Nikos Chausidis

LURISTAN STANDARDS

iconography semiotics and purpose



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LURISTAN STANDARDS - ICONOGRAPHY, SEMIOTICS AND PURPOSE

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Center for Prehistoric Research

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CONTENT

PREFACE ix

I. BASIC INFORMATION AND TERMINOLOGY RELATED TO THE LURISTAN STANDARDS .....
1. Territory 3
2. Chronology 4
3. Ethnocultural affiliation 6
4. Typology and terminology 7

II. THEORETICAL BASIS AND METHODOLOGY 17
1. Previous approaches in the study of the iconography of Luristan bronzes 19
2. Genesis and character of the pictorial motifs from the Luristan bronzes 22
3. Pragmatic aspects related to the creation and distribution of Luristan bronzes 26
4. The symbolic i.e. mythical-religious basis of Luristan iconography 29
5. Classification of Luristan iconography 33
6. Transformation of Luristan iconography 34
7. Basic "styles" of Luristan iconography 37
8. Conceptions of Luristan iconography 42

III. GEOMETRIC LEVEL 47
1. The geometric level of Luristan bronzes 53
2. Artifacts as carriers of the image of the universe 54
3. Archaic notions on the form of the cosmos 56
4. Iconographic parallels 64
5. Cosmological aspects of the rhombus (Western Asian seals) 76

IV. ZOOMORPHIC AND PHYTOMORPHIC LEVEL 79
1. Pair of symmetrical animals on the "zoomorphic standards" 81
2. The central pillar of the "zoomorphic standards" 129
3. Gigantic (macrocosmic) character of the composition 154
4. Dual i.e. complementary meaning of the pair of animals 155
5. Pins with a flat or openwork head fastened onto the "zoomorphic standards" 160

V. PAIR OF SYMMETRICAL ANIMALS AND A CENTRAL ANTHROPOMORPHIC CHARACTER 173
1. Centrally placed anthropomorphic head between the animals: type "zoomorphic standards with a human head" 175
2. Anthropomorphic figure between a pair of animals 201
3. Ambivalent triune zooanthropomorphic character 217
4. Human with arms in the form of animal protomes 222
5. Human with bird protomes on the shoulders 222

VI. MALE AND FEMALE PRINCIPLE 237
1. Sex organs 239
2. Human figures with accentuated sexual features 254
3. Duplication of the figure with zoomorphized legs ("six-pointed standards") 279
4. Hierogamy 281
5. Human head between the zoomorphized legs of the birth-giving figure 287
6. Figure depicted in the lower half of the "idols with protomes" 291
7. The meaning of the birth-giving woman and of her male counterpart on the Luristan standards 299

VII. MACROCOSMIC GIANT 313
1. The macrocosmic giant on Luristan standards 315
2. Creation of the universe from the body partsof the macrocosmic giant i.e. the macrocosmic phallus 332
3. The mythical hero creates the world from the body of the gigantic primordial monster 335
4. Creation of the first man and the first woman from the body parts of the macrocosmic giant 335
5. The macrocosmic giant that holds or spreads out the sky with his hands 336
6. Human with arms in the form of animal protomes 349
7. The hat of the macrocosmic giant as a celestial dome 357

VIII. THE ANDROGYNOUS PRIMORDIAL GOD GIVES BIRTH TO HIS TWO SONS – HEIRS 361
1. Multiplicated anthropomorphic faces i.e. heads on the pillar of the Luristan standards 363
2. The myth of Zurvān and the birth of his two sons 366
3. The Myth of Zurvān on the plaque from the Cincinnati Art Museum 366
4. The myth of Zurvān on other Luristan bronzes 379
5. Main iconographic elements of the scene and their meaning 391
6. Anthropomorphic character with a pair of zoomorphic protomes or a pair of additional human busts on the shoulders 406
7. The myth of Zurvān on Luristan standards 430

IX. HUMAN HEAD WITH TWO OR MORE FACES ORIENTED IN VARIOUS DIRECTIONS 445
1. General characteristics of the "idols" 449
2. Implicit and explicit multifaciality 463
3. Multiplicated faces in other Luristan standards 463
4. Multiplicated faces in other Luristan objects 468
5. Iconography and comparative analysis of the mythical character with two or more faces 478
6. Excurse: Zoomorphic or anthropomorphic head at the bottom 547
7. Comparison of the features of Janus and his equivalents with the central character from the Luristan standards 558
8. Cultural-historical interpretation of the similarities between Janus and the other mythical characters and deities included in the comparative study 581

X. CHARACTER AND PURPOSE OF THE LURISTAN STANDARDS 583
1. Previous theories on the character and purpose of the Luristan standards 585
2. Appearance and construction of the Luristan standards 590
3. Archaeological contexts of the Luristan standards 596
4. Iconographic and functional parallels of the Luristan standards 624
5. Iconographic elements and functions of the Luristan standards in relation to the kerykeion, caduceus and other analogies 659

XI. HISTORICAL AND ETHNO-CULTURAL INTERPRETATIONS 675
1. Existing theories on the ethno-culturalaffiliation of the Luristan bronzes 677
2. Our observations on the ethno-cultural affiliation of the Luristan bronzes 697
3. Historical-cultural model in relation to the origin i.e. creation of the Luristan bronzes 700

ILLUSTRATIONS CATALOGUE 719

BIBLIOGRAPHY 795



PREFACE

Do people really want to reach and understand the culture of their most distant ancestors?

It seems that this dilemma cannot be substantiated if judged by the sheer volume of archaeological excavations being conducted around the whole world. But, this is not such an obvious counter-argument if one evaluates how much archaeologists are ready to delve into the deeper layers of the cultures whose material objects they excavate daily. How ready are they really to penetrate the mind and spirit of the people who created and composed these cultures? Having dealt with archaeology all my life, I can conclude that such real attempts to delve behind the ancient objects and behind the buildings in which they were found are very rare. The reasons for this can be sought on several levels. At first glance, of course, there is the concern for objectivity, the absence of exact facts and arguments, as well as the caution against unjustified assumptions. In the advocacy of these components, a leading role is played by archaeologists who strive to bring their science as close as possible to the group of exact disciplines. But, one can also sense a tendency among a significant portion of them to completely transfer archaeology into these disciplines, regardless of the fact that all over the world, from its inception until today, it is classified in the category of the humanities i.e. speculative sciences. In this pursuit they go even further, criticizing in principle, and even completely eliminating, the interpretations, assumptions and elaborations of various scientific models - tools that are legitimate in all of science, and even in those disciplines that are much more exact than their own.

The deeper reason for this I see in the insecurity and indecisiveness of these researchers, behind which mainly stands some kind of fear. Fear of delusion and error, fear of doubt "can I?", fear of criticism by "those better than me", fear of deviating from the paved and generally accepted path that could damage "my" professional rating. The rare ones who will nevertheless choose such a very risky act, are going to be met with a wave of disapproval and labeling as being unscientific, fantasizers and dilettantes. Regardless of all the justification for this fear on the one hand and the hyperscepticism and hypercriticism on the other, it seems that behind both of them stand some even deeper primordial, subconscious and metaphysical archetypes - fear of the unknown; awe of the abyss of time that separates us and our ancestors; taboo regarding the revelation of ancient sacred secrets. Behind these feelings may also be the tendency to emphasize the difference between us - modern humans and them - the ancient people, between our ingenuity and their primitiveness or perhaps vice versa - our overly complex and confusing modernity and their simple primary perfection.

But, fortunately, in the last few decades, perhaps precisely as a counterweight to the so-called "exactification of archaeology", concepts have emerged that return this science to where it was born and where it belongs - in the nest of the humanities and social sciences, side by side with anthropology, sociology, psychology and philosophy. Here we have in mind the concepts of the so-called **post-processual**, **cognitive** or **semiotic archaeology** in which behind every archaeological object and archaeological situation are sought the thoughts, motives and intentions of man, not only perceived through the prism of the utilitarian and the pragmatic, but also of the symbolic, which is especially characteristic of the member belonging to ancient and archaic cultures. I wrote my earlier works without insight into the existence of this trend, which is why in discussions and battles with colleagues who were critical or skeptical about my approach and methodology I was deprived of a strong weapon. Today, many of these polemics can simply be reduced to referencing certain works in the field of archaeological and anthropological theory that justify, support and legitimize such an approach.[1]

The objects to which this book is dedicated are in various ways related to the phenomena we have presented above. The Luristan bronzes are without a doubt some of the most impressive and mysterious archaeological finds within global frames. This is due not only to their truly unique appearance and style of execution, but also to the circumstances under which they appeared in the collections of private individuals and major museums in the Western world. They started arriving there around a hundred years ago, literally "out of nowhere", without even knowing the country of origin. Nevertheless, it was soon discovered that they came from Luristan - a completely unknown and remote mountainous area in western Iran, located on the periphery of the large urban cores of ancient Mesopotamia and Persia. But, besides that, their character still remained shrouded in secrecy because they were excavated by the locals, without the use of any scientific methods, motivated by the modest earnings offered to them by the Western antiquities market. All this further fueled the creation of an aura of "fascinating mystery" around these objects.

In this publication I decided to study the Luristan standards - the most interesting, the most enigmatic, but also perhaps the most numerous category of objects from the group of the Luristan bronzes. In this monograph alone, we used over three hundred such specimens, but from an overview of the literature it can be estimated that there are more than 1000 in the world collections. They represent objects cast from bronze in the "lost wax" technique, with an average height of about 15 cm, which were intended for fastening onto a bronze or some other kind of support that stood on a flat surface or was planted onto some kind of pole. The mentioned circumstances regarding the illegal discovery of these objects give reason to suspicions on the presence in today's collections of such counterfeit items as well, because they, with their impressive form, were especially in demand in the antiquities market.[2] I accept the risk that some of the objects presented in this monograph were made in our time, but I am thereby convinced that this fact will not have a decisive role in the basic observations and interpretations that I propose because they are not based on individual objects but on series composed of several (dozens and even hundreds) specimens of the same type or subtype. Fortunately, in recent decades several Luristan standards have been found during legal and professionally led excavations which, in addition to confirming the Luristan origins of such finds, have enabled their more accurate dating between the 13th and 7th centuries BCE. Based on several finds discovered in situ, guidelines were also given for a more specific determination of their character and purpose.

Today, there is no doubt in academic circles that the Luristan standards were used not as utilitarian, but as symbolic i.e. signifying objects. But, despite that, they, as well as the whole group of Luristan bronzes, have so far been studies mainly in terms of their form and appearance, typology, chronology, stylistic-artistic

[1] I. Hodder, *Theory*; B. Olsen, *Od predmeta*; C. Renfrew, C. Scarre (eds.), *Cognition*; C. Renfrew, E. Zubrow, *The Anc. Mind*; R. W. Preucel, *Archaeol. Semiotics*; C. S. Henshilwood, F. D'Errico (eds.), *Homo Symbolicus*; L. Malafouris, C. Renfrew (eds.), *The Cognitive*.

[2] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 34-36; P. R. S. Moorey, *Ancient*, 42. O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze,* 119, 120, 161-164, 204, 247; O. W. Muscarella, *Archaeology*.

and technological execution. Thereby, this essential aspect of theirs has not been specially examined, with the exception of a few authors who have touched upon it to a greater or lesser extent within their more general studies. Different to them, in this book it is placed in the very focus of the study that covers the **iconography** of the Luristan standards i.e. the pictorial representations integrated in their form, the **symbolic i.e. mythical-religious system** that stood behind these representations and behind the objects themselves, and, in that context, also the **place i.e. function** of these objects in the given culture.

Such very ambitious tasks in science are usually solved through insight into the thoughts i.e. beliefs of the people themselves who conceived, produced and used the objects that are being studied. In ethnology and anthropology this is achieved through direct contact with those people or insight into the recent questionnaires or other records of previous researchers. In archaeology, the impossibility of such direct contacts is compensated by the search and analysis of ancient records relating to a given culture. In our case, not only the first but also the second possibility is not available to us because it is not certain which ethnic, cultural or political entity stood behind the Luristan bronzes, which would justify their connection with some possibly preserved written sources. Hence, the indicated questions remain to be solved through some other approaches which in modern science, in principle, are considered more speculative, such as the various comparative methods. In this specific case, they would consist of linking the standards or individual pictorial motifs integrated in them to relevant traditions present in other cultures for which there are written records, and which are close to the bearers of the Luristan bronzes in a geographical, chronological, cultural or historical sense.

However, there is also another method that is more and more finding its place in science, which I have been using and developing intensively in the past years. At its basis is the conviction that the image is an **autonomous manifestation of human thought** which, like speech, is generated according to certain rules and principles on the basis of which the consciousness and subconscious of an individual function, but also the various collective phenomena of the archaic i.e. traditional cultures. Consequently, the thought of an individual and the spirit of a culture (in our case related to the spheres of symbol, myth and religion) can also be reached through various forms of decoding of the images that they created and used.

Not a small number of scholars and schools of science are skeptical in regard to the results of such analyzes of the **"objectified"** and **"visualized thoughts"** of ancient man. Namely, it is considered that they cannot offer the same degree of exactness i.e. decisiveness as the thoughts encoded in some verbal text, because they are a product of the process of **translation from the visual medium into the verbal one**, which means that in doing so they must also be **interpreted** through the mind of their contemporary researcher. This suspicion is based on the concern that in these translations and interpretations, some modern meaning may have been imposed on the ancient phenomena which they did not originally have. Although this skepticism is justified in principle, it must be emphasized that it is much more accentuated in terms of analyzes of non-verbal phenomena from the past than of written records. We think that the proponents of this hyperscepticism should equally direct it towards the written thoughts of the past as well, and, ultimately, to any written thought that reaches us without the direct (live) presence of its author or without the authentic context. The indicated methods and the doubt regarding them only remind us that everything in the world, even the "undeniable facts" of the exact i.e. natural sciences, can be transformed into human thoughts only if they first pass through appropriate **interpretation** and **explanation** by means of the verbal or some other human sign systems. Therefore, the semiotic i.e. cognitive interpretations of the artifacts i.e. images from the ancient past may not be much more speculative, for example, than the interpretation of the term *catharsis* in the works of Aristotle, the term *logos* written in some old Christian text, or even the verbal explanation of the famous Einstein equation $E = mc^2$.

The past does not consist of unambiguous facts and absolute truths that exist in themselves and whose objective truth is revealed and interpreted once and for all. Every such fact and every truth is formed and acquires a certain meaning only in relation to the specific researcher, according to the culture to which he belongs and the scientific approach he advocates. In some other time and other cultural or scientific context,

the study and interpretation of the same facts may result in truths that would differ from the previous ones, which does not mean at all costs a denial of their value within the time in which they arose.

In context of all that was said above, I recommend that this book not be opened at all by those who do not accept the indicated principles i.e. do not believe that it is possible to reconstruct the symbolic and mythical-religious system of an ancient culture without insight into some kind of written sources that would refer directly to it, only on the basis of analysis of the pictorial representations and archaeological finds that were created or used in that culture and their semiotic, comparative and interdisciplinary study.

How did this book come about?

I have devoted my entire professional career to researching topics that were not particularly approved by the mainstream of archaeology. Here I have in mind the studies of the spiritual culture i.e. the symbol, myth, religion and ritual within ancient and archaic cultures, specifically based on the elements of their material culture and primarily their pictorial representations. Thereby, I often used the Luristan bronzes and especially the standards as comparative material. Since my first works I realized that the iconography of these objects is rich, multifaceted, consistent and shows strong relations with other cultures, even such that are very far from them in a geographical and chronological sense. In 2016, I synthesized these partial observations of mine into a whole in the form of a paper that I presented at the Seventh International Conference "The Actual Problems of History and Theory of Art" in Saint Petersburg.[3] When the time came for it to be published in the conference proceedings, I realized that within the prescribed pages there were no possibilities to fit even my basic theses in relation to these subjects and the necessary illustrative material. Giving up on the publication of this paper, I decided to continue the work I started for another few months and to complete it in the format of a booklet that would be intended not only for specialists but also for the wider audience. But it is obvious that the topic attracted me so much that the few months grew into five years, and the small booklet turned into an exhaustive monograph. Its volume increased even more due to the desire, developed in my other books as well, to support the research with numerous and appropriately catalogued illustrations that present the analyzed objects and comparative material, followed by various schemes through which I explain my interpretations.

Although this monograph is focused on the Luristan standards, a significant place in it is also occupied by the analyzes of some of the other categories of Luristan bronzes whose iconography and other aspects overlap with them. It is a good occasion and incentive for future researchers, who in principle accept the methods I have applied, to continue with more detailed study of these objects as well.

The publication of this monograph and the studies that preceded it are not financially or in any other way supported by any official project or institution, but are based on the personal resources of the author. I owe the only gratitude for its formation to several younger colleagues from foreign countries and to my former graduates and master's students, who are currently studying at various universities around the world. Besides them, I also have to mention my daughter Noemi Chausidis, who in recent years lives and works in Brussels, the city that houses one of the richest collections of Luristan bronzes in the world. Here I would like to wholeheartedly thank them for their readiness and effort to provide me with some publications without which this monograph simply could have not been completed. I owe special gratitude to Igor Eftimovski, my master's student, and now doctoral student as well, who undertook a great task - translating this voluminous monograph from Macedonian to English. But his work did not end just with translation. As an already formed connoisseur of the spiritual aspects of ancient cultures, in parallel with the translation of the individual chapters, he also took on the role of a serious interlocutor and even editor with whom part of the presented analyzes and interpretations were discussed and thought out. Thereby, in some cases, he offered me additional comparative examples and appropriate bibliographic units through which the corresponding interpretations were even better complemented and argued.

[3] N. Chausidis, *The Cosmogonic*.

A significant part of the literature used in this book has been published in some of the Slavic languages that use the Cyrillic script. I have decided to not transcribe these bibliographic units using the Latin alphabet, although this will cause difficulties in following the content for readers who do not know the Cyrillic script. I nevertheless decided to do this due to several reasons, including the aspiration to amortize the phenomena of globalization and the suppression of local cultures, languages and scripts. I want these readers to understand such a move as my modest act of promoting among world scholars the principle of respect for cultural diversity, and in that context the mutual acquaintance with the basic features of their native languages and scripts. In this case these are the Slavic languages and the several Cyrillic letters that differ from the Latin ones. In fact, this problem can be easily solved by the readers themselves through Google Translate, which, in addition to translation, also offers Latin transcription of Cyrillic texts. In the same spirit, in parallel with the English version, this monograph will also be published in Macedonian - the original language in which it was written.

The monograph uses a large number of illustrations taken from print and electronic publications, as well as from the Internet. For each illustration used, its source is denoted and listed in the catalogue in abbreviated form, while its complete information, relevant to the moment of download, is presented in the bibliography. Most of these illustrations are included in our plates with significant visual adaptation: re-framed, changed background, graphic accentuation of some elements, all in order to put in the forefront not the object as such, but its iconography and semiotics. We believe that by doing so we have not violated the rights of the authors of these illustrations and the owners of the objects because we have used them for strictly scientific and educational purposes and in a publication which, above all, has the function of a teaching aid, freely available on the Internet without any financial compensation for its author.

We decided to publish this monograph in electronic PDF format due to several reasons. One of them is the inability to secure funds for printing in color of such an extensive monograph, as well as the high price for such an edition that would hinder its availability and distribution to a large number of interested readers. In fact, each of the readers can provide such a possibility for themselves, by printing and binding this electronic book on their own. If they would want the print version to retain the intended layout of left and right pages, the first page should be left blank when printing. This electronic format has another advantage, given that readers and researchers of the newer generations no longer consider their native medium to be paper books, but their computers and monitors, which at the same time give them many advantages.

Chapter I

BASIC INFORMATION AND TERMINOLOGY RELATED TO THE LURISTAN STANDARDS



I. BASIC INFORMATION AND TERMINOLOGY RELATED TO THE LURISTAN STANDARDS

1. Territory

Although there is insufficient data regarding the exact location of discovery for most Luristan bronzes that are housed in private and public museum collections around the world, there is consensus among contemporary academia that the majority of objects within this group and of the standards that are part of it, originate from the region of Luristan.

This region is located in the western part of Iran (the Islamic Republic of Iran). It stretches in the central part of the mountainous region of Zagros, from Kermanshah in the north to Badreh in the south and from Khorramabad and Nahavand in the east to Chavar in the west (Fig. 1). It is the most inaccessible part of Iran, which is completely dotted with mountain ridges that stretch parallel to the northwest-southeast direction. Formed between them are smaller valleys, about 25 km wide and 50 km long, which are interconnected by narrow passages. The most important river Seymareh divides the Luristan region into two main provinces: Pish-i Kuh to the east and Pusht-i Kuh to the west (modern-day Ilam province). Located between them is the Sefid-Kooh mountain range that has always made communication between these areas difficult, dictating certain specifics in their historical and cultural development.[1]

From the appearance of Luristan bronzes in Western collections until today, information occasionally arrives about their origin from Luristan or some of its specific regions. The sources of this information are mostly antiquities dealers, curators and archaeologists, based on their direct or indirect contacts with the illegal excavators of such objects. The Luristan origin is also being confirmed day by day through the discovery of new such finds within the frames of professional excavations, which in recent decades are being carried out much more often in this region. Collections and publications of Luristan bronzes often also include finds from neighboring Amlash, because bronze objects that are similar in shape and style to the Luristan ones have also been discovered in this region.[2] Nevertheless, typical Luristan bronzes, with a few exceptions, have not yet been found outside of Luristan. That is why it is very surprising, but also indicative, that a number of such finds, including several standards, have been discovered in the Aegean region (H14: 1 – 3).

[1] On the geomorphology of Luristan: *Lorestan Province* 2020; P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 12-15; М. Н. Погребова, *Закавказье*, 164; E. Haerinck B. Overlaet, *The Chr. of the Pusht-i Kuh*, 119, 120.

[2] E. de Waele, *Bronzes*; P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*.

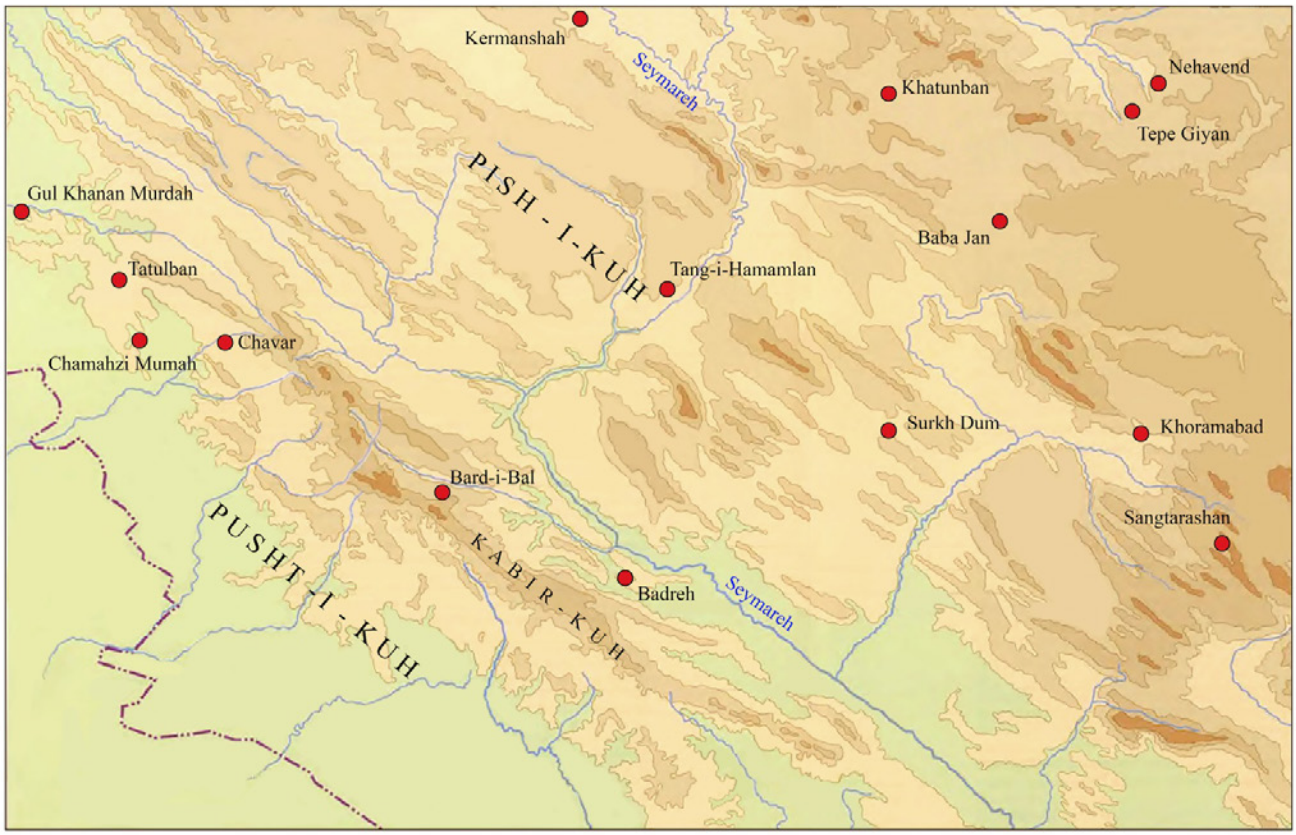


Fig. 1

The biggest "blank spot" regarding Luristan bronzes is the question of their geographical distribution within the Luristan region. Despite the growing number of legally discovered finds, with a known location, today it is still not possible to create a comprehensive map of the regional distribution of certain types of objects belonging to this group, again due to the indicated problem with their illegal and undocumented detection. This is even more pronounced in regards to the standards, because one can literally finger-count the number of such specimens that have been discovered during professionally led excavations - the only ones for which the exact location is known.

2. Chronology

The chronological determination of Luristan standards, as well as of the other items from the group of Luristan bronzes, has not yet been completely resolved, once again due to the indicated problem regarding the origin of most of them from unprofessional excavations that have not provided adequate facts for their exact dating. In the first decades since the appearance of these objects in private and museum collections, researchers have tried to compensate for this handicap by comparing them (in terms of form, style and iconography) with other more reliably dated finds from Luristan or surrounding regions. Attempts for dating have also been made according to the cuneiform inscriptions present on some objects (weapons) categorized in the group of Luristan bronzes. Based on these approaches, the first proposed dating of the standards was within the frames of the **3rd and 2nd millennium BCE**, and, accordingly, appropriate interpretations of their ethno-cultural affiliation and iconography were undertaken.[3] As we will see, with the studies conducted in the last decades of the 20th and the first decades of this century, such dating was proved to be inaccurate, so the

[3] M. Rostovtzeff, *Some Remarks*; E. Herzfeld, *Iran*, 134-176; C. F. A. Schaeffer, *Stratigraphie*, 477-495; P. Calmeyer, *Datierbare*; in general regarding their dating: O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 137, 138.

chronology of these objects was moved towards the **last centuries of the 2nd millennium and the first half of the 1st millennium BCE**.

Several researchers have tried to establish some kind of chronological relations within the separate categories of Luristan bronzes by arranging the specific specimens into corresponding typological-chronological classes. They did so based on two approaches. The first was to connect the rare objects discovered in closed archaeological contexts to other better-dated finds from those same contexts. The other procedure was based on projecting certain global tendencies in their stylistic and typological development. The second conception became most pronounced exactly in regards to the standards, so that the prevailing opinion among some researchers became that there were transformations that began with naturalism, and from that point moved, on one side, towards stylization i.e. geometrization, and on the other towards complication (hybridization and baroquesation) within the frames of the zoomorphic style, to eventually result in a gradual reduction and abandonment of zoomorphism at the expense of anthropomorphization.[4]

A new phase in the process of dating the Luristan bronzes, especially the standards, occurred with the publication of the results of new systematic excavations at Luristan sites conducted in the second half of the 20th and the first decades of the 21st century. During these excavations, several standards were discovered *in situ* within graves, settlements and cult buildings, providing facts for the first scientifically based dating of objects from this category. Although still being extremely rare findings, these examples, in relation to the other archaeological material and the archaeological contexts, mainly confirm the chronological relations between the individual types obtained with the previous (corrected) comparative, typological, and stylistic analyzes.

Based on the indicated excavations, today there are much less dilemmas that the Luristan bronzes existed in the last centuries of the 2nd and in the first half of the 1st millennium BCE, or more precisely, from 1300/1250 to 800/750 BCE, and according to some researchers up to 700/600 BCE.[5]

According to the observations of L. Vanden Berghe and C. Goff, based on the new finds discovered during their archaeological excavations, within the category of Luristan standards there are three basic groups: **finials, standards** and **tubes**. Considered as the oldest type are the "zoomorphic standards" (animal finials) that were in use in the late phases of Iron Age I (1000 - 900 BCE). The most widespread group of standards, of the type "idols with protomes" (Master-of-Animals standards), were used in the early phases of the Iron Age III (ca. 750 - 700 BCE), while the "idols" and "columnar figurines" (tubes) were in use sometime in the Iron Age III (7th century BCE).[6] In global terms, with small differences, this chronological line was also accepted by other researchers who were directly involved in later excavation campaigns of the Luristan sites (E. Haerinck, B. Overlaet, M. Malekzadeh and others). According to B. Overlaet, some "zoomorphic standards" were in use during the Iron Age IB (1150-1000 BCE), while the "idols with protomes" in Iron Age III (800-750 BCE).[7]

In the following paragraphs we present several specific finds of Luristan standards that are dated based on facts obtained during the indicated excavations.

- Two "zoomorphic standards" with a pair of ibexes created in a naturalistic manner were discovered in the necropolis at **Bard-i-Bal** (B1: 4, 7; H11: 1 – 7). They date to the Iron Age IB/IIA (ca. 1150 - ca. 900 BCE), while it is also not excluded that they could belong to the Iron Age IA (ca. 1300/1250 - ca. 1150 BCE).[8]

[4] E. Porada, *Nomads*, 20-23; P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 17-34; E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 110-116; 136-138; for more details on this see p. 34.

[5] B. Overlaet, *Luristan Bronzes*; B. Overlaet, The *Chronology*.

[6] L. Vanden Berghe, *Excavations*; O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 138; М. Н. Погребова, Д. С. Раевский, *Ранние*, 157.

[7] E. Haerinck, B. Overlaet, *The Chr. of the Pusht-i Kuh*; E. Haerinck et al, *Finds*, 114, 115; B. Overlaet, The *Chronology*.

[8] B. Overlaet, The *Chronology*, 12, 25 (Pl.6); B. Overlaet, *The Early*, 185-187, 216 (Fig. 184).

- A "zoomorphic standard" with a pair of animals from the family of felines was discovered together with a support in grave no. 6 of the necropolis at **Khatunban** (B7: 4; H12: 1, 2). It is classified within the later variants of the "first group", which is dated to the Iron Age IB (1150 - ca. 1000 BC).[9]

- A "zoomorphic standard" was found at a sanctuary near **Sangtarashan** (B5: 4; H8; H9: 1, 10). It was discovered within a closed context (along with many other bronze objects), associated with the first phase of the sanctuary dating to the Iron Age I - II (1300/1250 - 800/750 BCE) (H9: 6 - 12).[10]

- Two more standards were discovered at the **Sangtarashan** site, the first of which again belongs to the type "zoomorphic standards" (B1: 6; H9: 2), while the second - to the type "idols" (H9: 3; G4: 5). However, in this case, we are not acquainted with the context of their discovery i.e. whether they belonged to the first phase of the sanctuary (Iron Age I - II) or to the second, which dates to the Iron Age II - III (1000 - 600 BCE).[11]

- A standard of the "idols" type, with two anthropomorphic faces facing in opposite directions, was discovered in a building in **Baba Jan** (G3: 6). Based on the context of discovery it is dated to the 7th century BCE.[12]

- A standard of the type "idols with protomes" was discovered *in situ*, along with its support, in a grave in the necropolis at **Tattulban** (H10: 1 – 9). It is dated to the early stages of the Iron Age III (ca. 800/750 - ca. 650 BCE).[13]

- A fragmented standard of the type "idols with protomes" was discovered in the sanctuary of Hera on the island of **Samos** in the Aegean Sea (H14: 2). It is believed that it was deposited there not earlier than the late 8th century BCE, and no later than the late 7th century BCE.[14]

- One bronze bottle-shaped support for a standard and another short tubular support were found in grave no. 80 from the necropolis at **Gul Khanan Murdah**, dated to the Iron Age III (800/750 – 650 BCE) (H10: 11 – 16). The absence of a standard in this grave (intact until excavation) is justified with the combination of the support with a standard or some other kind of object made of non-durable material.[15] Another bronze support with a somewhat different shape was also discovered in grave no. 53 from the **Chamahzi Mumah** necropolis, dated to the same period. In this case the support was combined with an iron figurine (found in a highly corroded condition) implanted quite inappropriately in the wide end of the support which usually functions as its base (H11: 9 – 11).[16] Another support was discovered in **Tang-i Hamamlan**, this time in a non-funerary context (a building), along with various other bronze objects (some damaged), including among them a Luristan standard.[17]

3. Ethnocultural affiliation

This aspect of the Luristan bronzes and the standards as part of them also cannot yet be considered resolved. Although it is not in the focus of our study, the iconographic analyzes that we present in this monograph have outlined certain insights in regards to this issue as well. We have presented them in the last chapter, in which we also present the current state of research on this topic, together with the existing hypotheses regarding the cultural and ethnic affiliation of these objects (see Chapter XI – p. 677).

[9] E. Haerinck et al, *Finds*, 114, 115, 148 (Pl. 8).
[10] Z. Hashemi, *The Bronze*; B. Overlaet, *Čale Ğār*, 119-123; M. Malekzadeh et al, *Fouilles 2005-2006*.
[11] M. Malekzadeh et al, *Fouilles 2005-2006*, 85, 86 (Fig. 26).
[12] C. Goff, *Excavations*, 38 (Fig. 14: 26); O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 137.
[13] B. Overlaet, The *Chronology*, 15, 16, 33 (Pl.14: 11); B. Overlaet, *The Early*, 188-189, 216 (Fig. 184).
[14] U. Jantzen, *Ägyptische*, pl. 74: B896 (according to: O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 137).
[15] E. Haerinck, B. Overlaet, *Djub-i Gauhar*, 154, 156, 168-170, Pl. 107, Pl. 126; B. Overlaet, The *Chronology*, 16.
[16] E. Haerinck, B. Overlaet, *Chamahzi Mumah*, 30, 31, Fig. 48, Fig. 49, Pl. 66.
[17] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 16, 21, 53, 84, 108, 291; O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 138, 139, 152, 156, 159, 189, 289, 290.

4. Typology and terminology

During the almost hundred years of study and publication of the Luristan standards, numerous academic terms have been proposed and used in regards to them - together as a whole group, its separate types and variants, as well as the supports that are considered an integral part of them.

By various authors and within individual languages, the whole group has so far been referred to by various names: **Standards** or **Tops of Standards**,[18] **Finials and Standarts**,[19] **Finials**,[20] **Finials or Idols**,[21] **Idols** or **Votive Idols**,[22] **Funerary Idols**,[23] **Pole Tops,**[24] **Statuettes funeraires**,[25] **Idoles funeraires**,[26] **Idoles tubulaires**,[27] **Stangen-aufsätze**,[28] **Standarte**,[29] **навершия**.[30] In this monograph we decided to use the term **standards/Luristan Standards** as the name for the whole group, due to the following reasons:

- this term is the most common and most familiar in the spheres of academia and wider;

- it carries a relatively broad and neutral meaning of a non-utilitarian object that stands vertically, alone or fastened on some other object;

- it does not imply more specifically to any of the assumptions regarding the character and purpose of these objects.

During our research of the iconography and meaning of the Luristan standards as a category of objects, it proved necessary to introduce a new terminology in regards to the individual types of which it is consisted. We are aware that any change in the existing and already quite familiar terminology is unpopular and risky because it creates additional difficulties in following the contents of publications and in principle does not result in wider acceptance of the new proposals. However, in our case, such a step was really **necessary** because the existing names proved to be inappropriate, and within the frames of our research, completely unusable. This is due to the fact that in some cases this terminology has implications in regards to the iconography and symbolism of the given objects that are not acceptable to us for several reasons. The first reason is that some of them are based on free associations that have no scientific background, which is why they were not considered consequential even by their proposers. Such are the terms that include the name of the Italic two-faced god Janus: **Idole tubulaire janiforme**; **Third type (with a Janus head)**. The second reason is that, in some cases, these terms derive from hypotheses based on academic stereotypes and platitudes that today cannot be considered justified and in relation to which there is serious scientific discussion. Such are the terms **Votive Idols** and **Funerary Idols**, which are based on assumptions that Luristan standards were primarily of a votive or funerary nature, which in turn are highly debatable. In regards to the term **Heraldic Animal Finial**, the use of the epithet *heraldic* is unclear and problematic, while in regards to the term **Anthropomorphic "Fertility" Tube -** the epithet *fertility*. The third and most crucial reason is that the existing names are often in direct contradiction with the interpretations we propose, so that their inclusion in our elaborations would mean the presence of two mutually contradictory conceptions within

[18] M. Rostovtzeff, *Some Remarks*, 49. According to E. Porada, this author was the first to have referred to these objects as "standards" (E. Porada, *Nomads*, 20).
[19] E. Haerinck et al, *Finds*, 114.
[20] S. Przeworski, *Luristan Bronzes*, 255-259.
[21] B. Overlaet, *Luristan during*, 386; B. Overlaet, *The Early*, 185, 216.
[22] R. Ghirshman, *The Art*, 43-45.
[23] L. Vanden Berghe, *Excavations*, 264-267.
[24] H. Frankfort, *The Art*, 344, 345.
[25] A. Godard, *Bronzes*, Pl. L - Pl. LVII.
[26] Y. Godard, A. Godard, *Bronzes*, No. 109-131.
[27] Ph. Verdier, *Les bronzes*, 46, 47.
[28] H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*; J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*.
[29] G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 109-117.
[30] М. Н. Погребова, *Закавказье*, 143-151.

the same sentence. In this sense, particularly notable is the example with the term **Master-of-Animals Standards** because of its wide distribution in academic and popular literature and intrusiveness regarding the iconography and the mythical-religious character of the given objects. In our opinion, this term is based on another academic stereotype that has never been properly argued.

These are the reasons why it was necessary for us to introduce in this monograph new terms for most types of Luristan standards (Fig. 2a; 2b). Thereby, based on previous experiences, we decided to make these terms as simple and neutral as possible i.e. to be based on the appearance of the given type of objects i.e. on the presence on their surface of some specific element that is not (or at least is less) debatable and that does not stem from our or other previous interpretations of the iconography and meaning of the specific types.

We have already mentioned that in existing literature the Luristan standards are usually divided into three groups: - **finials**, **standards** and **tubes**.[31] These terms are not the most fortunate solution because they do not reflect the real features that differentiate the objects from the three groups. In fact, the qualificatives behind them can refer not only to the corresponding but also to the other types because they are all standards, most of them have a tubular shape and were intended to stand on top of some more complex sets. However, we do not consider this basic division to be acceptable primarily because it cannot serve as a good basis for more detailed and in-depth studies. Due to that, previous more serious researchers, each in their own way, had also divided them into another two or three - and even more additional types. The results of our analyzes, and not only the iconographic but also the typological ones, have prompted us to introduce within the existing typology three new types of standards that were not at all noted (or not clearly enough) by previous researchers. We believe that in time they will be accepted by future researchers.

In the chapters that follow we will present the different types of Luristan standards named according to the new terminology that we propose. Within this framework, we include a short description of the appearance i.e. form and genesis of the given type and an overview of some of the so far most used terms in regards to them, with reference to the respective authors and their works (a more detailed presentation of these types will follow in the relevant chapters). We also present a table with the most important information from this overview, for which we believe will facilitate the visual identification of the specific types in the monograph and in existing publications (Fig. 2a; 2b).

a) Type "zoomorphic standards"

They are considered the oldest standards, formed by two (rarely three) symmetrical figures of animals, standing on their hind legs (B1; B2; B5 - B10). Occurring variants are with ibexes and some other herbivores and with carnivores from the family of felines. Formed between the legs of the animals are two hoops and/or a separate small tube through which some kind of vertical pole was passed.

P. R. S. Moorey globally refers to them as **Finials** or **Standard finials**. He calls the subtype with a pair of horned animals **Wild-Goat Finials**, or **Caprid Finials**, while the subtype with animals from the family of felines **- Feline Finials** or **Lion Finials**.[32]

O. W. Muscarella globally refers to them as **Finials**, whereby the basic type with a pair of animals is named **Animal Finial** and **Heraldic Animal Finial**, while the rare zooanthropomorphic variant – **Horned-Demon Finial**.[33]

[31] For example: O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 136.
[32] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 146-153; P. R. S. Moorey, *Ancient*, Pl.IX; Pl.X; P. R. S. Moorey (et al), *Ancient Bronzes*, 51-54.
[33] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 142-146.

Fig. 2



	new names / authors	Zoomorphic standards	Zoomorphic standards with a human head	Idols
1.	**P. Amiet**	Étendards	Étendards	
2.	**E. Haerinck, B. Overlaet, Z. Jaffar-Mohammadi**	First type	Third type (with a Janus head)	Third type (with a Janus head)
3.	**R. Ghirshman**	Idols or Votive Idols		Idols or Votive Idols
4.	**P. R. S. Moorey**	Finials, Standard Finials, Wild-Goat/Caprid Finials, Feline/Lion Finials	Feline Finials, Standard finials	Other Anthropomorphic Tubes
5.	**O. W. Muscarella**	Finials, Heraldic Animal Finial, Horned-Demon Finial	Idol Standards	Anthropomorphic Tubes
6.	**B. Overlaet**	First group	First group	Third Group (simple tubes with human heads)
7.	**E. Porada**	First group (of Standards)	Second group (of Standards)	
8.	**J. A. H. Potratz**	Mufflon-Stangenaufsätze, Mufflon-Reihe, I. Gruppe (Pantheraufsätzen, Panther-Reihe)	II. Gruppe: from Form A to Form C. Pantheraufsätzen or Panther-Reihe	Röhrenkörper or simplen Röhren
9.	**S. Przeworski**	Finials		Decorative objects
10.	**E. de Waele**	Étendards Pseudo-étendards bouquetins / lions affrontés		Idole tubulaire
11.	**P. Watson**	Zoomorphic Finials	Finials	Decorated Tube with Grotesque Janus Head
12.	**G. Zahlhaas**	Standarten		Röhrenidol

Fig. 2



Idols with protomes	Columnar figurines	Standards - statuettes	Six-pointed standards
Idole tubulaire	Idole tubulaire	Idole tubulaire	Étendards
Second type or Second Group or Master-of-Animals Standards	Third type (with tubular "human" figure) or Third Groupe	Third type (whose lower body retains the shape of the predator`s lower part)	
Idols or Votive Idols			
"Master-of-Animals" Finials or Standard finials	"Fertility" Tubes, Anthropomorphic Tubes		Standard Finials
Master-of-Animals Standards	Anthropomorphic "Fertility" Tubes		
Second type (Master -of-Animals Standards)	Third type (with tubular "human" figure) or Third Groupe	Third type (whose lower body retains the shape of the predator`s lower part)	
Third group (of Standards)			
II. Gruppe: from Form D to Form N; III. Gruppe: from Form A to Form H		Transitional form of II. Gruppe	II. Gruppe: Form M
Finials			
Idole tubulaire janiforme	Idole tubulaire (avec une face et un dos)		
Finials	Decorated Tubes		
Standarten	Standarten	Standarten	

P. Watson, uses the term **Zoomorphic Finials**.[34]

E. Porada defines this type as **First group** (of Standards),[35] and a similar term (**First type**) is also used by **E. Haerinck**, **B. Overlaet** and **Z. Jaffar-Mohammadi**.[36]

P. Amiet calls these standards **Étendards**.[37]

This type, along with the "idols with protomes", are referred by **R. Ghirshman** as **Idols** or **Votive Idols**.[38]

E. de Waele calls them **Étendards** or **Pseudo-étendards**, differentiating them into two groups: standards depicting ibexes ("étendards en forme de paire de bouquetins affrontés") and standards depicting lions ("étendards en forme de paire de lions affrontés").[39]

Unlike other researchers, **J. A. H. Potratz** does not treat the "zoomorphic standards" as a single type, but as two typological groups that differ based on the affiliation of the animals. He calls the first group **Mufflon-Stangenaufsätze** (mouflon standards) or **Mufflon-Reihe** (mouflon series) and further divides it into a number of variants (from **Form A** to **Form P**).[40] The group with animals from the family of felines is determined by him as **I. Gruppe**, within the category **Pantheraufsätzen** or **Panther-Reihe**.[41] This category also includes, in separate groups, standards that other researchers classify into separate typological classes (according to our terminology, they are "zoomorphic standards with a human head" and "idols with protomes").

b) Type "zoomorphic standards with a human head"

This type is quite similar to the "zoomorphic standards" and differs from them by the human head placed at the raised front legs of the animals, which has a face on both the front and back side (C1 – C5). It originated with their transformation, mainly in those variants where the pair of animals belongs to the family of felines. With the development of this type, it increasingly lost its connection with the category from which it originated, gradually leading to the formation of a separate type (according to our terminology "idols with protomes"). There are numerous liminal specimens that bear the characteristics of both groups, because of which they can be classified in one or the other (C5: 7; C13: 1 – 3).

P. R. S. Moorey does not differentiate these standards as a separate type, but treats them within the **Feline Finials** i.e.[42] **Standard finials**.[43]

O. W. Muscarella calls them **Idol Standards**.[44]

It seems that **P. Watson** refers to this group as **Finials**.[45]

E. Porada defines this type as **Second group** (of Standards).[46]

B. Overlaet treats them as part of the **First group**.[47]

One specimen of this type is included by **P. Amiet** into the category **Étendards**.[48]

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[34] P. Watson, *Luristan*, 2-4.
[35] E. Porada, *Nomads*, 20.
[36] E. Haerinck et al, *Finds*, 114, 115; B. Overlaet, *Luristan Bronzes*.
[37] P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 91, 92.
[38] R. Ghirshman, *The Art*, 43-46.
[39] E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 93-98.
[40] J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 42-44.
[41] J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 46-51.
[42] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 152, 153.
[43] P. R. S. Moorey (et al), *Ancient Bronzes*, 55-57.
[44] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 146, 147.
[45] P. Watson, *Luristan*, 3, 5-7.
[46] E. Porada, *Nomads*, 20.
[47] B. Overlaet, *Luristan Bronzes*.

J. A. H. Potratz differentiates them as three variants (from **Form A** to **Form C**), included in **II. Gruppe**, and within the category **Pantheraufsätzen** or **Panther-Reihe**.[49] Within this category, classified into separate subgroups are standards that other researchers define as separate groups (according to our terminology "zoomorphic standards with a human head" and "idols with protomes").

c) Type "idols with protomes"

We have already mentioned that this type came to be with the gradual transformation of the "zoomorphic standards with a human head", whereby the front legs of the animals became integrated into the tubular pillar of the standards. It gradually began to be cast with the other elements, representing the neck and torso of the central zooanthropomorphic character that retained the two-faced feature of the previous type. The necks and heads of the animal pair separated from the rest of their bodies, which, in turn, gradually lost their original and acquired new meanings. In this type they were transformed into separate elements (an open ring composed of two joint arc-shaped protomes) that became its most recognizable feature (C1: 5, 6, 9; C13 – C19; C24; D32; D35; D39; E7; E17; F1; F30; G7; G9 – G11).

In the writings of **A. Godard** and others (mainly earlier) researchers, these (and also other) standards are referred to as **"Gilgamesh" finials**, based on the identification of the anthropomorphic character holding the two protomes with Gilgamesh from the eponymous Mesopotamian epic. The contemporary, newer dating of these objects has demotivated such naming because it does not coincide with the time when this epic was most popular.[50]

P. R. S. Moorey calls them **"Master-of-Animals" Finials**[51] or **Standard finials** (along with the "zoomorphic standards").[52]

O. W. Muscarella names them as **Master-of-Animals Standards**.[53]

E. Haerinck, B. Overlaet and **Z. Jaffar-Mohammadi** use the term **Second type** or **Second Group**, as well as **Master-of-Animals Standards**.[54]

E. Porada defines this type as **Third group** (of Standards).[55]

P. Amiet calls them **Idole tubulaire**.[56]

This type, along with the "zoomorphic standards", is referred to by **R. Ghirshman** as **Idols** or **Votive Idols**.[57]

E. de Waele uses the term **Idole tubulaire janiforme** and as part of the broader group **Idole tubulaire** which also includes the "idols" and "columnar figurines".[58]

In the writings of **J. A. H. Potratz**, these standards are classified into two different groups. Those subtypes in which the central anthropomorphic character does not have arms are included in **II. Gruppe**, within the category **Pantheraufsätzen** or **Panther-Reihe**, from **Form D** to **Form N**.[59] The subtypes in which

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[48] P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 92 (No. 209, 210).
[49] J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 51-53.
[50] A. Godard, *Bronzes*, 83-85, in regards to other standards 88, 94; *E. D. Phillips, The People,* 225, 244; on this problem: P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 15, 21, 154; E. Porada, *Nomads,* 23, 24; B. Goldman, *Some*, 179, 180.
[51] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 153-160; the same term: P. Watson, *Luristan*, 7-9.
[52] P. R. S. Moorey (et al), *Ancient Bronzes*, 58-62.
[53] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 147-151; the same term is also used by B. Overlaet (for example: B. Overlaet, *Luristan during*, 386).
[54] E. Haerinck et al, *Finds*, 114, 115; B. Overlaet, *Luristan Bronzes*.
[55] E. Porada, *Nomads*, 20.
[56] P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 91.
[57] R. Ghirshman, *The Art*, 43-46.
[58] E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 98-103, 114, 115.
[59] J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 53-59.

the central character does have arms are classified under **III. Gruppe** of the indicated category, which is subdivided into several variants, from **Form A** to **Form H**.[60]

d) Type “idols”

It represents the simplest type of standard, consisting of a tubular body that is supplemented at the top by a human head with two or, less often, more faces, sometimes also alternated with zoomorphic or zooanthropomorphic heads or protomes. In some variants these elements are also present at the lower end of the object (G1 – G5). The genesis of this type may be due to the reduction of the more complex "idols with protomes", the addition of heads to the small tube inserted between the paws of the animal pair from the "zoomorphic standards", or to the introduction into these objects of iconography from a completely different type of objects with the character of miniature or monumental idols, probably made of other materials (wood, clay, stone) (G8; G9).

This type of standards are referred to by **P. R. S. Moorey as Other Anthropomorphic Tubes**, and as part of the larger group of **Decorated Tubes**, which also includes some rarer zoomorphized variants of the "idols" ("Zoomorphic Tubes") and the "columnar figurines" ("Anthropomorphic Tubes").[61]

O. W. Muscarella calls them **Anthropomorphic Tubes**.[62]

E. de Waele classifies the only such specimen in his monograph within the group **Idole tubulaire** ("idoles en forme de tube surmonté d’une tête janiforme"), together with the "idols with protomes" and "columnar figurines".[63]

E. Haerinck, B. Overlaet and **Z. Jaffar-Mohammadi** refer to this type as **Third type (with a Janus head)**, but it seem that they also include within it the "columnar figurines" and the "standards - statuettes".[64]

B. Overlaet treats them as part of **Third Group (simple tubes with human heads)**.[65]

J. A. H. Potratz names them descriptively, such as **Röhrenkörper** or **simplen Röhren**, without pretensions to treat them as the name for the type.[66]

G. Zahlhaas uses the term **Röhrenidol**, whereby he refers to all other types by using the term **Standarten**.[67]

e) Type "columnar figurines"

This type of standards also has a tubular shape, but unlike the "idols", here the tubular body is shaped like a human figure with a pronounced height, front and back side of the body and head, with arms placed in several specific positions. In numerous cases the shoulders (or less frequently the chest) of this figure are complemented by a pair of animal protomes. Based on the indicated element, this type can be divided into two basic subtypes - **"columnar figurines with protomes"** (C27; C28) and **"columnar figurines without protomes"** (C26). The origins of this type can be sought in the reduction of the "idols with protomes", perhaps in interaction with the "idols" or Luristan miniature bronze figurines.

P. R. S. Moorey refers to this type as **"Fertility" Tubes** or **Anthropomorphic Tubes** and as part of the larger group of **"Decorated Tubes"** which also includes the "idols" (“Other Anthropomorphic Tubes” and “Zoomorphic Tubes”).[68]

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[60] J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 59-64.
[61] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 161-164; the term “Decorated Tubes” is also used by P. Watson, *Luristan*, 10, 11.
[62] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 152.
[63] E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 104.
[64] E. Haerinck et al, *Finds*, 114, 115; B. Overlaet, *Luristan Bronzes*.
[65] B. Overlaet, *Luristan Bronzes*.
[66] H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 33, 34.
[67] G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 118, 119.

O. W. Muscarella calls them **Anthropomorphic "Fertility" Tubes**.[69]

P. Amiet includes this type into the category **Idole tubulaire**.[70]

E. de Waele calls them **Idoles tubulaires** ("représentant un homme ou une femme nus avec une face et un dos") and as part of the larger group **Idole tubulaire** which also includes the "idols" and "idols with protomes" ("Idole tubulaire janiforme").[71]

E. Haerinck, B. Overlaet and **Z. Jaffar-Mohammadi** refer to them as **Third type (with tubular "human" figure)** or **Third Groupe**, which also includes both the "idols" and "standards - statuettes".[72]

J. A. H. Potratz, in his earlier works classifies these objects within the category of standards (Stangenaufsätze), although there is no tendency for their differentiation into a separate type.[73] However, in his later monograph on the Luristan bronzes, he does not include them in this category at all, but within freestanding plastics (Rundplastik), regardless of the fact that he concludes that they are in some way genetically related to the "panther series" of "zoomorphic standards".[74]

P. Watson refers to this group as **Decorated Tubes**.[75]

f) Type "standards - statuettes"

This represents a smaller and not very compact type of standards that have been classified by previous researchers in various groups, while some of them, to some extent and rightly so, were not at all included within the category of standards because their form deviates quite a lot from the basic features of this group (C23: 11; C33). We decided to include these specimens into a separate typological group, although, in some cases, they show a high degree of resemblance to the "zoomorphic standards with a human head", the "idols with protomes" or to the "columnar figurines".

P. Amiet includes one specimen of this type into the category **Idole tubulaire**.[76]

J. A. H. Potratz seems to be inclined to define the specimens of this type as a transitional form of **II. Gruppe**.[77]

One gets the impression that **E. Haerinck, B. Overlaet** and **Z. Jaffar-Mohammadi** tend to classify the specimens of this type within the **Third type** ("whose lower body sometimes retains the shape of the predator's lower part"), together with the "idols" and "columnar figurines".[78]

g) Type "six-pointed standards"

It represents a smaller group of standards formed mainly within the category "idols with protomes", by the extraction of their upper half and its mirrored duplication in the lower part (D3: 4, 5; D25: 1 – 5). In this context, **P. R. S. Moorey** treats one such specimen as part of this type (**Standard finials**).[79] This author

[68] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 161-164; P. R. S. Moorey, *Ancient*, Pl. XII; P. R. S. Moorey (et al), *Ancient Bronzes*, 62-64; the term "Decorated Tubes" is also used by P. Watson, *Luristan*, 10, 11.
[69] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 151, 152.
[70] P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 93 (No. 222-224).
[71] E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 104-106.
[72] E. Haerinck et al, *Finds*, 114, 115; B. Overlaet, *Luristan Bronzes*.
[73] H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 30, 31.
[74] "... die irgendwie am Ende der sog. Pantherreihe bei den luristanischen Stangenaufsätzen tehen." (J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 30-31).
[75] P. Watson, *Luristan*, 10, 11 (Fig. 5a).
[76] P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 93 (No. 221).
[77] H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 30.
[78] E. Haerinck et al, *Finds*, 114, 115; B. Overlaet, *Luristan Bronzes*.
[79] P. R. S. Moorey (et al), *Ancient Bronzes*, 60, 61 (No. 250).

also includes within the same group the only such specimen that we know of, which according to its form derives from the "zoomorphic standards" (B15: 2 compare with 3, 4 and the rest).[80]

P. Amiet includes one such standard within the category **Étendards**.[81]

J. A. H. Potratz defines one specimen with the indicated features as **Form M** within **II. Gruppe**.[82]

h) Standard supports

They represent hollow objects in the form of a bottle with a narrow neck, cast in bronze, without a bottom, used as supports on which the Luristan standards were fastened by some kind of pole or pin with a decorative head (B2: 1; B5: 8; B8: 7; B44: 6, 8; B45: 10; C16: 4 – 6; C22: 7, 8; C23: 11; C33: 6; E17: 4, 6, 7; G12: 3). It is assumed that some of them were adapted to stand on a flat surface, while others for fastening on an elongated pole (H1 – H4). Although they are usually not supplemented by pictorial elements, in some cases they are accompanied by multiplicated anthropomorphic or zooanthropomorphic heads (G12; H10: 12, 14, 15). Specimens of a different form are also known (B44: 6; E17: 4, 6).

S. Przeworski refers to them by using the term **Supports**,[83] while **O. W. Muscarella** calls them **Finial of Standard Support**.[84]

P. R. S. Moorey refers to them as **Mounts**,[85] while **P. Watson** as **Finial Mounts**.[86]

Multiple researchers from an English speaking background use the term **Bottle-shaped Supports.**[87]

P. Amiet calls them **Base en forme de bouteille** or **Support tubulaire**.[88]

E. de Waele calls them **Supports d'etendards et d'idoles tubulaires** or **Support en forme de bouteille**.[89]

J. A. H. Potratz refers to them as **Untersetzer** or **Untersetzer in der Form von umgekehrten Süssweingläsem**.[90]

G. Zahlhaas uses the term **Standartenstander**.[91]

At the end, we once again note that the proposed terms for the separate types of standards in this monograph will always be accompanied by quotation marks because of two reasons: to emphasize that they are terms with a conditional i.e. narrowly-professional character; and in order to separate these terms (which are sometimes quite long i.e. complex) from the content of the sentence.

[80] P. R. S. Moorey (et al), *Ancient Bronzes*, 54, 55 (222).
[81] P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 92 (No. 212).
[82] H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 30, 31.
[83] S. Przeworski, *Luristan Bronzes*, 255.
[84] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 152, 153.
[85] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 166-168.
[86] P. Watson, *Luristan*, 11-13.
[87] E. Porada, *Nomads*, 20; B. Overlaet (for example: B. Overlaet, *Luristan during*, 386); E. Haerinck (E. Haerinck et al, *Finds*, 114).
[88] P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 91, 94.
[89] E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 117-120.
[90] J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 39, 40; H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 19, 34.
[91] G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 117.

Chapter II

THEORETICAL BASIS AND METHODOLOGY



II. THEORETICAL BASIS AND METHODOLOGY

Luristan standards are an integral part of the category of Luristan bronzes, which is clearly indicated by their shape, style and technology of production, chronological and geographical origin, as well as their iconography. Therefore, the theoretical and methodological aspects for their study presented in this chapter will not be specifically focused on these objects, but on the whole group to which they belong. We will focus on the standards occasionally, when there is reason and need for it.

1. Previous approaches in the study of the iconography of Luristan bronzes

Almost all previous researchers of the Luristan bronzes point to the striking iconography of this group of objects, which is why a significant number of them have decided to become more actively involved in its study. We decided here to classify them into five groups, based on their attitude towards this topic and the way and seriousness with which they have approached it.

a) Nihilists

According to these authors, the study of the iconography of Luristan bronzes, its significance and meaning is not particularly beneficial because such components did not exist as part of it even at the time when these objects were created and used. They represent **pictorial motifs**, **originating from other cultures**, which were selected and combined not according to the principle of "meaning and significance", in order to form some contentual and symbolically thought-out compositions, but according to the principle of "form and appearance" in order to serve exclusively as **visual decoration** of the specific objects. Part of these researchers could not really understand the rich and complex iconography of the Luristan bronzes except as the **confusion of randomly combined elements**. Because of this, they direct their analyzes of this layer of the Luristan bronzes towards more pragmatic aspects such as their typology, chronology, archeological and cultural contexts, purpose, as well as relations with similar objects and pictorial motifs from other cultures.

P. Amiet, for example, expresses the opinion that the Luristan bronzesmiths drew inspiration from some kind of "traditional vault" of motifs, which they interpreted in accordance to their decorative fantasticity, without caring about the meaning.[1] A similar view is also held by **H. Frankfort**, who, comparing the Luristan figures with the corresponding Sumerian examples that are characterized by a high degree of naturalism, concludes that the former are **ruthlessly abbreviated and malformed** in accordance to the decorative goals of their designers, which, in this regard, indicates their closeness to the prehistoric traditions of Persia. According to him, these older Mesopotamian themes served only as a starting point for all kinds of fascinating inventions in which the original meaning was completely lost sight of.[2] A similar conclusion is reached by **É. Salin**, who, while comparing the Mesopotamian pictorial depictions of the "Master of Animals" type with the corresponding motifs from the Luristan bronzes, agrees with **M. Contenau** that in the latter, the exuberance of details actually led to the loss of the main theme of the former scene.[3]

b) Skeptics

Unlike the previous class, these researchers believe that there are certain contents and meanings behind the iconography of the Luristan bronzes, but they are not convinced of the usefulness of such research because they believe that **contemporary science, based on available facts and methods, cannot reach their original meaning**. Because of this, analogous to the researchers from the previous group, they focus their approach on the indicated more pragmatic spheres of study. In their works, they note (mostly superficially) the existing interpretations of the iconography of these objects that have been proposed by other researchers, usually followed by a critique, and sometimes with a superficially worded proposal of their own. These are mainly archaeologists trained according to the strict empirical principles of processual archaeology, who cannot overcome the narrow pragmatic confinements of their native profession. The most prominent and extreme representatives of this class are **P. R. S. Moorey** and **O. W. Muscarella**, while its somewhat more moderate members are **B. Overlaet**, **E. Haerinck**, **L. Vanden Berghe** and **E. de Waele**.

Presenting the previous observations regarding the standards of the type "idols with protomes", **P. R. S. Moorey** concludes that even if the iconography of these objects, although with difficulty, can be in some way described, it is practically impossible to be explained on the basis of existing evidence. According to him, the great variety of interpretations presented in the past only emphasizes this problem.[4] O. W. Muscarella accepts the view that some of the Luristan bronzes reflect the spiritual life of their bearers and that some zoomorphic and demonic figures are associated with Iranian religious beliefs and practices. However, in spite of this, he believes that the previously expressed interpretations of these motifs, in relation to Indo-European, Vedic and Zoroastrian culture, still remain in the spheres of the speculative, due to the lack of specific knowledge in regards to the theology, mythology and religious hierarchy of the culture that produced these objects.[5]

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[1] "Il apparaît ainsi que les bronziers du Luristan ont puisé dans un trésor traditionnel qu'ils ont interprété au gré de leur fantaisie décorative, sans se soucier de sa signification." (P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 57).

[2] "In Luristan, on the other hand, they are ruthlessly abbreviated or malformed to suit the decorative purposes of the designers, who show, in this respect, their affinity with the prehistoric vase painters of Persia." "The old theme served in Luristan as a starting-point for all kinds of fascinating inventions, while the original meaning is lost sight of." (H. Frankfort, *The Art*, 344, 345).

[3] "... et que le theme principal se perd dans l'exuberance des details, ..." (É. Salin, *Sur quelques*, 236).

[4] "If the iconography of these finials is difficult enough to describe, it is virtually impossible to explain with existing evidence. The great variety of interpretations advanced in the past forty years only serve to emphasize the problem." (P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 154).

[5] "Some scholars have claimed to recognize Indo-European (…), Vedic (…), or Zoroastrian (…) elements in such imagery. Without any knowledge of the theology, mythology, or religious hierarchy of the culture that produced these objects, however, all interpretations remain speculative." (O. W. Muscarella, *Bronzes*).

c) Diligent researchers

This group consists of top scholars of the Luristan bronzes and the history, archaeology and art of Iran and Western Asia. The desire for detailed elaboration and argumentation of theories and interpretations is clearly expressed among these researchers, even in individual articles or in the separate chapters of their monographs dedicated specifically to the iconography of the Luristan bronzes, and even concretely to the standards. Specific to them is that they focus on a relatively narrow iconographic theme, that they apply concepts that are not particularly broad and flexible, and that they do not substantially incorporate the approaches and results of other researchers. As eminent representatives of this class we can mention: **R. Dussaud** who proposes various interpretations related to Iranian religion and mythology; **E. Porada**, whose focus is on "the pair of animals that flank the Tree of Life"; **H. Potratz**, in whose interpretations the central place is occupied by the "Moon Goddess"; **R. Ghirshman** who in his analyzes gives special place to the myth of Zurvan and his sons Ormazd and Ahriman, as well as other Iranian mythical characters and deities (Mithra, Sraosha and others).[6] We will focus in more detail on the concepts of these authors in the following chapters and sub-chapters, when elaborating on the specific topics and aspects to which they relate.

Deserving of particular attention here is **D. de Clercq-Fobe**, who in her monograph dedicated to the Luristan pins from Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire de Bruxelles dedicated great attention to their iconography, as well as to the symbolic, mythical and religious character of the depicted pictorial motifs. Unlike other researchers, her interpretations do not range within some narrow and unified concept, and the theories of previous authors occupy an important place as part of them. However, despite the presence of symbolic and mythical-religious aspects of research, her work is dominated by the "horizontal" historical-artistic approach of noting the main pictorial motifs and compositions, reviewing their analogies, projecting the eventual sources of specific motifs and the directions of their movement towards Luristan or the impact on Luristan bronzes. The mythical-religious aspect is also touched upon, but again on a general, more historical than analytical level, based on the conclusions of previous researchers.[7]

Over the last few years, the young female researcher **A. V. Melchenko** (**А. В. Мельченко**) has also taken part in the research of the spiritual aspects of Luristan bronzes, in whose articles one can note a combination of classical empirical (archaeological, historical and historical-artistic) approaches with in-depth analyzes of the iconography, semiotics and mythical-religious aspects of specific pictorial motifs.[8]

d) Diligent guests

They represent researchers who do not deal specifically with Luristan bronzes, nor with Iranian or Western Asian archaeology and art. They use these objects as comparative material within their own studies of some specific motif or scene in a global context or within some other culture. These are often researchers whose personal area of interest is outside of archaeology and history, which provides them with a broader, or at least different, view of the subject. This is largely due to their comparative and interdisciplinary approach. Their broad (philological, philosophical, anthropological) education provides them with the ability, during their research, to penetrate into the deeper layers of the analyzed pictorial motif or composition within the Luristan bronzes. This class, among others, could for example include **G. M. D'Erme**, **G. Dumézil**, **W. Deonna** and others.[9]

[6] Referring to numerous works that will be frequently utilized in this monograph (see Bibliography).

[7] D. de Clercq-Fobe, *Epingles*.

[8] А. В. Мельченко, *Луристанская*; А. В. Мельченко, *Редкие*; А. В. Мельченко, *Традиция*. Here we should also mention the dissertation of M. Malekzadeh, which, despite its promising title, did not meet our expectations (M. Malekzadeh, *Semiology*).

[9] G. M. D'Erme, *The Cappella*; G. Dumézil, *Dieux*; W. Deonna, *Daniel*.

d) Passive followers

Most of the previous authors who have dealt with Luristan bronzes, and have had an affirmative attitude towards the research and interpretation of their iconography, usually adhere to some of the existing concepts, mostly based on the authority of their proponents and the trend that at the given time dominates academia. These are mainly authors of professionally and correctly composed appropriate texts that are published within the catalogues of exhibitions dedicated to Luristan bronzes, or of articles that are part of synthetic or popular science books dedicated to ancient Iranian history, culture and art.[10]

2. Genesis and character of the pictorial motifs from the Luristan bronzes

Within the framework of previous studies on Luristan bronzes, several approaches can be differentiated regarding the origin and character of their pictorial motifs i.e. iconography. In the following paragraphs we will present these approaches followed by our comments.

a) Blindly appropriating and copying pictorial motifs

According to this approach, whose representatives were already mentioned in the previous chapter, the pictorial elements were introduced in these objects exclusively because of their decorative function and were appropriated from other cultures because of their formal i.e. visual features, **without the participation of symbolic, religious and any other semantic aspects**, and even without any special system and order, but by almost random selection. These are mainly older theories in which Luristan culture is treated as peripheral, primitive and barbaric. According to them, its decorative style is based on the blind appropriation and copying of pictorial motifs from the developed Western Asian civilizations, which, because of that, is accompanied by various forms of their deformation and degradation.

b) Appropriation of artistic motifs and artistic style

Within this conception, Luristan iconography is raised to a higher level whereby the blind or naive appropriation and compilation of foreign elements gains a more articulated significance. In this case the whole process is set on an artistic level, as the acceptance of motifs and compositions belonging to the pictorial arts of neighboring cultures, which is followed by their **contentual and stylistic reworking and adaptation** according to the criteria of Luristan culture.

c) Appropriation of art motifs from some common base (*"koiné"*)

According to the third conception, the presence of similar pictorial motifs and compositions on Luristan bronzes and on synchronous objects from other Western Asian cultures is sought not in the appropriation of the former by the latter or vice versa, but in the origin of both from some sort of common **transethnical and transcultural source**. The representatives of this concept try to round up the mentioned model through the introduction of the term *"koiné"*. Thus, O. W. Muscarella hypothesizes the existence of some kind of **"Great Iranian *koine* of motifs"**, widespread in the area between the Caspian coast and the southern parts of the Zagros mountain massif. He believes that motifs and concepts were taken from it by the master metallurgists from various cultures of the Iranian region, including those that created the Luristan bronzes.[11] R. Ghirshman speaks of a similar **"metallurgical *koiné*"** («koiné» metallurgique) which, according to him, covered the entire area of Zagros and the region of Armenia around Lake Van. The

[10] For example: A. Parrot, Assur, 127-137; E. D. Phillips, *The People*; S. Ayazi, *Luristan*.
[11] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 200.

workshops of the Cimmerians, the Medes, and of the Kingdom of Urartu all participated within this "*koiné*", whereby it had a much wider field of influence, which, in a way, even included some Mediterranean cultures such as Greece and Etruria.[12] J. Bouzek speaks of some kind of "**Koine of Early Iron Age geometric styles**" whose pretty broad and not very clear area of influence, which covers much of Europe, the Mediterranean and Western Asia, also includes Luristan with its bronzes.[13] All three cases represent not very clearly defined narrowly-professional terms that imply some kind of **base of pictorial motifs**, common to several ethnic, cultural and political formations from Western Asia and broader, from which they drew pictorial motifs, but also certain stylistic and technological concepts.

Although in these approaches the concept of simple and naive copying of visual motifs by the less developed cultures from the more developed ones has been overcame, the treatment of Luristan bronzes only or above all as products of craftsmanship and art continues to be maintained. Thereby, these two phenomena are perceived in a profane and pragmatic sense inherent to modern Western civilization, which is based on the principles of mercantilism and consumerism. At their base, on the one hand, is the production of objects (within those frames also of "artistic" ones) for the purpose of selling and thus gaining economic benefit, and on the other hand - the purchase of objects due to their "purely aesthetic" dimension in relation to utilitarian, economic and social (status) values.

However, according to the contemporary theory and history of pictorial art, in archaic cultures **there is no "pure art"** such as the pictorial arts within modern Western civilization. In ancient and modern traditional communities it is always inseparably intertwined with other key spheres of culture, primarily with myth, ritual and religion or, at the very least, with certain social and sociological layers of those communities. Hence, we believe that the term "Luristan (pictorial) art" should be treated exclusively as a modern (and not very appropriate) construct of scientific terminology because in the given period and the given culture it did not exist by itself, but **in an inseparable relation with the spiritual spheres** i.e. with the symbolic, mythical-religious and ritual system, and certainly also with the social system of Luristan culture.[14] It does not make much sense to discuss, study and interpret the iconography, style and general pictoriality of these objects without taking into account these systems, although today we do not have a clear enough insight into them. However, we think that the researcher who includes a certain component in the structural model of his research despite there not being enough exact facts regarding it, is still in a better position than the one who, due to such a shortcoming, does not take it into account at all.

d) Luristan iconography as a reflection of a consistent mythical-symbolic and religious system

The observations of several researchers of the Luristan bronzes, and hopefully ours, including those presented in this monograph, show that behind these objects is a fairly **consistent iconographic system** based on an appropriate **symbolic, mythological and religious basis**. In a way, it can be sensed even in the aforementioned scientific conceptions, behind the indicated artisanal templates, artistic models and trends according to which they were created. Although among the indicated authors the term *"koiné"* has a professional significance i.e. refers to the spheres of metallurgy, craftsmanship and art, it can also, in a particular context, take on a broader and deeper connotation. For example, some researchers believe that the

[12] R. Ghirshman, *Invasions*, 4, 5.
[13] J. Bouzek, *Studies*, 212-217.
[14] Therefore, we will use the terms *"art"* and *"Luristan art"* to a limited extent, primarily within our discussions regarding the theories of other researchers who use them, and we will often replace them with the more appropriate terms *"pictoriality"* and *"Luristan pictoriality."*

similarities between some Luristan and Scythian objects do not have a stylistic and technical but an iconographic and ideological character.[15]

E. de Waele rightly notes that individual types of Luristan bronzes, created according to **various artisanal techniques**, have a **different repertoire of motifs, characters and scenes** that are also executed in a **specific style and technology**. Thus, in objects cast according to a wax matrix (standards, openwork pins and cheekpieces) the human figures are more stereotypical and more schematic, while in those made in the technique of hammering and chiseling (discoid pins, quivers and various appliqués) they are much more realistic, more diverse and organized in more narrative structures. He concludes that these differences are due to the specifics dictated by the processes of their production, probably realized in different workshops (on one hand foundries, on the other toreutic workshops) which, over time, also created specific aesthetic traditions and their own separate iconographic repertoires.[16]

But, due to his focusing on differences, this author does not notice the other side of this phenomenon i.e. the fact that in some Luristan bronzes **the same iconographic models** (same hybrid figures, compositions and scenes) **can be also traced on different categories of objects**. We consider this to be another indicator of the existence of some kind of global iconographic system, common to all Luristan bronzes. Such similarities are more common in objects made in the same technique, especially clearly manifested in the following two groups. The first consists of standards of the type "idols with protomes" and pins with openwork heads (D20), both of which are made in the format of "freestanding plastics", cast according to a wax matrix. The second group consists of pins with discoid heads, quivers and other plate objects, conceived as reliefs executed in the techniques of forging, engraving or casting (F5 – F8). This phenomenon becomes even more apparent by the presence of the same iconographic solutions (same motifs, characters and compositions) on objects that are different in both shape and production techniques (F32; F33). These relations lead to the conclusion that behind the indicated similarities were not only **"objects - prototypes"**, simple artisanal templates and matrices intended for mechanical "stamping" of products of a specific type, but **iconographic models** as part of a global iconographic system, which, by complex and gradual modifications, were adapted to different types of objects and the techniques of their production.

The above-mentioned components show that the study of Luristan iconography, and even of Luristan bronzes in general, should be placed on another - spiritual level, by which the obvious similarities between "Luristan" and "foreign motifs" actually take on a completely different character. In this context, the **visual similarities**, previously treated as the appropriation of analogous pictorial motifs, compositions and artisanal clichés between different cultures, grow into **iconographic similarities** that indicate more general relations at the level of mythical-religious content which stood behind the depicted motifs and scenes. With this in mind, the mentioned *"koinés"* would not in fact imply some kind of corpora of "artistic motifs" or "artisanal clichés", but a **unified symbolic and mythical-religious system, common to several Western Asian cultures**.

All this leads us to the hypothesis that the Luristan bronzes and their iconography are in fact a pictorial manifestation of a specific **religious phenomenon** with an accordingly structured symbolic, mythical and iconographic system. In this context, the mentioned chronological and local differences within this group of objects could reflect the development over time of this system and its local geographical and ethno-cultural variations. Thereby, the *"koinés"* apostrophized by previous researchers would actually reflect the **interethnic and intercultural character of this religious system** i.e. its presence, movement, expansion and influences across different cultures, perhaps similar to Christianity and its transethnic and transcultural expansion in the Early Christian period.

[15] В. Г. Луконин, *Искусство*, 24, 25; С. С. Бессонова, *Религиозные*, 82, 83.
[16] E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 265-267.

e) Questions and their implications

Among the majority of researchers, the symbolic i.e. the mythical-religious approach to the Luristan bronzes is not sufficiently prominent, so that their analyzes of specific objects and motifs continue to be conducted mainly at the level of morphology, typology, and style. Even when it is more clearly emphasized (as in the works of H. Potratz and R. Ghirshman or D. de Clercq-Fobe) not all of the implications regarding the nature of these objects and their further study are taken into account. If we accept the view that the motifs or pictorial models of the Luristan bronzes are not only artisanal and artistic but also iconographic, and therefore symbolic, mythical and religious, then it draws consequences in relation to some very important questions related to the previous and future studies regarding these objects. In the following paragraphs we present some of them.

- How and why the members of Luristan culture would appropriate motifs that belong to other, to them foreign, mythical-symbolic i.e. religious systems?

The simple appropriation of such a motif, so often and easily apostrophized by many scholars of the Luristan bronzes, is problematic primarily due to the lack of motivation, because members of traditional cultures generally do not easily accept symbols of another culture that is completely foreign to them. This can only be justified in a collateral sense - as a consequence of the **appropriation of the objects** on which those symbols were depicted, due to their material and utilitarian value. For these reasons, such a process must be accompanied by t**he loss of the authentic meaning and significance of the given motif**, which soon disappears or gets deformed i.e. its existence and development is interrupted.

- How could these motifs be transferred freely through various, mutually quite different and spatially distant cultures if within them existed different mythical-symbolic and religious systems?

Three options are possible in response: that the motifs were taken without their original meaning; that their meaning was also recognized in the new environment in which that motif was appropriated, meaning that the cultures in which this process took place were not so different; that the motifs were taken not in and of themselves, but together with the spiritual system to which they belonged.

- Could craftsmen and artists really "blindly" appropriate and combine these motifs arbitrarily?

If we accept that Luristan pictorial motifs were part of some symbolic, mythical-religious and iconographic system, then we cannot expect craftsmen and artists to combine them on the basis of their own mechanical, formal and visual concepts and criteria as this would inevitably result with the loss of the motifs' meaning. They had to do this within the framework of the above-mentioned systems to which the given motifs belonged, which means that they themselves were supposed to know these systems solidly.

Directing the mentioned observations towards the Luristan standards that are the focus of our research, it can be concluded that they should not be considered the product of some kind of mechanical borrowing, copying and compilation based on other objects. The main argument for this is the fact that these are objects with a clear symbolic, cultic and religious character that occurred as a quintessence of the spiritual traditions of a culture, which is why they were not appropriated so easily between two different cultures. This could have only happened by the appropriation and accepting of all or at least part of the mythical-symbolic and religious system that stood behind these objects, because without it their existence would not make sense.

This conclusion should not mean complete denial of the possibility for mechanical acceptance of pictorial motifs between different cultures without their authentic content and meaning. Our goal is just to apostrophize a more careful assessment of the justification for introducing such concepts in future studies, while also taking into account other possible options. There are indications for such processes also among Luristan bronzes, and even in relation to the standards. It is difficult to dispute the conclusions of many previous researchers that the oldest Luristan bronzes are based on motifs which, judging by their chronological, geographical and cultural affiliation, **are not actually Luristan**. We also come to such conclusions ourselves, as part of the research presented in this monograph. But it is equally true that

immediately after the introduction of these motifs within the Luristan circle, begins their **radical transformation** as the result of two components that will be presented in the following chapters. On the one hand is the material basis of the objects as the bearer of the **principle of conservatism**, and on the other - the spiritual interpretations as bearers of the **principle of innovation**.

3. Pragmatic aspects related to the creation and distribution of Luristan bronzes

In the following chapters we will deal with several questions that in our opinion are of great importance in understanding the iconography of Luristan bronzes, but also for a better understanding of their origin and transformation. Although these questions at first glance relate to the pragmatic aspects of the creation, duration, and function of these objects, they also play a significant role in regards to the deepest spiritual aspects of their existence.

a) Organic materials as the basic medium of Luristan iconography

The material culture of ancient and contemporary archaic communities is mainly created and developed within organic materials such as wood, leather, textiles, bone, horn, etc. Hence, most of their pictorial creations are executed in these materials, and even in less durable ones, such as, for example, unfired clay, dough or wax. Only a small part of this main stream of pictoriality and iconography, and only in certain periods and cultures, is conveyed into permanent i.e. inorganic materials that are commonly available to archaeology (ceramic, stone and metal). In some cases it is about 10 or 20 percent, but in other even zero percent i.e. all the pictorial work, as well as the whole material culture, in certain communities is executed in non-permanent materials. A huge handicap for science is that this main medium does not survive the centuries, because of which we can have no insight into it. This is most evident when compared to those rare examples (from Egypt, Siberia, the northern parts of Europe) where conservation, due to favorable climatic conditions, of even a small part of this creative output rapidly increases the scientific knowledge in regards to a given culture.

The failure to take into account this notorious fact, which is so obvious that any arguing obout it is in vain, often leads to superficial, erroneous and completely illogical observations regarding the genesis, transformations and interactions of pictorial traditions in certain cultures. This is one of the axioms on which we base our theoretical and methodological approach. It does not relate only to the Luristan bronzes i.e. the culture in which they were created but, more or less, to all archaic cultures of humankind, from the earliest prehistoric, for which archaeology is mainly in charge, to the contemporary ones that today are studied within the framework of ethnography and folkloristics. The example that perhaps most illustratively shows all the importance and value of this axiom are the **pictorial traditions of the Scythians**.

The prevailing view in science is that this ancient people did not have their own figural pictorial art until their arrival in Western Asia (8th - 7th century BCE) where, based on influences i.e. borrowing from the developed cultures of this region, their so fascinating and so much studied "animal style" was created. In the following centuries, they spread this style (known in science as the **"Scytho-Siberian animal style"**) throughout much of Central and Northern Asia and Eastern Europe.[17] However, this very serious conclusion is made only on the basis of the absence of Scythian archaeological objects created in the mentioned style before the centuries when this people arrived in Western Asia. Thereby, not taken into account is a huge number

[17] М. Н. Погребова, Д. С. Раевский, *Ранние*, 192, 193; some scholars disagree with this theory, preferring the indigenous Central Asian genesis of Scythian art (Г. Н. Курочкин, *Скифское*, 120; Г. Н. Курочкин, *Ранние*, 105-108), perhaps based on the, for us, invisible models created in organic materials (Г. М. Бонгард-Левин, Э. А. Грантовский, *От Скифии*, 19); regarding to this issue also see: V. Becker, *Zur Entstehung*.

of finds in organic materials (wood, leather, textiles, etc.) which, thanks to the favorable climatic conditions of the soil, have been preserved in the tombs of the Scythians and the peoples related to them from the territory of southern Siberia and Mongolia, mainly within the so-called **"Pazyryk culture"**. Although these objects clearly point to the long and well-developed traditions of using organic materials and their leading role in the development and existence of Scythian art, such an observation is not considered relevant within this theory. The only reason is that they (according to the finds known so far) **do not originate strictly before the Scythian contacts with the cultures of Western Asia**.

For most archaeologists, there exists only that which will be found in their trenches. Everything else for them is an unsubstantiated fantasy that can hinder the discovery of the truth. The Scythian example shows the negative side of this, basically positive principle. Not taking into account a fact that is notorious and applies to every human community, just because in the specific case it is not explicitly archaeologically ascertained *in situ*, can be just as harmful in the process of discovering the past. The reason for this is the manic aspiration of archaeologists to transform their science into an exact discipline that consists only of facts and not of assumptions and interpretations. Let us ask ourselves what would happen if linguistics (which, by the way, on a methodological level is much more advanced than archaeology) was built exclusively on facts i.e. only on the basis of what is explicitly "ascertained by fieldwork". Would there have existed categories such as *Indo-Europeans*, *pre-Indo-Europeans*, *Indo-Aryans*, *historical grammar*, the various concepts regarding the development and branching of world languages, the reconstruction of the phonetics of languages in whose vocality we have no direct insight today?

A wider acceptance of the **method of hypothetical modeling** is also necessary in archaeology where it must be treated as a legitimate tool and as a necessary stage in the development i.e. gradual cleaning, refinement and proving of archaeological theses.

It seems very probable to us that the **basic medium in which Luristan iconography existed were the organic materials**, today inaccessible to archaeology. For example, there could have been motifs carved in wood, bone or horn, embroidered or woven into textiles, and even modeled into dough, in the form of some kind of ritual breads and cookies. In support of such an opinion one could point to some of the concrete carved wooden objects from the mentioned "Pazyryk culture", almost synchronous with some younger types of Luristan bronzes, whose motifs and pictorial-stylistic solutions, executed within the "Scytho-Siberian animal style", show a significant coefficient of similarity in regards to the latter. These comparisons indicate the possibility that the **prototypes of some of the Luristan bronzes, and within those frames also of the standards, were made out of wood in the carving technique** (I4 – I6). The possibility that the Luristan standards could have been also created from non-durable materials i.e. from bone or ivory has also been pointed out by previous authors, based on the in situ discoveries within graves of only bronze supports, without the standards (Khatunban and Gul Khanan Murdah - H10: 12 – 15; H11: 9 – 11).[18] If we also allow the possibility for a final **coating of these objects with gold foil**, as was done with the Pazyryk wooden objects (I4: 1, 3; I5: 3), then such hypothetical objects, on a visual level, would have not differed substantially from the Luristan ones, cast in bronze, which, when new, polished and non-oxidized, differs very little from gold. This would mean that the Luristan bronzes, regardless of their number, are only a small fragment of an even more massive (and perhaps major) production that was realized over the centuries in non-permanent materials. This hypothetical model could provide explanations for many aspects regarding these objects that are still unclear, such as: the genesis of Luristan style and iconography; the exceptional wealth of iconographic types and variants and their sudden appearance; the unexpected and enigmatic resemblance to examples from other cultures, quite distant from Luristan culture in both geographical and chronological terms.

[18] E. Haerinck, B. Overlaet, *Djub-i Gauhar*, 154, 156, 168-170, Pl. 107, Pl. 126; B. Overlaet, The *Chronology*, 16; B. Overlaet, *Luristan Bronzes*; A. B. Мельченко, *Луристанская*, 200.

b) Iconography and production centers

The concepts and conclusions presented in the previous chapters raise some questions of a pragmatic nature related to the **production** and **distribution** of Luristan bronzes and the **communication between their creators and users**. In the following paragraphs we will present these questions and try to answer them.

Were the Luristan bronzes produced within the culture that used them or outside of it - in the large artisan centers of Western Asia that also worked for other cultures in the region?

Existing literature is dominated by the second option for which have been proposed various **external metallurgical centers** (Mitanni, Elamite, Urartian, Hurrian) or **foreign traveling craftsmen**. The option for the production of Luristan bronzes in the native Luristan culture has so far not been particularly favored, mainly due to stereotypes that it was the sum of nomadic communities without developed urban centers and other higher civilizational features. However, in the last few decades, through careful archeological excavations at Luristan sites and the appropriate interpretations of these discoveries, the indicated stereotypes are gradually being abandoned, so that the second option is becoming more and more relevant.

If we accept that the iconography of the Luristan bronzes is a manifestation of some mythical-symbolic and religious system, then it means that **their producers should have had insight into that system**, and even be its **top connoisseurs and interpreters**. In support of this there are numerous examples where exceptionally inventive solutions and adaptations of older Luristan iconographic templates can be observed.

Could this have happened outside the native culture, in the artisan workshops located in some region far from Luristan i.e. in a culture completely foreign to the Luristan one?

Examples from other periods and regions show that it really happened. The most illustrative is the case with the luxury metal objects of the Scythians and Thracians that during the 5th and 4th century BCE were created by the Hellenic master craftsmen. No less interesting are the examples with the "Macedonian bronzes" - objects in time and character very similar to the Luristan bronzes, for which it is believed that at some stage were being produced in the Hellenic colonies of the northern Aegean coast.

However, exactly these three examples show that in such cases the indicated workshops **had to be located close to the region i.e. the culture for which the items they produced were intended**, at the very least to ensure easy and inexpensive delivery of the goods to their consumers. But, no less an important reason for that would also be the direct contact of these workshops with their customers, in order to monitor and check whether the offered products meet their taste and other criteria, to better get acquainted with the spirit, mentality and affinities of the customers and to adjust production to their needs.

Based on this, it seems more likely that if Luristan was indeed supplied by foreign workshops, they would have to be located **in the region itself or in its immediate vicinity**. In that case, as in the Scythian, Thracian and Macedonian examples, we believe that there had to be communication between the specific workshops and craftsmen and the members of Luristan culture, especially those who were more deeply acquainted with the iconography of the Luristan bronzes. Here we have in mind the priests and other clergy who were in charge of preserving and protecting their original i.e. essential meaning, but also their innovation, interpretation and adaptation according to various specific circumstances. That communication could have been realized directly, through a **dialogue with the craftsmen in their workshops** or through the **arrival of the craftsmen in the specific environment for which a certain type or contingent of products was intended**. Of course, this could have also been done indirectly - by **sending to the workshop a sketch, model or existing specimens** according to which the new objects would be produced.

This problem becomes much easier to solve if we accept the above-elaborated theory that the native sphere in which Luristan iconography existed and developed were objects made of organic materials, especially various objects carved from wood, similar to those of the "Pazyryk culture". In that case, sent to the foreign metallurgists were these, for us invisible, **wooden prototypes**, according to which they would produce their bronze versions.

If the other possibility is accepted, that the **producers of the Luristan bronzes, at least in some cases, were the local metallurgists**, then there would be no need for us to refer to the indicated intercultural communications between the Luristanians and the foreign producers of their bronzes. In that case it is understood that a local producer of these items, in addition to his other technical and artistic skills, had to be a **good connoisseur of local spiritual traditions**. At the same time, the combination of both skills in the character of some kind of **priests-metallurgists** who would execute these objects (or maybe just conceptually conceive them) from the position of top connoisseurs in both spheres would not be improbable at all. These craftsmen-artists and at the same time top connoisseurs of the Luristan symbolic, mythical-religious and ritual system, would be the most competent in transposing the deep essences of Luristan spiritual culture into the medium of the image and their materialization into objects with a symbolic-utilitarian or purely symbolic (mythical, religious, ritual or magical) purpose.

4. The symbolic i.e. mythical-religious basis of Luristan iconography

We believe that the iconography and semiotics of the Luristan bronzes, despite the great interest it has caused among previous researchers, have not been properly studied, due to which their results have not reached the level that these objects really deserve. Exceptions to this are the several already mentioned scholars who have made some progress in these spheres, although not as the result of some more seriously developed methodology, based on appropriate theoretical principles, but thanks to their intuition and vast knowledge and experience in researching ancient Middle Eastern cultures. In this chapter we will try to supplement this shortcoming i.e. to set the basic methodological and theoretical principles on which we will base our research presented in the following chapters of this monograph. We will realize this on the basis of our previous experiences in the study of objects with a similar character and iconography created in or for cultures that originate from various historical epochs and different parts of the world.

We decided to present our observations starting from the views of several researchers who in our opinion showed the strongest aspiration to delve into the iconography of the Luristan bronzes and a desire to articulate the theoretical and methodological aspects of such research. We will actually present our views in the form of a discussion with the views of these researchers that address specific topics and issues related to Luristan iconography. In doing so, we will especially often refer to the views of H. Potratz who, besides the aspiration to interpret the specific motifs and scenes from the Luristan bronzes, in his works also tries to give these procedures a certain theoretical-methodological argumentation. In the last chapter of his monograph on Luristan bronzes, he makes an attempt to synthesize the knowledge and experiences he has gained during his intensive and long-term study of these objects and their iconography and symbolism. It is obvious that he was not able to execute this in a more exact and rational way, as he does so in his analyzes and interpretations regarding the specific objects in the previous chapters of the same monograph and in his other works. That is why he decides on an essayistic approach in which, what he could not convey into a scientific statement, he tries to grasp through poetically structured sentences whose meaning is not always easy to follow.

a) Luristan iconography as a reflection of the "inner", and not of the "outer reality"

In one of his studies, H. Potratz states that the images present on the Luristan objects are everything but naturalistic representations and that they were created in order to represent some specific theological content. Speaking of the so frequent hybrid formations in Luristan iconography, he considers that the very fact they were not perceived as disturbing is further proof that Luristan images were not experienced through the

eyes but according to the specific concept that determined their content. The images in Luristan had to manifest specific theological behavior and because of that were much more than naturalistic representations.[19]

But, contrary to this decisive statement, in some of his other works one feels hesitation and even withdrawal from this view and valorization of the achievements of "Luristan art" according to the value system of Western pictorial art based exactly on realism i.e. the concept of art as reflection and imitation of reality. This hesitation is especially noticeable in the conclusion of his monograph on the Luristan bronzes where he once again says that this art is directed not towards the real world but towards the transcendent and towards the visualization of the world of the religious.[20] However, contrary to this, several lines later he notes its shortcomings: that it is insensitive in regards to the objective and formal, that it shows insignificant stylistic development, and that the renunciation of the figuration and imitation of nature will lead to the freezing of its expressiveness and suffocation in the unrelated formal elements.[21] From these remarks it is clear that in understanding and evaluating this art, H. Potratz, despite the obvious impulse, still cannot get out of the value system of Western art. He fails to come to terms with the fact (which he senses at times) that these "flaws" were not caused by the low level of this art or the incompetence of its creators, but were simply the result of the fact that they were not even set as their goals.

The study of pictoriality in archaic cultures clearly indicates its preoccupation with the world as a whole, the projection of these images in all forms of culture, and within that framework of their materialization not only in the form of "pure images" but also in the form of "images-objects". We believe that the Luristan bronzes bear the character of such "objectified images of the universe" and can even be considered one of the most eminent i.e. the most impressive such examples worldwide. Most of the analyzes presented in our monograph come down to the conclusion that the iconography integrated in these objects reflects the mythical representations of the cosmos, namely: its creation, form, structure, functioning, the relationship between it and man and the meaning of that relationship.

However, the iconography of the Luristan bronzes should in no case be considered a product of mimesis i.e. a simple imitation of the universe understood as "external reality". Equally, and perhaps more appropriately, it would be to define it as a pictorial manifestation of the "inner reality" present in the consciousness and subconscious of the people who created and used these objects.[22] Ultimately, this "inner reality" can also be treated as external, but in the form (reshaped and rethought) in which it could be perceived and understood through the sensory, emotional and thought apparatus of the members of Luristan culture. Therefore, this "inner reality" can be defined as a **mental image** formed through the perception and cognition of the outer reality (of the cosmos i.e. nature, of society i.e. culture and of man as part of both systems) with the mediation of symbols, myths and religion.[23]

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[19] „Daß solche hybriden Bildungen in Luristan optisch nicht als störend empfunden worden sind, ist ein weiterer Beweis dafür, daß die luristanischen Bildschöpfungen nicht mit den Augen wahrgenommen worden sind, sondern daß sie einem inhaltlich bestimmten Vorstellungsschema gerecht zu werden hatten. Die Bilder in Luristan hatten einen konkreten theologischen Verhalt zu manifestieren und waren daher alles andere als naturalistisch gesehene Darstellungen.“ (H. Potratz, *Die Luristanbronzen*, 212).

[20] “Von den Figurationen Luristans gehören praktisch alle thematisch dem transzendentalen Bereich an. Kein leibliches Auge hatte zumeist je solche Wesen geschaut, nur in den Seelen der Künstler lebte ihr Eindruck schemenhaft und konturlos. Erst die Bildner mussten den Umriss der Gesichter für den Wirklichkeitsbereich konkretisieren.“ (J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 79).

[21] „ ... die Unempfindlichkeit gegenüber dem formalen Bildausdruck in sich trug“, “... nur eine äusserst geringe stilistische Fortentwicklung ihrer selbst geschah”, “... gab die Luristankunst durch ihren Verzicht auf die Gegenständlichkeit letztlich ihren gehobenen Kunstauftrag auf. Durch die Vernachlässigung der Naturnachahmung erstarrte die bildnerische Aussagekraft dieser Kunst, um dann im dekorativen Wuchern von beziehungslosen Formelementen zu ersticken.“ (J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 79, 80).

[22] On this issue, within the framework of prehistoric pictoriality: D. Borić, *Images*, 97, 98.

[23] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 3-8, А2.

Our views are based on several axioms that we note in the following lines.[24] The man - member of ancient and contemporary archaic cultures gets to know himself and the world by which he is surrounded and in which he lives through **myth**. Myth, in turn, is a product of the specific concept of thought i.e. functioning of his mind which in some respects differs from the modern rational scientific-discursive concept of thought. In science, this concept is called **mythical thought**, **mythopoeic thought** i.e. **mythical consciousness**, whose main specifics in relation to the latter are: a higher share in it of the sensory, emotional, unconscious, subconscious and collective unconscious, as well as the dominance of the collective forms of creation versus the individual ones. Mythical consciousness, like any other activity of thought, manifests itself in various media, due to which all of its media manifestations contain the mythical as their essential component (the spoken myth in the verbal medium, the mythical image in the pictorial medium, the ritual in the actional medium, sacral architecture and other manifestations in the spatial medium). Myth, in and of itself, is not manifested in any media i.e. it does not have a basic or main media form, so all the above-mentioned manifestations are equal in rank, including the verbal myth, despite the fact that even today it can be mistakenly treated as the primary mythical form from which others are derived.

The **mythical image** is a manifestation of myth i.e. mythical thought in the pictorial medium, both two-dimensional (drawing, image) and three-dimensional (plastic, sculpture, architecture). In principle, every image within an ancient or contemporary archaic culture is mythical because it is created according to certain concepts of mythical thought. In archaic cultures, the mythical image is in principle not an illustration of some verbal myth (mythical story), actional myth (ritual) or spatial myth (sacral building), but is induced directly from the spheres of the mythical i.e. from the mythical concepts of a culture that are by themselves unmanifested in media. But, its content can be transposed also in other media of the mythical and vice versa - it can arise through the transposition in the pictorial medium of their contents. The mythical image is transformed in time and space according to the changes of the mythical and thought matrix or under the influence of other media manifestations of the mythical. Within archaic cultures, the mythical image does not occur as a product of individual creation i.e. the activity of one person, but as a product of the collective work of one or several generations of creators within a certain culture. The mythical image is usually not created intentionally, as a result of a project that is planned in advance and elaborated in detail by an individual or team, but "by itself", according to certain concepts and laws contained within itself, in regards to which its immediate creators are most often unaware.

b) Luristan "baroqueness"

Luristan "baroqueness" is treated by **H. Potratz** as a product of the aspiration for decorativeness, which leads to the withdrawal of Luristan art from reality and the complete decomposition of its pictorial structure. Thus, according to him, separating itself from the living reality, it is transformed from clear information into a cipher, losing the ability to make transcendence visible i.e. visually perceptible.[25]

Baroqueness i.e. overcrowding, although characteristic of much of the Luristan bronzes, cannot be treated as a dominant feature of all “Luristan art” (B8 – B10; D15: 9; F1), because it also contains examples

[24] For a more detailed explanation of the elaborated concepts see: Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 38-67; Н. Чаусидис, *Митска слика*; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 3-29; this concept is mainly based on the theories of E. Cassirer (E. Cassirer, *The Philosophy. Vol. II*; E. Kasirer, *Filozofija. T.II*).

[25] „Ebendieses letztgenannte Moment hatte ein zunehmendes Zurücktreten des eigentlichen Bildhaften gegenüber dem an sich nebensächlichen Detail und insbesondere der sinnbildlichen Siglen zur Folge, was schliesslich zur völligen Zersetzung des Bildgefüges zu Gunsten einer letztlich nur noch wirren Detaillierung führte. So kam es, dass am Ende dieser anfänglich so bildfroh aussehenden Kunst die Auflösung stand.” “Kunst hat ihrer Natur nach anschauliche Informationen zu vermitteln. Wo sie zur Geheimschrift von Kulten oder Bünden entartet, verliert sie automatisch ihre Fähigkeit, Transzendenz in sich optisch wahrnehmbar zu machen.” (H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 79, 80, for some aspects on these topics also see 28-30).

that are its fundamental opposite i.e. reduced and geometrized to a degree that can rarely be found in any other archaic culture (B7: 3, 7, 9; E17). The remark about the withdrawal from reality, in fact, speaks more about the withdrawal of H. Potratz from his statement that Luristan art "is everything but realism". The motivation for such retraction may be sought in the confusion of this researcher before the Luristan bronzes i.e. his inability to understand their iconography on a global level. It is clear that baroqueness and the other forms of "overcrowding" and "confusion" are not the flaws of Luristan art but of its contemporary researchers, including the mentioned author. This is because they do not belong to the culture that created this art, because they do not have insight of the key to its decoding i.e. the iconographic and mythical-religious system on the basis of which it was created. The obscurity of the pictorial depictions caused by their overcrowding with details simply did not exist at the given time because the observers of the time owned that key. It was present in the form of mental images of those pictorial compositions formed in their mind during the process of upbringing, and not only through the pictorial, but also through the other (verbal, ritual, etc.) media manifestations of the mythical. With that basic template in his mind, the Luristan observer could not be hindered in reading the given picture by the "overcrowded details", just as the hundreds of intertwined figures do not hinder a Christian believer's understanding of the "Last Judgment" fresco in some baroque cathedral.

c) Narrativity or symbolism

Several previous researchers have touched on the issue of narrativity in Luristan art, its absence and replacement with another concept in which, instead of it, placed at the forefront is symbolism.

According to **R. Ghirshman**, Luristan art is in the service of the religious representations of this culture, whereby the age-old diversity of its mythology is compressed by the artists in a single work of art. It does not depict scenes from some legends or series of episodes from some narratives (as in Mesopotamian art), but symbolic representations rich in associations. Anthropomorphism, although present, is not sufficiently pronounced because it is completely subordinated to the symbolic basis of this art.[26]

We have already mentioned that **E. de Waele**, speaking of the differences in the conception of the compositions of different types of Luristan bronzes, concludes that in the two-dimensional ones they are more realistic and more narrative, while in the three-dimensional ones they are more stereotypical and more schematic. He concludes that these differences are due to the specific processes of their technical execution, probably realized in separate workshops.[27]

Agreeing with these researchers, we can connect their observations with a constant, universal to many cultures, according to which flat pictorial forms (drawing, painting, relief), not only on a technical but also on a conceptual level, provide better conditions for the formation of narrative compositions in comparison to three-dimensional ones. This is due to the fact that they correspond more to the way the human visual apparatus perceives the outside world - in the form of a flat field of view (a kind of "screen") based on a static point from which one observes the given structure or action. On the other hand, three-dimensional forms (freestanding sculptures) are in principle not suitable for depicting more complex scenes composed of multiple figures and objects, first because it is much more difficult to define the background i.e. the ambience in which they are placed, and consequently the action that all of them evoke together. An additional problem is the fact that the complete perception of a freestanding sculpture implies its observation from different

[26] „Thus art was put to the service of religious imagery and the rich diversity of the age-old mythology was condensed, epitomized by the artist in a single work of art. What we have here is not a series of episodes, nor the climactic scene of a legend, but a symbolism rich in intimations that was to permeate Iranian art throughout its long history. By the same token there is no question of a narrative, religious or secular, such as we find in Mesopotamian art, where gods are given a human form. True, this anthropomorphic conception certainly exists, but it is not given expression, for all the art of Luristan is basically symbolic.“ (R. Ghirshman, *The Art*, 45).

[27] E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 265-267; on the specific principles in the creation of three-dimensional plastics also see: H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 28-30.

positions, whereby a set of different two-dimensional images is created in the mind of the observer. Through their joint processing in the mind of the observer, they are combined into a single three-dimensional mental representation that does not have to be objective, but interpretive, because it is based on pre-learned patterns of "processing" the primary visual impressions.

For these reasons, the iconography of three-dimensional Luristan objects is also less narrative and therefore more difficult to identify. Most often they do not evoke some kind of narrative composed of the activities of the depicted characters (as in contemporary comic strips), but some of their symbolic functions and relations, which are more like today's diagrams. In the Luristan case, these are usually hybrid figures that by themselves do not evoke certain content, but rather function as triggers. These "triggers" can only recall and extract from the consciousness or subconscious of the viewer certain ready-made contents (categories, value structures, meanings, emotions, mythical actions) that are "recorded" within them by the culture to which they belong, through processes of upbringing and learning. They can also be more general structures with an archetypal significance based on some biological i.e. anthropological constants inherent to humans as a species.

To conclude this topic, we paraphrase the observation of **I. Marazov** on the character of Thracian art, which, in our opinion, can absolutely also refer to Luristan art. According to him, the biggest mistake in previous interpretations of Thracian iconography is due to its perception according to the narrative concept as a scene from an action i.e. as some kind of "literary text" that flows i.e. takes place in time, according to the concepts of the verbal forms of myth. Contemporary approaches to the interpretation of archaic forms of pictoriality show that the pictorial "story" does not develop in time and usually has no plot, so it is not read in stages but at once, in a moment and with one glance, because it is "cumulative", and not narrative. In order to reach the mythical action and the meaning of the pictorial representation, it is necessary for the observer to have prior insight into the depicted images and actions. This form, in a way, is closer to the essence of the myth because it focuses on the symbolic communication between myth and observer, and not on the mythical action which is only the instrument that helps (especially within the frames of the verbal medium) it to happen.[28]

5. Classification of Luristan iconography

Previous researchers have tried to divide and organize the vast fund of Luristan bronze objects and their extremely rich and varied iconography into some kind of chronological, geographical or cultural classes that would reflect the stages of the historical development of these objects, the separate Luristan micro-regions in which they were distributed and the corresponding cultural groups that used them in a given time and space. Some authors have also tried to identify some universal concepts on the basis of which the specific types of objects and their variants could be arranged chronologically or in stages.

Such an attempt is made by **H. Potratz**, who tries to sense some developmental lines organized in a certain chronological order among the widely branched out types of Luristan standards. In that context, he notes the following conceptual line of transformations, which, according to him, is constantly repeated in the Luristan bronzes. It begins with some **simple form**, which gradually becomes **more complex**, **thus losing its basic visual structure and idea**, which leads to its ornamentalization, and eventually ends with the **revealing of a new meaning within it**.[29] Within the framework of these analyzes, one can sense the line of some kind of stage development of the standards, from zoomorphism, most dominant in the "zoomorphic standards", through hybridity, most typical of the "idols with protomes", up to anthropomorphism i.e. the reduction of

[28] Regarding this concept and its application in the study of Thracian art: И. Маразов, *Мистериите*, 8; И. Маразов, *Мит. на златото*, 251-256.

[29] H. Potratz, *Das "Kampfmotiv"*, 26-29; H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 29-31; H. Potratz, *Die Luristanbronzen*, 212.

zoomorphic elements at the expense of the dominance of anthropomorphic figures, most clearly present in the "columnar figurines".

Within the mentioned concepts, this researcher also strives to impose on the figures of Luristan compositions some kind of functional and hierarchical relations. On one side it is the **anthropomorphic figure** which according to him represents the **deity** as a dominant character, and on the other - the animal or **hybrid zooanthropomorphic figures** that represent the **demonic characters** as companions i.e. satellites that are subordinated to the anthropomorphic one.[30]

Once again in this case, the strict and rigid concepts that he himself imposes do not allow this researcher in his interpretations to go beyond the principles of naturalism. Thus, for example, he cannot perceive the fact that in the specific compositions the zoomorphic elements do not always figure as separate entities, but are **part of the body of the central anthropomorphic character** (his arms or legs).[31] Or that, by entering into some kind of action with them (fighting with them, holding them) he, ultimately, **fights or holds himself** i.e. that in these cases we have interactions not between different entities, but between separate parts of the body of the same hybrid character i.e. some singular mythical entity.

We propose that the iconography of the Luristan bronzes, and within that framework of the standards, be divided into **several layers** that do not necessarily reflect only some kind of **"chronologically arranged stages"** or **"regional schools"**. Although these layers gravitate towards certain chronological phases and geographical and cultural micro-regions within Luristan culture, the concrete finds clearly show that they moved freely through time, and probably through space. The second (geographical) aspect of this phenomenon is more speculative because most of Luristan bronzes were discovered during illegal excavations due to which the specific location of their discovery is unknown. The chronological aspect of this handicap is partially compensated because the dating of most of the objects is possible, at least approximately or relatively, in regards to other subtypes and variants within a single type.

6. Transformation of Luristan iconography

However, it seems that under the pressure of the material itself, which he obviously knows very well, **H. Potratz** at times manages to surpass the rigid chronological and stage models that he had imposed onto himself. On one occasion, speaking of the "typologically ordered sequences", he stated that they cannot be equated with a **chronological order** i.e. that the iconography of the bronzes could also be the reflection of a **change in point of view** within the same period and the same cult.[32] It is one of those moments when this author reaches the higher concepts of study and understanding of Luristan iconography i.e. the interpretive and esoteric levels of its mythical-religious basis.

But despite this step forward, he eventually returns to the rigid templates of "naturalism" and the "artistic", whereby the concept of **alternative interpretation of the myth** re-enters the web of some kind of regional sections, as replacement to the previous "typologically ordered sequences". Thus, in the following sentences, he seeks the differences among some of the Luristan standards in the various "cult regions" or "art schools" which, within the territories they covered, made a different choice of motifs ("mythologems") from the large fund of such examples that was at their disposal. However, he leaves the possibility that the

[30] H. Potratz, *Das "Kampfmotiv"*, 22-26, 34, 35.

[31] "Die Mondgöttin im Kampfe mit sich selbst, wäre ziemlich absurd zu denken." (H. Potratz, *Das "Kampfmotiv"*, 26, 27).

[32] "Die typologisch geordnete Abfolge kann dann selbstverständlich nicht mit einer chronologischen Reihung gleichgesetzt werden. Die so stark differenzierte Motivauswahl bei den Stangenaufsätzen stellt also nicht notwendig und für den ganzen Bildbestand einen zeitlichen Entwicklungsvorgang dar, sondern kann wenigstens für einen Teil auch als Wechsel des Blickpunktes aus ein und derselben Kultgeschichte verstanden werden." (H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 36, 37).

differences in the iconography of specific types of Luristan objects could be the reflection of **different variations or interpretations of the same myth** specific to certain Luristan micro-regions.[33]

a) "Hardware" and "software" levels

Among Luristan bronzes, one can distinguish two levels of transformations that could be best and most easily defined according to contemporary computer terminology - as transformations at the level of **"hardware"** and transformations at the level of **"software"**.

The term **hardware transformations** would mean changes that took place at the level of form and material, conditioned by various components related to the visual and pragmatic aspects of the creation and use of these objects. Craftsmen have always worked according to certain **prototypes** and **clichés**. Even when they introduced some innovations in the products they created, they usually took place gradually, or even imperceptibly - over several generations. The users also selected and valorized these objects according to the established criteria of the given culture, more often based on the traditional and the proven, than on the revolutionary and innovative. Like any material aspect of a certain phenomenon, "Luristan hardware" is dominant, sluggish, inert, conservative, difficult to overcome, and functions according to the principles of established clichés and taboos.

The **transformations of the software** took place in the consciousness and subconsciousness of the people who conceived, produced, viewed and used the Luristan bronzes. They were created based on how these people imagined, experienced and interpreted the objects and how they wanted them to look. As computer programs over time influence the change of the material configuration of the apparatus itself, so did these ideas, desires and interpretations participate in the transformation of the Luristan objects themselves.

These two levels never, even in this case, overlap. People always in one existing image see another image i.e. two observers of a single Luristan object did not view it in the same way. The producer and the user of an object build their relationship with it based on different motivations and criteria due to which their ideas and visions regarding that object often do not match. Although they operate on two different levels, "hardware" and "software" influence each other. The "hardware" i.e. existing objects are the basis on which in the minds of users their special impressions and experiences of those objects are formed, just as these impressions and experiences then actively or passively participate in the transformation of their form. If a producer or user in an existing objects sees some other image, he or she can then integrate it into the next generation of such objects. The producer does this through the innovations that he himself will implement, while the user, through direct suggestions addressed to the producer or through market selection i.e. purchase of the most likable specimens.

If in the foreground we put the material aspect of the Luristan bronzes as objects that have existed for more than half a millennium in a relatively limited but not so small territory, then they can, quite rightly, be treated in the way that most other researchers do - as a rounded group of objects composed of different types and variants that changed **diachronically** through the phases of existence of Luristan culture or **synchronically**, through the individual microcultures of which it was consisted.

If we take into account that Luristan bronzes are only **material manifestations of the spiritual culture of Luristan communities**, then their various types and variants can be considered as indicators of all those changes that took place in time and space within the symbolic and mythical-religious system that stood behind them. Here we have in mind the transformations and reconceptualizing of symbols and myths, the new

[33] "Man könnte zu der Ausflucht greifen, daß die verschiedenen Ausdrucksformen auf unterschiedliche Kultbezirke oder Kunstschulen zurückgehen, die wechselnde Ausschnitte aus einem großen, umfangreichen Mythologem zur Darstellung gebracht haben."; „Es wäre vielmehr so, daß die verschiedenen Motive der Stangenaufsätze wechselnde Phasen ein und desselben Mythos darstellen, deren Auswahl mit örtlich bedingter Usance zusammenhängen muß." (H. Potratz, *Die Luristanbronzen*, 209, 210).

interpretations of theological principles and dogmas, and the emergence of various religious factions and heresies.

In the previous chapters we touched upon the question regarding the foundation of the oldest Luristan bronzes on motifs and objects which, judging by their earlier dating and geographical origin, cannot be considered Luristanian. Thereby, we pointed out that soon after their introduction within these objects, the gradual but also essential **reconceptualizing of those primary motifs had started**. We believe that hidden within this phenomenon is the basic concept of the creation of Luristan bronzes, based on the two components to which this chapter refers. The non-Luristan protomodels in this case bear the character of "hardware" that was inherited from the older (own or foreign) culture. Then, this "hardware" becomes the given basis i.e. substrate (represented by a specific type of objects) in which, gradually, spontaneously and even imperceptibly, a new "software" is implemented i.e. the spirit of the new culture that took over the given protomodel. This new "software" is actually a new reading of the image contained within the protomodel, with which begins its changing according to the taste, affinities and the symbolic and mythical-religious system of the culture's members.

Most transparently this process can be seen precisely in the development of the Luristan standards, the genesis of which begins with a motif that is well known in the cultures of Western Asia, long before the Luristan bronzes. It consists of two fairly realistically depicted animals that, standing symmetrically on their hind legs, flank a tree or pillar (I1: 7, 8; B34 – B36). In just a hundred years, this pure and simple composition entered a process of complete reconceptualizing in which the bodies of animals were deformed and even completely disintegrated into a set of separate geometric zoomorphic segments, which were complemented by numerous other smaller motifs (B5: 3, 7, 8; B8: 4, 5, 7). Contrary to previous researchers who mainly considered these changes as a consequence of immaturity i.e. the inability of the new culture to grasp and adopt the style and content of this image inherited from previous cultures, we are convinced (and in the following chapters we will try to argue) that they are a product of the process by which the new culture in the existing image recognized another image and according to it began to change the former gradually.

b) Transformation according to free associations

Observing and analyzing numerous Luristan bronzes and various realized or potential i.e. implicit motifs and scenes present on them, one gets the impression that they were created and transformed on the principle of free associations. Thus, a motif that in the older "zoomorphic standards" depicted the front legs of the pair of antithetical animals standing upright on their hind legs (C1; C3), in some variants of the later "idols with protomes" is transformed into the spread legs of a woman depicted in a birth-giving pose (D17 - in the upper part of the object), while in others it acquires the meaning of braids in the hair of the lower figure (D39 - in the lower part of the object). This and other examples presented in the following chapters show that the transformations of Luristan iconography, with its numerous types and variants, actually began in the minds of their producers and users as a result of the **principle of free interpretation** and development of their iconography, which in the given culture was obviously **stronger than the principle of its dogmatic adherence**.

Luristan iconography is extremely multifaceted i.e. within it are various types and variants of the same composition, and even **two or more parallel (explicit or implicit) possibilities for its reading**, even within a single object (examples D15: 7 – 9; D24: 1 – 6, 9). This is a clear indication that at its basis there were no strict and rigid canons that would regulate i.e. maintain its survival and would prevent unwanted changes and deformations of its elements. We believe that precisely the indicated phenomenon provided freedom to the spontaneous associations that would greatly profile the appearance of these objects, their rich iconography and its development over the centuries. However, among the Luristan bronzes one can also notice a **principle of discipline and conservatism**, which we present in the next chapter.

c) Consistency i.e. durability of the current compositional structure

Most of the above-mentioned phenomena and processes can be traced within Luristan bronzes thanks to a rule without which the research of their iconography would not be possible at all. The rule is, **when introducing innovations, to respect the basic compositional framework inherited from the existing i.e. older specimens of the given type**. Despite its obviousness, this phenomenon has not been clearly noted by previous researchers. More attention to it is given by H. Potratz who seeks the reasons for its existence in the adherence to the iconographic basis of the objects which, due to their sacral character, was sanctified within the frames of Luristan culture by tradition and therefore nothing within it was permitted to be changed.[34] Because of this, the demands imposed by the new forms of experience and visual manifestation of the divine characters and categories that were depicted on them could only be realized through the application of appropriate "emblems", whereby **any influence on the basic structure of the composition was not allowed**.[35]

Despite the indicated iconographic heterogeneity, these depictions mainly adhere to the basic contours i.e. global plan of the objects, whereby in certain types or specific samples, some or others of their iconographic variants are thrown into the foreground.

Our analyzes also lead us to agree with the conclusion of H. Potratz that among Luristan bronzes, the meaning and significance of certain pictorial motifs and compositions was determined and protected by a **system of guidelines and taboos** that were known and applied by the craftsmen - producers of these objects. Because of that, the various changes in the iconography, which occurred as a result of the mentioned free associations or some other factors, were introduced and adapted to the contours of the given prototypes i.e. inherited compositions.

This principle may derive from the rule for adherence to the existing form of the objects because in the case of the Luristan bronzes many of them, besides the symbolic, also had a certain utilitarian purpose. Therefore, this rule seems to us as more imperative because changes in the shape of the objects under the influence of iconography could have very easily led to the reduction or complete loss of their functionality.

7. Basic "styles" of Luristan iconography

Summarizing the findings from the numerous iconographic, semiotic and culture-historical analyzes of the Luristan bronzes conducted in this monograph, a conclusion is being imposed for which we thought was better to be presented here - at its beginning, and not at the end, so that the reader can bear it in mind while following through the specific analyzes.

Among Luristan bronzes, and especially among the standards, one can distinguish four basic, conditionally speaking, **pictorial or iconographic concepts** which (once again conditionally) can be also called **"stylistic" tendencies: naturalism, zoomorphism, geometrism** and **anthropomorphism**. Although some researchers consider these to be chronological phases of Luristan style and iconography, such strict chronological treatment is contradicted by the fact that in numerous cases all four tendencies can be identified

[34] „Die Bildgestaltung zeigt im Einzelnen Modulationen der Ausformung, ohne dass davon aber der Grundgedanke betroffen wird, selbst nicht bei so gänzlich ornamental aufgelösten Stücken ...“; „Die Veränderungen erfolgen ausschliesslich vom Dekorativen her, indem man den zwischen den Hälsen verbliebenen Leerraum mit zusätzlichen.“ (H. Potratz, Das “Kampfmotiv”, 26, 27).

[35] „Das Bildschema war durch die Tradition geheiligt; an ihm konnte nichts verändert werden. Den Erfordernissen neu erkannter göttlicher Manifestationsformen konnte man nur durch die Anbringung der entsprechenden Embleme gerecht werden; das Kompositionsgerüst durfte davon nicht betroffen werden.“ (H. Potratz, *Die Luristanbronzen*, 212).

on the same object - one besides the other and one interwoven with the other. We believe that, viewed on a global level, they could also be related to the **main cultural components** that, each within its own chronological and geographical context, **participated in the creation of these objects** (Fig. 3).

a) Naturalism

Many previous researchers have already pointed out that among the oldest Luristan standards one can clearly notice a tendency towards **naturalism i.e. realism**. It is most clearly manifested among the oldest "zoomorphic standards" which depict a pair of ibexes standing upright on their hind legs, whereby all their anatomical elements are represented quite realistically in terms of shape, volume and proportions. Although less pronounced, this tendency also occurs in variants where these figures are alternated with a pair of animals from the family of felines (B1: 5, 8; B2). Comparative analyzes show that this "style" is based on the pictorial conceptions of the indigenous cultures of Mesopotamia and Western Asia (Mitanni, Kassites, Elam, Urartu) that were appropriated and embedded into the Luristan bronzes by their (newly settled?) bearers (I1: 7, 8, 13, 14 compare with 9, 15). These were specific images or objects that served as a substrate that was then gradually and imperceptibly adapted and refined according to the affinities and visual norms of the new Luristan culture. It is quite probable that it found its way into them as a result of the engagement of autochthonous craftsmen and workshops which, satisfying the requests of the customers of the bronzes, intentionally or accidentally, incorporated within them their own pictorial approach (Fig. 3: 7, 8, 9).

b) Zoomorphism

The second component is **zoomorphism**, which within the framework of Luristan bronzes and standards is actually dominant and gives them their basic feature. By this term we do not mean only the domination of zoomorphic motifs, but everything which in academic circles is understood under the term **"animal style"**, which also includes anthropomorphic elements (usually in the shadow of the zoomorphic ones), various forms of unrealistic depiction of animals and zoomorphic elements. Here we have in mind the concepts of hybridization, metamorphosis, deformation, hypertrophy, multiplication, rhythmicization and ornamentalization of various zoomorphic motifs, but also their combination with anthropomorphic elements. Most previous researchers agree that this is a tendency that did not exist on the Iranian Plateau and more broadly in Western Asia (at least not in such pronounced forms) before the appearance of Luristan bronzes (Fig. 3: 3, 4, 6). Even within the framework of these objects (including the standards) it is not present in the oldest specimens, but develops somewhat later - within their most lavish phase. Although there is no unanimity among researchers, the prevailing view is that **this tendency came with the migration of certain peoples from the north**, whose genesis is associated with the large complex of nomadic populations from the Eurasian steppes. The ideal paradigm for this tendency is the so-called "Scytho-Siberian animal style" which, during the time of the Luristan bronzes and later, extended over a vast area - from the eastern Black Sea coast in the west to Mongolia in the south and China in the east. Numerous examples, somewhat younger and even almost synchronous with the Luristan bronzes, mainly within the framework of the mentioned Pazyryk and neighboring cultures, show that the basic features of this concept were developed and maintained even earlier, through objects made of organic materials (I4 – I6). We are convinced that this component was integrated into the Luristan bronzes through the iconographic models made of wood, leather, bone and textile which successively, in several waves, were brought by the new Indo-Iranian or Iranian settlers to Luristan.

Numerous non-Luristan parallels show that this system is not only Luristanian, but much broader and more global. In academia it is often labeled as "zoomorphic style" most notably manifested within Scythian and other steppe cultures of Eastern Europe and the Siberian part of Asia. Luristanian-Ancient and Luristanian-Medieval iconographic parallels indicate its survival not only in the Bronze and Iron Ages, but

also in antiquity and the Middle Ages. It was accepted even within Christian Romanesque and Gothic plastics, but in a formal way - as grotesque and fiction, without the authentic context and meaning of its hybridity and other stylistic features (example: G50: 5).

c) Geometrism

The third tendency - **geometrism**, has also been already pointed out by many researchers. It also, like the previous one, is considered a feature of the peoples who settled in the Iranian Plateau in the first centuries of the 1st millennium BCE, whereby it is often placed into opposition to the realism of indigenous cultures. Among Luristan bronzes we do not find it in pure form but as an **aspiration, i.e. tendency for stylization** of the products of the other three tendencies i.e. the reduction of the realistic, zoomorphic and anthropomorphic depictions to some kind of basic, often even completely nonfigural geometric structures (A1; A2: 3, 6). Although in some cases this tendency may have been motivated by the most pragmatic reasons, such as the **economization of the process of modeling the wax matrices** on the basis of which the objects were cast, nevertheless, numerous examples show that behind it there was also some nonutilitarian intention i.e. **general affinity towards geometrism**. However, within the circle of Luristan bronzes, it is never the basis from which a certain image-prototype or object-prototype stems, but an aspiration towards which its further transformation gravitates. In a pure i.e. basic form, this tendency can be identified outside of Luristan, in the examples from Armenia, which, despite the geographical distance, show unquestionable relations in regards to them, at the level of their basic composition i.e. contour (A5). The geometrism of the mentioned objects from Armenia can be recognized as a tendency of the so-called "mannerist zoomorphic standards" (A1: 1, 3, 5; B7), as a **component of the geometrism of the northern settlers in Iran**, alluded to by a number of researchers.

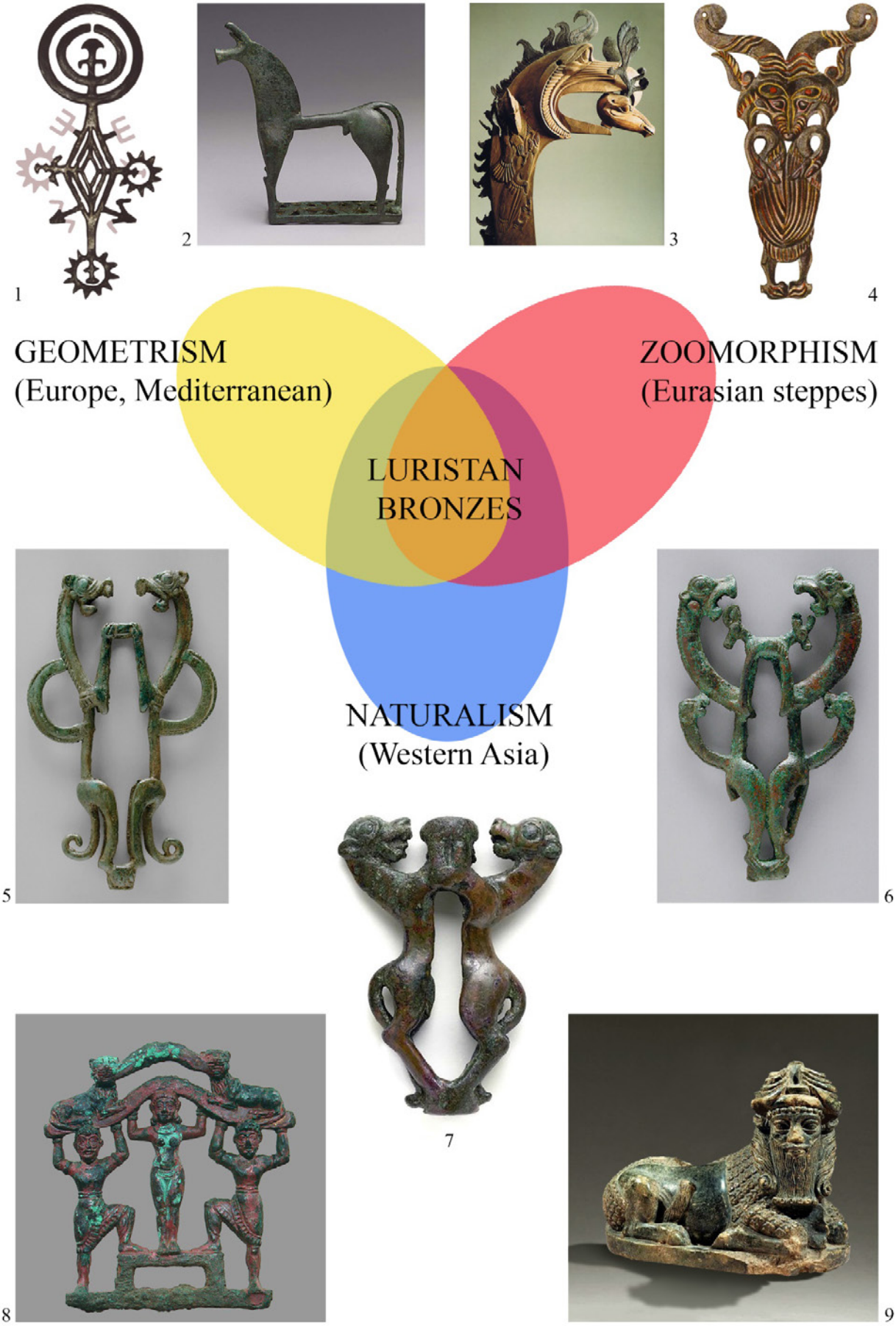
In a geographic sense **this tendency gravitates towards the West** i.e. Eastern Europe, the Balkans and the Eastern Mediterranean, where it can be recognized, in pure forms, in the geometrism of the Late Bronze Age and Iron Age cultures from these regions, especially strikingly represented in the Balkans and the Aegean (Fig. 3: 1, 2, 5).[36] Hence, as bearers of this tendency in the Luristan bronzes, one could consider the Cimmerians, perhaps not literally as a specific ethnos, but as a complex of multiple different populations with Indo-Aryan features. We are led to this by the fact that it is the most western potential Luristan component that shows direct relations with European prehistoric geometrism.

d) Anthropomorphism

Anthropomorphism in the iconography of Luristan standards appears gradually, first among the **"zoomorphic standards"**, in the form of a human head depicted between the muzzles of the two animals standing on their hind legs. Its presence would lead to the formation of a special type of **"zoomorphic standards with a human head"** within which it gradually gained a neck with the reconceptualizing of the raised front legs of the animals (C1 – C5). The iconography of the following type of standards would also develop around these motifs - the **"idols with protomes"**, which played a decisive role in the radical change of the form of these objects (C1: 4 – 6, 9; C13). They led to a process of anthropomorphization of the subsequent types, which in this type reached the status of zooanthropomorphism. Thereby, the neck and the separately shown head were complemented by a torso equated with the central pillar of the standards, which was also supplemented by hands (C3: 3, 6, 9). Their meaning was first carried by the protomes of the two animals, whose presence through the concept of ambivalence could be felt even in previous types (C5: 1, 2). But in this type they appeared as a separate and explicit element, with the function to grip the mentioned pair of protomes, which in the meantime were transformed into a zoomorphic ring around the figure. Within the concept of ambivalence, this hybrid character also acquired both hips and legs with the reconceptualization of

[36] J. Bouzek, *Studies*, 212-217; J. N. Coldstream, *Geometric*.

Fig. 3


1
2
3
4
GEOMETRISM
(Europe, Mediterranean)
ZOOMORPHISM
(Eurasian steppes)
LURISTAN
BRONZES
NATURALISM
(Western Asia)
5
6
7
8
9

the rumps and hind legs of the pair of animals (C23; E1). Although rare, subtypes with almost complete anthropomorphism would also appear within this type (E10; E17). The further progression of anthropomorphism among the typical standards of this type resulted in the emergence of the type **"columnar figurines"**, in which the zoomorphic component of the hybrid character was reduced at the expense of anthropomorphism (C26 – C28). The large arched protomes shrank and got their new place on the shoulders of the central character who had now become completely anthropomorphic and, for the first time among these objects, depicted not with two faces and two front sides of the figure, but with a face and back of the head and with front and back sides of the torso and legs (C27; C28). In one subtype of these standards, even these protomes would disappear, resulting in a purely anthropomorphic figure with a pronounced height that clearly shows its genesis from the central columnar element of the "idols with protomes" (C26; G6: 6). In parallel with this type, and maybe some time before it, from the "idols with protomes" a smaller group of **"standards - statuettes"** did also separate, in which hybridity was more prevalent, especially in the lower part where the legs still bear the contours of the rumps, hind legs and tails of the formerly upright animals (C23: 11; C33). In this line of anthropomorphization of the standards, the place of the **"idols"** is not entirely clear. As we have seen, these are simple standards with a tubular corpus at the top of which there is a formed human head with two, or less often with three or four faces, sometimes supplemented with a similar motif at the lower end (G1 – G5). In most specimens of this type, one can clearly sense the image of an erect phallus whose glans penis is metamorphosed into a human head. The standards in this category undoubtedly existed in parallel with the last three types, and perhaps even since the time of the "zoomorphic standards", which would indicate the great influence of the former on the development of all types.

The appearance i.e. presence of anthropomorphism on Luristan standards does not have the same character as the previous three components. It cannot be explained as a component of any of the mentioned three or some fourth cultural-geographical zone. Due to that, we did not present it as part of the attached diagram (Fig. 3). It could belong to the indigenous Western Asian cultures in which anthropomorphism was at an extremely high level even before the appearance of Luristan bronzes. It could also be a western element, where, regardless of the dominance of geometrism, it had also reached an enviable level (ancient Egyptian, Minoan culture). However, the fact that it does not appear immediately with the first Luristan standards, but with the later types and gradually, shows that it is probably the result of some kind of tendency in the development of Luristan iconography based on some **innate rule**.[37]

The elaborated four "stylistic" tendencies can be also seen on another, non chronological, geographical or culture-historical, **but semiotic i.e. gnoseological and symbolic level**, whereby they could reflect **the levels of perception and the conscious and subconscious cognition of reality**. Geometrism is focused towards the **global shape of things** and especially the **abstract space and volume** they occupy. Oriented towards the universe, they encode its form, as perceived and imagined by archaic man. Zoomorphism is focused at representing the **dynamic aspects** of cosmic phenomena and processes, their changes and movements i.e. the forces that realize them and the principles that stand behind them. Anthropomorphism is in principle focused towards signifying the highest aspects of phenomena, and that is their **regularity, order, harmony, logical flow and meaning**. Their introduction, although not always, in principle actualizes the question of the meaning, consistency and value aspects of a phenomenon.[38]

Based on all that was previously elaborated, it can be concluded that the different layers of Luristan iconography can be the reflection of different processes: - various periods of existence of the objects; - various geographical (micro-ethnic) zones i.e complexes in which the given types were used; - the influences of various neighboring cultural nuclei and their tendencies; - various social groups to which their customers i.e. users belonged; - various levels of perception and cognition of the surrounding world by archaic consciousness; - various theological and iconographic interpretations of the mythical contents present on the

[37] Multiple articles on anthropomorphism in archaic art and its interpretation: Р. С. Васильевский, *Антропоморфные*.
[38] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 9-12; Н. Чаусидис, *Архаични*.

objects; - various workshops in which they were produced. Thereby, within one layer or one category of objects, several of the indicated components could participate in parallel.

8. Conceptions of Luristan iconography

In this chapter we will present several basic pictorial concepts that were directly involved in the formation and combination of Luristan pictorial motifs and compositions. These are visual conceptions universal for all mankind that have played an important role in the creation of numerous iconographic systems in various historical periods and various parts of the world.

a) Combining real motifs into unreal arrangements

We have already mentioned that Luristan pictoriality is not mimesis i.e. it is not aimed at imitating the external reality, but at using the elements of that reality as symbols and signs to perceive, exteriorize (from the mind, from the subconscious) and present (before consciousness and before culture) a certain mythical-religious understanding. As a result of this process, strange and unreal arrangements were created, consisting of heterogeneous pictorial elements that do not exist in reality. Although Luristan pictoriality is often labeled as "zoomorphic style", it is in fact a concept in which, in addition to the zoomorphic ones, there are also motifs of all kinds and origins: anthropomorphic, phytomorphic and other elements of nature, celestial bodies, artifacts and geometric figures. Summarizing the knowledge from previous studies on Luristan iconography, one can draw the basic principle of its creation and the point of its existence. **It is the free combination of everything that surrounded man at that time, without the restraints of realism i.e. naturalism, in order, through the resulting unreal i.e. surreal pictorial arrangements, to express some fundamentally unrecognizable, unimaginable and hard-to-reach cognitions that relate to the universe and man as part of it.**[39]

The products of this concept were not particularly comprehensible to most previous researchers of Luristan bronzes, for the simple reason that they sought to analyze and evaluate them according to the criteria of realism. Consequently, this unsuccessful approach will often result in assessments according to which they were unsuccessful, imperfect, or confusing works of primitive and inconsistent art.

- Fragmentation

It consists of the partial depiction of individual body parts of an animal, human or plant, separately, by multiplying them or combining them with other elements, within the other concepts presented below.[40] Especially often depicted in such a way are: the animal head or protome (B13; B14; C14 – C20), the human head (C2 – C11; G12; G13), the human foot (G15) and palm, the male and female genitals (D2; D3), while from the plant elements - the separately depicted flower, branch, leaf or fruit. Although for such depictions real templates can be found (for example, the amputation of body parts from these creatures due to ritual or other reasons), we believe that in the indicated cases the reason for this should be sought in evoking some of the meanings (significant i.e. symbolic) of the given bodily element. Among some of the previous researchers this phenomena was considered to be the result of blindly appropriating and copying pictorial works from other cultures, which came up with such a depiction due to the following two reasons: the given composition was not understood integrally - as a whole, but as a set of separate elements; because the parts of the given composition were used as decoration, adapted to fill the available empty spaces of some particular object.

[39] For these questions, within prehistoric pictoriality: D. Borić, *Images*.

[40] For the various aspects of body fragmentation: K. Rebay-Salisbury (et al), *Body Parts*; L. E. Talalay, *Heady*; H. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 94, 95, 98, 133, 134, 138, 224 (partiation).

- Multiplication

It consists of the multiplication i.e. depiction of the same pictorial motif (a complete animal or human figure, plant or some part of them, another element of nature, artifact) several times within one composition. The simplest and most common variant of this concept within the frames of Luristan bronzes is duplication, usually according to the principle of symmetry (B1 – B11; C27; C28), and somewhat less often triplication (B2: 7 – 9; C9: 1; E7: 3; G4: 5) and quadruplication (C9: 2, 5; E7: 1, 3, 6). In three-dimensional compositions, the multiplicated elements are spatially organized i.e. oriented towards different directions: forward, backward, left, right, up, down and center (G3; G5; G15). In two-dimensional ones, they are multiplicated in one plane, forming symmetrical structures organized according to the concept of bilateral and radial symmetry or in rhythmic structures that form straight, arched or circular bordures (C7: 9; C9: 2, 5). If it is a case of multiplication of an identical pictorial element (for example a bird or a solar disk), then the resulting composition can be interpreted not only as a set of **several such elements** but also as **different positions of the same element arranged in space and time**. They can be interpreted diachronically (as its movement through the marked points) or synchronously (simultaneous presence at those points), suggesting the various stages of some process that takes place in time and space (B18 – B21). Viewed on a spatial level, these multiplicated elements can encode the sides of that space (the four corners of the world), and on a time-related level - the phases of a certain cycle (for example months within a year) (C9: 1, 2, 4). Multiplication can also encode the various aspects, various epiphanies, i.e. natures of a character, especially when it comes to the multiplication of body parts of a human or animal within a single figure (G15; F33). The multiplication of a certain body part within an animal, human or hybrid figure may also be due to the tendency to emphasize the function or significance of that part in the sense of impressiveness or enhancement of its function (for example, duplicated breasts = increased nurturing/feeding power).

- Hypertrophy

This concept consists of depicting elements of a whole (usually parts of a human or animal figure) with dimensions that are larger in relation to the others. The purpose of such a depiction may consist in various aspects of **emphasizing the functions and meanings of that element** or its bringing closer to the form of another. For example, it can be the extreme increase in body height of a certain character (E4; C26 – C28), or only of the neck (E6), to suggest his giant or macrocosmic significance i.e. the extension from earth to sky and/or equation with the cosmic axis i.e. cosmic pillar. As a second example we can take the enlargement of the head and the emphasis on its circular shape in order to equate it with the solar disk or the sky (E3). Often occurring is the elongation and arching of the necks of the pair of animals in order to suggest the circle they enclose, which in our opinion may signify the sky or some time cycle that takes place in it (A1 – A3; B43). Behind the emphasization of the size of one character in relation to others present in the same composition may be an aspiration to denote his higher symbolic or religious rank in relation to the other figures (F2).

- Metamorphosis

A procedure in which the body of a certain pictorial motif (usually a figure of an animal, human or plant) is deliberately deformed in order to suggest another element, which ultimately aims at its equation with that element. Besides the aforementioned example with the animal necks (A1 – A3; B43), this concept is most pronounced on Luristan openwork wheels in which the pair of animals with their bodies make up (or metamorphose into) the hoop of the wheel, while their legs form its spokes (B28: 1 – 4). No less striking are the examples in which a plant or tree is metamorphosed into a human figure with outstretched legs and raised arms i.e. into a figure of a woman in a birth-giving pose (B30: 1, 3, 4, 7; B31: 4). Also common are the aspirations to metamorphose a given motif into the very artifact on which it is depicted, such as the

transformation of the body of a human character into a cheekpiece formed in the shape of a wheel (B28: 2, 6). Among the "idols with protomes" and in pins with an openwork head, there is often a transformation of the pair of arched protomes into a ring in which an anthropomorphic character is depicted, that holds these protomes i.e. ring with his hands (C16 – C18).[41] As the most illustrative example of metamorphosis we can take a Luristan pin with a discoid head on which are depicted, through three separate scenes, the stages of metamorphosis of a trinity of mythical characters. The pair of lateral zoomorphic characters that flank the central anthropomorphic character are first anthropomorphized, and then merged into a single double-headed character, which is followed by the loss of the third (central) anthropomorphic character (F8).

- Hybridity

It is one of the main features of Luristan style i.e. a pictorial concept which, in accordance with the previously mentioned ones, consists in the free extraction of elements of plants, animals, man and artifacts, and their combination into hybrid figures or other arrangements. The form of the resulting compositions is not based on any real models from nature, but usually on the form of the object or scene within which they are presented. Among the Luristan bronzes almost all types of hybrid figures do occur: anthropozoomorphic (B6: 1), heterozoomorphic (B14), phytoanthropomorphic (B31: 2, 4; B41: 1, 2), phytozoomorphic (B36: 1), anthropoartifactual and zooartifactual (B28). Among the anthropozoomorphic figures there are variants in which the dominant anthropomorphic figure is supplemented by zoomorphic elements (C27; C28) or vice versa (B14: 1, 3, 6; B26). Among the heterozoomorphic hybrid figures there are two categories, the first of which takes the figure of a relatively realistically depicted animal as a basis and adds to it a body part of another animal that with its size and impressiveness does not endanger the dominant identity of the former (for example, unicorn B6: 2, 8). The second category is represented by figures of animals in which the added elements with their impressive volume and form endanger the basic identity of the animal (B15: 2).

This concept, as the previous ones, was often considered within the framework of Luristan bronzes as a result of blind and inappropriate copying of foreign motifs, whereby the random associations of the new producers of these objects were projected onto the improperly understood original template.

The meaning of this concept lies in the combination of different elements, usually within a single hybrid figure, due to their placement in some kind of symbolic relation i.e. interaction, in order to convey i.e. relate certain meanings and functions of those elements to the character that is represented by that figure.[42] For example, a human or animal figure taken as a basis can be supplemented by animals (or parts of their bodies) that are connected to the three cosmic zones (birds = sky, terrestrial mammals = middle zone, reptiles = underworld) to denote its macrocosmic character i.e. the extension or identification of its figure with the whole universe (B14). An anthropomorphic character may be complemented by a pair of symmetrical zoomorphic protomes, often equated with his arms (E16 – E19) or legs (D21; D22), in order to denote the two complementary principles contained within his nature (creative and destructive principle) and some of his specific manifestations (life and death, day and night, etc.).

- Symmetry

It consists in the mirrored depiction of the same or different elements in a pair, usually left and right in relation to some vertical axis (B5 – B10) or their quadrupling in relation to two axes that intersect at a right angle (D3: 4, 5; D24: 9; D25: 1 – 5; C9: 2, 5). This concept is indispensable for Luristan standards, given that among all types the left side is absolutely symmetrical to the right, with most of them also having two faces so that both their front and back sides are also symmetrical (C13; G3; G5). There are even subtypes (the "six-

[41] On some aspects of metamorphosis in prehistoric pictoriality: D. Borić, *Images***.**

[42] Multiple articles on the various aspects of hybridity: Н. В. Злыднева, *Гибридные*; in prehistoric pictoriality: D. Borić, *Images***;** Г. Наумов, *Неол. антропоморфизам*.

pointed standards") in which symmetry is complete i.e. in addition to the previous ones, it is also applied in relation to the upper and lower half of the object (D25: 1 – 5).[43] Among the oldest standards ("zoomorphic standards") the axis of symmetry, flanked by two animals standing upright on their hind legs, was formed in the shape of an indeterminate vertical pillar whose tip was probably supplemented by a floral motif (B17) or a pin with a decorative head (B47: 4, 6, 8). Among the "idols with protomes" it is transformed into an anthropomorphic figure with a columnar body which, together with the head, acquires the contours of a phallus, whereby the symmetrical animals are reduced to arched zoomorphic protomes (C1: 4 – 6, 9; E1). Among the "columnar figurines" the axis is further anthropomorphized, by which the symmetrical protomes merge with the shoulders of the human figure (C27; C28) or disappear altogether (C26).

The dual-symmetrical images are usually considered a visual manifestation of binary opposites, whereby the central element placed between them (pillar, plant, human figure) acquires the meaning of the third element (the axis i.e. center) that is outside the duality around which their action is realized, at the same time representing the factor that ensures their balance.[44]

b) Parallel i.e. ambivalent images

Quite often on an object from the group of Luristan bronzes or on a specific part of it, one can identify two or more parallel images within the same composition, which are overlapped and even fused into one another so that it seems they simultaneously belong to two different figures or compositions (C5: 1, 2; D15: 7 – 9; D24; B26: 7, 8).[45] In today's observation of such a composition, and in our opinion also its perception at the time it was created, the question of which of them would impose itself as dominant depended on the presupposition of the observer i.e. which of the iconographic matrices for its reading dominated his consciousness and subconscious.

The existence i.e. occurrence of such examples can be explained in several ways. They could be understood as a consequence of the movement of the given object or pictorial composition through time and space, whereby the parallel images would be a remnant of their various previous readings i.e. interpretations. These layers could have occurred during the existence of the object and the composition in various cultural environments distributed through the historical phases of Luristan culture or through the micro-regions that consisted it. The dominance of some of them depended on the mental image present in the consciousness or subconscious of their users or creators.

However, in some examples it is clear that this is an ambiguity that is not accidental, but created intentionally, through a skillfully planned concept in advance. Some of our analyzes, which will be presented in detail in the corresponding chapters, show that this was done due to semiotic or theological reasons in order to, through the parallel presence of the two images and their interwoven meanings, evoke such an ambivalent and multifaceted theological content. For example, it could be the image of some kind of central human character that is accompanied or attacked by the two symmetrical animals that are flanking him (E1: 1). Thereby, these animals do not have to be treated as separate entities, but as parts of his body (E1: 2), i.e. as his arms (E1: 5) or legs (D20 – D27) which, ultimately, means that the given composition does not depict only three characters (one human and two animal), but perhaps also some kind of a single hybrid anthropozoomorphic character. This character has a human head and limbs transformed into animals or, such a process of metamorphosis i.e. zoomorphization takes place at a given moment. Maybe it is some kind of triune deity whose identity is in constant motion: on the one hand, the division of the one (all-encompassing)

[43] G. M. D'Erme, *The Cappella*, 411.

[44] И. Маразов, *Мит. на златото*, 271-274; on the various aspects of symmetry: D. Washburn, *Embedded Symmetries*.

[45] On the presence of this concept on Luristan standards and within Scythian art: М. Н. Погребова, Д. С. Раевский, *Ранние*, 155; about this concept, with examples from the ancient non-Hellenic cultures of the Central Balkans: И. Маразов, *За семантиката*, 46; from Celtic culture: M. Aldhouse-Green, *An Arch. of Images*, 196, 197; regarding this and another Thracian example: Н. Чаусидис, *Негроидните*, 244, 255 (Т.VIII: 1а, 1б, 2а, 3б).

into two oppositional and one neutral principle, and on the other - the fusion of these three principles into one (F8).

Parallel and ambivalent images can have the same orientation i.e. both can be seen at the same position of the object i.e. composition, but there are also those in which the second image comes to the fore if they are rotated by 90 or more often by 180 degrees (D24).

c) Implicit i.e. hidden images

The previous approach may imply another one, which would consist of intentionally hiding a particular image within an object or composition. On the Luristan bronzes this approach has been executed in several ways. The first consists in arranging the elements that form a single figure or composition without sufficiently emphasizing its unifying contours (D15: 7), while the second - through its camouflaging by cluttering with other additional elements (D15: 8, 9). Such images could be revealed to the observer only under certain circumstances, such as specific illumination, dimming and angle of brightness, or as a true "revelation" caused by long-term observation of the composition i.e. meditating over it.

The reasons for the application of this concept can be sought in the tendency to hide certain contents and meanings of the Luristan bronzes for which it was considered that they should not be available to everyone, except for a certain circle of selected people, while at the same time being hidden i.e. remaining invisible to other uninitiated observers. The indicated revelation of the hidden image could be due to the observer's previous training or his personal commitment and perseverance. The second reason can be sought in the specific tactic of the conceivers of these objects, according to which the given image should have "revealed itself" to the observers i.e. users of the objects to which it was shown, as a kind of theophany. By doing so, they would feel its vitality and sacred power, or they would understand the process of its discovery as a merit of their own ability, or that exactly they are “the ones” - the chosen ones to whom the secret image presents itself.

As a good example of such an implicit image one can take a Scythian appliqué for decorating the forehead of a horse from Bolshaya Tsimbalka. Depicted below the two pairs of zoomorphized and spread legs of the mythical birth-giver is a whirlpool of floral motifs and snakes in which one can recognize a male character with a mustache and wide open eyes, from whose mouth these floral motifs and snakes emerge (D35: 4 compare with D36; about this character see pp. 293, 295).[46] As a second example we can take one of the early medieval Slavic two-plated bow fibulae, on whose semicircular plate, in the middle of the wavy relief segments that probably represented the cosmic waters, there appears a "cubistically" modeled anthropomorphic character, which probably carried the meaning of the chthonic god or god of water equated with this cosmic element (F3: 7, 9).[47]

[46] Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 239-240, B28: 1.

[47] Regarding the mentioned and other similar examples: Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 269-272, Г30.

Chapter III

GEOMETRIC LEVEL



III. GEOMETRIC LEVEL

Until the completion of this monograph, we were hesitant about where to place this chapter - whether at its beginning or at the end. Here is the reason for our dilemma.

Geometry is the basis of every image and every shape. They are reduced to it after all the specific figural iconographic elements are excluded from them: anthropomorphic, zoomorphic, phytomorphic, ornaments and those that depict artifacts or elements of inanimate nature. Accordingly, it would be logical to present the geometric level at the end of this book, after all the other figural iconographic layers of the Luristan standards have been analyzed. But, on the other hand, in such a case, the readers will not have in mind the geometric basis of the analyzed objects and pictorial motifs while following the mentioned layers. That is exactly why we decided to nevertheless present this level at the beginning, starting with some dilemmas related to the character and place of geometry in pictoriality, specifically in its most general framework. Some of these questions have already been addressed in the previous chapter.

Should the geometric layer of an image be treated as the primary level i.e as the level that in a chronological sense appeared first and was then followed by the other iconographic levels?

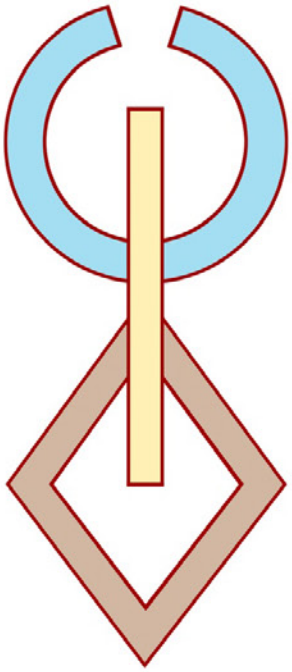
The answer to this question actually comes down to another question, with a more general character: *Should the history of pictorial creativity be considered as some kind of determined evolution in which the earliest images were geometric, which were then followed by the others i.e. the zoomorphic and then the anthropomorphic ones?*

In principle, the evolutionistic, or any other global concepts do not function in the spheres of culture, and neither the specific archaeological or ethnographic artifacts go in favor of such a scheme. Rare are the examples when the transformation through time of a pictorial tradition or a certain image begins with the geometric style or its geometric version. Much more often it is a relatively realistic image, which at some more advanced stage begins to be stylized and geometricized i.e. reduced to some simpler and schematized elements. As a good example of this, one can take the earliest rock paintings in the region of present-day

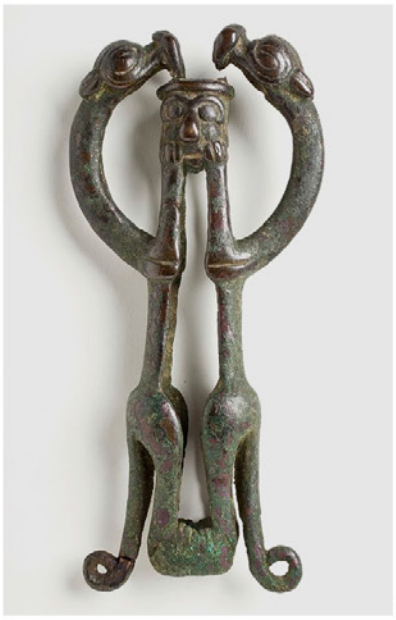
A1



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France and Spain, which have been executed very realistically (Chauvet Cave, c. 32nd millennium BCE; Altamira, c. 20th millennium BCE; Lascaux, c. 17th millennium BCE), while their stylization occurs at the very end of the Paleolithic and the transition to the Mesolithic (Los Caballos Cave, 10th – 9th millennium BCE).[1]

Although such a sequence of transformations cannot be considered universal for all mankind, its prevalence could be justified by several factors. Before we list them, it should be taken into account that images in ancient and archaic cultures did not exist because of what we now call a *purely artistic* i.e. *aesthetic experience*, but because of evoking their content and meaning.

- Technique of execution. Complex realistic images, even if well conceived and placed in the hands of talented creators, cannot be easily executed in whichever technique and in whichever material. To do so requires knowledge of certain technological skills, such as engraving, preparation of colors, carving, sculpting, casting and others, as well as possession of appropriate tools and materials. The stylization i.e. geometrization of an image is often conditioned by the material itself and the technique of execution. For example, in wood, stone and other hard materials it is easier to engrave straight rather than curved lines. Textile weaving and embroidery, as well as the weaving of pliable materials (wickers, rods, canes, straws), in and of themselves prefer geometric shapes because in such a case the image is formed as a set of points that are mathematically determined according to the "coordinate system" formed by the longitudinal and transverse threads or pliable materials.

- Principle of economicalness i.e. with less pictorial elements and less labor and time to achieve the desired effect. The longer an image or a concept (conventionally called "style") of pictorial execution lasts within a particular culture, the more it tends to become simpler and more economical. Its members do not have to perceive the content of a certain image directly from the specific work, but are familiar with it beforehand. Most often that happens even in childhood and youth through insight into other such images, or by evoking them through other media (for example, spoken myths, rituals, dances, etc.). Accordingly, the specific image, in this case highly stylized and geometricized, functions only as a sign i.e. trigger that in their mind turns on the finished and much more realistic mental image that has been previously created and memorized. In that case, it really becomes irrelevant whether the materially executed image is presented realistically and perfectly, just as it is irrelevant whether a text is written in a beautiful or less beautiful (but legible) handwriting or font.

- Unification and codification of images. For an image to communicate well with the members of the community in which it exists, it must be to some extent unified in terms of the content it carries and the way i.e. style in which it is executed. If it occupies an important place in the culture and is therefore mass-produced, its clarity must not depend on the talent of the particular executor and the quality of the materials in which or from which it is executed. Because of that, in the process of codification, preference is given to the simple pictorial depictions (reduced to signs) that can be reproduced by almost any member of the given culture. And exactly such is the character of the geometricized images i.e. those whose artistic elements are reduced to simple geometric shapes.

- Prohibitions on explicit depiction of certain content. Images in archaic cultures often carry a certain symbolic, mythical or religious meaning which, for various reasons, must not be easily perceivable and clear to everyone. In some cases there is a taboo regarding the explicit visual depiction of a certain mythical character, deity or symbol, so it must be evoked through some kind of reduced forms, geometrical or some other. The non-depiction or concealment of an image may be done so it would be accesible only to certain selected, dedicated and trained people - members of a particular community, of a particular clan, of a particular religious, age or some other group. The perception of a symbolic, mythical or religious image means the usage of its power which must not be in everybody's hands.

[1] About the primary character of realism i.e. naturalism or of stylization in the early or archaic forms of pictoriality: D. Washburn, *The Genesis*; W. Davis, *Replication*; L-R. McDermott, *Self-Representation*; А. Д. Столяр, *Происхождение*; А. Д. Столяр, *Проблемът*.

A2



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Based on these observations it can be concluded that geometry is an integral part of every image and every visual phenomenon, regardless whether their creator or observer is aware of its existence. Viewed on a psychological level, it mainly functions at the level of the subconscious i.e. it is created, perceived and influences man not always with the participation of his consciousness, even when he is not aware of its existence at all. Occasionally, certain cultures and certain individuals become aware of its existence, meaning and power, which is why they strive to single it out i.e. to extract it from other pictorial forms and maintain and cultivate it as a separate style of pictorial expression and as a specific type of visual perception.

1. The geometric level of Luristan bronzes

On the Luristan standards, this iconographic level is generally not depicted in a pure i.e. explicit form, but can be perceived implicitly, at the level of the basic composition i.e. contours of objects, if we neglect the other, primarily zoomorphic, phytomorphic and anthropomorphic elements. It consists of a circle, or usually an open ring, which forms their upper part, a rhombus that can be sensed in the lower part and an elongated vertical element that extends between them i.e. through them (A1: 2).

Among the "zoomorphic standards" and the "zoomorphic standards with a human head", the first element is formed by the elongated and arched necks of the two symmetrical animals that make up these objects, while the rhombus appears in the contours of their hind legs (A1). In some specimens of this group (which are considered to be somewhat later) these elements impose themselves so much with their geometricism that it results with the loss of figurality and transformation of the existing realistic content into some kind of semi-abstract image (A1: 1, 3, 5).

Similar is the situation with the "idols with protomes", with the difference that, due to the disintegration of the above mentioned animals, their protomes and hind legs in this case stand out as separate elements that obviously acquire some new context and meaning (A2). Their necks transform into separate arched protomes which, coming out of the central pillar, form an open ring with ends in the shape of animal heads. The legs of the animals, on the other hand, are transformed into an indefinite rhombic frame, which in some specimens acquires the meaning of legs of some kind of zooanthropomorphic figure (A2: 1, 2). Among some standards, the anthropomorphism of this figure, which extends across the whole standard, becomes more pronounced. The zoomorphic circle seems as if it is coming out of the figure's abdominal sides, whereby it is holding it with its arms, while the rhombus is transformed into the figure's half-spread legs (A2: 4, 5). In a specific series, all the indicated elements fuse into a single human figure, whereby the zoomorphic ring is transformed into arms arched around the figure's shoulders and head, ending in animal protomes, while the rhombus can still be traced in the outer line of the figure's legs (A2: 6). In fact, some of the most geometricized specimens of Luristan standards appeared within the frames of this series, where the recognizability of their figurative content seriously comes into question (A2: 3).

The central vertical element in the "zoomorphic standards" carries the meaning of some kind of column i.e. pillar that rises between the two animals (B5: 8, 9), whereby, among the "zoomorphic standards with a human head", an anthropomorphic or zooanthropomorphic head appeared at its top, usually equated with the front paws of the animals (A1: 3, 6, 9; C3). Among the "idols with protomes" this element acquires the form of a vertical phallus (D2; D3) or the torso of one (A2: 3 – 6) or two anthropomorphic or zooanthropomorphic figures placed one above the other (D35; D37; D39). Among the rest of the standards, including the "idols" (G1 – G3), the "columnar figurines" (C26 – C28) and the "standards - statuettes" (C33), the circular and rhombic elements are completely absent so that the global architectonics of these objects are reduced to a vertical element formed in the shape of a pillar i.e. idol, phallus or human figure.

Based on our previous research and analyzes presented in the following chapters, a hypothesis can be proposed according to which the indicated three geometric elements reflect the archaic notions of the universe, whereby the circle denotes its upper zones (sky), the rhombus - the lower zones (earth), and the

vertical pillar - the cosmic axis that, on one hand separates them, but on the other also connects them into a single whole (A3: 1, 2).[2] Given the marginalization of this level, it is possible that it was not at all consciously perceived by the users and makers of the Luristan standards, but was generated and perceived primarily on a subconscious level. Perhaps only certain members of the community were aware of it, such as the priests or the makers of these items, who at the same time cared for the presence of these elements and the maintenance of their essential meaning.

Although it seems that geometrism was not very familiar within Luristan material culture, at least the one that is observable on an archaeological level, some bronze objects indicate that this pictorial concept nevertheless existed and was developed, but largely within some other category of objects, unknown to us today, probably made of organic materials (perhaps in the form of ornaments executed in wood or textiles). This is indicated by some openwork pendants formed in the shape of three concentric circles connected by a single bar, which are related to the Iron Age cultures located in the vicinity of Luristan: Armenia, northwestern Iran (Amlash) and the surrounding areas (A6: 1 – 4). As an example we can take a Luristan bracelet on which one could recognize a slightly different geometric image with cosmological features (A7: 1). We will return to these objects in more detail in the following chapters.

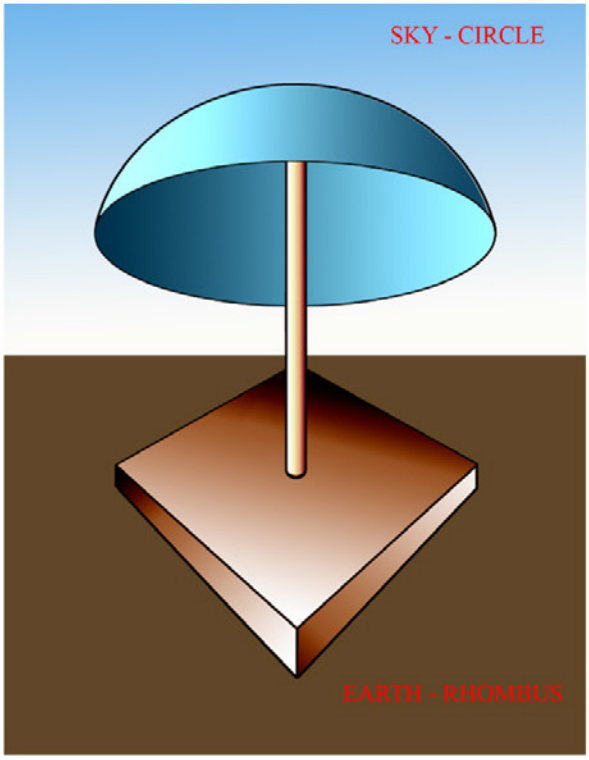
2. Artifacts as carriers of the image of the universe

For today's man - a member of modern civilization, it would be unusual for an everyday object to be shaped according to the notions of the world, or for an image of the universe to be depicted on it. However, numerous examples show that not only does this concept exist, but it is also common to archaic cultures, equally to those from the past epochs and those that existed until recently or still exist today. This phenomenon is explained by the important place of myth within these cultures, especially cosmogonic myths, which are included in literally all spheres of culture, and consequently in the creation and "decoration" of objects i.e. elements of material culture.[3] Their inclusion in the latter of the mentioned activities can be explained by treating the process of creating an object as a repetition of the cosmogonic act, whereby it acquires the meaning of a microcosm that contains the structure and all the essential elements of the macrocosm. Thereby, the maker of that object acquires the character of a priest or some other "holy person" that performs a ritual which represents an imitation i.e. repetition of the act of creation of the the universe.[4]

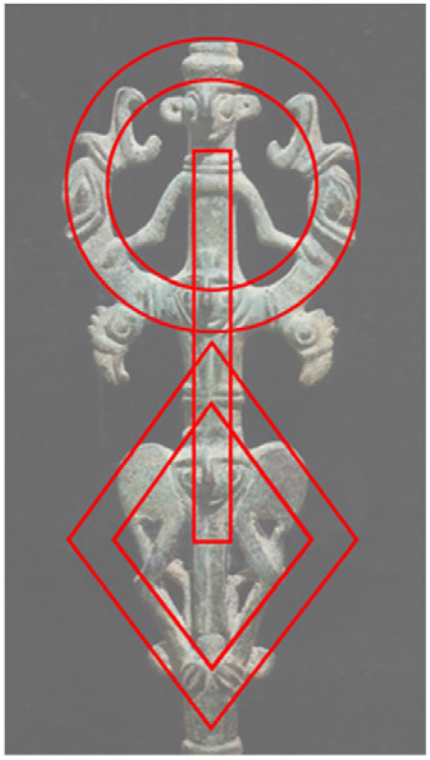
In support of this constatation, one can reference numerous examples from various historical epochs and various parts of the world.[5] On this occasion we will mention only a few that are most illustrative. One of them is the **shield of Achilles** described in the "Iliad", which, probably in concentric circular zones, depicted the sky (probably in the center) with the sun, moon and stars, then the earth (with cities, people and their various activities) and the chthonic areas represented by a depiction of the Ocean that stretched along the edge of the shield.[6] The **cloak of the goddess Gaia** was also embroidered with depictions of the earth, the Ocean and the homes of Oceanus.[7] Clothing decorated with elements of the universe was also common to humans, especially that of priests, shamans, and rulers.[8] Numerous sources that relate to the ancient cultures of the Middle East inform us about such clothing, while also known are preserved examples of such shamanic costumes from Siberia (A8: 4). Especially explicit depictions of the universe are present on the drums of

[2] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 60-67.
[3] М. Елијаде, *Свето*, 78-83, 88-114.
[4] И. Маразов, *Мит. на златото*, 10-15; В. Н. Топоров, *Пространство*.
[5] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 30-90.
[6] (Homeri Ilias XVIII, 475-610); the shield of Heracles also had a similar character, though not so explicitly cosmological (Hesiod, *Aspis Hērakleous*, 139-320).
[7] (Pherecydes, Frg. 54VS); according to A. Carson, *Dirt*, 89; И. Маразов, *Хубавата*, 51, 57.
[8] R. Eisler, *Weltenmantel*.

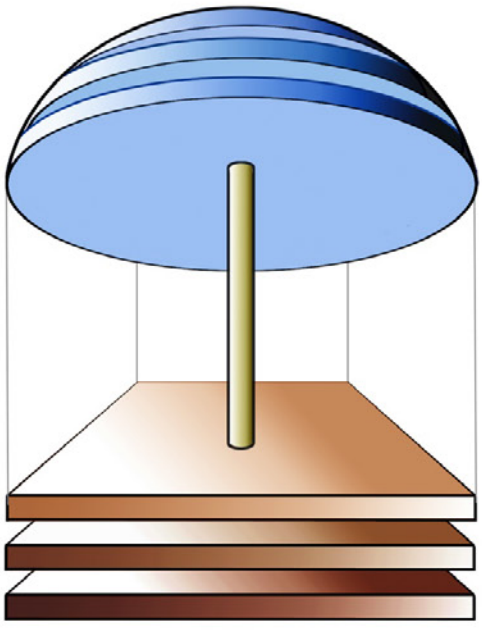
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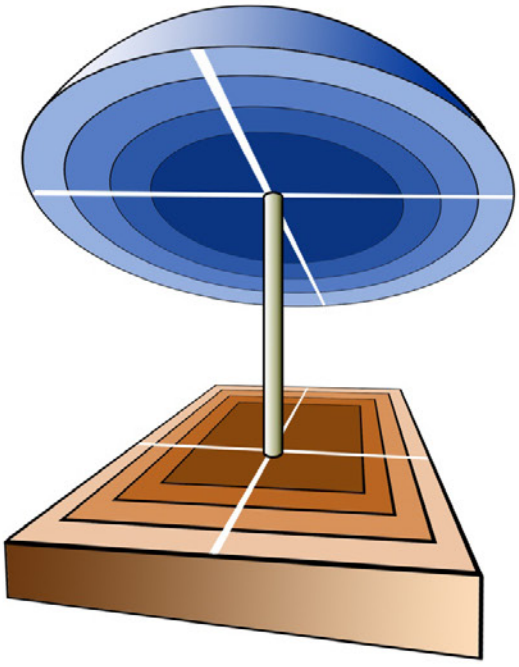
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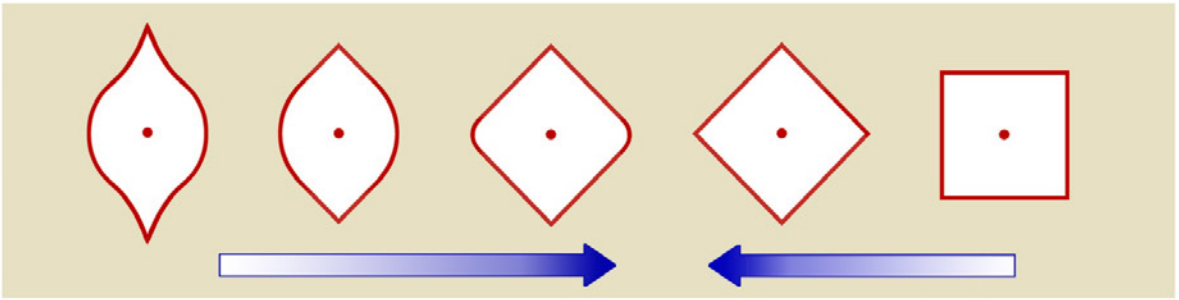
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shamans from Siberia and northeastern Europe (A8: 5).[9] Cosmological iconography was also present on the thrones on which emperors and gods sat, in order to signify the entire space to which their authority extended.[10] The cosmos is also especially often present in architecture, and not only in regards to sacral architecture, but also to the profane one.[11]

3. Archaic notions on the form of the cosmos

What are the reasons behind the archaic concepts of depicting the universe? Are they a product of reality? Are they standard to all of humanity and do different approaches exist in that regard?

Within the framework of archaic cultures, one can distinguish two most frequent concepts of visual depiction of the universe - the **concentric-spherical** and the **cubic-hemispherical**. According to the first, the sky and the earth have a circular or spherical shape (A15: 2), while according to the second, the sky is circular i.e. hemispherical while the earth is quadrilateral (A3: 1, 3, 4). Archaic consciousness comes to these solutions through templates, i.e. recognizing the form and structure of the universe in some specific objects of its immediate surroundings. For example, the egg could have served as an ideal paradigm for the spherical concept (by identifying the yolk, egg white, and shell with the separate cosmic elements), while for the second concept - the four-sided house i.e. hut with the floor as earth, the roof as sky and the empty space inside as the middle zone (A7: 4).[12]

In principle, the first concept is considered more archaic because in the rounded form of its elements, their horizontal division is not placed in the foreground i.e. the determination of the sides of the world, which does not mean that it could not be realized through some other additional pictorial elements. The depiction of the earth in the form of some kind of four-sided element encodes exactly the indicated aspect which can be represented by two geometric images - the square or the rhombus (A3: 1, 3, 4). The depiction of the earth in the form of a quadrilateral is based on the human notions of the four sides of the world, which referred primarily to the earthly level, because human orientation and movement really took place only at this level of the cosmos. In fact, the four sides of the world are based on the human quadruple system of perception and orientation (forward, backward, left and right) (A8: 1). Later, this quadruple determination will be also implemented at the level of the sky, as a reflection of man's aspiration for his mental i.e. spiritual presence in these areas as well, which required an appropriate orientation within this space as well (A3: 4; A6: 6, 7).[13] In many cases the earth is depicted as another geometric image with four sides and four corners - the rhombus (A3: 1). Its introduction into the cosmological images is motivated by another need - to depict the "female aspects" of the earth (its function as birth-giver and nurturer of man) based on the identification of the rhombus with a schematized image of an open vulva which, ultimately, is also four-sided i.e. equivalent to the square (A3: 5).[14]

What is the reason for the depiction of the sky in the form of a circle or a hemisphere?

We believe that this was based on certain real phenomena that occur in the sky, and suggest exactly these forms. The rotation of the starry night sky around a stationary Polar star suggests that it is a circular hemisphere or a circular disk that rotates around some kind of central axis (A3: 1, 3, 4). The notions of the sky as a hemisphere or a vault are due to the daily path of the sun, which is semicircular, so that archaic

[9] С. В. Иванов, *Материалы,* examples 239, 308, 655, 659, 689; on the shamanic drums: J. Pentikainen, *The Shamanic*.
[10] О. Минаева, *Тронът*.
[11] Multiple articles on the cosmological significance of sacral buildings: D. Ragavan (ed.), *Heaven*; on the basic cosmological dimension of the house: М. Елијаде, *Свето*, 61-87; M. Elijade, *Šamanizam*, 200-207; Н. Чаусидис, *Куќата*.
[12] About this and the contents of the following paragraphs: Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 30-37 ff.
[13] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 17, 18, 102.
[14] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 95, 97-100.

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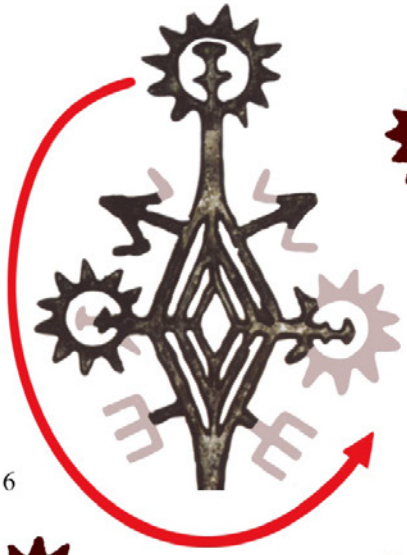
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A5



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consciousness interprets it as the sun's movement along the celestial vault, which in itself is invisible to archaic consciousness (A9: 9, 10 compare with A8: 2; ethnographic examples: A10: 4, 6, 7).[15]

The combination of the circle as the sky and the quadrilateral as the earth is also motivated by the need to differentiate these elements according to the concept of binary opposites. By giving them different forms, which are even essentially opposite to each other, archaic consciousness emphasizes the difference i.e. complementarity between sky and earth, which was also sought in other features and functions of these elements: earth as female, statically compact, dark and positioned below, as opposed to the sky as male, dynamic, fluid, bright and positioned above (A3).[16]

The Cosmic Axis i.e. Cosmic Pillar is the third (almost regular) element of the archaic notions of the universe, which is objectified as various symbols, depending on the dominant function given to it within a culture or some specific myth. It can take on the form of various images, such as a pillar, a tree or a man, which support the sky and separate it from earth, or as an axis around which the starry sky rotates (A3).[17]

The mentioned notions of the universe in the consciousness and subconsciousness of humans are conceived as three-dimensional structures that cannot always be consistently exteriorized into an appropriate three-dimensional material projection. It can happen only in those media that are themselves three-dimensional. Most often, these are cult objects: altars, temples, shrines, tombs, holy cities, etc., whereby the lower part of the building or its surrounding walls can encode the four-sided earth, while the upper ones (roof, dome, vault) - the sky. Numerous such buildings, in different parts of the world, represent exactly the cubic-hemispherical notions of the universe such as, for example, some megalithic buildings from prehistoric Europe (A15: 1), the Hindu stupa (A8: 3), the Byzantine domed temple (A7: 5) etc. They can also be manifested through rituals, dance, but also through the spatiality of narrative actions in the verbal forms of myth.[18]

Although the indicated notions of the universe withing human consciousness and subconsciousness are conceived as three-dimensional structures, with their exteriorization in the pictorial medium they had to take on a two-dimensional form. Thereby, due to the inability of archaic man to apply the concepts of perspective and three-dimensional projection, he was forced to reduce the three-dimensional notions to those two-dimensional images that seemed to him as most appropriate. In the horizontal projections of the spherical model, the sky and the earth were depicted as concentric circles placed inside each other, whereby one of them, whether external or internal, represented the earth, while the other - the sky (as in the "shield of Achilles"). In the cubic-hemispherical model, the circle was combined with the square or the rhombus (as in the case of the mandala – A7: 6 compare with A4: 4). Thereby, the cosmic axis was encoded through some kind of central motif in the form of a dot, circle or rosette, while the other elements (e.g. mountains, trees, animals, plants) were depicted lying on these surfaces, oriented with the upper part towards the center or towards the periphery.[19]

Practiced in the vertical projections was some form of vertical cross-sectional depictions of the universe i.e. its division into two or more often three horizontal zones, the lower of which represented the earth (with or without the underworld), the upper - the sky, while the space between them - the middle zone (A8: 5). In the cubic-hemispherical models, the upper part of this projection is arched in order to suggest the roundness of the sky (A8: 2, 4). The basic structure of these images is often taken over by the Cosmic Tree, whereby the three zones are encoded by appropriate animals: the lower zones by fish and reptiles, the middle by terrestrial animals, and the upper by birds (A8: 4).[20]

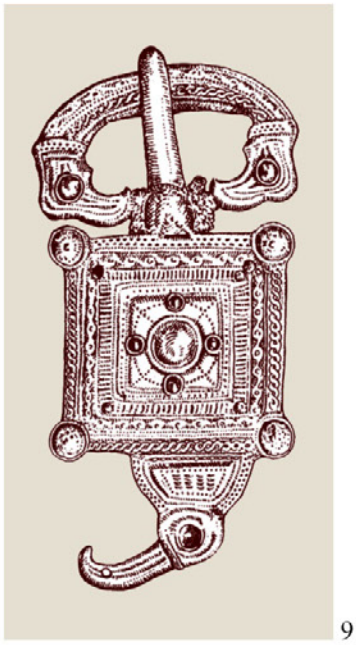
[15] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 18-20, 320-322.
[16] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 18-20.
[17] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 21, 314-316, 325, 326, 361-364.
[18] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 32-35.
[19] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 36-45, 321, 322.
[20] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 36, 37, 46-55, 320, 321.

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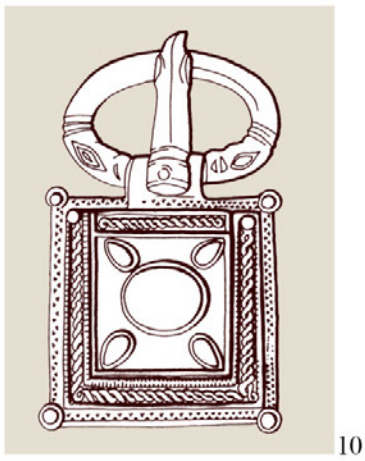

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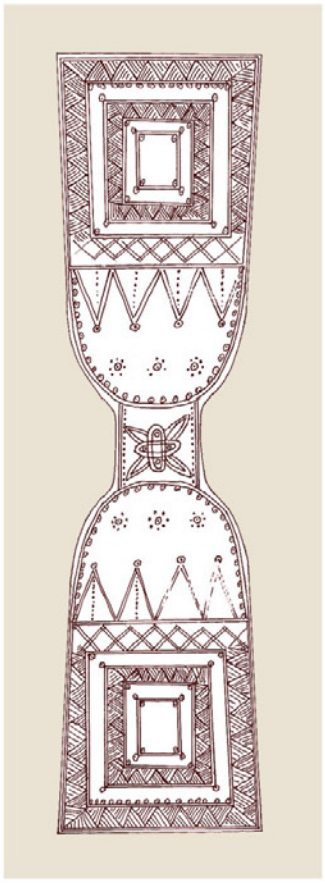
Both the vertical and horizontal two-dimensional projections of space have one drawback - if they are consistently projected, they lose their spatial dimension, whereby their elements turn into opaque geometric images that do not evoke their meaning, especially depth i.e. spatiality of the individual zones, the distance between sky and earth and the empty space that stretches between them. Therefore, archaic consciousness takes a compromise solution - it depicts the elements that encode earth and sky one below the other as horizontal projections, whereby the cosmic axis is drawn between them in the form of some kind of vertical element. Thus, despite the geometric inconsistency, an image is obtained in which the three main cosmic elements can be recognized in their realistic layout, whereby their shape and mutual distance are clearly represented (A9: 9 - 11 compare with the others).[21]

One variant of this concept is reflected in the shape of the already mentioned Luristan bracelet and in its geometric ornamentation executed in the engraving technique (A7: 1).[22] Based on numerous iconographic parallels, within them one can recognize a specifically combined (horizontal-vertical) two-dimensional projection of the cubic-hemispherical model of the universe (an ideal three-dimensional reconstruction of this model A7: 2 compare with 1). Within that framework, the lower part of the cosmos (the earth and the earthly waters that surround it) are represented in horizontal projection, divided according to the concentric principle, through squares inscribed in each other (early medieval examples: A6: 8 – 10). The middle zone is depicted through the mountains (a bordure of triangles) and above them the "lower sky" in the form of a semicircle with some of the celestial bodies (rosettes = sun, stars, full moon?). These elements are duplicated i.e. shown on both ends of the bracelet which, in the context of its arched shape, completes a cubic-hemispherical model of the universe conceptualized as a square structure covered by a vault. We believe that the central square field with a rosette depicted in the middle of the bracelet, within this model most probably represents the "high sky" (the most sacred celestial zone) with a depiction of the North Star located in its center (A7: 1, 2). It is not excluded that it also represents the sun, which is often depicted in the middle of the sky (as a representation of noon or the summer solstice). This concept most closely corresponds to the depictions of the universe presented in the work "Christian Topography" by Cosmas Indicopleustes from the 6th century CE (A7: 2 compare with 3, 4). The similarity between these models may not be accidental if we take into account the origin of Cosmas Indicopleustes from Alexandria and his travels through the Middle East (Iran, Arabia, India) during which he was able to get acquainted with this cosmological model. The cosmological notions presented in his work became very popular within Christianity, especially in the East, as a negation of the ancient Greco-Roman notions of the spherical cosmos.[23]

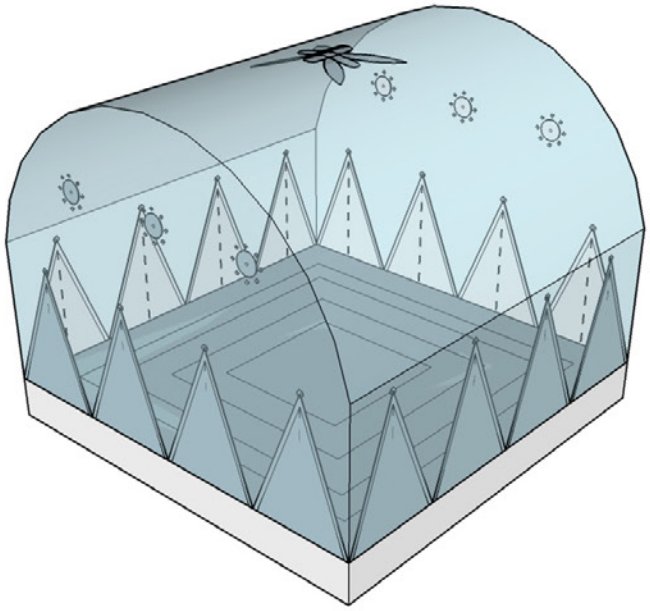
With the differentiation of the unperceivable cosmos into its indicated three main elements, the impulse of archaic consciousness for further division of these parts did not stop there. Mythical notions of a sky composed of several skies appeared all over the planet, organized in the form of layers stacked on top of each other or as circles placed concentrically - one inside the other. An analogous procedure was also carried out with the earthly level, which resulted in mythical notions of some kind of analogically structured zones of the earth i.e. underworld (A3: 3, 4). In the pictorial medium, these notions were manifested through the division of the circle and the quadrilateral that denote the sky and the earth, mainly by dividing them into concentric circles or semicircles or into concentric squares and rhombuses (A6; A9: 3, 8). Behind these procedures actually lies the aspiration to hierarchize these cosmic zones according to the degree of their sacredness. The highest zone of the sky, located simultaneously at its center, was identified with paradise or the seat of the gods, while the center of the earth was equated with the holy land, the holy mountain, the capital or the main sanctuary of the given culture (A3: 3, 4).[24]

[21] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 56, 57, examples: 57-90.
[22] For the object (without the indicated interpretations): E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 196 (No. 331, Fig. 166), 199 (Fig.172).
[23] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 33, 34 (with presented bibliography).
[24] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 22, 23.

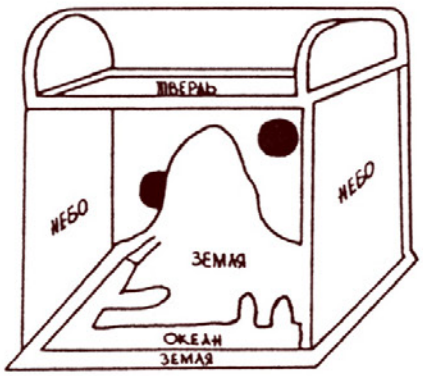
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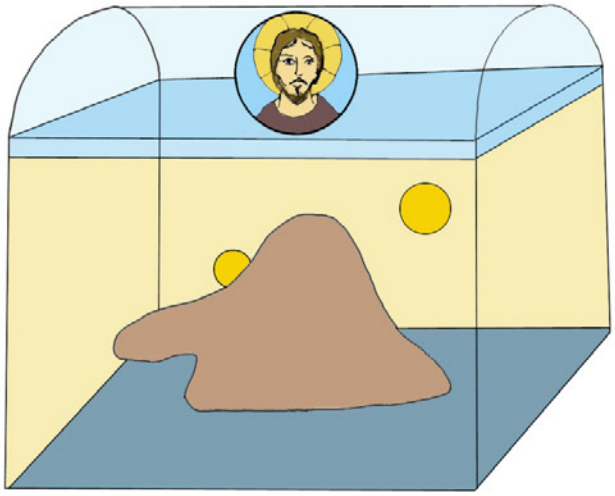
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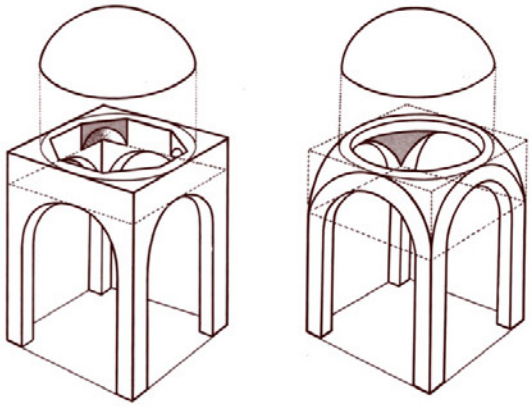
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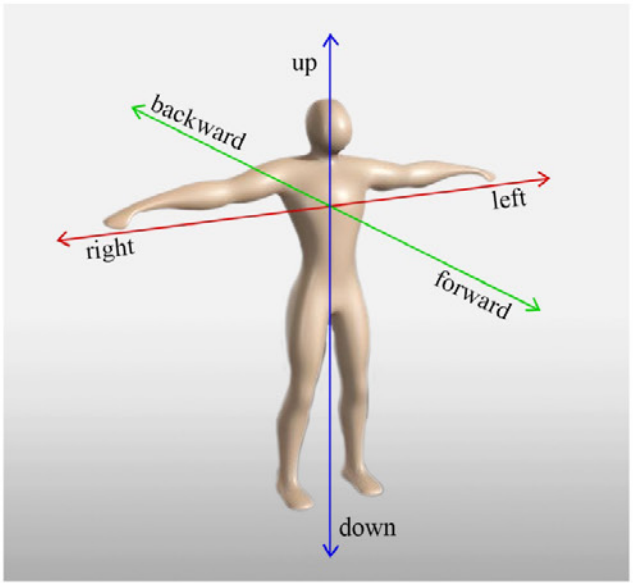


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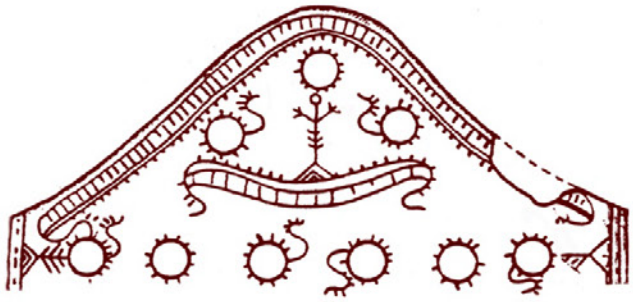


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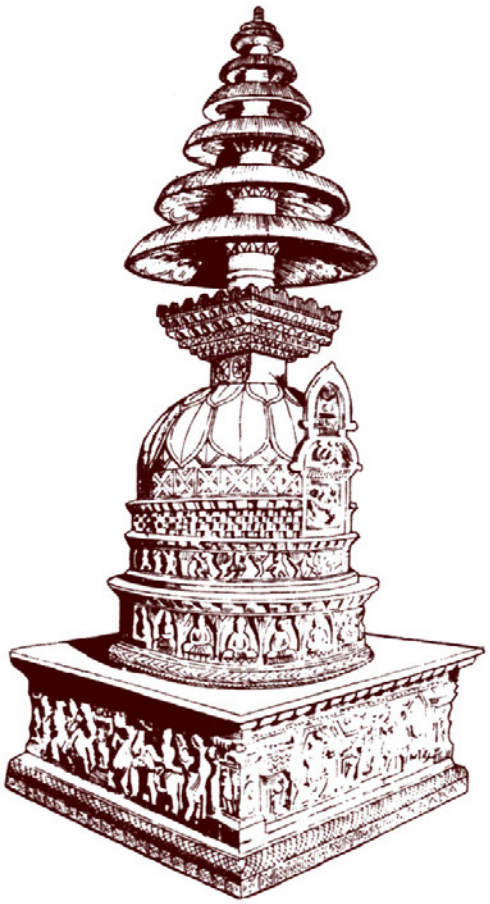
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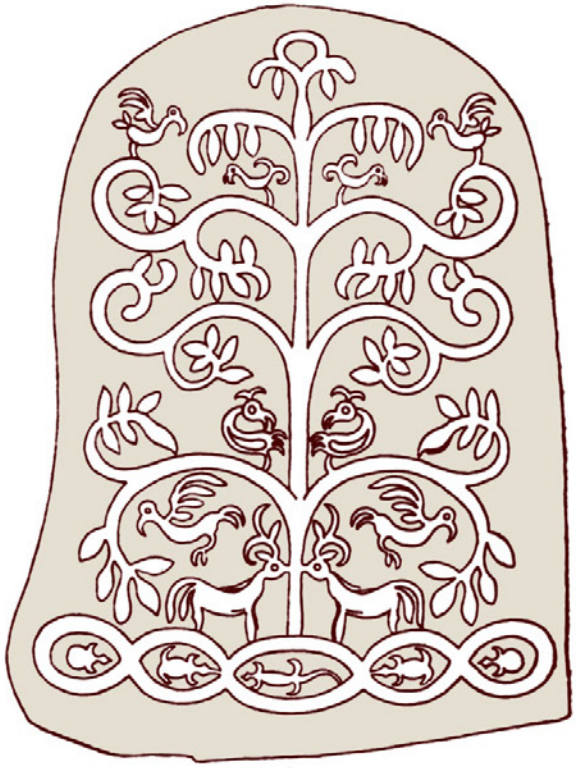
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4. Iconographic parallels

a) Openwork bronze objects from Armenia

The most corresponding analogies that indicate the existence of the geometric level among Luristan standards can be found on a group of bronze objects from the 8th - 6th century BCE, discovered mainly in Armenia, but also in neighboring regions (Georgia, Azerbaijan and Iran) (A4; A5: 2, 6, 8).[25] The three main parts of the universe are depicted on them in almost elementary geometric form, namely - the circular plate as the sky (A4: 1 – 4; A5: 2, 6, 8), the rhombus as the earth i.e. lower levels of the universe (A4: 4, 7 – 10) and the vertical bar between them as a cosmic axis that stretches between sky and earth (A4: 4). We consider the division of the circular and the rhombic part into concentric rings i.e. concentric rhombuses as the result of the notions regarding the division of the sky and the earth into several "skies" and several "earths" arranged in layers one above the other i.e. one below the other or in concentric zones placed one within the other. As we have already pointed out, in the absence of the concepts of perspective and other methods of consistent transposition of three-dimensional notions into two-dimensional ones, here it is achieved in an archaic way - by "flattening" and "stretching" the vertical into horizontal, whereby the center signifies what is up, and the periphery what is down (or vice versa). In the center of the concentric circles, one can recognize a geometricized anthropomorphic figure with a depicted head and outstretched arms whose body coincides with the bar that extends from here down to the rhombus (A4: 1 – 4). We consider it to be a mythical character - a personalization of the Cosmic Axis, which bears the function of a macrocosmic giant standing between sky and earth, who holds the sky, maintains its distance in relation to the earth and functions as the axis around which the cyclic processes in the universe take place (A5: 1, 4, 8 compare with the others).[26] The multiplicated radial rosettes depicted around the rhombus, in this arrangement encode the course of the time cycles i.e. the movement of the sun around the earth, and possibly above and below it (A4: 4, 6, 7, 9, 10). As we have seen, analogous meanings, with certain specific details, are also carried by similar objects from later periods (A6: 8 – 10; A9).[27] It is quite expected that in some objects the rosettes are alternated with "Maltese" crosses, if we take into account the solar significance of the cross even in the ancient cultures of Mesopotamia (A4: 8).[28] The rosettes and crosses are combined with stylized depictions of humans in the orans posture, which in this context probably signify the adorants who, with their prayers and other rituals performed on earth, glorify and support the proper course of the solar cycles in the sky (A4: 4, 6 – 9).[29]

But, with the exception of one object (from Nor Bayazet/Gavar – A4: 4), the indicated composition is divided into two different types of objects: the circular part with concentric rings is formed as a pendant (A4: 1 – 3; A5: 2, 6), while the rhombic one functions as a head for decorative pins (A4: 7 – 10). In view of this, it has recently been suspected that the above mentioned find is in fact composed secondarily, from two different objects (A4: 4 – 6).[30] Regardless of the outcome of this discussion, we can treat the two separate types of objects as elements of the same iconographic system and a complete depiction of the universe, because they

[25] In detail on these objects with an interpretation of their iconography: P. Avetisyan et al, *Axes*; also see: Р. М. Торосян (и др.), *Древний*.
[26] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 56-62.
[27] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 57, 58, later examples: 58-90.
[28] Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 457-461.
[29] In detail on these objects with an interpretation of their iconography: P. Avetisyan et al, *Axes*. Although in global terms we agree with the cosmological interpretation of the iconography proposed by the authors, our interpretations differ from their (see below, as well as in: Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 56-59). The relations between these and the Luristan examples have already been indicated by P. R. S. Moorey (P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 235, 236).
[30] P. Avetisyan et al, *Axes*.

A9



functioned withing the same culture and period, and have been found as grave goods in the same necropolises and even in one and the same grave.

At this point we want to propose a hypothesis about these objects that would be in context of the mentioned cosmogonic concept regarding the creation of artifacts within archaic cultures. Its validity can only be confirmed through a detailed analysis of the existing or some other future archaeological finds of such kind and the contexts in which they would be discovered. According to it, the two groups of objects presented here (the circular and the rhombic ones) were created as single objects that depicted the entire universe (such as the one from Nor Bayazet/Gavat – A4: 4). Then, in the metallurgical workshop itself or during some specific event (for example, the depositing of the object as a grave good), the object, within a ritual or magical procedure, was divided into the mentioned two halves, which were formed as separate objects (pendants or pin-heads) (A4: 4 – 6). This procedure would actually evoke (and repeat) one of the key cosmogonic actions - the separation of the sky from the earth as an act of arranging the universe and creating the middle zone as a space for the existence of man and the rest of the living world.[31] This procedure would not be a rarity within the framework of archaic cultures that are studied by archaeology, but another example in the numerous, especially typical of prehistoric cultures, in which certain objects are subjected to deliberate fragmentation and some kind of secondary treatment of the obtained pieces, primarily due to certain symbolic reasons.[32]

As we already mentioned, similar pendants, in the form of concentric circles connected by a single bar, are present among the Iron Age cultures of the Middle East, including the regions of northwestern Iran (Amlash, Dajlaman/Deylaman), which are in the wider vicinity of Luristan (A6: 1, 2, from the Ashmolean Museum). According to P. R. S. Moorey, these objects date between the 6th and 4th centuries BCE, whereby their origin is tied to the Caucasus (A6: 3, 4) where such objects gravitate towards the 10th century BCE.[33] Similar objects have also been found in the Balkans (A6: 5 – 7).[34]

A more direct connection between the Armenian finds and the Luristan standards can be seen at the level of the basic contours and especially through the partial anthropomorphization of their vertical axis from which two (or more) arched segments stem out (A5: 1, 2, 4, 6, 8 compare with 3, 7). On the Luristan bronzes this element is present in the type "idols with protomes" through the head and torso of the central figure and the pair of arched zoomorphic protomes (A5: 3, 7; A2), and the same arrangement also occurs in a category of openwork pins (B48: 2 – 4, 6, 7). The difference is that in the Luristan objects the central columnar figure is surrounded by one open hoop, composed of a pair of animal protomes, in contrast to the Armenian ones where this element is duplicated or multiplicated, but without protomes. This difference can be mitigated to some extent by an openwork Luristan pin where the central character is surrounded by two pairs of protomes which at the level of silhouette much more directly coincides with the Armenian finds (A5: 5 compare with 2, 6, 8). The fact that this composition appears on various types of Luristan bronzes shows that in the given culture it existed in and of itself, regardless of the objects, as a defined mythical i.e. symbolic image, which could be embedded in various objects (in the specific two, and perhaps in some others, probably made of organic materials).

In the following paragraphs we present several archaeological finds that clearly show that the presented Armenian objects should not be treated as a result of some kind of random inventions by the local craftsmen, but as products of a more general pictorial concept with a much broader geographical and chronological range that is manifested through other iconographic varieties spread outside of the specific period and region.

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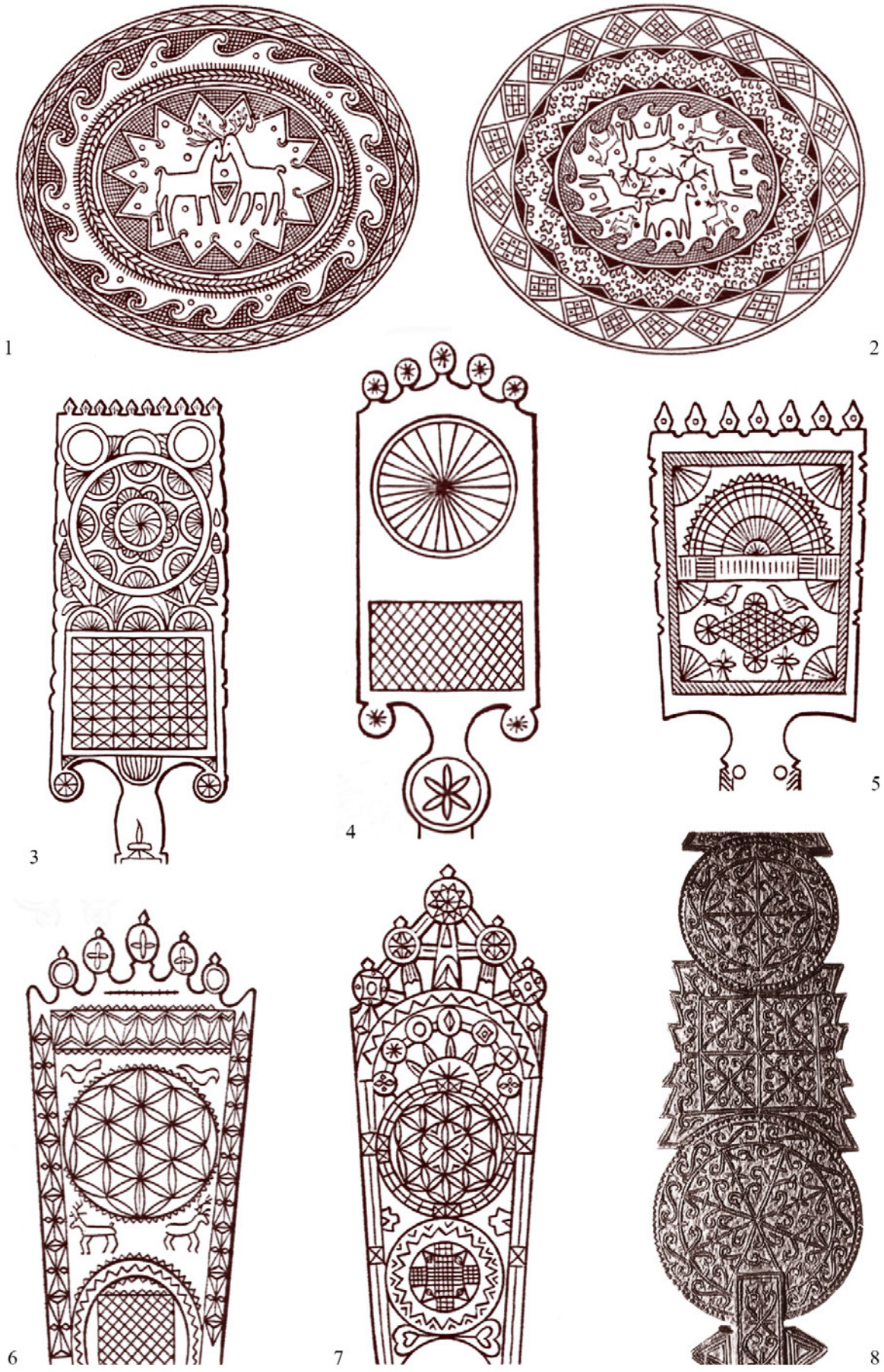
[31] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 20-22.

[32] On this topic, with examples and presented bibliography: Дж. Чепмэн, Б. Гайдарска, *Фрагментация*.

[33] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 235, 236; H. Samadi, *Les découvertes*, 188 (Fig. 24: d); P. Avetisyan et al, *Axes*, 5, 6, Fig. 5: A-I.

[34] Examples from Slovenia: S. Pahič, *Maribor*, 25 (Sl. 5); in general on similar objects from the Balkans and Italy, although not with one but with four inner bars: Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 577-583.

A10



b) Bronze openwork object from the Verona collection

One such find was recently made available on the online market of antiquities, previously in the ownership of a private collection in Verona. It is a bronze pendant, made in an openwork technique, whose corpus in the smallest details is identical to the above presented examples from the neighbouring regions of Luristan (A11: 3, 4 compare with 1 and with A6: 1 – 5).[35] In this case too the concentric rings (this time four instead of three) are connected by a single bar, whereby each of them is supplemented on the outer edge by a series of granules. But, unlike them, in this case the anthropomorphization of the object is clearly expressed. The mentioned bar extends up and out of the rings, ending in the form of a plastically shaped human head with distinguishable facial elements of which the nose and ears are especially emphasized, while at the back of the neck is a formed small loop for hanging. Shaped at the lower part is a pair of human feet, while on the sides - two loops (that slightly resemble the hands of the depicted character) through which a small ring is passed, apparently intended for hanging some kind of additional pendants. We are also familiar with other pendants, close to this one in terms of character, iconography and the applied conception. They are present within the Marlik culture, synchronous to the Luristan bronzes, which was widespread in northern Iran, along the southern shore of the Caspian Sea (A11: 5, 6 compare with 3, 4). They have all the elements of the previous pendant, with the difference that in this case the arms of the figure are clearly depicted, and in the middle part is an inscribed central cross, between the bars of which are placed four smaller groups of concentric circles.[36]

It is quite obvious that the character of the pendant from the Verona collection is a personalized variant of the analogous motif from the Armenian objects (A11: 3, 4 compare with 2 and with A4). If we agree with the interpretations that the circular part of the latter represented the upper level of the universe divided into "several skies", then in this case it could be a mythical figure that carried the character of a celestial god or more precisely God-Sky, who with his body actually forms this part of the cosmos. We have seen that, unlike him, in the Armenian specimens the stylized human figure represents only the cosmic pillar that extends through the celestial layers continuing further towards the earth. If the pendant from the Verona collection is taken as an ideal paradigm, its varieties could be found in regions that are geographically considerably distant from the Caucasus and Western Asia.

c) Elements of ceramic and bronze vessels from Italy

One such example (synchronous with the previous ones) originates from the “Villanova” culture, in the northern part of Italy (8th - 7th century BCE), which on a basic compositional level coincides with the previous ones, but executed in a different style, material and context, which is quite expected given the geographical distance between the regions in which they were discovered (A12: 1, 2 compare with A4; A11: 3, 4). This time it is a ceramic application added to the vertical handle of a vessel for liquids, probably with a cultic character. Within the framework of the same culture we are familiar with another ceramic vessel, with a different shape but a similar applique, this time with one ring around the human figure (A12: 5).[37] If we lower the criterion of similarity, other examples from the same culture could also be included in this group, but this time cast in bronze, in which the two concentric rings around the central figure are joined at the top, in some cases resembling protomes of birds (A12: 3). In these specimens, additional protomes or whole animals are arranged along the edge of the outer ring, and two animals are depicted besides the legs of the central anthropomorphic figure (A12: 3, 4, 6, 7, 12, 13). These objects had the same purpose as the ceramic ones - to

[35] *Lot 331 two Luristan* 2020. Together with the one described, another object was offered - "pin, with an openwork sphere and an added terminal of an upturned head of an ibex", with a very similar patina, probably discovered together with the previous.

[36] *Pendentif* 2016; *Pendant LACMA* 2020.

[37] B. Bagnasco Gianni, *Presenza*, 437 – Fig. 5; F. Delpino, *Una identità*, 42-46; A. Rathje, *The Ambiguous*, 114-116, Fig. 4.

complement the rim of some bronze vessels, obviously with a certain symbolic purpose (A12: 3).[38] There are indications that these ware vessels with a funerary purpose, almost always deposited in female burials which, judging by the form, probably served for ritual libations.[39]

Several interpretations of the iconography of these elements have been proposed, focusing on the solar spheres, the "solar barge" and the "master of animals".[40] We believe that they are mainly based on certain stereotypes and patterns that in the given case are not the most appropriate. Not every circular motif can be given a solar meaning, especially if it is composed of two or more concentric rings, nor can each pair of symmetrically joined protomes be treated as a "solar barge". And the term "master of animals" does not in itself explain anything, but more often functions as an empty phrase. We believe that in this case, as in the Armenian objects, the concentric rings are much more likely to carry a celestial meaning, within the frames of which the other elements of the composition also make sense: the animal figures or protomes arranged on the ring - in the sense of the phases of the time cycles (solar, lunar, stellar) that take place in the sky; the human figure in the center - in the sense of the mythical figure i.e. deity that guides these cycles on the basis of the dual principles denoted by the symmetrical animals placed besides his legs (A12: 3, 4, 6, 7, 10, 12); the zooanthropomorphic figure that holds the pillar with this composition - in the sense of the mythical figure with the character of Atlas who supports the cosmic axis on which the sky rests (A12: 4). The combination of this "image of the sky" with a vessel for liquids, obviously intended for some kind of cultic activities, can be justified by the belief that its presence above the drink will cause its sanctification i.e. acquisition of some positive properties. This correlation puts the objects presented here in direct relation to the Luristan standards which, judging by the recently discovered finds, were also placed in some mutual relation with the cultic vessels intended for the consecration of some kind of sacred drink (H7: 5; H9: 10 – 12; see p. 596).

A similar iconographic arrangement is also present on objects from the same cultural circle (“Villanova culture”), but with a different purpose - as belt buckles i.e. dividers or other types of jewelry (A12: 10), which certainly indicates the wider significance of the scene that was not limited to only one kind of objects and the narrower sphere to which they referred.[41]

d) The "crucifixion" of Ixion

In our comparisons we could also include other examples, if they are perceived in relation to the previous ones. First off are the scenes of the "crucifixion" of Ixion, painted on ancient vessels from southern Italy from the 4th century BCE. Although the textual records of this mythical act say that this character was punished by "crucifixion" on a wheel, in these examples it is a motif in the form of two or three concentric circles that does not resemble a wheel at all, among other things due to the absence of spokes (A11: 8, 9). This solution differs from other such scenes painted on older vessels from the 5th century BCE, where Ixion is crucified on a wheel with four spokes, and not in a standing and frontal, but in a convulsed and profile position (A11: 7). A. Painesi justifies this inconsistency with the adaptation of the scene by the Italic painters on the basis of some kind of pictorial concepts of their own, or other visual or textual templates.[42] Taking into account these components and the origin of the vessels from the Apennine Peninsula, we think about the

[38] B. Bagnasco Gianni, *Presenza*, 437 – Fig. 3; A. Rathje, *The Ambiguous*, 115, 116, Fig. 5; S. Haynes, *Etruscan*, 22-24, Fig. 23; T. Trocchi, *Ritual*, 789, 790, Fig. 42.4; P. von Eles, *Le ore*, 153-155, Fig. 10, Fig. 12; about the meaning of the scene: Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 362, 370, 371, 412, 413, Д28: 15, 16; И. Ефтимовски, *Примената*, 63, 64, Б15-Б17.

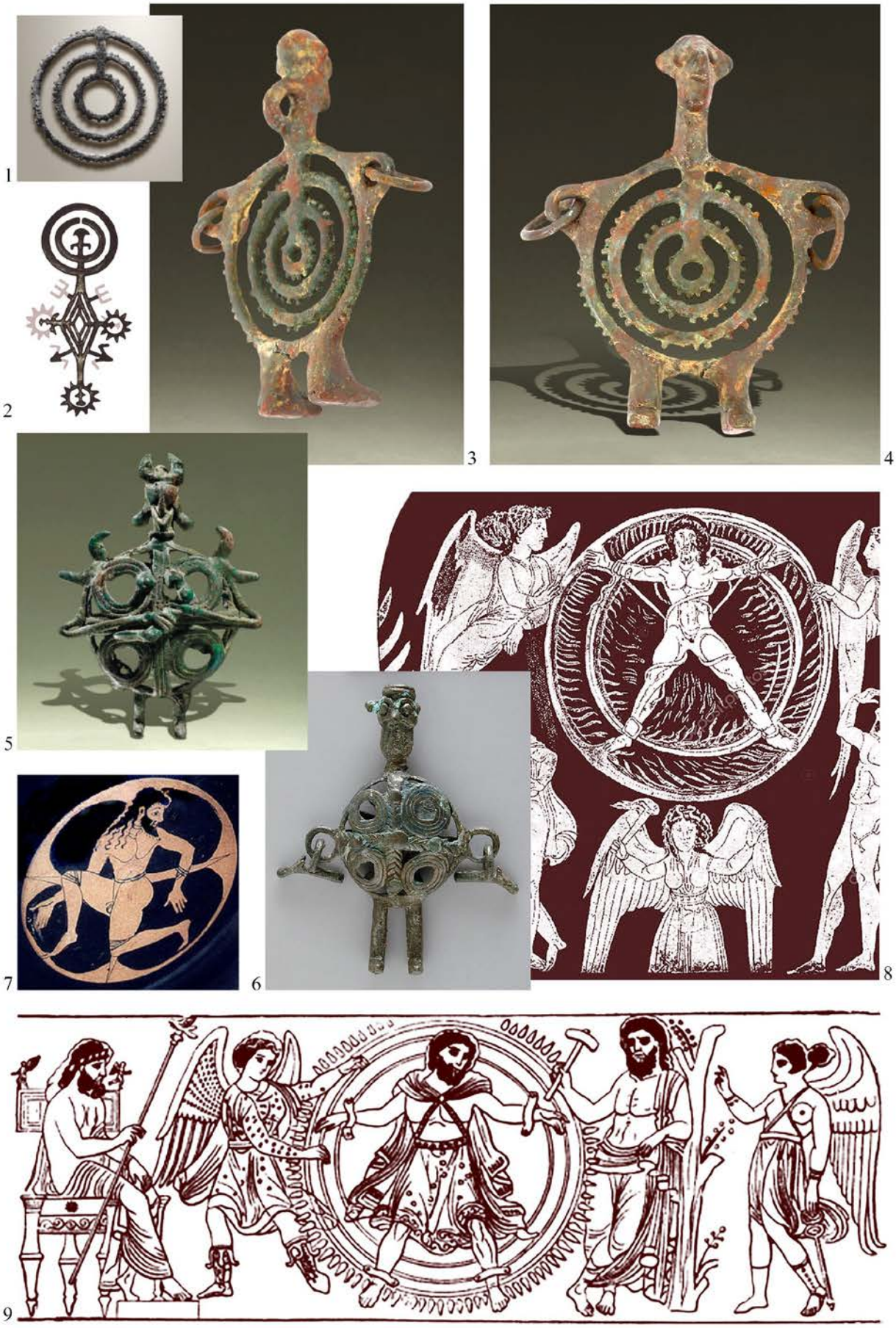
[39] P. von Eles, *Le ore*, 153, A. Rathje, *The Ambiguous*, 115-117; T. Trocchi, *Ritual*, 789.

[40] P. von Eles, *Le ore*, 153

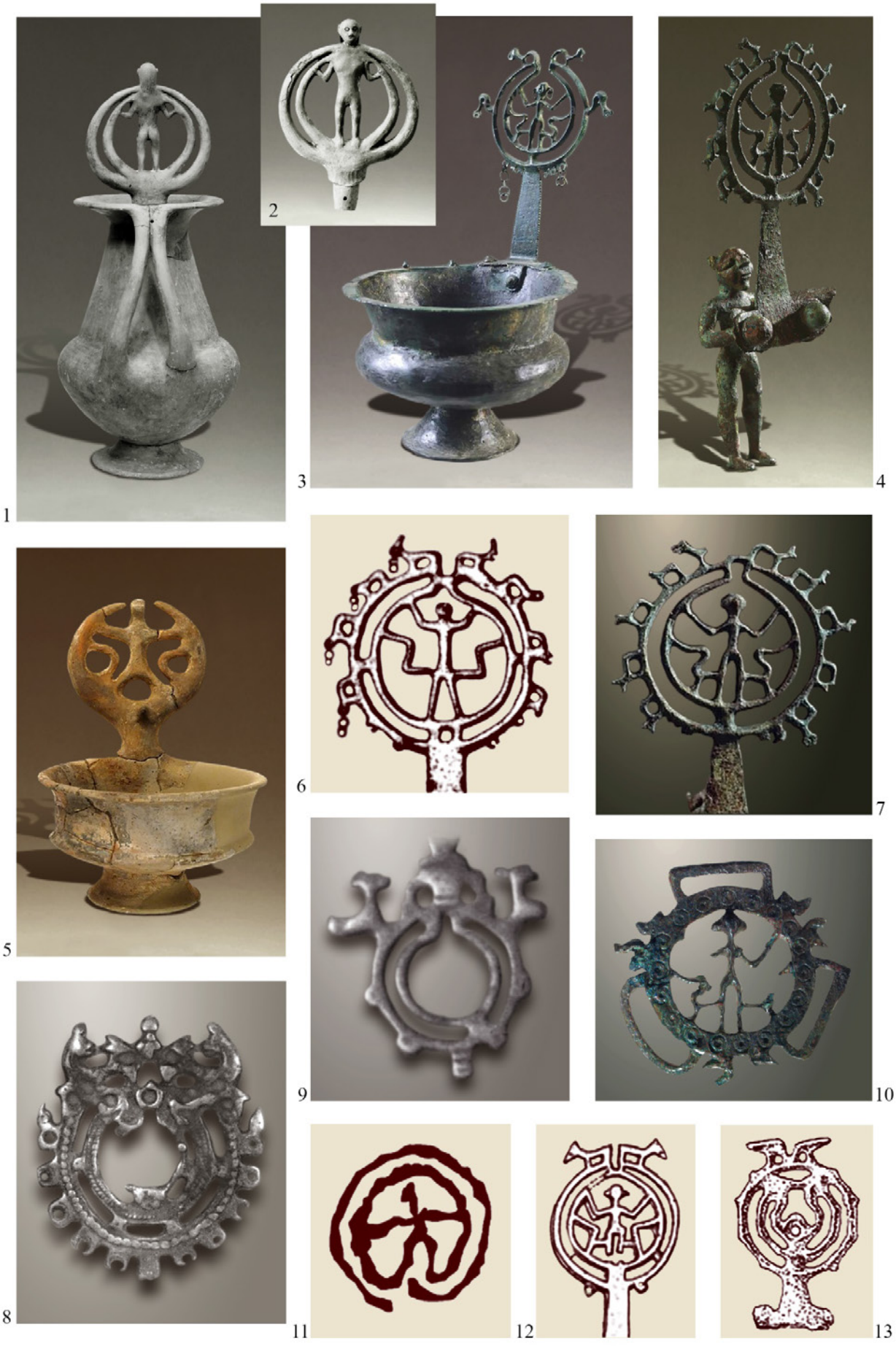
[41] P. Jacobsthal, *Early*, Pl. 237: a; *Verucchio* 2020.

[42] A. Painesi, *Objects*, 166-171. On p. 171, she lists (without favoring) the elements and interpretations on the solar meaning of the wheel, of Ixion, and the whole scene.

A11



A12



possibility that the replacement of the wheel with concentric rings occurred under the influence of some local traditions that may have been rooted exactly in the mentioned vessels from the "Villanova" culture (A11: 8, 9 compare with A12: 1 – 7).

e) Lead votive objects from Ain-al-Djoudj at Baalbek

From the later examples, deserving of special attention are several cultic objects discovered in the holy spring Ain-al-Djoudj near the famous sanctuary in Baalbek i.e. Heliopolis (Lebanon), left there as cultic gifts by pilgrims who visited this holy place. They represent dozens of lead plates from the Roman period, cast in relief in the form of various figures and compositions (A13: 1 – 9). On this occasion, we are especially interested in one group of them (A13: 1 – 6) which with its emphasized geometrism and non-figurality stands out from the rest whose iconography moves within the frames of the usual ancient Greco-Roman realistic concepts (A13: 7 – 9).[43] It seems that in this case they are miniature models of some other cultic objects, probably made of organic materials. They are formed in the shape of one or two concentric rings, open at the upper part, in the center of which is a crosshatched circular disk, supplemented by a human head. In this case also, the rings and the disc are connected by a bar which this time continues downwards and out of them, ending with a socket which, according to the authors, was intended for fastening on some kind of pole i.e. pillar ("la douille dans laquelle devait s'emmancher une hampe de bois"). In these objects also, the rings have granules, but much larger and in smaller numbers than in the objects from northwestern Iran (A13: 1, 4 compare with A6: 1, 2).[44]

Previous researchers, driven by similar iconographic templates specific to this part of Asia, have tended to treat the open ring-like segments as a lunar sickle, while the central circle - as a solar disk. They are also encouraged in their interpretation by some specimens in which the head above this disc has radially parted hair (A13: 5, 6) or others where in its place is a bust, made in a Greco-Roman manner, that resembles Helios (A13: 7).[45] Without denying these meanings, which could represent the second phase of the conceptualization of the mentioned objects, we believe that their global composition corresponds much better to the template behind the Armenian objects. We think that sufficient arguments in favor of this are the concentric rings (which do not look like a lunar sickle at all), the bar that connects them and extends beyond them, as well as the geometricized anthropomorphic figure in the center of the composition. Having in mind these similarities (compare A13: 1 – 6 with 10, 11) and the not too great geographical distance between Lebanon and Armenia, the finds from Ain-al-Djoudj could take on the character of some kind of late remnants of the same traditions that stood in the basis of the bronze openwork objects from Armenia. One should also not exclude some kind of indirect relations with Luristan, if we take into account that the objects from Lebanon (or their assumed larger prototypes) were fastened on a pole, similar to the Luristan standards (A13: 1 – 6 compare with 12). Also indicative of these relations is the location where they were discovered. As we have mentioned, this is the sanctuary of Baalbek where, among others, the Heliopolitan triad of gods was worshiped, as part of which, besides Atargatis and Hadad (equated with Hera and Zeus/Jupiter), another god was honored who was not depicted in a figural form, but in the shape of an aniconic pillar, not much different from the Luristan standards (H21: 5 – 9). On the presented lead objects we can look for him in the figures of the god Hermes i.e. Mercury and the caduceus shown in his hand (A13: 9)[46] - elements that in the last chapters of this monograph will occupy an important place in revealing the character and function of the Luristan standards (see p. 634). Appearing among the lead plaques is another iconographic composition that is also present amidst the Luristan bronzes. It is the depiction of an anthropomorphic deity standing on a symmetrical

[43] L. Badre, *Les figurines*; H. Seyrig, *La triade*.
[44] L. Badre, *Les figurines*, 193, Fig. 5: USEK 2; Fig. 11; H. Seyrig, *La triade*, 339, 340, Pl. XXXVI.
[45] H. Seyrig, *La triade*, 338-354.
[46] L. Badre, *Les figurines*, 189, Fig. 9, Fig. 10.

A13



composite structure composed of an ancient temple and the front part of two bulls,[47] which coincides with the iconography of a type of Luristan cheekpieces (A13: 8 compare with 13), but also with the central motif of the mentioned objects from the “Villanova” culture (A12: 3 – 7, 10, 12).

f) Metal objects from Tibet

Openwork metal objects with a composition and iconography quite similar to almost all here analyzed examples are also found in the collection of G. Tucci, collected in Tibet. They are two bronze pendants or appliques formed by two (and in one of them probably three) concentric rings complemented by loops, animal figures and a central anthropomorphic or hybrid (according to the descriptions monstrous) figure, flanked by a pair of four-legged animals or birds (according to the descriptions roosters) (A12: 8, 9). Although the items are published as prehistoric, there is no reliable information on their dating. In his attempts at chronological and cultural determination, M. Bussagli takes into account the nomadic peoples that occasionally, in various historical periods, entered Tibet from the north. The analysis of their form and style of execution also leads him to relations with the "art of steppes toward Mesopotamia" and even further north - with the "art des steppes". He does not doubt the symbolic i.e. religious character of these objects, which he connects to Buddhist traditions and shamanism, whereby he considers the circle, combined with the figures of roosters and the central character (monster, monkey), as an indicator of their eschatological meaning, with symbolism referring to cyclicity and the connection between sky and earth.[48]

B. Goldman notes the striking resemblance of these objects (which he considers to have been worn as "protective amulets") to almost all of the above presented groups: the Luristan bronzes, the bronze handles from the “Villanova” culture, and the lead votive objects from Ain-al-Djoudj (A12: 8, 9 compare with the others and with A6: 1 – 7; A11: 3, 4; A13; B28). Through comparisons he tries to reach the meaning of the "master of animals" and the birds i.e. roosters present on the Tibetan, Luristan, and Italic objects. He also analyzes the culture-historical routes on which the similarity between these objects could be based, whereby, within the frames of the **Tibet - Luristan - Etruria** line, he gives certain advantage to the Luristan objects which he considers closest to their assumed "prototype". Although in an indirect way, within the indicated communications, he also gives certain importance to the Eurasian steppes that functioned “as an open `sea` carrying commerce between the settled lands of East and West.”[49]

The apostrophized Luristan-Tibetan relations are very indicative because they refer not only to the mentioned, but also to other iconographic motifs (I12). It is possible that they reflect the spiritual culture of some Indo-Aryan group settled in this region during the movement of Indo-Aryans from Eastern Europe through the Caucasus and Iran towards India. The same applies to the Luristan-Italic similarities which are also represented through other pictorial motifs, presented in the following chapters (for example F3: 1 – 6; G22; see p. 707 and pl. I16).

A schematized variant of the mythical image analyzed here is present on a petroglyph from Moynak in Kazakhstan,[50] which indicates the possible nucleus from which this motif could have reached Armenia and the surrounding regions, especially if we take into account the assumptions about the Indo-Aryans as their hypothetical carriers (A12: 11).

g) Early medieval and ethnographic examples

The above presented geometric base consisting of a circle and a rhombus (or quadrilateral) is found in the early Middle Ages on numerous types of jewelry widespread in Eastern, Central Europe, the Balkans and broader. They are mainly two-plated bow fibulae and belt buckles consisted of a circular (= sky) and a square

[47] L. Badre, *Les figurines*, 183, Fig. 1 – Fig. 7.
[48] M. Bussagli, *Bronze*, 331-333, 337, 338 (No. 6; No. 12).
[49] B. Goldman, *Some*.
[50] U. Sansoni, *Reflection*, Tav. 2: 3; И. Ефтимовски, *Примената*, кат. бр. Б07.

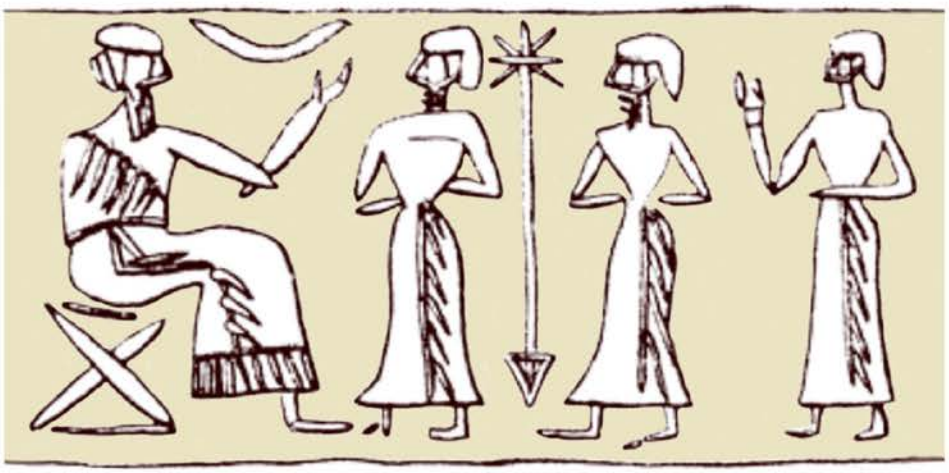
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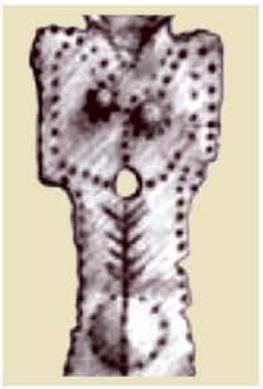

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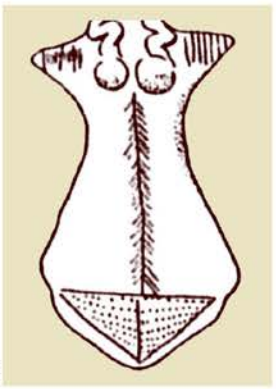

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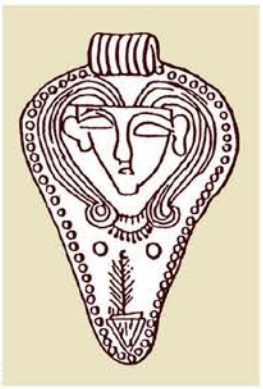

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or rhombic segment (= earth), whereby the circular one often also takes on a semicircular shape that represented a vertical projection of the sky in the form of a celestial vault (fibulae – A9: 2, 3, 5, 8; buckles – A6: 8 – 10; A9: 4, 6, 7). This is supported by the various smaller elements (circular segments, rings, rosettes or depictions of animals) placed along the edges which in the given arrangement acquire the meaning of the phases of the sun's movement through the universe (A9: 9 – 11 compare with the others and with A4). In both types of objects the rhombic or square part is often supplemented by a zooanthropomorphic figure or head of some mythical representative of the chthonic regions (A6: 8, 9; A9: 2 – 6, 8). The meaning of the cosmic axis i.e. cosmic pillar among the fibulae is carried by their bow, while in the buckles it is acquired by the prong that extends from the fitting towards the loop.[51]

Similar arrangements, in which a circle or semicircle is combined with a square or a rhombus also occur in various ethnographic objects. In our previous studies on this topic we have included two types of such objects from Eastern Europe and the Balkans. These include wooden distaffs for spinning (A10: 3 – 8) and painted Easter eggs (A10: 1, 2) in whose geometric ornamentation, supplemented by zoomorphic motifs, one can recognize the image of the cosmos depicted through the circle or semicircle as the sky and the square or rhombus as the earth.[52]

The cosmological paradigms of these objects have been discussed in detail in our previous studies. This is why on this occasion we only present a summarized overview, referring to them and the detailed arguments, examples and references presented therein.

5. Cosmological aspects of the rhombus (Western Asian seals)

As an indirect parallel for the mentioned geometric models of the cosmos, including those present on the Armenian plaques and the Luristan standards, one can take some motifs from Western Asian seals. They are motifs in the shape of a rhombus, rising from which is a vertical pillar with a star-like motif at the top (A14: 1 – 4).[53] We assume that this was a sign, standing behind which were cosmological representations in which the rhombus would indicate the four-sided earth equated with the female genitalia, while the vertical axis would represent the Cosmic axis (compare with A3: 1). Within that context, the star-like motif could represent the Polar Star whose position really coincides with the center of the sky i.e. the axis around which it rotates, due to which the star at the same time also becomes the center of the whole universe. Simultaneously, this last motif could also indirectly represent the sky, i.e. the upper zones of the universe, the zenith of the sun or the phase of the summer solstice.

Occurring on the seals is also a variant where the rhombus is replaced by a triangle oriented with its top downwards, which, in relation to the previous examples, could be interpreted as its alternation with the depiction of the pubis, once again as a symbol of the female aspects of the earth (A14: 5, 6, compare with 1 – 4).[54] This motif, combined with a depiction of a tree instead of a pillar, appears on various other objects such as the ceramic figurines of the Eneolithic "Anau" culture of southern Turkmenistan (A14: 9), and the prehistoric cultures of the Mediterranean and Eastern Europe (A14: 7; B42: 4 – 6). Somewhat later it can also be detected on a category of Bronze Age gold pendants from Palestine (A14: 10; B42: 2, 3). A similar arrangement is also present within the circle of the Luristan bronzes (A14: 8; B42: 7, 8). In most objects,

[51] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 69-82 (with presented bibliography).

[52] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 82-90 (with presented bibliography).

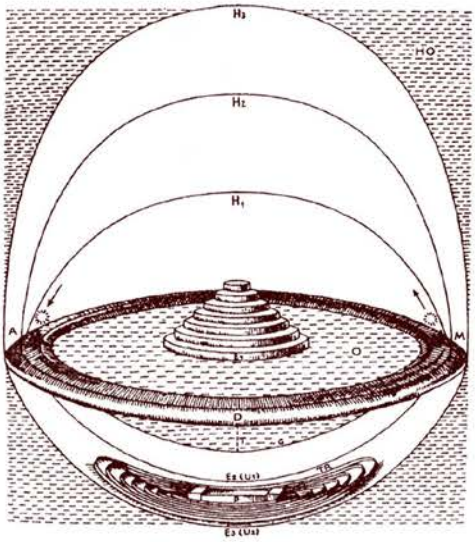
[53] For the examples (without the mentioned interpretations): E. Bleibtreu, *Zur nicht publizierten*, 484 (Abb. 379), 519 (Abb. 518a); photo: H.-U. Steymans, *Die Sammlung*, 558 (Abb. 4); on the female aspects of the rhombus: T. van Bakel, *The magical*, (sign "*peš: n.*").

[54] For the object (without the mentioned interpretation): E. Bleibtreu, *Zur nicht publizierten*, 519 (Abb. 518a); on the female aspects of the triangle: T. van Bakel, *The magical*, (*PIE *g^em(e)*).

A15



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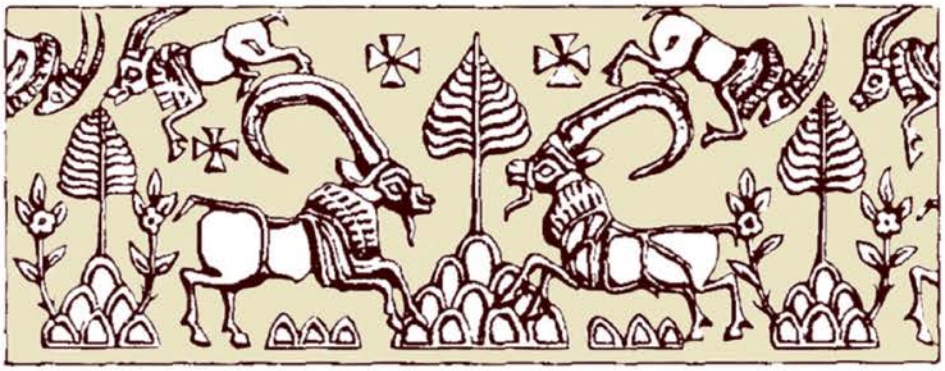
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within this composition one can recognize the equation of the depicted female character with the universe, whereby the lower parts of her figure, represented here through the triangle as a sign of the pubis, symbolize the earth, while the upper parts - the sky. The tree depicted above the triangle acquires the meaning of the Tree of Life (a symbol of the productive power of the goddess), but also of the Cosmic Tree as one of the variants of the Cosmic Axis (B42) (in more detail about these objects on p. 129).

A similar element appears on the Western Asian seals with a triangular motif pointed upwards, from the top of which rises some kind of plant motif (A15: 3 – 8).[55] The third combination could be interpreted as a schematized depiction of the Cosmic Mountain from which the Cosmic Tree rises towards the sky, which on a symbolic level would represent a combination of two symbols of the Cosmic Axis.[56]

* * *

We believe that through the concepts, analyzes and comparative material presented in this chapter we have succeeded, if not to prove, then at least to give arguments in support of the assumption that in the basis of the Luristan standards, underneath the other iconographic levels that make up these objects and actually determine their shape, is a geometric image of the universe, most often present implicitly, as their contour and global composition. We are convinced that additional arguments in support of proving this assumption will be presented in the following chapters relating to the other iconographic levels of these objects. The presentation of the content and meaning of these levels, and within that framework of the cosmological aspects of their iconography, will have a retroactive effect on the proving of such an aspect also on the geometric level of the Luristan standards.

[55] E. Porada, *The Oldest*, 565 (Fig. 2), 566 (Fig. 4); H. Frankfort, *Cylinder*, Pl.IV: j; T. van Bakel, *The magical*, KHO the Sumerian sign (Jaritz 99a) reads ku4.

[56] On the Cosmic Mountain: N. Čausidis, *Myth. of the Mountain*; Н. Чаусидис, *Мит. на планината* (with presented bibliography).

Chapter IV

ZOOMORPHIC AND PHYTOMORPHIC LEVEL



IV. ZOOMORPHIC AND PHYTOMORPHIC LEVEL

1. Pair of symmetrical animals on the "zoomorphic standards"

a) Basic features

The zoomorphic level dominates among a large group of the Luristan standards that have so far been referred to by multiple names. The most common terms are "Finials" ("Wild-Goat Finials", "Feline Finials"), "Animals Finials", "Heraldic Animal Finials", "first type standards".[1] The base of these objects consists of **two figures of animals** standing on their hind legs and facing symmetrically towards each other (B1; B2; B5 – B10). The objects have two identical faces, which means that they were conceived for observation from all sides. Although rare, there are examples with three animals depicted in the same pose and the same mutual orientation (B2: 7 – 9). In our study, we decided to call this group of objects "zoomorphic standards" - according to their basic feature.

Formed at the joint of the front and rear legs of these animals are two rings and/or a tube through which an elongated vertical element in the form of a pillar i.e. rod was passed (according to some opinions it could have been the Luristan pins with a decorative head), the lower end of which was inserted into the neck of a bronze bottle-shaped support that was placed underneath the standard (B2:1; B5: 7 – 9; B6: 9; B8: 7). It is thought that, in addition to its practical function - to raise and fasten the standard, this element also had a symbolic character.[2] Numerous previous researchers have suggested that this is the oldest group of standards, which was later also confirmed by the several rare finds of this type discovered *in situ* as grave goods (Bard-i Bal, Khatunban) and in shrines (Sangtarashan) (B1: 4, 6, 7; B5: 4; B7: 4). Based on other deposited finds from the closed archaeological contexts, some "zoomorphic standards" are dated to the **Iron Age IA** (1300 – 1150 BCE) or IB (1150 – 1000 BCE), and others to the **Iron Age I - II** (1000 – 800/750 BCE).[3]

It should be noted that zoomorphic figures with an identical body shape, posture and style of execution, also appear as part of Luristan bronze vessels - this time in the function of handles (H7: 1 – 4, 6; see p. 596).[4]

[1] For more details on these and other terms see p. 8.

[2] E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 109, 117-121, Fig. 74, 95, 97; see p. 129.

[3] E. Haerinck, B. Overlaet, *The Chr. of the Pusht-i Kuh*, 129-132 (Fig. 6); B. Overlaet, *The Early*, 185-193 (Fig. 153), 216 (Fig. 184); E. Haerinck et al, *Finds*, 114, 115, 132, Pl. 2, Pl. 8**;** M. Malekzadeh et al, *Fouilles*, 85, 86, 96, 97, Pl. 18, Pl. 19 (No. 160), Pl. 36.

[4] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 276 – Fig 27 (522); O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 141; R. Ghirshman, *The Art*, 78 (Fig.103).

B1

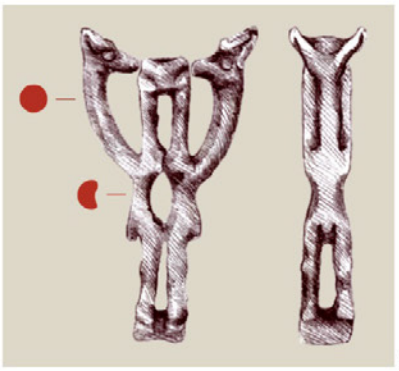

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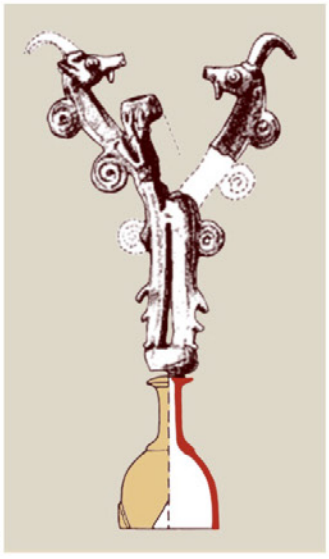

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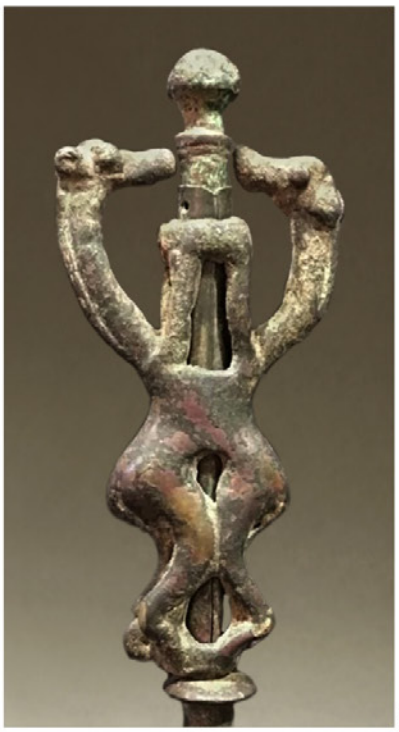

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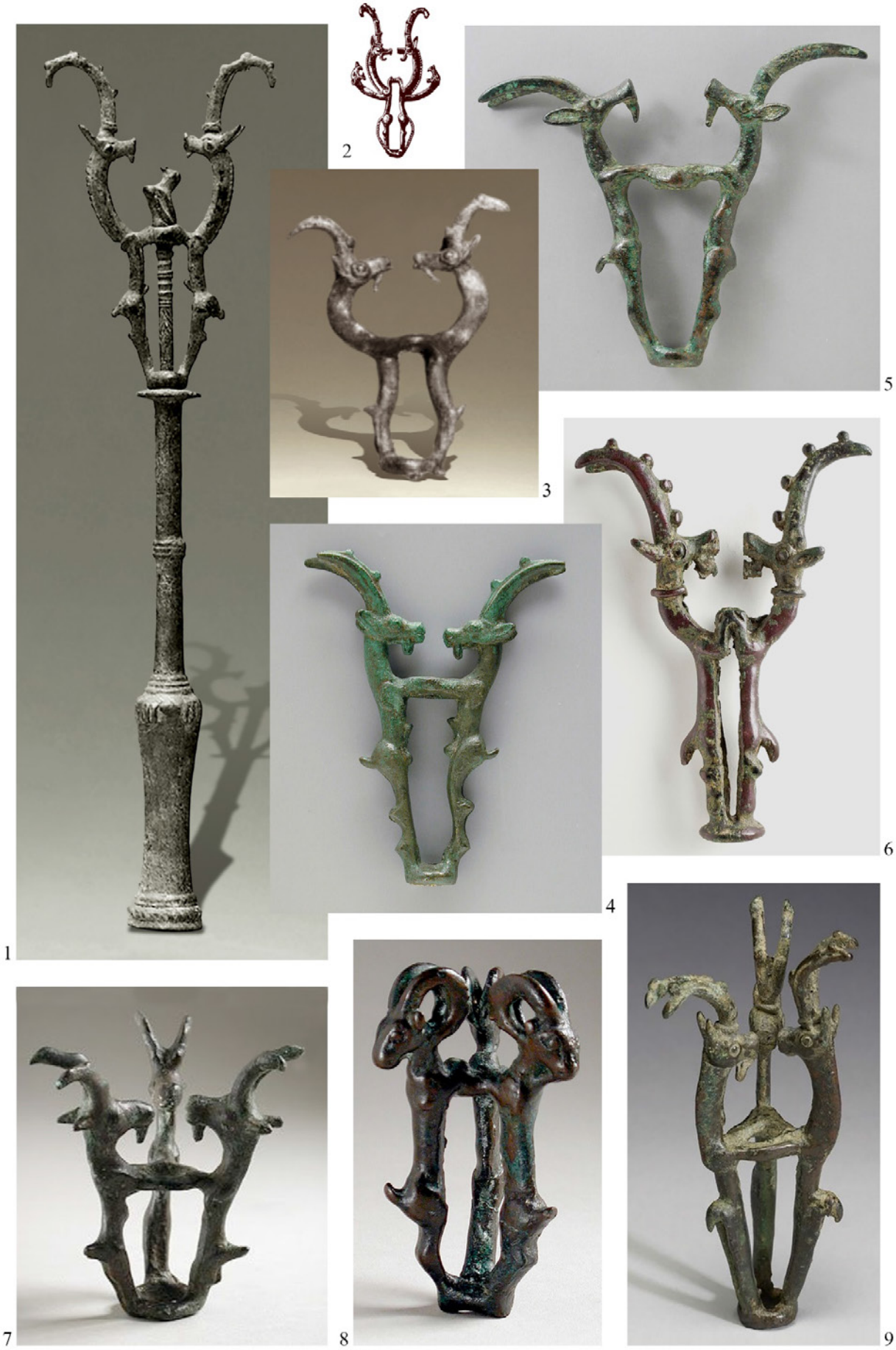

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B2



b) Species and sex of the animals

In the earliest "zoomorphic standards" the pair of animals is most commonly represented through **ibexes/wild goats**, which, on certain objects, have been identified by some researchers as **mouflons and gazelles** (B1: 4, 6, 7; B2; B5; B6). Numerous standards of this type, especially those that are generally considered to be somewhat later, also include **animals from the family of felines**, in which researchers often recognize **panthers** or **lions** (B1: 1 – 3, 5, 8, 9; B7: 1 – 4, 8, 9). There are a small number of specimens in which one can also clearly identify the horse, based on the profile of the head and the curved neck supplemented by teeth-like elements denoting the mane (B5: 1, 2, 5; B6: 2, 8). Despite the relatively rare presence of explicit depictions of the horse, its more intense presence can be sensed in the visual appearance of the ibexes and panthers - the two most dominant animals on the standards. Here we have in mind their necks, which with their elongated, arched shape and mane along the back edge are not at all typical for these animals.[5] In principle, in later specimens it is more difficult to determine the species of these zoomorphic figures, which appear in a more stylized form, and in **hybrid variants** combined from various animals.[6] Multiple researchers indicate the tendency for bringing the head of these animals (in the zoomorphic and other standards) closer to that of a bird. H. Potratz, thinks that the main pair of protomes (according to him originally pantherine) acquire an almost bird-like, and even specifically a rooster-like appearance.[7] This ambivalence is also noted by P. R. S. Moorey,[8] while E. Porada suggests the transformation of the primary animals into **gryphons** (B3 compare with B4 - examples of gryphons from West Asia, the Mediterranean and the North Black Sea region).[9]

Based on the global insight into all types of standards, it can be concluded that in the "zoomorphic standards" the transformation of the animal from the family of felines into birds commences, but is not finalized into a head with a more clearly formed appearance of a bird or gryphon (B3: 1 – 12). This occurs in other types, especially in the "idols with protomes" where the main pair of protomes acquire not only a fully formed beak, but also a comb specific to birds (B3: 13 – 15; C13 – C22).

Although in most standards of this type the sex of the animals is not designated, when it comes to the ibexes, based on the accentuated horns and the presence of a beard, it can be concluded that they are males (B2; B5). However, in several specimens the male sex of these animals is also marked explicitly - through the depiction, and even certain accentuation of the **phallus** (B6: 3 – 5, 9). On a so far unique "zoomorphic standard" from the Metropolitan Museum, the animals are alternated with human figures, but depicted in the same pose and arrangement and with the same horns, whereby one of the figures is depicted with an erect phallus, while the other with a vulva executed in relief (but not with breasts too) (B6: 1 compare with 11 - cylindrical seal motif). There are indications of similar sexual differentiation on another standard with quite realistic depictions of carnivorous animals (B1: 8).[10] The example from the Metropolitan Museum could point to the possibility that in some other "zoomorphic standards" the animals were conceptualized with a different sex, although on a visual level this was not adequately denoted. On a standard with figures of horses (from LACMA), it seems that the male sex was denoted symbolically, through the depiction of a **horn between the ears**, most probably only in one of the animals (B6: 6 – 8). This interpretation would be based on the

[5] This inadequacy has also been pointed out by H. Potratz (J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 46).

[6] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 142-144; P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 140-153, for the specific species of goats: 146 (*capra ibex, capra aegagrus*); S. G. Schmid,`*Neue´ Luristanbronzen*, 30-34; E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 109-112; on the presence of the horse: H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 35, 36; P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 90, No. 202, 203.

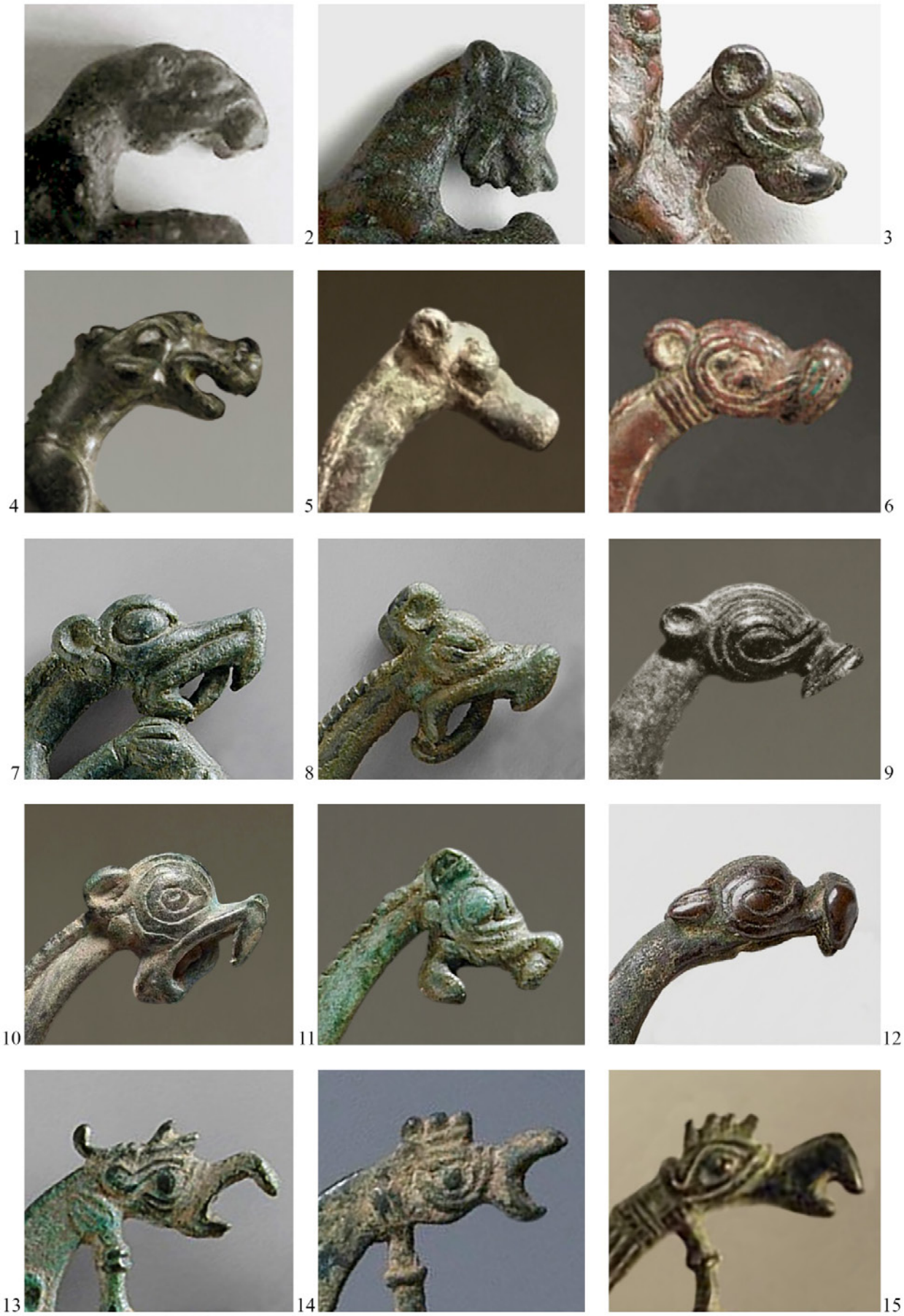
[7] H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 28; H. Potratz, *Die Luristanbronzen*, 211; W. Culican, *Bronzes*, 3.

[8] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 154.

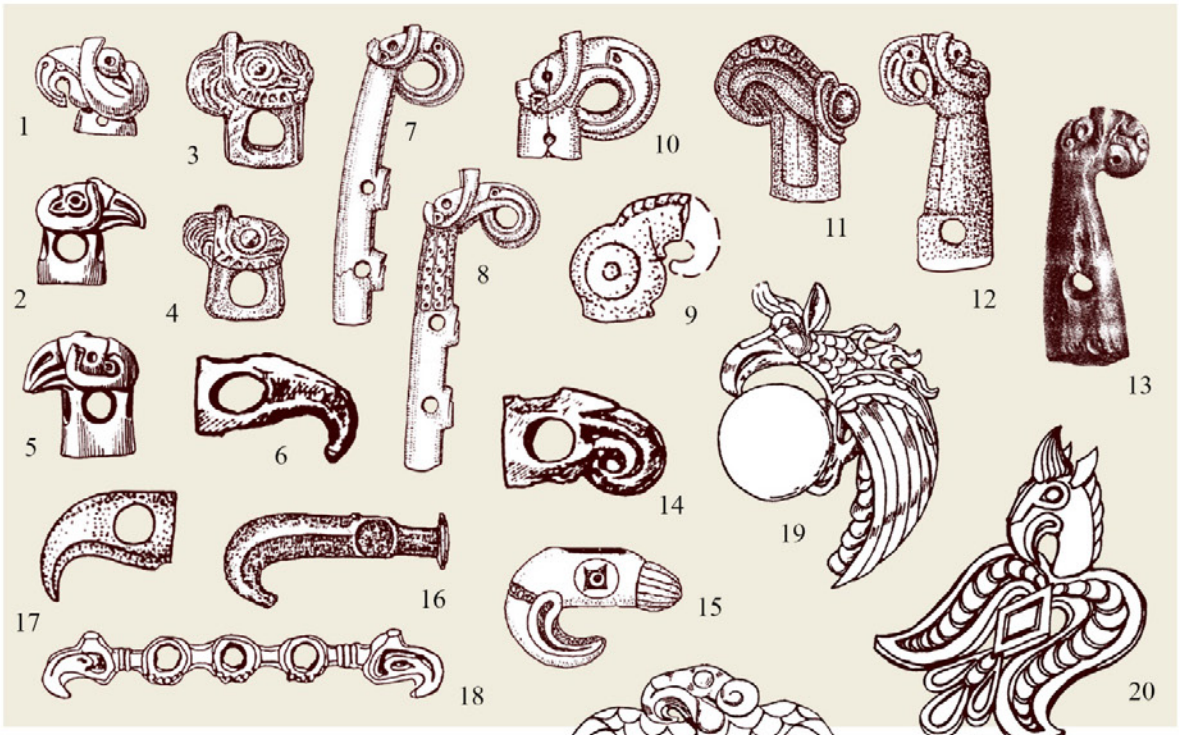
[9] E. Porada, *The Art*, 86; numerous examples of gryphons from the mentioned regions: А. Р. Канторович, *Истоки*; some more typical examples among Luristan bronzes in relation to other Mesopotamian analogies: P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 59.

[10] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 143 (No. 218), 144 (No. 219).

B3



B4









emphasized phallic symbolism of the **unicorn** throughout history.[11] A similar arrangement, also with a pair of stylized horses, is present on a standard from the Louvre, this time with much more dominant arched horns curved upwards (B6: 2). An animal figure with a single horn formed on the forehead between the ears, according to **P. Amiet**, is depicted on a Luristan pin from the David-Weill collection.[12] As a parallel and possible template for these objects, one could point to a seal from the Elamite period, discovered in Luristan, depicted on which is an analogous composition with a pair of winged animals flanking a tree (B6: 10 compare with 2 and 8). Here, depicted on the foreheads of the animals (according to the contours, most probably winged horses) is a single horn, which this time also is not completely straight, but slightly curved upwards.[13] An animal (according to some interpretations a horse) with a horn on its forehead or muzzle also appears on a specific category of Luristan pins.[14]

E. Porada, thinks that the figures of ibexes from the Luristan standards are not a product of the culture of the new peoples that settled in Iran, but of the traditions of the Elamites, ascertained on the motifs from the seals and on the stele of Untash Gal. She points to the connection of these animals with the Iranian demons of nature, and considers their appearance as a result of the restoration of some older indigenous traditions (compare with B6: 11; I1: 7, 8, 13, 14).[15]

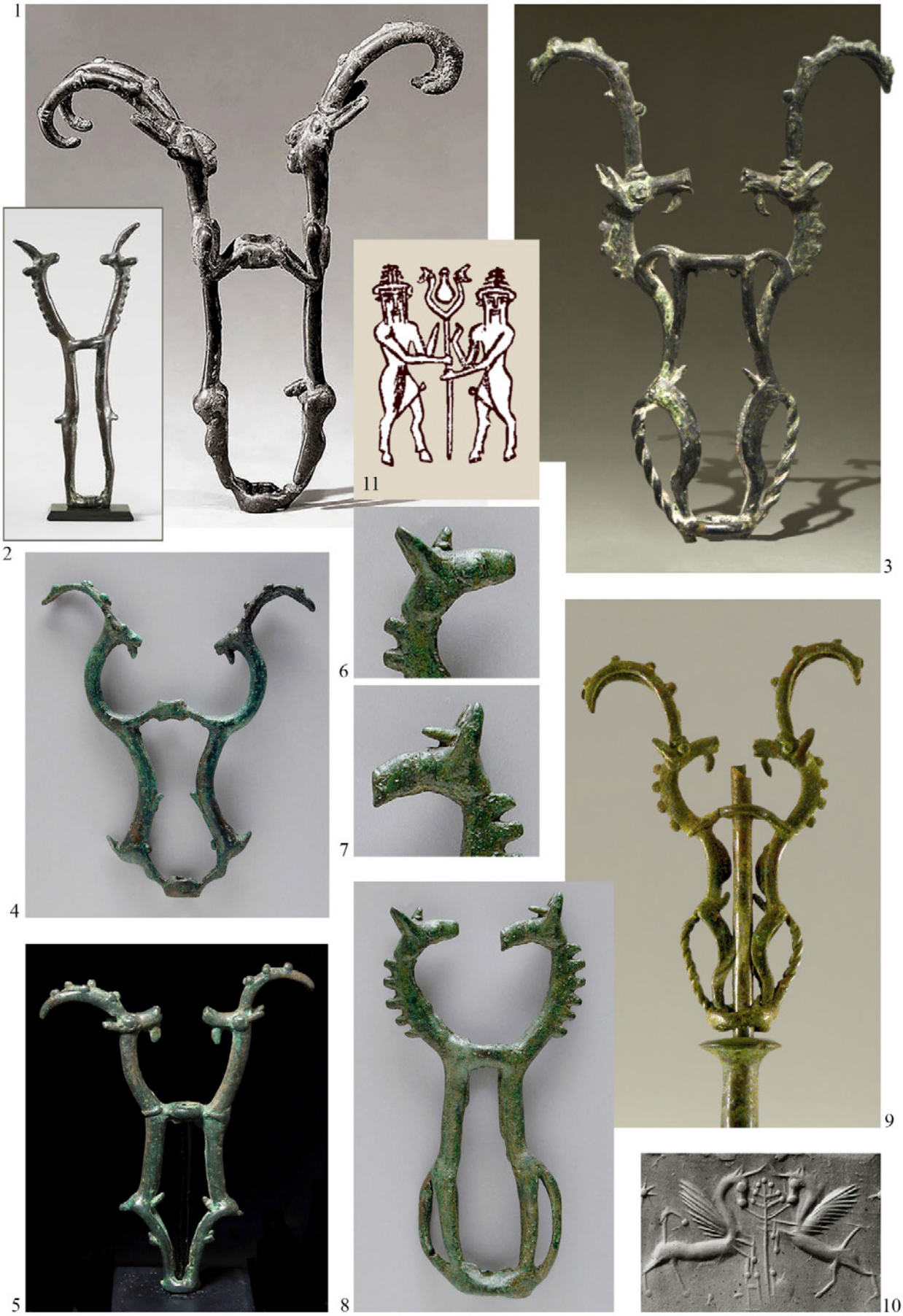
Several previous researchers have sought to justify the presence of specific species of animals as part of these objects. **O. W. Muscarella** emphasizes the possibility that the depictions of animals from the family of felines may indicate a symbolic association with certain deities and activities that would be different from the ones on which are depicted ibexes.[16] **H. Potratz**, within the frames of his lunar interpretation of Luristan objects, considers the "panthers" from the "zoomorphic standards" as symbols of the lunar goddess, and gives the same meaning also to the "mouflons", although in his older works he treated the latter as solar symbols.[17] He defines the panthers as representatives of the cult of the goddess of fertility, the mistress of the moon and the waters, giving them a pronounced apotropaic function which, according to him, was based on their frightening appearance, and was related to the protection of this goddess. He thinks that their wide open mouths are not aimed towards her but at the demons, whereby the whole triple composition, although resembling a fight, is actually defined by him as an apotheosis of the lunar goddess and her zoomorphic companions.[18] This author notes that the horse and its protomes are present on the standards much less frequently than the mouflon and panther, whereby he indicates the possibility that the horse was introduced at a later date and was associated with the cult of the sun, unlike the lunar character of the other two animals.[19] The tendency for transformation of the main pair of panther protomes into avian ones (and specifically into rooster-like), is justified by him with changes at the level of the cult ("mit einem veränderten Kultort zu erklären sein dürfte").[20]

[11] On the unicorn: F. Tagliatesta, *Iconography*; D. Hunt, *The Association*, 77, 78, 81 (associations related to the Luristan bronzes, but without reliably identified examples); basic data and meanings, with presented literature: *Unicorn* 2018.
[12] P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 72, 78 (No. 170).
[13] E. F. Schmidt et al, *The Holmes*, 425, 460, 462 (the animals are identified as winged bulls), Pl. 236: 82, another potential specimen with a straight horn and a central human figure instead of a tree – 459, Pl. 235: 71.
[14] J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 36, 37, Taf. XXIV: 141, Taf. XXV: 142-150.
[15] E. Porada, *Nomads*, 23, 24; on the motif from the seal: W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 177, *178* (Fig. 481).
[16] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 144.
[17] H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 23.
[18] H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 33. In some works this author refers to them as representations of the deity ("… stellvertretend für ein Götterbild zu stehen hatte."): J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 42, 45.
[19] H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 35, 36; an essay (not particularly successful) on the place of the horse among Luristan bronzes: F. A. Hasanvand et al, *Horse*.
[20] H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 28; H. Potratz, *Die Luristanbronzen*, 211; on this issue, but mainly related to the "idols with protomes": W. Culican, *Bronzes*, 3.

B5



B6



The tendency for alternation and transformation of the protomes of animals from the family of felines and of goats into horses (in the older Luristan standards) and especially into birds i.e. gryphons (in newer ones) could indicate some kind of cultural or demographic changes in the Luristan region (B3). If we accept the previous views that the first two animals, with their naturalistic depiction, reflect the local traditions of the Middle East, then the emergence of the other species could manifest the affinities of some new inhabitants that in Luristan had appeared later. The transformation of the ibexes and panthers i.e. lions into a **gryphon** i.e. a **bird-headed mammal**, especially due to its relatively late occurrence (7th – 6th century BCE, when the standards of the type "idols with protomes" are dated; B3: 13 – 15) could be associated with the arrival in this region of some populations from the north (Caucasus, North Black Sea region). A review of the material shows the presence of the gryphon in those areas starting from the 7th - 6th century BCE, but under the influence of Western Asia and/or ancient Greece (B4: 24 – 29).[21] In contrast to these relatively late and rare examples, hybrid creatures similar to the gryphon have appeared in those regions even before, as part of the local Late Bronze and Iron Age cultures, formed independently of the indicated regions. They represent variations of a creature (this time much more common) with the beak of a bird of prey and the horns of a ram, most often present on horse harness elements executed in bone and horn (B4: 1 – 18).[22] The autochthonous character of the creatures of this type is also indicated by the depictions of a bird with ears present on various objects within the frames of the Scytho-Siberian animal style, made out of wood and other organic materials (B4: 19 – 22).[23] In support of this one can also take the Scythian mythologized deers with horns supplemented by bird protomes, whose muzzle is often transformed into some kind of beak-like ending (B11: 5, 7; B16: 2, 5). Does this mean that this creature actually represents some Scythian version of a gryphon (this time a **"ram-gryphon"**)? It is indicative that in the Luristan standards we also have alternation of the three animals that participate in the figure of the gryphon, and exactly in its "Scythian" variant (ram-gryphon): a horned herbivorous animal (ibex, mouflon), an animal from the family of felines (panther, lion) and a bird of prey. Another unusual element could fit into these relations - the elongated addition formed above the forehead or above the upper beak of some Scythian and Mediterranean gryphons (B4: 24 – 29) which interferes with the several unicorn zoomorphic figures (horses) from the Luristan standards (B6: 2, 6 – 8).

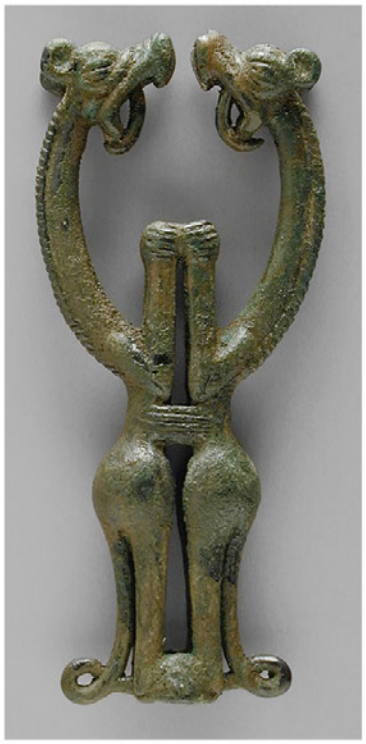
N. L. Chlenova has made a hypothesis that the heads of the Luristan "lions" were conceived in the Scythian world as bird heads, under the influence of the "cult of the bird of prey" that was specific to them.[24] The Scythian-Luristan relations are also sought in the symmetricaly paired depiction of animals on the zoomorphic standards, in comparison to the Scythian bone cheekpieces with animals that were combined in pairs - on both sides of the horse's mouth, thus forming a similar composition (B4: 1 – 18).[25]

c) Stylization and "baroquesation" of the animals

Noticeable in the later "zoomorphic standards" is a tendency for thinning out the bodies of the animals, their stylization and supplementation with various small accessories, which leads to complication i.e. "baroquesation" of the composition, and even marginalization of the figures of the animals themselves i.e. their transformation into some kind of abstract elements (B7; B8: 4 – 7; B9; B10; B13).[26] Some authors seek

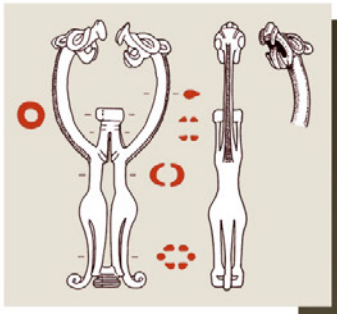
[21] А. Р. Канторович, *Истоки*, 190-192, 195-205, 215, 216; on the motif of a bird (rooster) in the objects from Ziwiye: М. Н. Погребова, Д. С. Раевский, *Ранние*, 122-131, on the Luristan relations (and influences) – 124.
[22] А. Р. Канторович, *Истоки*, 210-218, Рис. 16 – Рис. 19.
[23] А. Р. Канторович, *Истоки*, 206, 207, Рис. 12.
[24] М. Н. Погребова, Д. С. Раевский, *Ранние*, 133.
[25] М. Н. Погребова, Д. С. Раевский, *Ранние*, 133, 134, Рис. 22, б.
[26] E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 109; O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 142. A detailed elaboration and analysis of this process of stylization is given by H. Potratz, whereby he rightly concludes that it to some extent bypasses the animals' heads in order to retain the features that exactly define the species of the animal, and thus its divine character. (J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 46-48).

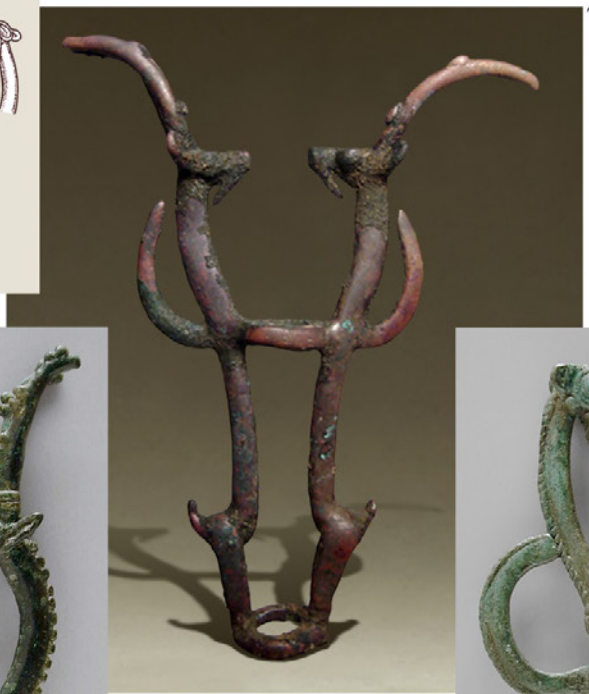
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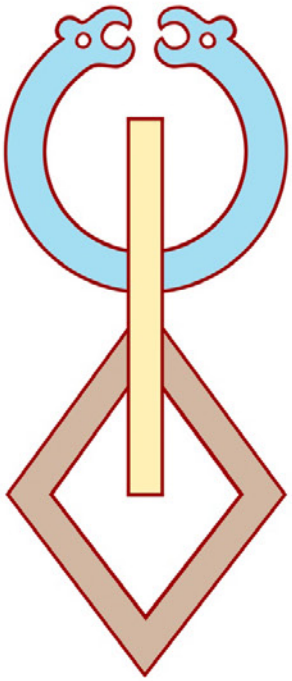

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B8


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the motivation of such a process in the aspiration of the metallurgists to emphasize the **expressiveness** of these figures, i.e. their **savagery**, **cruelty** and **monstrosity**.[27] Without denying this view, we believe that such tendencies could be justified by two more components. The first (which is also pointed out indirectly by E. de Waele) relates to the process of making these objects in the "lost wax" technique and would consist in simplifying the modeling of the wax model of these objects by reduction of the figures to the level of the basic wax rods by use of which this procedure began (most extreme examples B7: 7, 9). The second component relates to the iconography and meaning of these objects, and would be based on the aspiration to, through such "dissolution" i.e. abstracting the bodies of the animals, shift the focus to their **cosmological meaning**. In this context, the figures formed in this way would not be present on the standards in order to evoke the animals themselves, but the elements of the universe symbolically represented through the parts of their bodies. Viewed in context of the previous geometric level of the standards, this tendency can be understood as an aspiration, at this zoomorphic level as well, through the deformed bodies of the animals, to evoke (or intuitively reach) **the notions on the shape of the universe** encoded in archaic consciousness or subconscious as geometric structures (B8: sky = circle, earth = rhombus, cosmic axis = vertical line; see p. 53).

d) Supplementing the animals with zoomorphic elements

In many "zoomorphic standards" the main pair of animals is complemented by other smaller zoomorphic figures or by individual elements on their body that appear in three main positions: in the upper i.e. front part of the animals' figure, on their back, and at the tip of the tail. In this order we will present them in the following paragraphs.

- Upper i.e. front part of the animals' body

Above the upper ring formed at the front legs of the animals and on the inner or outer edge of their curved necks appear protomes of birds or protomes i.e. heads of herbivores (goats, gazelles). They are most often present in symmetrical pairs (B9: 1, 2, 4, 5, 8), but in some specimens also in the form of a single bird depicted on the pin that goes through the ring at the front legs of the animal pair (B9: 6; B2: 1).

The bird or herbivore depicted near the mouth and front paws of the large animals, especially if they are carnivorous, suggest a scene in which they are attacked and devoured by the latter. In the examples where only the head of the animal is depicted, this impression gains even more potency, suggesting the act of their **dismemberment** (B9: 4, 5, 8). A similar, but more explicitly depicted composition of this kind is present on a Luristan pin with a discoid head where the carnivorous animals are represented by a pair of symmetrical lions that with their wide open mouths clench the head of a herbivorous animal (gazelle?) (B9: 9). Another such scene, but with one lion, is present in the lower section of the disc (B9: 7; image of the entire object C9: 1).

For the motif of a bird depicted at the neck of the large animals we cannot present more direct parallels. As closest to them, we can take the numerous Scythian depictions of a deer, as well as the rarer Thracian variants of such kind, whose horns are metamorphosed into bird protomes (B18).

- The animals' back

In a number of "zoomorphic standards", depicted on the back of the large pair of animals is a small animal figure, in some cases with a designated male sex, in a standing position, often very stylized, oriented with its head upwards, and somewhat less frequently also downwards (B10: 1 – 4, 6 – 9).[28] P. R. S. Moorey

[27] E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 110, 111.

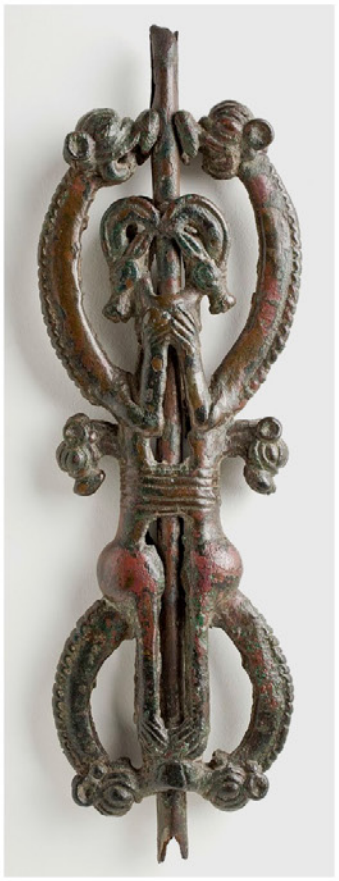
[28] Examples: O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*,143 (217), 144, 145 (223); E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 92, 93, (Fig. 74: 106), 97 (Fig. 78: 112); H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, Taf. III: 7, Taf. VIII: 24; J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 50, No. 182, 201-203, 206; P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 30: 163, Pl. 31: 164.

B9


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thinks it is a carnivorous animal,[29] while H. Potratz hesitates between dogs and panthers.[30] S. Przeworski thinks that it is a depiction of small panthers attacking the ibexes, which had a purely decorative character.[31] In some specimens this motif is present in a quite realistic form (B10: 1), while in the "baroque" specimens, it is involved in a process of stylization which results in barely recognizable figures (B10: 2, 3, 7 especially 4, 6, 8, 9). As a separate motif, this arrangement appears on a category of Luristan pins and whetstone handles, in which the ibex is depicted in a singular form, and only with its protome and back, mounted on which is a small carnivorous animal aimed at its horns (B11: 6, 9; B27: 6; B50). In some cases, depicted under this small animal with a designated male sex, is a bird (B11: 6).[32] In another variant, probably depicting a protome of a winged deer, the small animal is shown on its front edge (B25: 1, 2).[33]

A similar motif appears on a category of **openwork bronze buckles from the Caucasus** (4th - 2nd century BCE) depicting a deer or a horse, on whose rear part of the back, above the bent tail, is shown a smaller animal that usually has the features of a carnivorous, but in some cases also of a herbivorous animal (B12). Two additional animals, usually a bird and a snake, are depicted under the belly of the large animal and in front of it. There have been opinions that the visual appearance of these buckles is due to the influence of the "Koban variant" templates of the Scytho-Siberian animal style and the bronzes of Anatolia and Luristan.[34] The same arrangement, in forms very close to these buckles and to the Luristan standards, is also present on a **Thracian matrix**, this time as a clear depiction of a small figure of a carnivorous animal standing on the rump of a giant deer whose horns are supplemented by animal protomes (B11: 10). An analogous composition also appears on the **Scythian relief appliques**, with the difference that in this case the small carnivorous animal is not standing on the body of the big one (once again a deer), but in front of it and in a position that reflects an attack on it (B11: 5, 7).[35] Such motifs are also present on the **petroglyphs** and the so-called **„оленные камни“** (**"deer stones"**) from the Eurasian steppes (B10: 5; B11: 8).[36] The contrast between the size of the two animals is clearly emphasized in all of the mentioned examples, which we have seen is also present in all of the Luristan examples, including not only the "zoomorphic standards", but also the mentioned pins and whetstone handles.

A symmetrical arrangement very similar to that of the standards is also present among Balkan Iron Age pendants, almost synchronous with the Luristan standards, with the difference that in this case the animals (also symmetrical) stand on the edges of the corpus that is complemented by a pair of symmetrical animal protomes, which this time complete a stylized anthropomorphic figure with arms in the form of protomes, obviously conceived with gigantic dimensions (B11: 1, 2).[37]

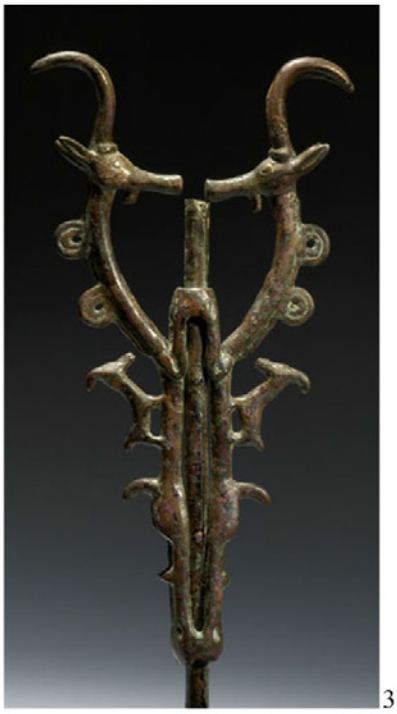
In some "zoomorphic standards", the small animals located on the back of the large ones are depicted **only by their head or protome** (B13). Analyzing several such examples with a goat's head depicted on the back of a pair of "panthers", **P. R. S. Moorey** concludes that they are a reduced version of the previous

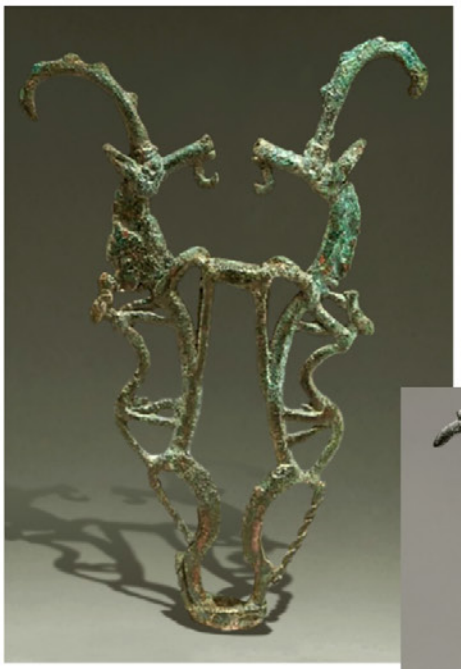
[29] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 146-148.
[30] H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 22, 25; J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 44.
[31] S. Przeworski, *Luristan Bronzes*, 258, 259.
[32] Other such specimens: P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, No. 167, 168; J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 35, Taf. XXIV: 138, 139; a specimen with a duplicated ibex protome: E. F. Schmidt et al, *The Holmes, Pl. 260 – d.*
[33] J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 16, Taf. XII: 62, Taf. XIII: 63.
[34] Г. Н. Вольная, *Мотивы*; 299-409, on the indicated influences: 405, 407-409; Б. В. Техов, *Об ажурных*; on their character and purpose: G. Kipiani, *Openwork*.
[35] For the Thracian object: M. Damyanov, *The matrix*; for the Scythian examples: Ю. Б. Полидович, *Хищник*, 356, 378 (Рис. 3: 6, 8, 9); А. И. Мартынов, *О мировоззренческой*; on this type of pictorial depictions (especially for the bird protomes on the horns): Н. Чаусидис, *Елен*; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 345-350; М. Н. Погребова, Д. С. Раевский, *Ранние*, 149, 150.
[36] М. Е. Килуновская, *Интерпретация*, 105.
[37] Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 101, 102 (А51: 13, 15), 114, 127, 791; Н. Чаусидис, *Зооантропоморфный*, 75 (Т.I: 9, 15, 19); M. Blečić Kavur, *Grobnički*, 44 – Sl. 3.

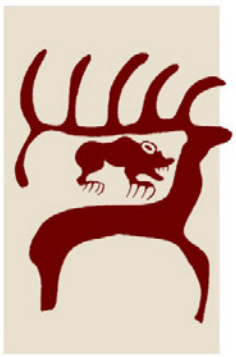
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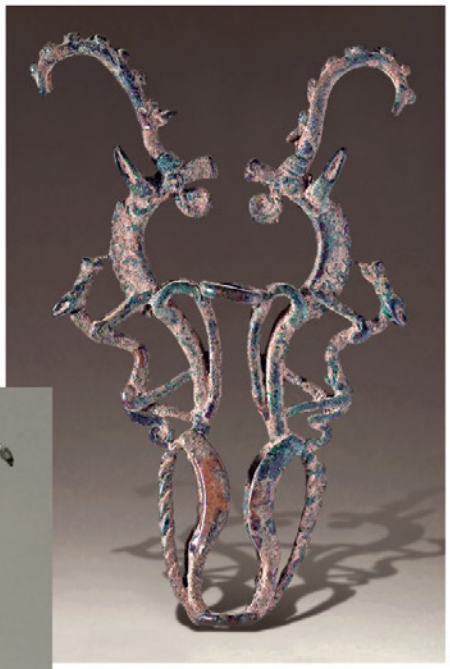

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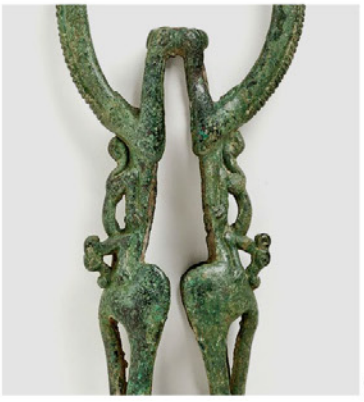

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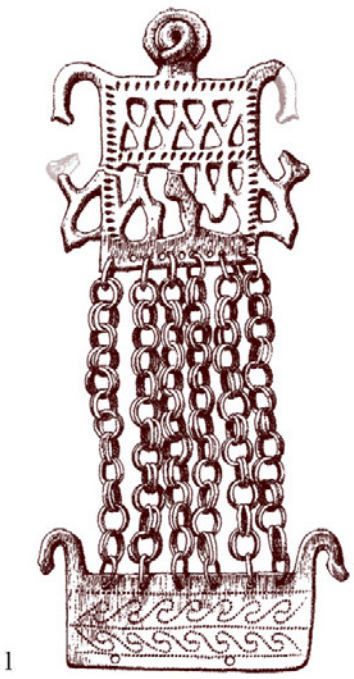

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B11



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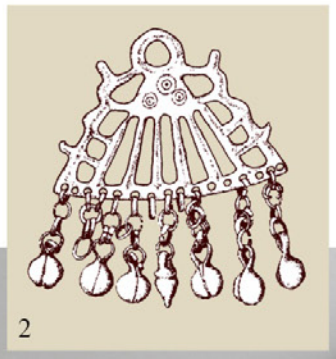
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compositions, in which the head represents the whole animal.[38] The variants in which the head is combined with an elongated and arched neck can be understood as the wing of the large animal, whose tip is metamorphosed into an animal protome (B13: 4 – 9). **H. Potratz** touches upon this interpretation,[39] although **A. Roes** analyzes it much more systematically, as part of his study on the genesis of the appearance of Chimera. In doing so, besides the Ancient Greek and Etruscan examples, he presents analogies from the Middle East, and within that framework several Luristan examples, although not standards but cheekpieces and rings (examples B14: 1, 3, 6, 7). He believes that the appearance of the Mediterranean **Chimera**, especially the unusual goat head that appears from its back, is a product of the transformation of the eastern templates of this character in which this head was depicted on the wing tip of the mentioned mythical creature that gradually lost such meaning (compare B13; B14: 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 9 with 10 – 12).[40] The transformation of wings into protomes can also be identified in the zoomorphized mythical birth-giver of the Etruscans and Scythians whose legs also transform into animal protomes (B14: 4, 8).[41]

Parallels for this Luristan motif can be found in the finds from the Ulsky kurgan (Ульский курган) and the Zhabotinsky kurgan (Жаботинский курган), but on a basic and not on a stylistic level, which speaks not of direct typological relations but of indirect relations at the level of basic iconography. However, there are also examples that give the impression of their true prototypes.[42]

In some "zoomorphic standards", the rear part of the small animal figure loses its meaning, transforming itself into an indefinite curved bar. In one specimen, one can follow the dissolution of this animal into two separate elements, whereby its head, neck and forelegs separated as a different protome, while the back, hind legs and tail were transformed into a bird standing on some kind of spiral pole (B13: 8 compare with B8: 5). In two specimens from the Ashmolean Museum, a large leonine or human head is depicted on the backs of the large animals, which will be discussed in the following chapters (B26: 2, 3).[43] H. Potratz identifies these protomes as pantherine, whereby he considers them as symbols of the increased supernatural power of the mouflons on whose backs they are depicted. In this case, too, he associates both animals with the moon cult.[44]

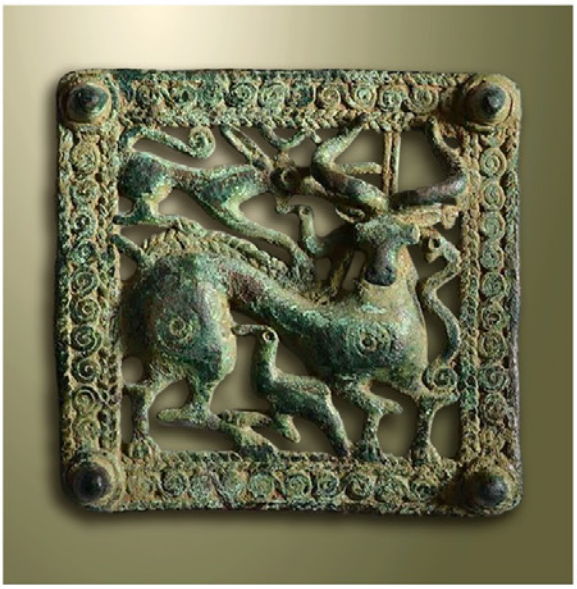
As we have seen, these elements are also present on some **Luristan cheekpieces**, this time depicted on the back of a zoo-anthropomorphic figure with a horned human head, in some cases accompanied by another anthropomorphic head placed on its back (B14: 1, 3, 6, 7). In one such specimen, the base on which the animal treads is formed by the bodies of two symmetrical rabbits (B14: 3). The last element refers to the cosmological symbolism of these scenes, having in mind the meaning of the **rabbit as a chthonic symbol**, which in this case appears in the role of a representative of the lower zones of the universe.[45] Ph. Ackerman relates the mentioned object to the Iranian myths on the creation of the beneficial (domestic) animals from the body of a primordial bull, whereby she defines the specific figure as a cow, associating it with the cult of the moon.[46]

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[38] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 151, 152, (No. 169).
[39] H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 22.
[40] A. Roes, *The Representation*, for the Luristan examples: 24 (Fig. 6).
[41] On the characters of this type: Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 168-205.
[42] М. Н. Погребова, Д. С. Раевский, *Ранние*, 94 (Рис. 3-в), 151 (Рис. 30), 153-155; Г. Н. Курочкин, *Скифское*.
[43] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 152 (No. 170 – a specimen with a human head, without information on the sex), 153 (No. 174 – a leonine head and an analogous specimen from a collection in Stockholm).
[44] H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 22, 23.
[45] On the rabbit as a representative of the lower zones of the universe among the Scythians and Thracians (often alternated with a fish): Ю. Б. Полидович, *Хищник*, 364, 365, 370, 374; Ю. Б. Полидович, Г. Н. Вольная, *Образ зайца*; М. Н. Погребова, Д. С. Раевский, *Ранние*, 147, 148; И. Маразов, *Рогозенското*, 227, 230, 241; several examples from the Luristan bronzes: H. Potratz, *Bär und Hase*.
[46] Ph. Ackerman, *The Moon*, 187.

B12


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As an analogy to this motif one can reference the already mentioned ancient Greco-Roman depictions of Chimera, on the back of which there is always a goat protome (see further) (B14: 10; B16: 7, 10). Considering that in many Luristan examples this protome represents a **transformation of the animal's wing** (B14: 3, 6, 7, 9), as indirect analogies we can also reference the numerous examples of hybrid zoo-anthropomorphic figures in which one can detect the same transformation (B14: 11, 12).

The small supplemental zoomorphic figures and protomes presented here also persist in the standards of the type "idols with protomes", exactly in the same zone of the objects, obviously as a result of their transformation from the corresponding "zoomorphic standards" (examples B11: 4; B14: 5). It is indicative that these elements are almost completely absent in the type "zoomorphic standards with a human head" (one of the rare exceptions B11: 3).

- Tip of the animals' tail

In rare cases, the tail tips of the pair of large animals from the "zoomorphic standards" are also supplemented by a protome.[47] We are familiar with several **specimens of avian** or more likely **gryphon protomes** (given the combination of a beak and ear) with varying degrees of stylization (B15: 1, 6, 7). Particularly interesting is one specimen in which, in addition to the leonine or pantherine heads of the basic pair of animals, there are three other pairs of protomes: a pair of goat-like heads at their front legs and two pairs of leonine or pantherine heads at their back and the tail tips (B15: 2).[48] Thereby, the tails are thickened and arched to the point that they match the main protomes as their symmetrical counterpart. With this form they introduce this object into the specific type of **"six-pointed standards"**, which are symmetrical not only along the axis left-right and forward-backward, but also along the axis up-down. Multiple specimens of this type are formed within the standards of the type "idols with protomes" (B15: 3, 4 compare with 2; D3: 4, 5; D25: 1 – 5). If we take into account the older age of the "zoomorphic standards", the mentioned specimen could be treated as a representative of the possible prototypes of the later standards of this kind.[49]

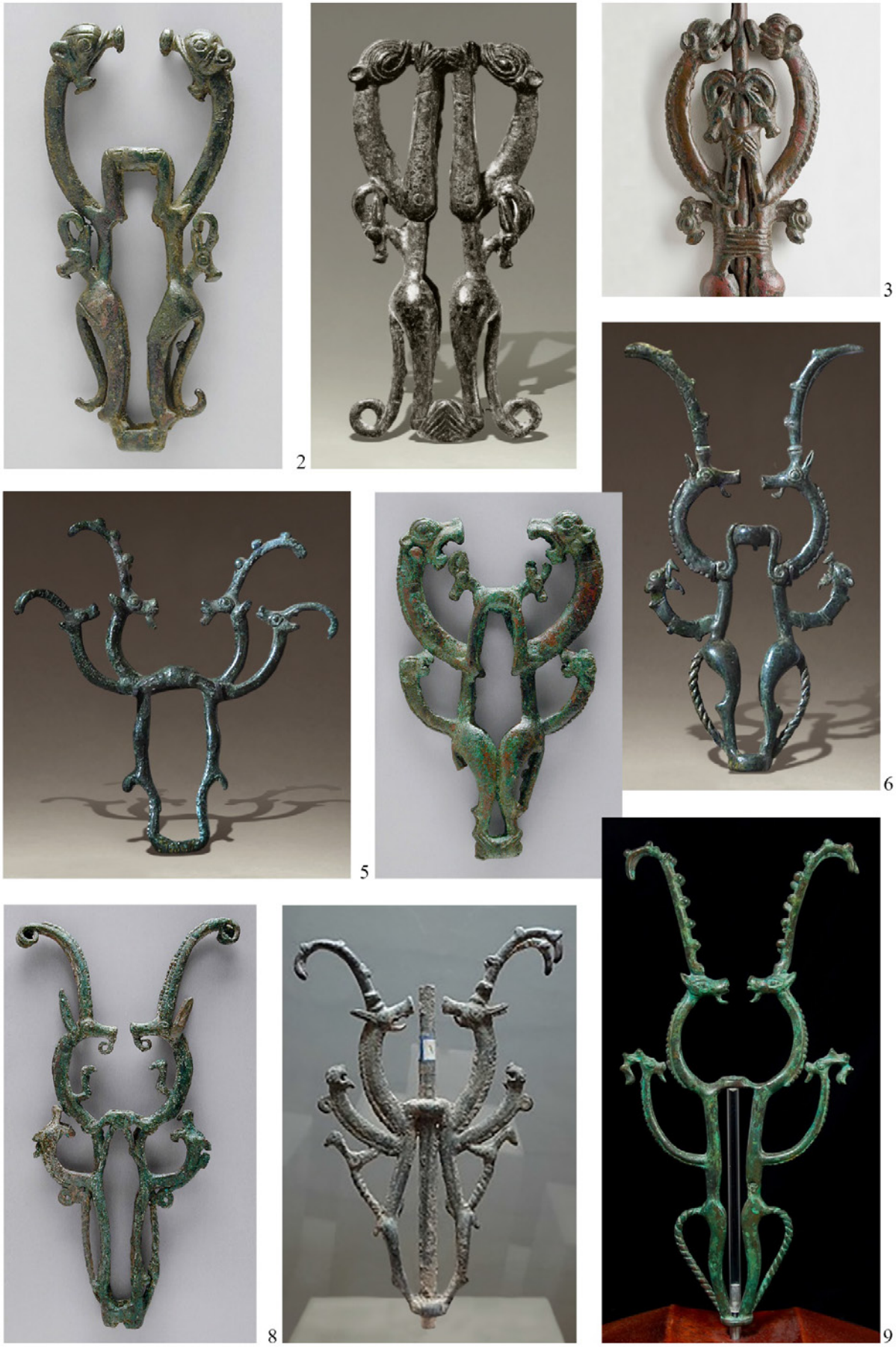
The number of "zoomorphic standards" with protomes on their tails is significantly increased if we also view through this template the elongated arched protomes that stem from the rump of the main animals, regardless of the fact that already there are tails that extend along their hind legs, probably forgotten and marginalized by their makers (B15: 5; B14: 2).

As analogies for this motif one can take the already mentioned **Scythian depictions** of a deer whose tails can also often be supplemented with an avian i.e. gryphon head (B16: 2, 5, 9).[50] Similar solutions are also present in **Thracian culture** (B16: 8). This may point to some deeper systemic mythical-symbolic relations between these and Luristan culture. As a regular feature, this motif also appears in the depictions of the hybrid character of the Chimera type, with the difference that in those cases the tail always ends with a snake head (B14: 10; B16: 7, 10). It is quite indicative that two more motifs also present on the "zoomorphic standards" appear among the characters of this type. It is the animal head and protome and/or anthropomorphic head present on the back of the animal. Although the most striking examples of such figures are formed within the frames of Hellenic and Roman culture, their more archaic examples can also be found within the ancient cultures of Anatolia and Egypt (in the latter case with a tail transformed into a protome of a dog, jackal or wolf) (B16: 3, 6). An example of a gryphon, with a tail tip in the form of a snake, combined with a woman's head, is also present on a silver vessel from Thrace (B16: 4).[51]

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[47] O. W. Muscarella notes one such example: O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 145 (No. 224).
[48] On the last specimen: P. R. S. Moorey (et al), *Ancient Bronzes*, 55 (No. 222).
[49] In detail about these standards see p. 14.
[50] А. Р. Канторович, *Классификация*, 99-101; Ю. Б. Полидович, *Пластина-обкладка*, 100-102.
[51] A. Roes, *The Representation*, 22; И. Маразов, *Рогозенското*, 207-219, Обр. 135.

B13



B14


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- Interpretation

The supplementation of the main pair of animals from the "zoomorphic standards" with smaller animal figures or with separate parts of their bodies can be justified through the concept of **cosmization** of these figures and the scene as a whole. By this term we mean the process of **encoding the three zones of the universe through animals specific to each of them**, taking into account the real living environment in which they exist and move. Within the frames of this concept one should also seek the motivation for the verticality of the two large animals i.e. their upright stance on the hind legs, whereby the three main zones of their body are equated with the vertical three-part structure of the universe (compare B17: scheme 1 with 2 – 5):[52]

- **Front part** (head, horns, neck, shoulders, front legs) = up, sky = birds, flying.
- **Middle par**t (back, torso) = middle zone, ground surface, above ground = terrestrial animals, walking.
- **Rear part** (rump, genitals, hind legs, tail) = down, earth, underworld, earthly waters = reptiles, fish, waterfowl, swimming, diving.

Only some elements of this ideal scheme can be identified among the "zoomorphic standards". The reasons for this should be sought in the **forgetting** or **abandoning** of this concept or its **contamination** with other iconographic concepts. Corresponding well with it are the indicated standards with depictions of **birds** in the area of the curved necks of the main animals, for which we saw that they could encode the **sky** through their unrealistically circular form (B9: 2; B8: 7). Also corresponding are the specimens with birds at their front legs, which are also located in the circular (celestial) zone or at least gravitate towards it (B9: 1, 6).

Almost all zoomorphic figures, protomes, and heads depicted on the backs of the large pair of animals belong to the category of **four-legged terrestrial animals**, thus they could consistently represent the **middle cosmic zone** (B9; B10; B13). In some cases, the stylization of these elements in the form of a **zigzag** or **wavy line** may indicate their presence in these compositions as signs i.e. symbols of some other cosmic elements which, from a spatial aspect, would fit well into the mentioned triple structure (B10: 8, 9). Here we have in mind the **aquatic meaning** of the indicated geometric motifs which in this case, due to the vertical disposition, could denote the rain currents that descend from the sky towards the earth.

It would be ideal, within this concept, for the tail of the two animals to be metamorphosed into a snake as a paradigmatic representative of the chthonic regions (as in Chimera). But this is not the case, because in three of the presented specimens, the tail ends with the head of a **gryphon** (B15: 1, 6, 7) and in one case with the head of a **lion** or **panther** (B15: 2). We have seen that in this context one could also conditionally include other potential examples of arched tails that end in the form of leonine or gryphon heads (B15: 5). In principle, in all these cases the serpentine character is encoded by the very shape of the tail (elongated, curled, undivided) that in combination with the heads of these animals forms a **hybrid creature** with the body of a snake and the head of a carnivorous animal or bird, which as a combination is typical for **mythologized snakes** i.e. **dragons**. In fact, the gryphon itself belongs to this category of animals whose hybrid body reflects the three cosmic zones: the head and wings of a bird = sky, the legs of a beast = earth, the scales and tail of a fish or a snake = water/underworld.[53]

This same concept of cosmization of the figure of an animal by its supplementation with accompanying zoomorphic elements is present in the ancient cultures of the North Black Sea region. Here we have in mind the already mentioned pictorial depictions in which the figure of a deer, in addition to other things, is accompanied by animals from the three zones of the universe (B18: 1, 3, 8). One of the most complete examples of this kind is the golden applique from **Ilyichovo** (Crimea), which depicts a deer attacked

[52] On this concept of encoding: И. Маразов, *Рогозенското*, 208, 227-230; Ю. Б. Полидович, *Хищник*, 362-364; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 217-219, 244-246; a similar concept: Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 67.

[53] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 217-219, 244-246; on the indicated features of the gryphon: А. Р. Канторович, *Истоки*, 190.

B15


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B16


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by an eagle, panther and snake (B18: 1).[54] It is also clearly expressed on the mentioned **Caucasian openwork buckles** in which the central large animal (deer or horse) is accompanied by three other smaller animals: most often present on the back is a carnivorous animal, under the abdomen - a bird, and in front of the chest - a snake (B12).[55] Some researchers have already pointed to the relations between the last mentioned category of objects and the Luristan bronzes, though not in terms of the key component apostrophized here, but regarding some marginal elements such as an atypical specimen in which on the back of the main animal, depicted with two protomes, sits a human figure (B23: 10 compare with 4, 11).[56] Although these similarities are mainly considered an influence by the traditions of Western Asia, and in that context also of the Luristan bronzes, on the Caucasian Iron Age cultures, we are inclined to treat them as manifestations of some kind of much more essential - organic closeness between the two cultures (see p. 688).[57]

In all the presented examples, the accompanying animals are several times smaller than the main one (deer or horse), which we believe has a function to determine the **giant scale** of the latter, and even its **macrocosmic character**. A similar concept can be sensed in the depictions of the mythical zoomorphic creature from the Thracian beakers, depicted with eight legs and horns metamorphosed into bird protomes (B18: 4, 7). In one such specimen, the cosmological encoding was executed by covering the front of its body with **feathers** (birds = sky), the middle with **fur** (mammals = earth) and the back with **scales** (fish, reptiles = water, underworld) (B18: 4).[58]

As we have mentioned, in numerous Scythian specimens, the **antlers** of the giant deer are **metamorphosed into bird protomes** (B18: 1, 2, 5, 6, 8; B11: 5; B16: 2, 5), which as a phenomenon is also present in some Thracian examples (B18: 4, 7; B11: 10; B16: 8).[59] We believe that in our previous research we have been able to argue the hypothesis that such transformed antlers were intended to represent the **sky**, within the frames of which, the multiplicated protomes would represent the **different phases of the sun's movement across it**. In support of this interpretation, one can reference multiple arguments, of which, on this occasion, we will point out a few. First of all, it is the real phenomenon of the periodic annual falling off and re-emergence (in the spring) of the deer's antlers, which interferes with the time cycles that take place in the sky. The second component is the equation of both the sky and the deer's antlers with the canopy of the Cosmic Tree or the Tree of Life (see further) (B18: 5, 6). The third argument are the pictorial depictions of a deer whose **horns are accompanied by solar disks**, as well as the existence of corresponding myths in which the same arrangement is apostrophized on a verbal level (see further) (B20).[60]

Preserved among the Finno-Ugric and other peoples from the northern parts of Asia and Europe are various versions of the myth in which the **universe is equated or created from the body of some kind of mythical primordial deer or moose**, which implies its division into three parts and the creation from those parts of the three levels of the universe.[61] The same cosmogonic mythical model is also apostrophized by the scholars of the mentioned "Scythian" pictorial depictions. According to them, the attack on the deer by the

[54] Ю. Б. Полидович, *Пластина-обкладка*, 96; Ю. Б. Полидович, *Хищник*, 363-365.

[55] Г. Н. Вольная, *Мотивы*. The author does not touch upon the concept of cosmological encoding noted here, but puts the hunting scene at the basis of these objects, which in our opinion is not justified. As analogies for the small animal, depicted above the back of the big one, she points out some alleged Luristan examples which are either not specified or are not supported by appropriate references (pp. 405, 408).

[56] Г. Н. Вольная, *Мотивы*, 407, 408.

[57] On these relations, based on the above mentioned pictorial depictions (with presented bibliography): М. Н. Погребова, *Закавказье*, 131-148.

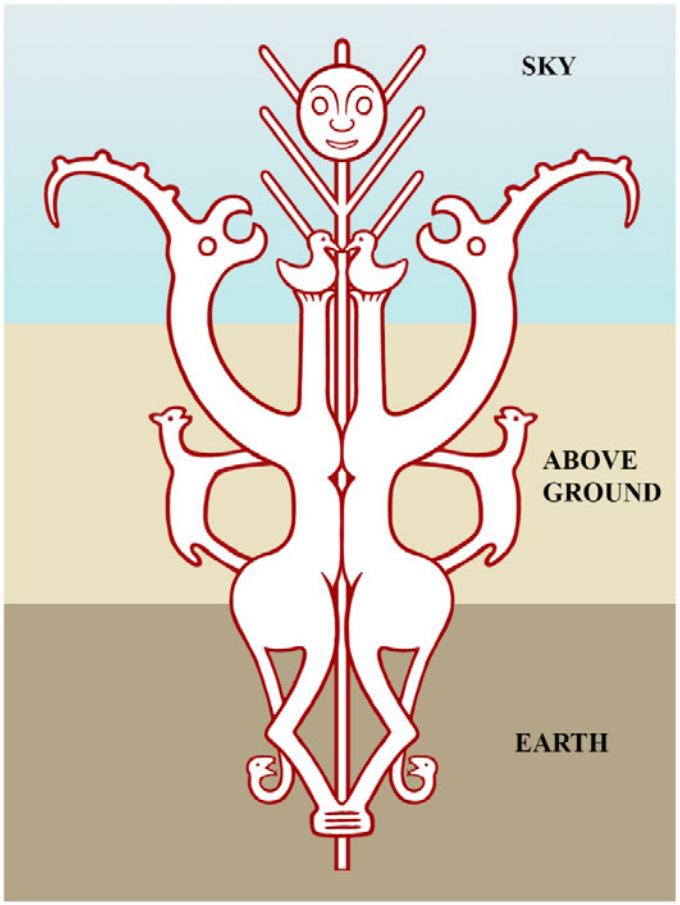
[58] On this concept: Н. Чаусидис, *Елен*, 48, 49; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 350; И. Маразов, *Рогозенското*, 222-242.

[59] For the Scythian examples: А. Р. Канторович, *Классификация*, 89-92; for the Thracian ones: И. Маразов, *Рогозенското*, 233-234.

[60] Н. Чаусидис, *Елен*; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 345-350; on the connection of this motif with the Tree of Life: Ю. Б. Полидович, *Хищник*, 371; Ю. Б. Полидович, *Пластина-обкладка*, 100-103.

[61] Н. Чаусидис, *Елен*, 40-44; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 347, 348.

B17



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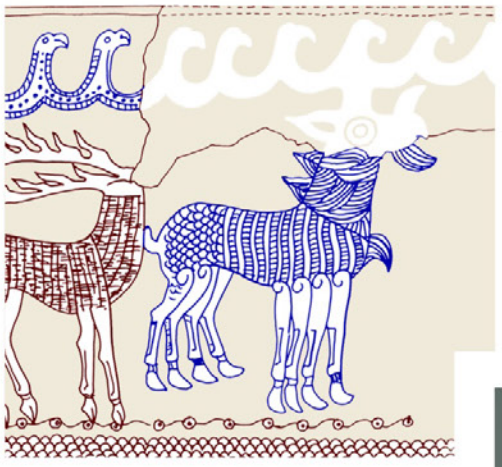
B18


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three animals, representatives of these cosmic zones, encodes exactly this dismemberment of the animal, which also receives the meaning of **its sacrifice in the name of the creation of the universe** (B18: 1).[62] The same essence is also reflected in the Vedic sacrificial ritual **aśvamedhá**, during which the sacrificed horse was divided into three parts, whereby apostrophized on a verbal level was the equation of these parts with the corresponding cosmic zones, and even more specifically the transposition of some organs into separate elements of the universe (see further). The presence in this ritual of a horse instead of a deer does not contradict these relations at all, since numerous facts confirm the alternation, and even the semiotic and symbolic identification of the two animals. At the level of linguistics it is reflected in the similar names of the two animals, while at the archeological level - the remains of sacrificed horses in the tomb of Pazyryk, which through appropriate appliques in the form of antlers were disguised as deer.[63]

e) Supplementing the animals with geometric elements

In some "zoomorphic standards" the main pair of animals are often supplemented by **multiplicated circular motifs**, which are rhythmically arranged along the outer edge of their arched necks, on their backs, on the tips of their tails, or on the arched segments that most likely denoted their wings (B19; B20: 10 – 12). They are mainly small granules (B19: 3, 6), loops (B20: 12) and discs filled with spirals or concentric circles (B19: 2, 4, 5, 7; B20: 10, 11) that do not correspond with some real element of the body of the depicted animals. Our current insight into the standards of this type indicates the much more frequent and more impressive combination of these motifs with the figures of the ibex, whereas in those of the panther i.e. lion it occurs much less frequently and in less noticeable forms, most often as a notched bordure that extends along the outer edge of the neck (B7: 1 – 4).[64] The **thickening of the horns of the ibexes** should also be noted here, which, although having a real basis, in some cases are so emphasized, with a regular circular shape and rhythmic arrangement, that they can be treated as a geometric ornament (B19; B21: 2). In one standard they are transformed into small loops that are also arranged on the wings (B20: 12, compare with the analogous Scythian examples B21: 6 – 8). Depicted on one handle of the Luristan whetstones is a protome of an ibex whose horns are completely disintegrated i.e. transformed into two abstract arcs composed of granules (B21: 5). A circular motif can also be identified at the **tail tips** of the main animals, if we take into account that it is very often **curled in the form of a ring** and not only in the "zoomorphic standards" (B22: 1, 6, 7; B1: 1 – 3) but also in other types (examples B22: 8, 9). This solution probably also had a practical function - as a loop intended to tie the standard to its support,[65] or to hang on it some additional elements, perhaps pendants that produce sound or some kind of accessories made of organic materials (H4: 1, 2, 5). But, this does not exclude its appropriate place in the iconography of the standards. The tip of the tail curved in the form of a loop is not uncommon in other Luristan bronzes (B14: 3; B26: 5) but also beyond, in similar objects from the Late Bronze and Iron Ages (B22: 12, 13), and even in subsequent epochs (B22: 11).[66]

H. Potratz also dedicates some attention to the elaborated components of the Luristan standards, whereby he emphasizes some of their formal and stylistic aspects - as expressive "baroque" elements that bring liveliness and dynamism to the composition.[67]

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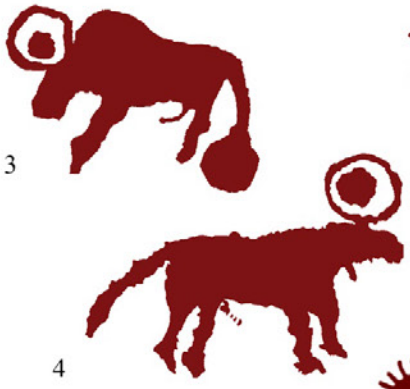
[62] Ю. Б. Полидович, *Хищник*, 362-365; Ю. Б. Полидович, *Пластина-обкладка*, 96.
[63] С. И. Руденко, *Культура*, T.LXXI; on these equations: Н. Чаусидис, *Елен*, 42, 43; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 348.
[64] A more impressive example with granules on the neck: E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 98 (Fig. 79) compare with 95 (Fig. 76).
[65] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 142; also see p. 593 of our monograph.
[66] Examples: Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 307, 309, T. LXXX: 6, 13; Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 523-525; Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Руси*, 528-531.
[67] H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 22.


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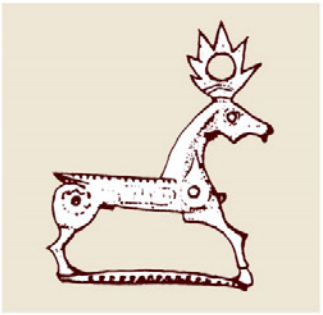

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- Interpretation

Within the cosmological concept of perception of the scene from the "zoomorphic standards", all these circular motifs can be interpreted as **separate phases of the sun's movement through the universe** or more specifically - through those cosmic zones represented by the corresponding body part of the pair of macrocosmic animals (B19: 1). As an ideal model for this interpretation one can take numerous similar examples of petroglyphs from Central and North Asia, mainly dated synchronously or closely to the Luristan bronzes, in which the radial supplements much more explicitly define the circular motifs as solar disks. They mainly depict deer or elk whose figures are complemented by such solar disks (B20: 2, 5, 6, 8).[68]

f) Supplementing the animals with solar disks

- Solar disks at the horns

In the mentioned petroglyphs, a radiant motif is most often depicted on the **tips of both antlers of the deer** (B20: 2, 5, 6, 8). Taking into account the indicated identification of the body parts of the cosmic deer with the levels of the universe, its horns are equated with the sky, whereby these motifs should denote the movement of the sun along the celestial vault. In this context, the presence in some petroglyphs of a small centrally placed rosette acquires the meaning of the **North Star** located in the middle of the sky (B20: 8).[69] A slightly different solution is offered on one petroglyph, whereby the horns are depicted in the form of a notched semicircle, above which is only one radial disk that obviously represents the movement of the sun along i.e. above the celestial vault (B21: 1).[70] There are also examples in which the horns of the animal are transformed into a ring, in some cases also surrounded by rays, in which one or several concentric circular motifs are inscribed (B20: 1, 3, 4; B21: 3). This element, too, based on numerous analogies, can be defined as a solar disk, but also as a **horizontal projection of the sky** divided into multiple "skies" i.e. celestial levels (compare with A4; see p. 56).

Based on these examples and the previously mentioned variants of horns supplemented with multiplicated protomes, this image can be recognized on a group of Scythian and Caucasian bronze appliques in which the deer's antlers are depicted as an arch, whereby the sun's movement would be encoded on them through the circular or semicircular segments into which the arch is divided (B21: 6 – 8).[71]

The indicated paradigms correspond to the similar supplementation or division of the ibexes' horns from the "zoomorphic standards" into some kind of ring-like or spherical segments (B19; B20: 12; B21). The depiction in pairs of the such supplemented horns, both in the standards and in the presented analogies, in relation to the proposed solar interpretation, implies the equation of one horn with one half of the solar cycle (the progressive one, from sunrise to noon or from spring to summer), while the other - with the second half (the regressive one, from noon to sunset or from autumn to winter). These two halves of the solar cycle indicate an analogous division in two halves of the sky itself, which merge together in the position of the midday sun or of the sun during the summer solstice. This image of the two horns that make up the celestial vault is not most adequately represented on the standards, because in their case the ibexes are oriented one towards the other, so the horns cannot merge into a single semicircle (B19, one of the rare exceptions – C4:

[68] А. И. Мартынов, *О мировоззренческой*, 15, 16 (Рис. 1); В. Д. Кубарев, *Мифы*, 42 (Рис. 2), 46.
[69] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 339, 340, 345-348 (Д16: 11-17).
[70] V. D. Kubarev thinks that both motifs represent the sun: В. Д. Кубарев, *Мифы*, 43 (Рис. 4: 12), 48.
[71] А. И. Мартынов, *О мировоззренческой*, 15, 17, 18 (Рис. 1: 15-17); Н. Чаусидис, *Елен*, 36, 37; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 346.

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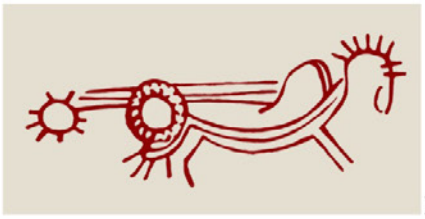

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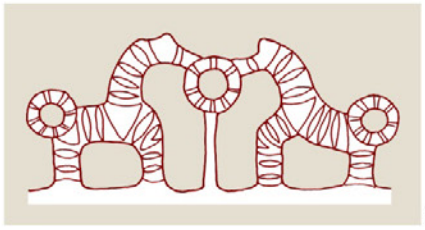

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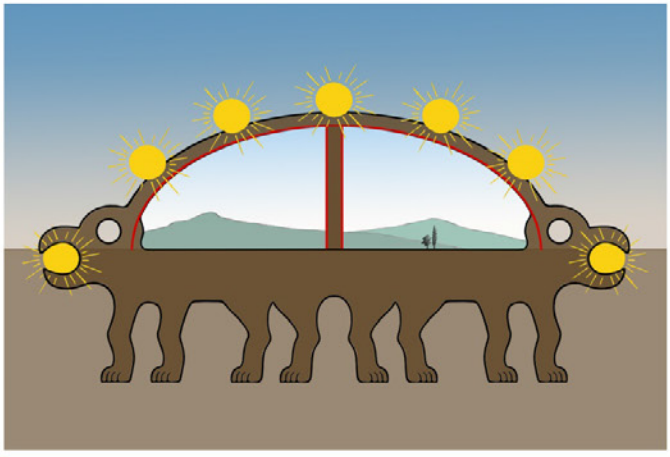

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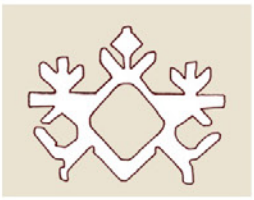

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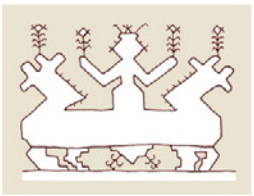

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10).[72] But, this image could potentially be projected onto a Luristan pin made up of a pair of ibex protomes oriented with their backs towards each other, whereby their horns merge into a heart-shaped arch (B23: 3).[73]

The most complete i.e. most consistently formed version of this mythical image can be found on a category of **metal combs** present in northern Russia in the 19th century.[74] Depicted on them in an openwork technique is some kind of dual hybrid animal with heads at both ends of the body (B23: 2). Its horns enclose a semicircle denoting the celestial vault, while the teeth of the comb interfere with the multiplicated legs of the dual animal (B23: 2 compare with 1). Thereby, the protomes (of horses or birds), rhythmically arranged on the horns, acquire the meaning of the separate phases of the sun's movement along the celestial vault (additionally accentuated by the bordures of imprinted circles), while the central loop coincides with the sun at the zenith. In this context, the body of the dual animal acquires the meaning of the lower zones of space (earth, underworld), whereby the mouths located at opposite ends are included in the explanation of the key phases of the solar cycle: the sunset is identified with the devouring of the sun, realized by one head, while the rising - with its disgorging from the other (B23: 1).[75] We reference these objects also because such a dual fantastic animal also appears on some Luristan bronzes, although without the mentioned horns. They represent several examples of cheekpieces in which the animal is accompanied by a human figure (a female one, judging by the breasts and hairstyle) which, mounted on its back or fused with its body, holds both protomes (B23: 4, 11; another variant – B26: 6). Pictorial depictions with the same composition appear in the cultures of Armenia, the Caucasus and Scythia, almost synchronous with the Luristan ones (B23: 5, 10, 12), but also in later cultures from the territory of Iran (B23: 6). It is quite interesting that this motif continued to exist in the Middle Ages (especially in Central Asia and Eastern Europe), and in exceptionally archaic forms it also existed in the East Slavic and South Slavic folk embroideries from the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century (B23: 7 – 9).[76] The presence of this motif in the Caucasus, Europe, and even in Mohenjo-Daro in India, leads R. Ghirshman to a dilemma whether these motifs originated in Luristan or elsewhere. However, he does not deny the possibility that it was exactly the Luristan objects that played the key role in the creation of the Achaemenid capitals with this motif and then in its spread east to India and west to the Aegean.[77]

- Solar disk at the tail

We mentioned that in some of the indicated petroglyphs, the sun is represented in the form of a circle or oval, formed by the horns of the animals, depicted in which is a smaller circle i.e. point (B20: 1, 3, 4). In some depictions, from a stylistic aspect close to the previously mentioned ones, a similar motif is also depicted at the tip of the tail (in these cases they represent cattle i.e bulls, judging by the emphasized phallus) (B22: 2, 4, 5). Also occurring are variants in the form of a radiant motif (B22: 3). The unrealistic basis of this element and its resemblance to the previous one, indicate that in this case, too, it is a solar motif, this time depicted at the opposite end of the animal's body - the tip of its tail. The depicted element, projected onto the "zoomorphic standards", interferes with the mentioned loop formed at the tail tips of the main pair of animals (B22: 2 – 5 compare with 1, 6 – 9). If within the frames of the proposed cosmological concept the circular segments in the area of the neck and horns of the animals denoted the culmination phases of the solar cycle, then in the case of these loops one could recognize its lowest point i.e. **the stay or travel of the sun through the chthonic regions** (B19: 1). If we view this motif in relation to the variants with the zoomorphized tail (B15; B16), then the presence of the animal protome at the tip of the tail could be related to the image of the

[72] A standard with protomes facing outwards: J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 44, 90 (No. 184).
[73] For the object (without the proposed interpretation): E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 108 (Fig. 87, No. 128 B).
[74] For the presented example: Л. Гончарова, *Медные*, 101; other examples: *Магич. Бронз. Гребень* 2020.
[75] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки,* 53, 54, 223, 242, 341, 342, 346, 349, 350; Н. Чаусидис, *Елен*, 37.
[76] Г. Г. Король, *Северокавказский*; М. Н. Погребова, *Закавказье*, 131-142, 180-185; O. W. Muscarella, *Archaeology*, 670, 671; Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 130-132, Т. XXIV.
[77] R. Ghirshman, *The Art*, 59.

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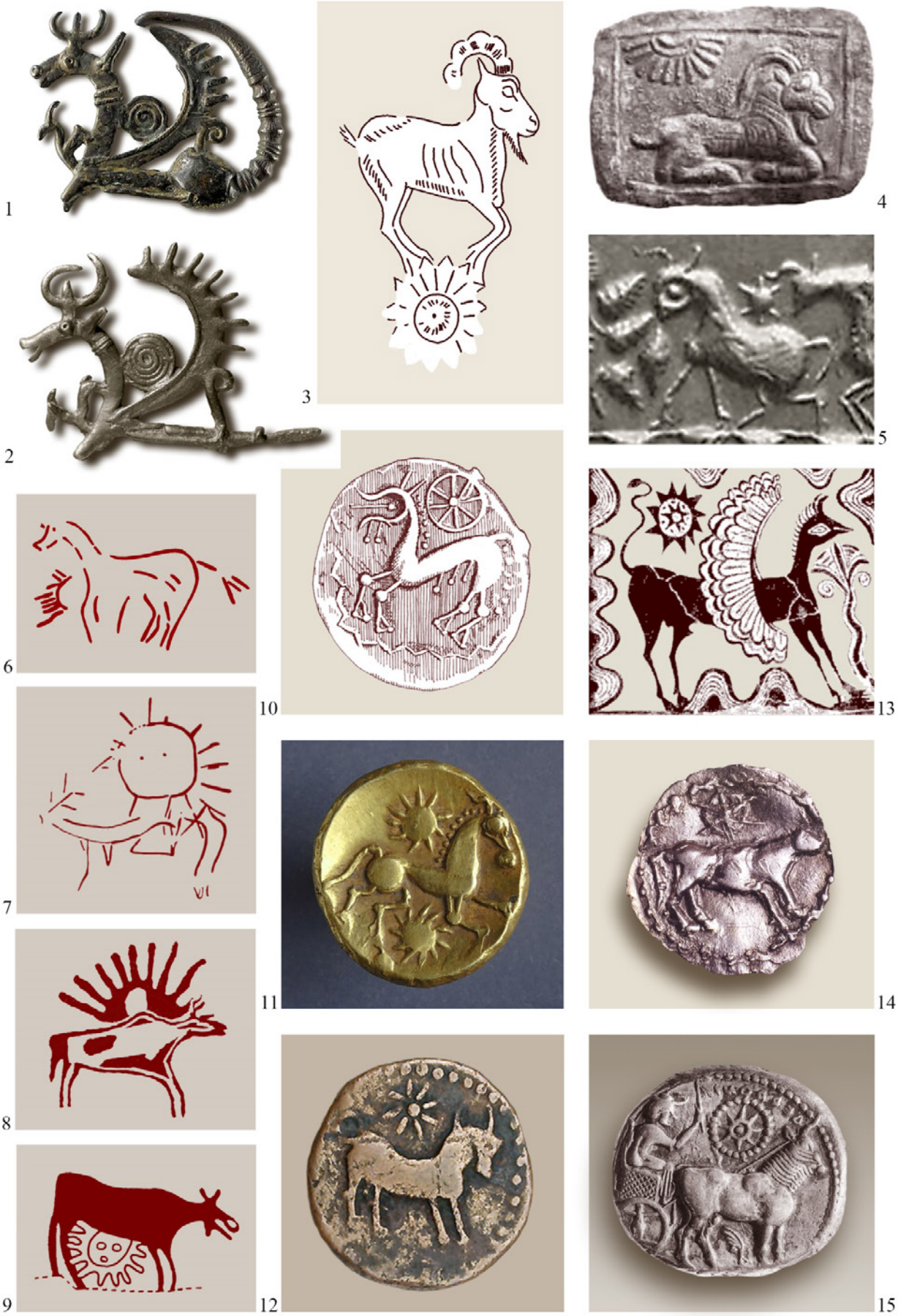

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chthonic dragon that has trapped the sun in the underworld by swallowing it with its mouth or by coiling its body around it. If the proposed interpretation proves to be well-founded, then in this mythical image one could seek for another reason for the great persistence of the mentioned motif within the Luristan standards.

- Solar disks along the whole body

As the most appropriate iconographic paradigm for the mentioned multiplicated circular motifs from the "zoomorphic standards" we can take a **petroglyph from the Mongolian part of the Altai** that depicts a deer or moose, over the body of which are arranged five radial discs connected to it by thin bars (B20: 2). Based on the previous examples, it is quite possible that the front two were conceived as part of the horns, while the last - of the tail.[78] Its composition corresponds quite well to the standards in which various multiplicated circular segments are arranged along the back and neck of the animals, including the horns and tail (B20: 2 compare with 10 – 12 and B19).

Among the petroglyphs from the Altai region, one can also point out other forms of execution of the same mythical image, in which the multiplicated sun is depicted on the very body of the animals (B24: 3, 6, 7). These examples are not as transparent as the first one because in them, the sun is more stylized, in the form of various circular motifs or rosettes.[79] Taking into account the macrocosmic nature of the deer and the moose elaborated in the previous chapters, in these cases the indicated motifs arranged along the animals' bodies could, at least in some cases, represent the individual phases of the sun's movement across the sky or across the whole universe.

We believe that this is an iconographic concept that was quite widespread throughout the territory of Eurasia, but mainly maintained in **the medium of organic materials** i.e. through images executed on leather, textiles or wood that are generally not available to archaeology. In this context, one can justify its seemingly sudden and unexpected presence on a late and, at first sight, banal object such as a ceramic toy from Russian folklore (the specific example is from the vicinity of Tula, Russia – B20: 9 compare with 2).[80] As indicators of the pervasiveness of this concept one can take the countless small bronze objects, usually shaped in the form of a figure of a horse or a deer, on the torso of which are imprinted motifs in the form of concentric circles or a circle with a dot (B24: 8, 11 – 13). These are mainly pendants, amulets, appliques and fibulae present throughout Eurasia, starting from the Iron Age, and up to the Middle Ages. Due to its numerousness, rich ornamentation and closeness to the Luristan bronzes, one should especially emphasize the presence of this concept within the Iron Age cultures of the Caucasus, which, given their geographical and chronological proximity to the Luristan examples, could have had some kind of more direct mutual relation with them (B24: 4, 5).[81]

Although **H. Potratz** does not recognize this solar-cosmological paradigm in the indicated circular supplements from the "zoomorphic standards", he nevertheless does come to it, but on a more general level. Namely, this researcher notes that the mouflons, as well as some other animals on the Luristan bronzes often have on their body geometric signs with a solar meaning, which leads him to the conclusion that this animal is a bearer of the ideas of solar mythology. But, on the other hand, the horns of the central (female) anthropomorphic character that they accompany, according to him, point to the lunar meaning of these animals.[82]

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[78] В. Д. Кубарев, *Мифы*, 42 (Рис. 2: 8), 48.

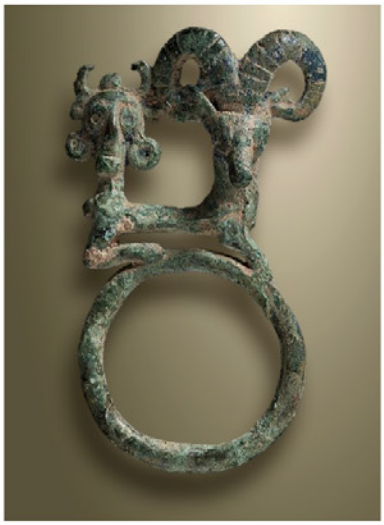
[79] В. Д. Кубарев, *Мифы*, 42 (Рис. 3: 1-6), 45.

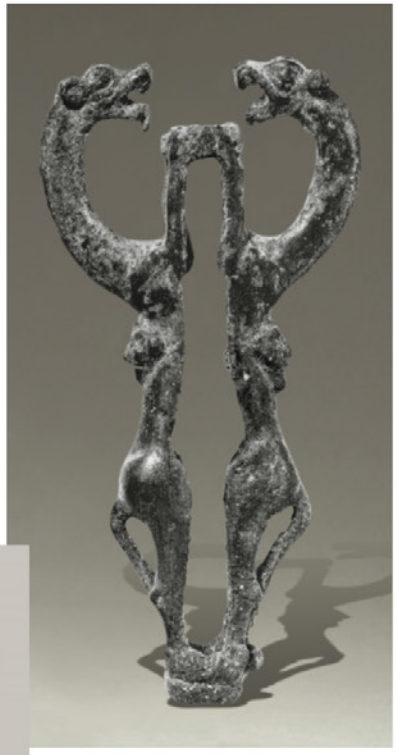
[80] И. М. Денисова, *Зооморфная*, 29 (Рис. 3: в), 34 and other examples executed according to the same cosmological concept.

[81] Н. Е. Урушадзе, *Опыт семантического*, 133 (Рис. 3: б, в); Г. Н. Вольная, *К вопросу*, 270 (Рис. 1).

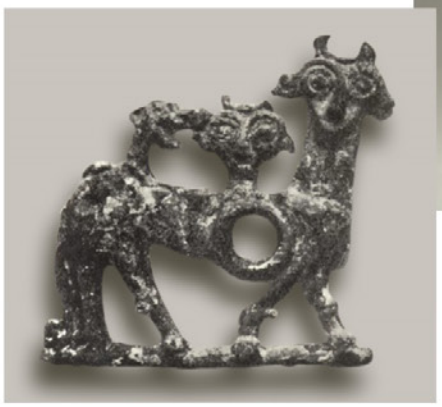
[82] H. Potratz, *Das "Kampfmotiv"*, 20-24. The author thinks that one of such examples (the scene from the cheekpieces) is based on Mesopotamian templates, but accepted in Luristan only as a compositional framework in which new mythical contents were introduced.

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In the study of **H. J. Kantor** on the prevalence of this motif in the Middle East (specifically rosettes on the shoulder and thigh of the animals), this author also elaborates on the examples present on the Luristan bronzes which she considers to be the product of Assyrian influences on the artisans of Luristan.[83] She thinks that the motif originated in Egypt in the 14th century BCE (B24: 9), and in the following centuries gradually expanded in the Middle East (B24: 2). She mentions some of the previously stated interpretations regarding its meaning, mainly related to the sun. Not denying such a possibility, she believes that there are still not enough facts in favor of these interpretations, especially not in relation to the finds from the new Asian territories through which this motif had spread. However, she notes that in certain environments it could have changed its character from a decorative element to an element with a certain symbolic meaning and vice versa.[84]

Within the **"zoomorphic standards"**, this concept of cosmization can be identified on an atypical specimen with highly stylized animals, on the body of which there are several imprinted pairs of circular motifs (B24: 1).[85] The upper two pairs have a realistic basis, denoting their eyes and ears. But, the following two pairs, depicted on the shoulders and thighs, on one hand do not have a realistic paradigm, while on the other - correspond exactly to the positions of the solar geometric signs apostrophized by H. Potratz. Another pair of circular motifs (this time spiral ones) on the same specimen can be recognized at the tail tips, denoting the eyes of the animal heads formed in this place.

In a much more impressive form the same motif is present on a type of **Luristan appliques** depicting a horse whose shoulders and thighs are complemented by concentric circles (B24: 14, 15). Given the probable solar meaning of these motifs, it is is not excluded that the same idea was also behind the accentuated **radiant mane** of the animal, whose paradigms can once again be found among the petroglyphs (B21: 1; B22: 3).[86] Among the medieval tombstones from Bosnia and Herzegovina there is an example in which it is obvious that such overemphasis of the horse mane exceeded all realistic grounds, denoting some supernatural (most probably celestial or solar) dimension of the animal. Among other things, this is also indicated by the snake which it tramples with its hooves and strangles it with its mouth (B24: 10).[87]

Reduced variants of this mythical image can also be recognized on other types of Luristan bronzes. Thus, in the rectangular field of an applique, there is a depiction of an ibex in a kneeling position, above whose back, from the surrounding frame, protrudes half of a rosette (B25: 4).[88] On one applique of unknown purpose (probably from Luristan) there are depicted four ibexes with a rosette under their feet (B25: 3).[89] In one type of **Luristan pins** decorated with a protome of a winged animal formed between their neck and wing is a disc divided into concentric circles or a spiral. Judging by the horns and the small animal on the chest, it probably represents a giant deer (B25: 1, 2). The scene depicted on these objects belongs to a very large group of mythical images present in various cultures from almost all epochs, in which the rosette or some other circular motif represents the sun (it is also not excluded that it could represent some other celestial body) (B25: 6 – 15). From a geographical aspect, as the closest parallel one can take the motif from a cylindrical seal in which the rosette on the back of the animal is interpreted as a star (B25: 5).[90] The animal depicted below or less frequently above the celestial body could symbolize its dynamics (the factor i.e. the force that moves it through the universe) or the cosmic level (most often the earth) above or below which that movement takes

[83] H. J. Kantor, *The Shoulder*, 257, 258, T.IX, Fig. 7: A; see also: А. В. Мельченко, *Традиция*.
[84] H. J. Kantor, *The Shoulder*, 264-267; А. В. Мельченко, *Традиция*.
[85] Catalogue data on the object: P. R. S. Moorey (et al), *Ancient Bronzes*, 54 (No. 220).
[86] V. D. Kubarev interprets this motif on the petroglyphs as a mane shaped in the form of sun rays: В. Д. Кубарев, *Мифы*, 44 (Рис. 8: 1), 45.
[87] Н. Чаусидис, *Дуалистички*, 201, 214 (Т.XXV: 1).
[88] E. F. Schmidt et al, *The Holmes, Pl. 212: c;* B. Overlaet, *Čale Ǧār*, 136 (Fig. 25).
[89] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 259 (Fig. k); an analogous example: R. Ghirshman, *Notes IV*, 183 (Fig. 3).
[90] T. van Bakel, *The magical*, Number 26 (Planche 85, fig. 13).

B27



place.[91] There are variants in which the circular or rosette-like motif is alternated with a human head as a result of the personalization of the sun (B27; see the next chapter).

The proposed interpretations of the motifs presented here, although seemingly similar to the existing solar interpretations, differ substantially from them, and at the same time correct their logical inconsistency. Namely, if the sun is depicted on the body of an animal (especially in a multiplicated form), then that animal itself cannot represent the sun, but the thing along which the sun moves. In this case, that thing could be the whole universe, the sky or some other space that is part of it. This animal can also represent the factor (force, principle, mythical character) that ensures the movement of the sun.

g) Supplementing the animals with anthropomorphic elements

In one "zoomorphic standard" and one "zoomorphic standard with a human head", formed on each back of the two animals is a **head**, in the first case an **anthropomorphic one** (probably with features of the male sex), while in the second - a **leonine head**, which within the frames of Luristan bronzes usually also carries certain anthropomorphic characteristics (B26: 2, 3).[92] A similar form of supplementation is also applied to some other types of Luristan bronzes with the difference that the anthropomorphic heads, given the two-dimensionality of the objects, are facing the viewer. In the first case, they are **decorative plaques from cheekpieces**, whereby in some variants a human head or bust (supplemented ny horns) is placed on the back of a hybrid four-legged animal that itself has a horned human head, while from its rump appears another head, this time an animal one, with an open mouth (B26: 4, 5).[93] As in the above presented examples, it could be a tail transformed into a protome even though the creature already has a tail lowered along its hind legs. In another cheekpiece, the head (this time also anthropomorphic and horned) is depicted on the back of a hybrid animal with four legs and two front sides (presented in previous chapters) which, judging by the mane, probably belongs to a horse (B26: 6). The third example is a ring supplemented by an ibex figure, from the rump of which protrudes a horned human head (B26: 1).[94] Given the hairstyle, the head is most likely female, in this case perhaps transformed from the tail of the animal. This motif is also present on a Luristan bronze **whetstone handle** (B27: 6). It is formed in the shape of an anthropomorphic or zooanthropomorphic head with small horns, which, fastened on a pillar, rises from the neck of an ibex that is depicted only with its front part of the body. The composition is accompanied by a human "mask" without a mouth, which is depicted on the chest of the ibex, and a figure of an animal from the family of felines, which, standing on the ibex's back, touches the detached head with its snout.[95]

The same motif is also present on an **openwork Luristan pin**, depicted twice - left and right of the centrally placed horned human figure, probably with female features (short skirt, neck rings and various head accessories) (B27: 1 – 3). The human figure in fact lifts with its arms the two animals with a human head on their backs, whereby another stylized head is depicted under its legs. The whole composition, also supplemented by other smaller zoomorphic elements, is placed inside a ring formed by two elongated ibex protomes. The central figure of this object is defined by **R. Dussaud** as the master of animals (Maître des animaux sauvages), while the human heads depicted above the bodies of the animals (according to him lions) are considered by him as copies of the main character (réplique de notre héros). He treats this meaning within the concept of multiplication of the main hero of the Luristan bronzes, which he tries to argue with other

[91] Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 279, 280 (T.LXVII), 281; Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 619, 620 (Д73), 621; one such depiction of a bull with a radiant rosette on its back, (Cyprus, 7th century BCE) is interpreted as a zoomorphic symbol of the daily heat (R. du Mesnil du Buisson, *Nouvelles*, 207 – Fig. 102).
[92] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 152 (Pl.32: 170), 153 (Pl. 34: 174).
[93] H. Potratz, *Das "Kampfmotiv"*, 26 (Tab. VI: 21).
[94] A. Godard, *Bronzes*, 68, Pl. XXXII: 115; A. Roes, *The Representation*, 24.
[95] P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 40-42 (Fig. 71).

examples.[96] **R. du Mesnil du Buisson** proposes a slightly different conception in the basis of which are mythologems associated with the appearance and disappearance of Venus in the sky, represented as the Morning and Evening Star. He defines the arched protomes that surround the main figure (Ashstart, Ishtar) as snakes with antelope heads. The animals with human heads on their backs did not attract his attention.[97]

In the collection of the Ashmolean Museum is a "zoomorphic standard" in which on the backs of both animals, similar to the previous two standards, there is a formed anthropomorphic head (B26: 7, 8). But, in this case, thanks to the description and the available side photo, we find out that the backs and rumps of both animals, viewed from the side, are shaped in the form of **human figures** whose female sex is clearly indicated by the depicted breasts. Thereby, the body elements of these figures (hip, legs, waist, raised arms) match the corresponding parts of the animals' bodies.[98] **P. R. S. Moorey**, referencing Middle Eastern analogies, thinks that behind this combination lies the **symbolic identification of the lion with the local Mother-Goddess**.[99] Due to the absence of side photographs, we have no information whether a similar parallel image was also formed in the previous two similar specimens (B26: 2, 3). This example could mean that the pair of animals in the "zoomorphic standards" should, at least in some cases, be treated as hypostases of the Luristan gods (in the last case goddesses) conceptualized not only in an anthropomorphic, but also in a zoomorphic form. This particular interpretation would be in line with the frequent **combining of female deities into pairs** (on the pair of mythical mothers see p. 297). These interpretations would correspond to the toughts of **G. Dumézil**, according to which the animal pair from the Luristan bronzes could function as **epiphanies of the gods**, as **"auxiliary animals"** (animaux auxiliaires), or as "symbolic expressions of the powers that the gods possess or bestow" (l'expression symbolique des puissances que le ou les dieux possèdent ou donnent).[100]

As parallels to the iconographic arrangement "a detached human head placed on the body of an animal" one can present numerous examples dating from the Bronze Age and up to contemporary folklore, geographically distributed from Central Asia to Western Europe and south to the Mediterranean (B27: 4, 5, 7 – 13; B25: 7, 9).[101]

- Interpretation

The presence on the animal's back of a detached human head – without the body, indicates a specific iconographic arrangement, quite common on **European early medieval jewelry** (B27: 9, 13), but also on Eurasian petroglyphs (B25: 9; B27: 10). In our previous studies we presented the various interpretations on the meaning of this mythical image. In them, we pointed to the possibility that it represents the **personalized solar disk** i.e. the **God-Sun**, whereby the animal that carries it acquires the meaning of the factor i.e. the force that effectuates the **dynamics** of the sun i.e. realizes its **movement through the universe**. This is supported by the alternation of this image with analogous examples, presented in previous chapters, in which, in place of the human head is some other motif that denotes the solar disk (radial circle, rosette, wheel) or other solar and celestial symbols (cross, swastika, head with accentuated hair and beard as symbols of rays – B25).[102] Also

[96] R. Dussaud, *Ceinture*, 195 (Fig. 6), 196.
[97] R. du Mesnil du Buisson, *Nouvelles*, 220-222.
[98] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 149, 150, 152 (the author is familiar with four other standards similar to this one and the previous two specimens), Pl. 33: 171.
[99] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 149, 150. Within the framework of Scythian iconography, the identification of carnivorous animals with the female deity is also advocated by Yu. B. Polidovych (Ю. Б. Полидович, *Хищник*, 366-370, 373, 374).
[100] G. Dumézil, *Dieux*, 24.
[101] Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 283-288; Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 619-621; medieval Balkan amulets with this form: E. Komatarova-Balinova, P. Penkova, *The "Horse Amulets"*.
[102] Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 283-288; Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 619-621; different interpretations of the detached head as a reduced depiction of the rider: И. Маразов, *Рогозенското*, 212.

pointing to a solar meaning is the horse, the most common animal component of these images, which in itself functions as a solar symbol. The Slavic god of the sun was called **Hrs** i.e. **Hors**, whereby his genesis is placed in relation to the Iranian i.e. Persian *xwaršēδ/xoršid* (meaning *sun*), and even more likely to the Vedic *hrsu* (*sexual arousal = life energy*). Therefore, the relations of these lexemes with the Old Germanic and Anglo-Saxon *hros/horse* (horse) are not at all accidental, considering that the horse was one of the most common zoomorphic symbols of the sun and of the fertilizing power.[103]

The symmetrical combination in pairs of this motif in the "zoomorphic standards" would indicate the **two complementary tendencies of the solar cycle** - the progressive one (in relation to morning and spring) and the regressive one (evening and autumn) (B26: 2, 3, 7, 8 compare with B19: 1; B23: 1). In the example of a Mycenaean/Minoan gem, such meaning is indicated by the presence of two animals which, inscribed in the circular field, in principle allude to some kind of circular motion (B27: 4). This meaning is even more pronounced in the circular composition of the described Luristan pin whose ring-like frame formed by two ibex protomes suggests the cyclicity of this cosmic process (B27: 1 – 3). Thereby, the central figure, holding the two animals by their hind legs, represents the **deity that conducts this process** or literally *"the solar cycles are in its hands"*. In this context, the figure's head represents the culmination of the sun, the heads placed on the backs of the two animals - the progressive and regressive phase of the solar cycle, while the one under its feet - the chthonic phase, and perhaps the act of rebirth of the personalized sun from its womb.

The leonine heads present on one of the mentioned standards (B26: 3) fit well with this interpretation, given their visual relations with the sun (lion's mane = sun rays). Such a meaning of the lions is indicated by C. Lancaster, who thinks that on the Luristan bronzes, the wide-open mouths and the accentuated manes of this animal indicate the "blazing sun" in its destructive aspect - as a destroyer of crops and pastures. He justifies this identification with the golden color of the lion's fur and the fact that in the given period this animal still existed in the Middle East, posing a real danger to herds.[104]

In previous chapters we interpreted the presence of the animal head on the backs of the pair of large animals from the "zoomorphic standards" as a **reduced depiction of the whole animal**, which in some specimens appears in the same position but depicted with its entire figure as a classifier of the middle cosmic zone (B13; B14). Although this interpretation does not negate the parallel solar meaning of these heads, in some cases, such as the example with ibex heads, the second meaning does not seem more justified to us due to the absence of some more pronounced symbolic relations between this animal and the sun. However, in the previous chapter we presented enough arguments that also point to such a possibility.

h) The meaning of the ibex on Luristan objects

- Relations with the ritual aśvamedhá

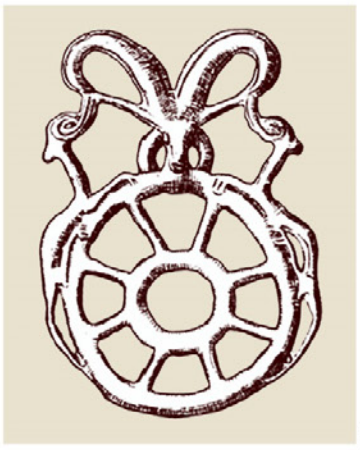
If we take into account the equivalence and alternation of the deer i.e. moose and the horse, which we pointed out in previous chapters, then as an ideal paradigm of the mythical images presented here one can take the textual explanation of the **Vedic ritual aśvamedhá** (annual sacrifice of a horse), which in a chronological sense is close to the Luristan bronzes.[105] In continuation, we reference a passage from the **Brihadaranyaka Upanishad** which presents the cosmogonic essence of this ritual i.e. the inclusion of the animal's body in the re-creation of the universe denoted by the equalization of its body parts with certain cosmic elements or phenomena:

[103] C. L. Borissoff, *Non-Iranian*; М. А. Васильев, *Язычество*; Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 459; Н. Чаусидис, *Дуалистички*, 181-185, 225-231; Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 314-331.
[104] C. Lancaster, *Luristan*, 96.
[105] Our previous observations on this ritual and its Pontic-Caucasian, Italic and Balkan parallels (with presented literature): Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 905-910.

B28

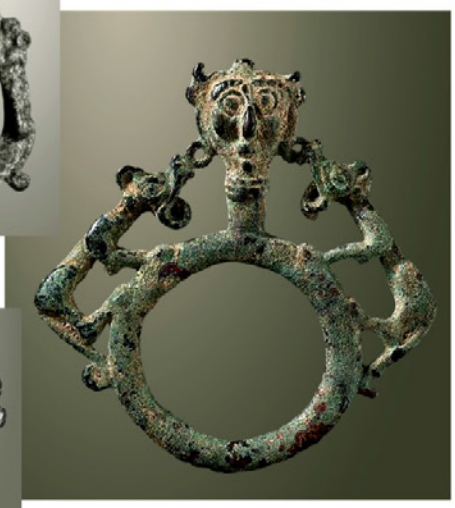

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"Om. The head of the sacrificial horse is the dawn, its eye the sun, its vital force the air, its open mouth the fire called Vaisvanara, and the body of the sacrificial horse is the year. Its back is heaven, its belly the sky, its hoof the earth, its sides the four quarters, its ribs the intermediate quarters, its members the seasons, its joints the months and fortnights, its feet the days and nights, its bones the stars and its flesh the clouds. Its half-digested food is the sand, its blood-vessels the rivers, its liver and spleen the mountains, its hairs the herbs and trees. Its forepart is the ascending sun, its hind part the descending sun, its yawning is lightning, its shaking the body is thundering, its making water is raining, and its neighing is voice."[106]

Some of the equations in this quote fit quite well with our interpretations of the above presented images. In this case we especially think of **the equation of the animal with the year** ("the body of the sacrificial horse is the year"), **of its back with the heavens and of the identification of the sunrise with the front and the sunset with the rear half of its body**.

- Meaning of the ibex

The performed analyzes and the presented parallels point to the conclusion that the ibex in Luristan culture represented the **cosmos**, both in its **spatial and time-related sense**, analogous to the horse in the Vedic ritual aśvamedhá, and the deer in Scythian and other Central Asian and North Asian cultures that created the mentioned petroglyphs.

In support of this, and especially of the symbolism associated with time cycles, we can take the **Luristan openwork rings** (horse harness elements) supplemented with the head of this animal (B28: 7 – 10), which in one type are alternated with a spoked wheel that has a central opening (B28: 3).[107] In most of these objects the head is formed in their upper part, accompanied by large arched horns, obviously as a zoomorphic equivalent of the horned anthropomorphic head which is more often present in another category of similar objects (B28: 2, 6 compare with 3, 7 – 10).[108] These objects clearly suggest the **identification of the ring or wheel with the ibex and the horned human character**, which implies that they actually make up the body of these characters i.e. that the **circle i.e. wheel are the characters themselves**. If we agree that the circular corpus of these objects represents the **sky**, it means that the depicted ibex or its equivalent horned zooanthropomorphic mythical figure are **equated with this part of the cosmos**, but also with the **time** that takes place within it.

The mentioned rings and wheels can also help in revealing the meaning of the pair of animals from the "zoomorphic standards" if we take into account that the rim of numerous such objects is supplemented (B28: 2, 3, 5 – 10), and even constructed (B28: 1, 4), by the same pair of symmetrical animals. If we agree with the previous conclusion that the indicated circular elements symbolize the sky and the time cycles that take place within it, then it would follow that this pair of animals represent the **two complementary halves of the sky** and the corresponding phases of those cycles. This could mean that these animals carried analogous meanings also within the frames of the "zoomorphic standards".

On some rings of this kind the mentioned triad is accompanied by **additional anthropomorphic heads** (judging by the hairstyle more likely female), usually depicted with small (bovine?) horns. They are mainly depicted in pairs, placed on the ring, left and right of the ibex's head (B28: 7, 8). In some cases it is a single depicted figure with the same features, shown inside the ring, but this time as a half-length portrait, with hands raised in an orans pose that touch or grasp the ring, and in some cases with barely indicated breasts (B28: 9, 10). In both cases, the hierarchy of these characters is clear i.e. that the **dominant status belongs to the ibex** or **its anthropomorphic equivalent**. The pair of animals and horned human heads, due to their

[106] (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. 1, 1); English translation and commentary: *The Bṛhadāraṇyaka 1950*, 8-11.
[107] Detailed review and classification of the objects: J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 22-27, on the divine character of the central character: 24, 25; on some older hypotheses and on their purpose: S. Przeworski, *Luristan Bronzes*, 249, 250.
[108] This equivalence is noticed by H. Potratz, who considers the anthropomorphic figure to be a moon goddess (Mondgöttin): H. Potratz, *Das "Kampfmotiv"*, 31-33, Fig. 54-60.

lateral position and smaller dimensions, gives the impression as its **companions** with a rank lower than its. The same also applies to the character placed inside the circle, which in this case is also suggested by its location underneath the ibex. If we agree that the circle i.e. the ring represents the body of the main character (man-ibex) then the position of the former indicates that it is located **inside its body i.e. womb**. The indicated relation gives us a reason to include in these interpretations the **myth of Zurvān and the birth of his sons**, which will be discussed in the following chapters (see p. 366).[109]

In iconography, animals normally have a lower status than humans. The fact that in these cases the situation is reversed could mean that the central animal is actually only an **epiphany of some mythical character i.e. deity** whose essential nature (and appearance) surpassed the rank of an animal, that is, it was either human or superhuman, and perhaps even immaterial, and therefore visually undepictable. A similar conclusion is also reached by H. Potratz who thinks that the central head belongs to a divine creature, whereby the spiral horns as the dominant element of these objects functioned as its cryptogram.[110] In support of these observations, to which we are led by the iconography itself and the pictorial structure of the presented Luristan objects, there are some examples from the cultures in the more immediate or distant surroundings of Luristan.

Among the ancient Iranians, the wild goat i.e. ibex was one of the ten hypostases of the god **Verethragna** that reflects some of his functions, such as military power, victory, the power of healing and miracles, and in this case perhaps the most appropriate ones - masculinity and sexual potency.[111] The zoomorphic hypostasis in the form of a goat is also characteristic of the Indian god **Daksha**, whose main functions are close to the previous deity, and relate to the male life force, sexuality and fertilizing power directed towards nature and especially towards plants.[112] Goats are also an attribute i.e. companion of the Vedic and Hindu god **Pushan** who harnesses these animals in his chariot instead of horses. The solar character, the connections with traveling and the dual birth of this god (once in the heights and another time in the depths) indicate his connection with the dynamics of the sun and with the phases of the solar cycle. Also emphasized are his fertilizing functions, manifested, among other things, in the incestuous pretensions towards his mother and sister.[113] In this context we should also mention the Mediterranean mythical characters such as **Pan**, **Satyr** and **Silenus**, whose anthropozoomorphic body is complemented by goat elements and an accentuated phallus. Some of the mentioned features are also possessed by the Nordic celestial god **Thor**, who can be included in this group because he rides a chariot pulled by two goats. In addition, he uses these animals as a renewable source of food by resurrecting them with his hammer, which, among other things, functions as a phallic symbol and a source of vital force.[114]

The "zoomorphic standard" from the Metropolitan Museum (B6: 1) shows that the pair of ibexes in Luristan culture also had their own zooanthropomorphic i.e. anthropomorphic hypostasis, which could also indicate **some kind of divine status** (compare B6: 1 with 11).[115] As we will see further, the wheel as a symbol of the sky and time is in relation to the god Zurvān and some of his specific hypostases (pp. 391, 572, 577).

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[109] If we accept H. Potratz's interpretation that this half-length portrait represents the goddess of the moon (H. Potratz, *Das "Kampfmotiv"*, 33), then the head of the ibex above her should belong to some other deity with a rank higher than hers.

[110] „An dem nunmehrigen Beweise ist aber nicht diese allgemeine Korrespondenz von Belang, sondern vielmehr die Tatsache, dass es sich um das Kopfbild eines göttlichen Wesens gehandelt hat, von dem die Brillenvolute ein Kryptogramm war." (J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 24).

[111] (Bahram Yasht. 14); G. Gnoli, P. Jamzadeh, *Bahrām*; Ю. Б. Полидович, *Хищник*, 368.

[112] Т. И. Оранская, *Производные*, 59. The author accentuates the relations between the goat and the tree, quite common in various cultures, which (as we will see) is also present on the "zoomorphic standards".

[113] В. Н. Топоров, *Пушан*, 353.

[114] H. R. Ellis Davidson, *Gods*, 73-91.

[115] E. Porada, points to the possible relations of the characters of this type with older Elamite prototypes such as the example of a figure (perhaps a pair) of this kind on the stele of Untash Gal, depicted standing by a tree and holding it by the branches (E. Porada, *Nomads*, 23-25, Fig. 2).

These objects can be compared to the pictorial depictions of the Buddhist "Wheel of Existence" (**Bhāvacakra**), especially popular in Tibetan traditions (I12: 4 compare with 3). In these images, a zooanthropomorphic character is holding the wheel with its claws and teeth, identified with the demon **Mara** or the god of death **Yama**. The image on a visual level symbolizes the main goal of Buddhism - liberation from the circle of continual reincarnations (**Moksha/Nirvana**) and the claws of the depicted demonic figure by following the Buddhist principles of living.[116]

2. The central pillar of the "zoomorphic standards"

The central pillar of the "zoomorphic standards" still represents an enigma. We have already presented the dominant position among scholars that through the tube or through the two rings formed between the front and rear legs of the pair of animals, a **metal rod** was inserted that connected and fastened the standards to their bottle-shaped supports (B2:1; B5: 7 – 9; B6: 9; B8: 7). But, within the collections, these rods are often absent, probably because the illegal diggers did not consider it worthwile to also collect them from the field as peripheral (and unattractive) elements of the main object. However, in some cases they are present, but even then accompanied by doubts about whether they really belonged to the specific items or represent a compilation created by modern antiquities dealers or collectors. There have also been expressed opinions, based on several preserved specimens, that some of the **Luristan pins with a decorative head** were inserted in the indicated rings or tubes, which we will discuss in more detail in one of the following chapters (see p. 160).

a) Previous observations regarding the appearance and meanings of the central pillar of the "zoomorphic standards"

Some researchers have tried to reconstruct the form and appearance of this element on the basis of iconographic and symbolic analyzes followed by appropriate parallels. One of the first to do so was **E. Herzfeld** who finds older templates for this motif, among others also on the Karkuk seals dating from 1600-1200 BCE, the era when Mitannia was ruled by an Aryan dynasty (I1: 7, 8).[117] **E. Porada**, but also some other authors, comparing the pair of animals from the oldest "zoomorphic standards" (especially the variants with ibexes) with various pictorial compositions from the Middle East, mainly from seals (examples B29: 7 – 11), hypothesizes that they reflect the traditions of the indigenous culture (especially that of the Elamites), and not of the new populations that settled in Luristan around 1000 BCE. Thereby, she points out specific Elamite prototypes (motifs from seals and other objects with a pair of goat figures) which she believes have served as stimulus in the creation of the "zoomorphic standards". Based on these templates, she concludes that the central pillar, which in the standards stretched between the front and hind legs of the animals, actually **symbolized the "Tree of Life"** – a motif especially common in the Middle East, associated with some female deity.[118] **P. R. S. Moorey** also thinks that the genesis of this composition is due to the Elamite iconographic prototypes from the 13th century BCE, based on the real position in which goats, standing on their hind legs, nibble leaves from the upper branches of trees.[119] **M. N. Pogrebova**, in these comparisons also includes examples from the Koban culture of the Northern Caucasus region.[120]

However, the hitherto known "zoomorphic standards" in which such a pillar is preserved do not fully confirm this hypothesis because in their case, the specific element is composed of a vertical tube or rod which,

[116] S. F. Teiser, *The Wheel*; О. Д. Огнева, *Образ*; R. E. Buswell, D. S. Lopez, *The Princeton*, 309, 310; in general on the symbolic depictions of this kind: И. Ефтимовски, *Примената*.
[117] E. Herzfeld, *Iran*, 164-167 (Fig. 281 – Fig. 283).
[118] E. Porada, *Nomads*, 14-16, 20, 22-26, 30.
[119] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 146, 147.
[120] М. Н. Погребова, *Закавказье*, 145-148.

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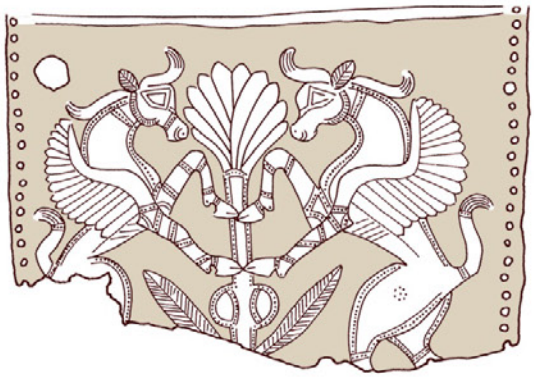
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at best, at the upper end has only a decorative thickening or some kind of zoomorphic element (B2: 1; B5: 7 – 9; B6: 9; B8: 7).[121] The hypothesis is supported only by some rare exceptions in which the upper part of such a pin is **supplemented by certain phytomorphic elements**.[122] E. Porada thinks that such floralized pins are in fact a reflection of the process of insertion into the mentioned rings or tubes of some **real plant elements** (flowers, twigs) or **their pictorial depictions made of easily degradable materials** (for example wooden pins).[123]

If it nevertheless turns out that these pillars most often did not have any supplements that would complete their phytomorphism, it would not mean rejection of the mentioned thesis. In that case, this central vertical motif could be treated as a symbol of the other **axial equivalents of the Cosmic Tree**, such as the **Cosmic Pillar** that supports the sky or the **Cosmic Pivot** around which it rotates. In both cases, this element of the standards retains its cosmological significance, denoting these elements as symbols of the Cosmic Axis that extends through the zones of the cosmos, separating them from each other, but also connecting them as a whole, at the same time appearing as symbol of the Center of the universe, in its spatial and sacred sense.

The strongest argument that the pillar of the "zoomorphic standards" depicted (or at least on a conceptual level symbolized) the Cosmic Tree or the Tree of Life are the **other categories of Luristan bronzes** in which the same symmetrical pair of animals forms a composition that would be analogous to the hypothesized one. Raised on their hind legs or alternated with upright zooanthropomorphic figures, they flank a vertical motif composed of various plant elements which in this case, without doubt, can be identified as a stylized tree, in some cases a palm tree, and even as some kind of unrealistic tree with a symbolic i.e. mythical character. We will present these examples in the next chapter.

b) A tree flanked by a pair of animals in other types of Luristan bronzes

This scene is quite common on **Luristan pins with an openwork or discoid head**. In those of the first category, the pillar, flanked by a pair of animals (herbivorous or carnivorous), is shaped in the form of a plant with branches at the top (usually three in number), supplemented by leaves, buds or fruits (B30: 5, 6).[124] There are also variants inscribed inside a ring (B31: 6). The same composition is quite often also found on pins with a discoid head, as their central and most often only scene (B29: 5; B31: 1 – 5; B33: 1 – 3). One of the exceptions is a pin with two discs, on one of which, below the motif of a tree accompanied by a pair of symmetrical figures, there is a sexual act taking place (see further) (B33: 6). It is very indicative that in some specimens the scene is oriented 90 degrees in relation to their pin, which can only be justified by the act of their horizontal fastening (B31: 1, 3, 4). The scene is also common on the hammered bronze plaques, which mainly served as **coverings for quivers**, and probably for some other objects (B29: 2, 4; B30: 1, 3, 4, 7). It also appears among the reliefs of the Luristan **bronze vessels** in which we also have an asymmetrical example with a lion on one side and a bovine on the other (B29: 1, 3, 6; B30: 2). This composition is also present on the openwork plaques of **Luristan cheekpieces**, represented by scenes that have a fairly stable composition (B32: 1 – 4). It consists of a central phytomorphic motif formed by a vertical trunk that branches out into three branches and two more on the side, which, in some cases, with their arched and feathery shape overlap with

[121] E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 109, examples: 92, 93 (Fig. 74: 106); P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 88; M. Malekzadeh et al, *Fouilles*, 85; A. Godard, *Bronzes*, Pl. LIV: 200, 202, Pl. LV: 203.

[122] P. R. S. Moorey gives a short description of one such specimen: “A finial in the Schmidt collection, Solothurn, cast as double-headed rampant ibexes, has such a tube passed through the rings between their feet. It is finished at the top with pendant leaves as if to suggest a plant. A pin, its head cast as a flower with pendant calyx, is inserted at the top. The mount is of the usual bottle-shape, but cast in openwork.” (P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 141).

[123] E. Porada, *Nomads*, 22; E. Porada, *The Art*, 86; P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 141; L. Vanden Berghe, *Excavations*, 267, 268.

[124] E. Porada, *Nomads*, 22, 23 (Pl.V: 1).

the wings of the lateral figures. In the middle of the trunk there is always a formed central ring that had its functional purpose – insertion of the mouthpiece bar.[125]

The lateral figures in these mentioned depictions are **zoomorphic**, **zoo-anthropomorphic** or **anthropomorphic**. The zoomorphic ones are represented by the usual herbivorous species (ibex, bovine, horse, gazelle, antelope), and less often by carnivores (lion i.e. panther) or hybrid animals (gryphon). They stand on four legs or upright on their hind legs, and are often supplemented by wings. In the hybrid zoomorphic and zoo-anthropomorphic variants (the latter mainly present on the cheekpieces), the figures are combined from the mentioned animals.

c) Analogies

The scene depicting a centrally placed vertical plant, accompanied laterally by a symmetrical pair of animals, belongs to the group of **archetypal images**, universal to all mankind, which spans through all epochs. It occurs in a number of variants, whereby the central motif can be represented by a tree, a palm tree or some ornamented phytomorphic motif, while the animals can be alternated with figures of various real animals, hybrid zoomorphic or zooanthropomorphic figures, and even anthropomorphic ones, supplemented by smaller zoomorphic details. It is especially common in the circle of the ancient Middle Eastern civilizations (**Mesopotamia, Phoenicia, Hittites, Phrygia**) but also in the Bronze Age cultures of the **Aegean region**. It is very indicative that, in spite of the diversity of the central plant motif, the **goat** occurs quite commonly among the animals, in most cases standing upright on its hind legs, with its front legs leaning on the plant and its mouth striving towards the plant's branches, leaves or fruits (B34). The variants with **lions** and **gryphons** are somewhat rarer, with some progression in later periods (B35). Also rare are the examples in which the figures show various forms of deviation from the symmetry, which usually does not refer to the basic contours but to some smaller details. These scenes are realized in all possible artisanal techniques and materials. They also persist within **Christianity** (B35: 6, 7) which is the best indicator that in previous epochs, too, they changed their meaning by adapting to different religions, regardless of the fact that their basic composition remained largely unchanged.[126]

d) Iconographic variants of the centrally placed tree in Luristan bronzes

- Combining the tree with geometric elements

On most of the presented Luristan examples, the central tree is accompanied by a pair or a larger number of symmetrically organized **circular motifs** or **rosettes**. In some cases they are arranged around the tree (B31: 1, 4) while in others, as in the cheekpieces, they are incorporated into its canopy as supplements to the tips of its branches (B32: 1 – 3; B30: 6). The presence of these elements (especially in the latter case) can be justified in several ways. Viewed from a naturalistic point of view, they acquire the meaning of **flowers** or **fruits of the plant**. From a stylistic-artistic aspect, they can be understood as the result of the creator's aspiration to fill in the empty space of the composition (horror vacui). Perceived on a mythical-symbolic level, having in mind the cosmological meaning of the whole composition, the same elements acquire the meaning of **celestial bodies** (sun, moon, stars) which in ancient and archaic cultures are stylized in such a way. This is

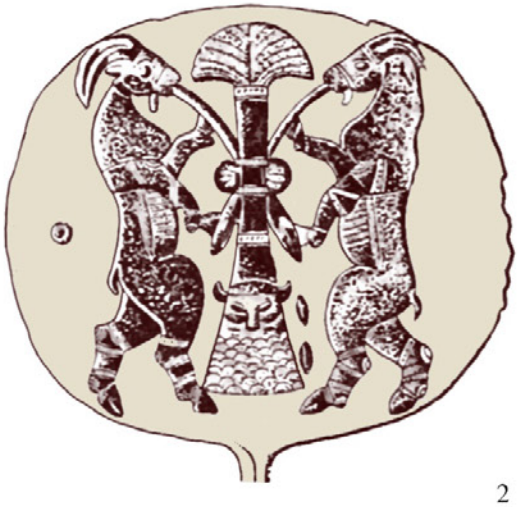
[125] *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020, M.76.97.122, M.76.97.126, M.76.97.123; H. Potratz, *Das "Kampfmotiv"*, Taf. X: 37; G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 100, 101 (Cat. 210). A similar but older example from the territory of Iran ("Jiroft" culture, 3rd millennium BCE): O. W. Muscarella, *Archaeology*, 510, 516 (Fig. 13).

[126] G. Lechler, *The Tree of Life*; U. Holmberg, *Der Baum*; О. А. Кифишина, *Священное*; A. J. Evans, *Mycenaean Tree*; E. D. van Buren, *The Fauna*. About the mythical, symbolic and religious meaning of the tree: M. Eliade, *Patterns*, Ch. VIII; Р. Кук, *Дрво*; В. Н. Топоров, *Древо мировое*. E. O. James, *The tree of life*; on the Western Asian seals: H. Frankfort, *Cylinder*, 204, 205; E. Herzfeld, *Iran*, 165 (Fig. 281), 166 (Fig. 282), 167 (Fig. 283); T. van Bakel, *The magical*.

B31



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testified by numerous examples in which such a meaning is supported by other iconographic elements or by corresponding verbal interpretations of the creators and users of these images. Thus, the solar meaning of the circular motifs, rosettes and wheels is best reflected in examples in which they are supplemented by a smaller circle and surrounded by rays (B37: 1 – 3, 6, 7). Such a meaning is also clear in those examples where the **sun** is depicted on one side of the tree, while on the other - the **moon**, depicted in the form of a sickle, semicircle or "C" - motif (B38: 1 – 3, 6).[127]

It is not possible to estimate with certainty which of the above three concepts prevailed in a particular composition. For example, in some cases, the first or second concept could have dominated during the composition's execution by the artisans, while in its perception by the users – the third one, based on the mental images formed in their consciousness or subconsciousness under the influence of the culture in which they were raised. Opposite situations are of course also possible.

In **Sumero-Akkadian myths**, such a cosmological meaning is encoded in the Sarbatu tree, whose broad shadow (and of course canopy) extends from sunrise to sunset. In **Chinese myths**, associated with the movement of the sun is the Fusang tree. They speak about how the sun, after bathing in the Pool of Xian, ascends the tree and from there sets off on a journey across the sky. Then, in the west, it dives into the waters of the Yellow Springs which are ruled by dragons, and after passing through the underground waters - the world of darkness, it is born again on the opposite side of the world. In some myths, the multiple suns rest on this tree (personified in the form of birds) before embarking on their journey across the sky. In **Indian traditions**, too, the Cosmic Tree (equated with Brahman i.e. the Universe) is identified with time and specifically with the year. These mythical notions are also reflected in European folklore, through various riddles and legends, in which the year is represented as a tree or pillar with birds, nests or other supplements.[128]

In these mythical notions and their pictorial manifestations, the individual stages of the sun's movement are represented as circles or rosettes arranged along the edges of the tree's canopy, often identified with its fruits. Such are, for example, the stories of the **magical golden apples** that grow on some hard-to-reach mythical tree.[129] In some myths these multiplicated phases of the solar dynamic are treated literally as the presence of **multiple suns in the sky**. Such is the case with the ten suns in Chinese mythology that reflect their ten-day week (compare with B37: 1 – 3, 6, 7).[130]

The identification of the sun with the flowers and fruits of the Cosmic Tree is best represented on **Luristan cheekpieces**, whereby the stable triple depiction of these motifs can be justified by the **three key phases of the sun's movement** along the visible parts of the universe - sunrise, noon and sunset (B32: 1 – 4). Of the numerous parallels for the indicated image, on this occasion we have selected several motifs from South Slavic **folk embroidery** and from European **alchemical illustrations** (B32: 7 – 10). The tree with three branches is especially common in the **folklore of Siberian peoples**, where its cosmological meaning is accompanied by corresponding verbal interpretations that refer to traditions related to **shamanism** (B32: 5). It can also be found among the relief motifs on the medieval **tombstones from Bosnia and Herzegovina** (B32: 6).[131] The triple division of the tree can also be sensed in some of the **Luristan pins** with a discoid head (with one vertical and two oblique lateral branches) in which there is also a tendency for transformation towards an analogous quadruple structure (B33: 3, 5). The last variant could have been motivated by two paradigms, the

[127] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 314-316, 399-401.

[128] On the Sumero-Akkadian example: И. С. Крамер, *Мифология*, 144; some stylized palm trees from Sumerian seals that resemble the combination of the signs for a star and a circle - an ideogram for the *"whole heaven"* (T. van Bakel, *The magical*, No. 10, 11). On the Chinese examples: Д. Бодде, *Мифы*, 392, 393; Т. Вулета, *Лесновске*, 164-167. On the Indian ones: В. Н. Топоров, *О структуре*, 31-33, 47; L. Parmly Brown, *The Cosmic Hands*, 16, 17. In general on the topic and for the folklore examples: Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 314-316.

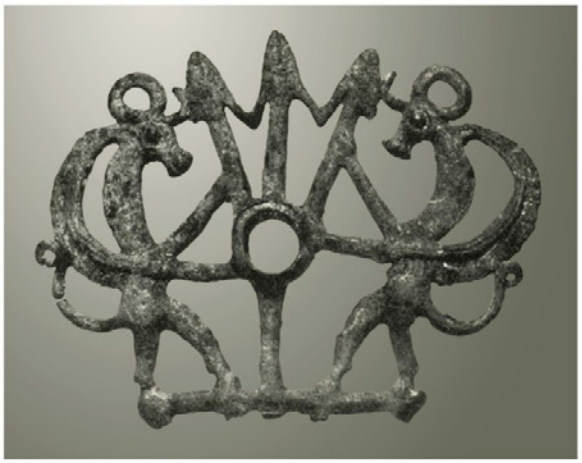
[129] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 314-316.

[130] These ten suns are born by Xihe, on the other side of the East Sea (Д. Бодде, *Мифы*, 392).

[131] For the analogies: Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 365, 366. 390, 399; Н. Чаусидис, *Кольцо*, 531.

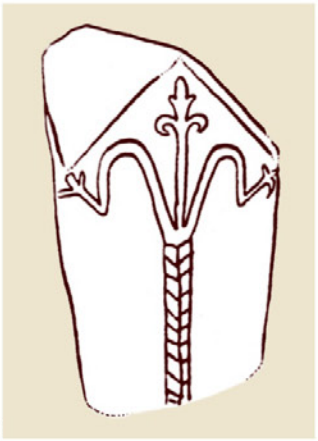
B32


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first of which would be the horizontal projection of the cosmos with four trees encoding the sides of the world, while the second – the four-spoked wheel denoting the four phases of the cyclical processes in the sky. In the "zoomorphic standards" this concept could be reflected through the mentioned pins, if it is shown that they were inserted into the tube or rings formed between animals (B47: 8; H3: 5).

One of the mentioned pins with a discoid head depicts a stem with a human head at the top and a rosette above it (B33: 1). If we take into account that in this case the head represents the sun in the phase of its culmination (see further), then in this case the rosette could represent the **Polar Star** that encodes the center of the sky and the whole universe, whose vertical projection (in the form of the Cosmic Axis) in this case would be represented by the stem (compare with B20: 8).[132] In support of such a meaning one can take numerous depictions of trees at the top of which, instead of a human head, is a radiant solar disk (B37: 4, 5). It is believed that in the presented ancient Egyptian example (B37: 4) this position of the sun marks its **birth from the tree**, which in this case appears as an **epiphany of the Mother Goddess**.[133]

In some examples the branches of the depicted tree end in the form of arrows (B31: 4; B32: 4). In this instance, too, it could be a case of stylization of a certain realistic plant element, such as, for example, an **ivy leaf**. But, it could also be a form of symbolic representation of the **Light Tree** (usually turned upside down - with its roots up), as a symbol of the sun or the sky, whereby its branches acquire the meaning of rays that descend from there towards the earth (B37: 7). The equation of their tips with the arrow would have been motivated by the desire to represent the active aspect of light - the positive i.e. fertilizing, but also the destructive i.e. deadly.[134]

- Combining the tree with zoomorphic elements

The tree can be given a cosmic character by procedures analogous to those in the case of the macrocosmic animal – through its **supplementation with animals specific to the three zones of the universe**. Numerous such images have been recorded in the folklore traditions of Siberian populations, most often within the equipment of shamans, in which the **birds** depicted in the **tree's canopy** equate it with the **sky**, the **reptiles and fish** depicted in the lower zone identify its **roots** with the **underworld**, while the **terrestrial animals** placed **next to the trunk** place it in relation to the **middle cosmic zone** (B38: 7). This concept also survives in Christianity through the replacement of the tree with a cross (B38: 4), obviously with gigantic dimensions, given that it is often accompanied by small figures of animals, arranged according to the same concept (B38: 8, 9).[135] Reptiles as representatives of the chthonic regions, which are absent from the presented examples, are regularly depicted on iconostasis crosses in Orthodox churches through the pair of symmetrical dragons (and in some cases fish) placed at their bottom.[136] Only remnants of this concept are present on the Luristan bronzes, fragments of which can be sensed in certain objects.

Such zoomorphic encoding of the celestial zones could be detected on the small scene from a Luristan pin with a discoid head (B36: 1), in which the tree consists of a central trunk with a few leaves in the upper and bottom part, while in the middle - branching out from it is a pair of symmetrical branches, slightly resembling arms bent at the elbows, which both end in a single bird protome. They are held by the two zoo-

[132] In the Sumerian language and script, the star sign is associated with the palm tree, both in relation to the meanings *"top-one", "heavens", "plant-top"* (T. van Bakel, *The magical*, No. 7); for this motif on Luristan pins: D. de Clercq-Fobe, *Epingles*, 22.

[133] E. Neumann, *The Great Mother*, 241-243 (Fig. 53); another example with the sun at the top of a tree (on shamanic drums from Siberia): U. Holmberg, *Der Baum*, 155 (Abb. 76); G. Lechler, *The Tree of Life*, 379.

[134] On the upside-down tree: Rig Veda 1. 24. 7; M. Eliade, *Patterns*, Ch. VIII: 100; P. Granziera, *The Indo-Mediterranean*, 610; on the symbolism of the arrow: Н. Чаусидис, *Дуалистички*, 35-39; N. Chausidis, *The Funeral*, 651-654; in the Sumerian language and script the arrow had the meaning of “timber” and “life” (T. van Bakel, *The magical*, No. 6).

[135] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 49, 50, 210, 363, 364, 372.

[136] Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 491.

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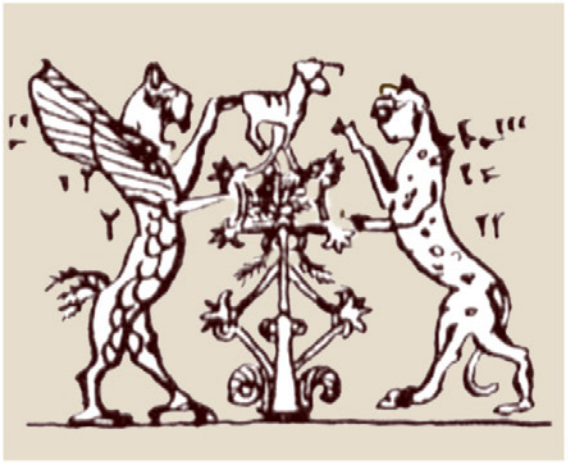

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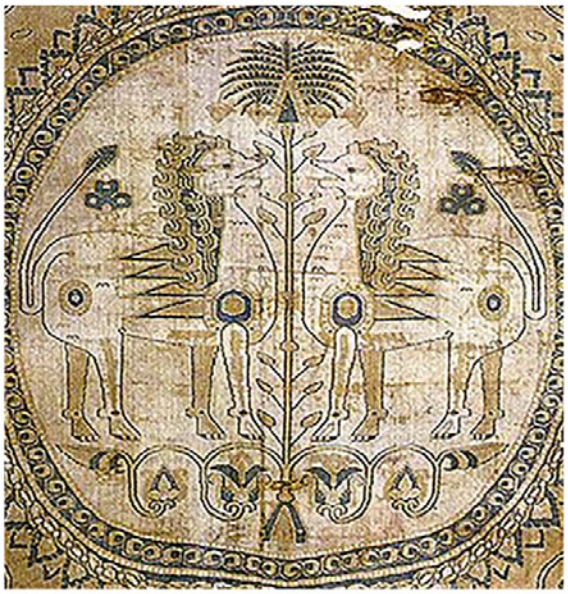
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anthropomorphic figures standing left and right of the tree.[137] In an ideal case this element should be accompanied by the presence of reptiles or fish in its lower zone and terrestrial animals in the middle. As an older visual parallel to this example we can take a similar motif, supplemented by symmetrical protomes, present on an Old Babylonian **cylindrical seal from Larsa**. In it, the vertical stem, at the bottom is supplemented by a transverse element, at the top by a few twigs or leaves and below them by a pair of animal (supposedly leonine) protomes (B36: 2, 3).[138] It is interesting that in this case it is not a tree but some kind of cultic or ceremonial prop in the hands of the god Nergal, which puts this object on the list of potential prototypes or inspirers of the Luristan standards. We will address these aspects in more detail in the chapter dedicated to the purpose of these objects (H16 – H19; see p. 624).

If we accept that the central pillar of the "zoomorphic standards" represented or conceptually encoded the Cosmic Tree, then as a manifestation of this concept one could treat the **avian** i.e. **gryphon heads** of some of the large pair of animals inclined towards its supposed canopy (gryphon/avian head = sky) (for example B7: 1 – 3, compare with B3). The mentioned birds present in the upper i.e. front part of these animals would also bear the meaning of **classifiers of the celestial zones** (B8: 7; B9: 1, 2, 6).

The zoomorphic encoding of the lower parts of the Cosmic Tree is also not explicitly represented on these standards, but it can be expected given its presence on the remaining Luristan bronzes. Here we have in mind the cheekpieces and some other objects in which the figures of **rabbits** (as animals with a chthonic meaning) with their body literally build the line of the ground i.e. substrate of the scene on which the main characters tread (example B14: 3).[139] As a remnant of this procedure one could take the mentioned **tails of the pair of main animals metamorphosed into dragons** (with the body of a snake and the head of a gryphon or lion) (B15: 1, 2, 5 - 7). This would also include the **heads depicted at the bottom of the central trunk**, given their zoomorphic features, most commonly represented through the animal ears (see further: B31: 2; p. 547).

The chthonic animals depicted at the bottom of the Cosmic Tree in the mythical actions acquire the meaning of its **guardians** or of the **negative factors** that have seized and deny the use of the benefits of this tree by humans or the gods. Given the territory in which the Luristan bronzes were discovered, on this occasion it is important to mention the myth in which **Ahura Mazda** plants the **Hōm** tree on the sacred mountain, while his opponent **Angra Mainyu** creates a reptile that attacks the tree.[140] The fish (**Kara**), as another typical classifier of the cosmic tree, in the Avesta acquires a new function – a guardian that protects from the **"lizard"** or **"dragon of the depth"** the roots of the Tree of Life that grows in the middle of the sea.[141]

The encoding of the middle zone of the Cosmic Tree by terrestrial animals is widely represented, at least in a potential sense, in all of the Luristan examples presented here, including the "zoomorphic standards", if we take into account that the pair of large animals (all of them, without exception, terrestrial) belong to this zone of the universe. But, their meaning does not come to the fore without proper encoding of at least one of the other two cosmic zones. It can be assumed that in the formation of the "zoomorphic standards" the selection of specific species of terrestrial animals was primarily motivated by these goals, as well but it is evident that in the later stages of existence of this scene some other meanings of these animals were brought to the forefront (see further).

The zoomorphic cosmological encoders of the mythical tree, besides this one, can also bear other functions and meanings within the same or some other mythical-symbolic contexts. Thus, the presence of

[137] Sketch of the scene: A. Godard, *The Art*, 60 (Fig. 44).

[138] J. Black, A. Green, *Gods*, 19 (Fig. 13).

[139] Other examples: H. Potratz, Das "Kampfmotiv", Tab. I: 4, 5, 6, T. III: 9, T.IV:15, T. V: 18, T.XVIII: 68, T. XIX: 72; in his article on the presence of the rabbit (and bear) on the Luristan bronzes, the author does not give attention to these specimens (H. Potratz, *Bär und Hase*).

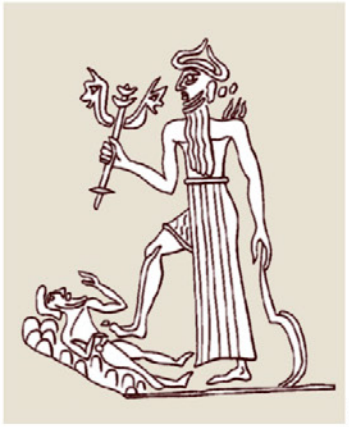
[140] M. Eliade, *Patterns*, 290 (108). The same ambivalent functions are also retained by the dragons that accompany the mentioned iconostasis crosses in Orthodox temples (Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 491).

[141] (Yasht, 14. 29; Bundahishn, 18. 16); G. Lechler, *The Tree of Life*, 379; R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 215.

B36

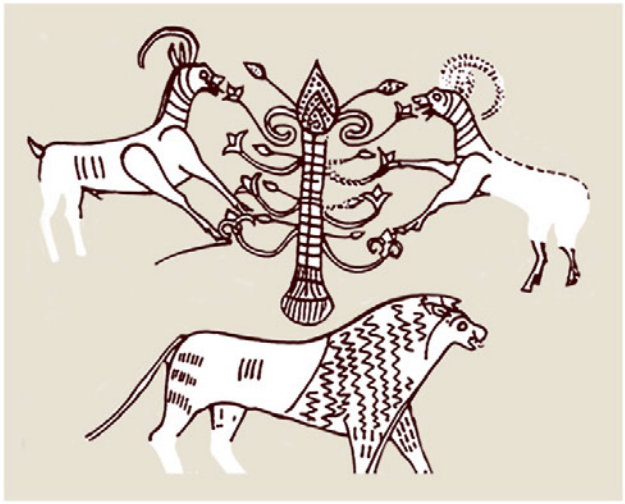

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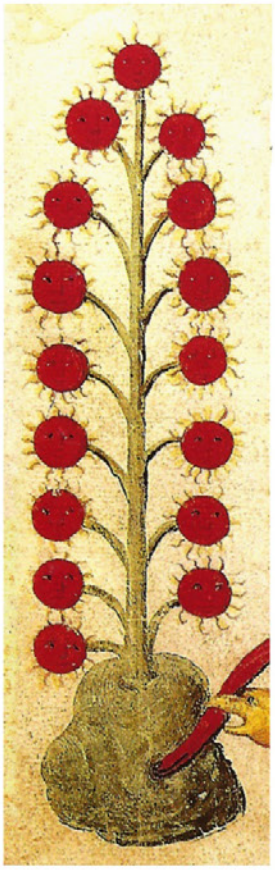
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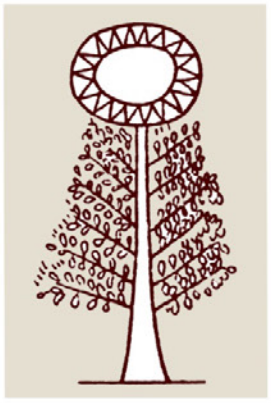
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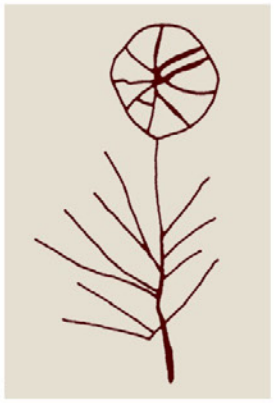
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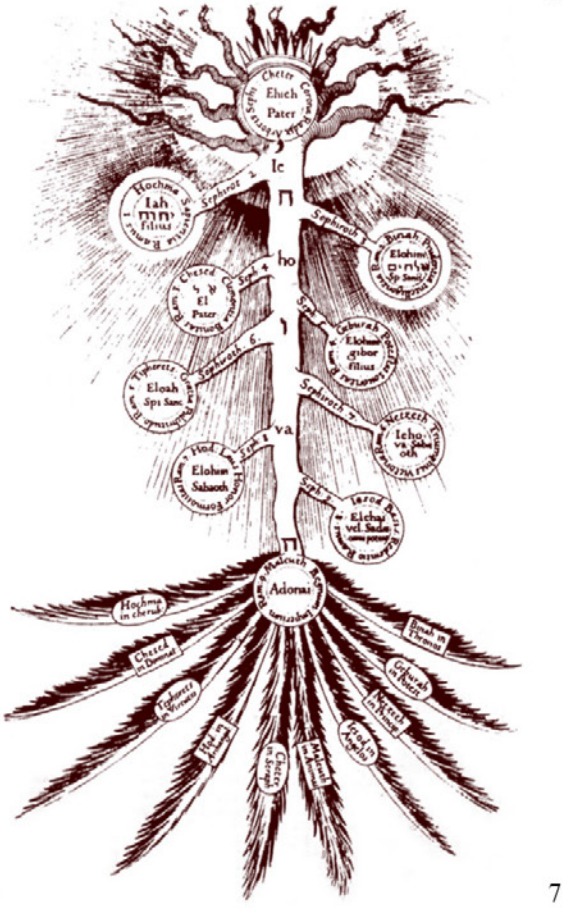
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Chetter
Ehieh
Pater
Iah
filius
Hochma
Sephiroth
Binah
Elohim
Gibor
Filius
El
Pater
Chesed
Geburah
Eloah
Spi Sanc
Tiphereth
Hod
Elohim
Sabaoth
Netzah
Jehovah
vel Sadai
Jesod
Malkuth
Adonai
Hochma in cherub
Binah in Throno
Chesed in Deorum
Geburah in Throno
Tiphereth in Throno
Netzah in Throno
Hod in Throno
Jesod in Throno
Malkuth in Throno

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birds at the tips of the branches of the Cosmic Tree, especially if they are multiplicated and rhythmically arranged along the edges of the canopy, can be treated as a zoomorphic alternation of the mentioned circular or rosette motifs with the same function - as **symbols of the sun** or **separate phases of its movement across the sky** (B39 compare with B37). This meaning is indicated by the verbal mythical forms in which the sun is explicitly represented as a bird, usually accompanied by some surreal features that bring it closer to this celestial body (bird with golden feathers, firebird, phoenix). At the pictorial level, this identification is represented through various forms of combination of these birds with circular motifs (discs, wheels, rosettes) as geometric symbols of the solar disk, such as: depiction of these motifs on i.e. inside the body of the bird; depiction of the bird inside these motifs; depiction of the bird's body in the form of a sun disk; replacing the sun with a bird as its symbol.[142]

Given the territory in which the Luristan bronzes were created and used, as the most appropriate verbal parallel in the interpretation of the images elaborated here, one can take into account the mythical traditions of Iranian culture. One such example is present in the work of **Ferdowsi**. We are talking about **two riddles** that could be related to the images of the tree equated with the sky in which time takes place. **R. C. Zaehner**, defines them as older motifs which, according to their features, could belong to the **Zurvanite doctrines**. The first one tells about 12 noble and lush cypresses, each with 30 branches, which denote the movement of time with the 12 months, each of them with 30 days. The second motif refers to the presented images of a tree combined with depictions of birds as zoomorphic equivalents of the sun. In this case it is one bird that alternately lands on two tall cypress trees. When the bird lands on one of them in the evening, its leaves and fruits become fresh and lush, and when it flies off and lands on the other, those of the first one dry out, while those of the second one become fresh. In the answers to the second riddle, the two trees represent the two halves of the high celestial vault ("the two arms of the lofty firmament"), while the bird is the sun that occasionally lands on them.[143]

If we accept the view that the central pillar of the Luristan standards symbolized the Cosmic Axis i.e. the Cosmic Tree, then the presence next to it of **gryphons** (especially typical of the "idols with protomes" C16 – C19) can be connected to similar iconographic arrangement from the Middle East. Here we have in mind the examples in which a tree or a similar axial motif is accompanied by these or some other similar winged hybrid creatures (**sphinxes, cherubim**). Duplicated or multiplicated in the number of four, they symbolize **the four corners of the world or the Earth's plate**, and at the same time bear the function of **guardians of the Cosmic Tree** and **supporters of the sky**.[144]

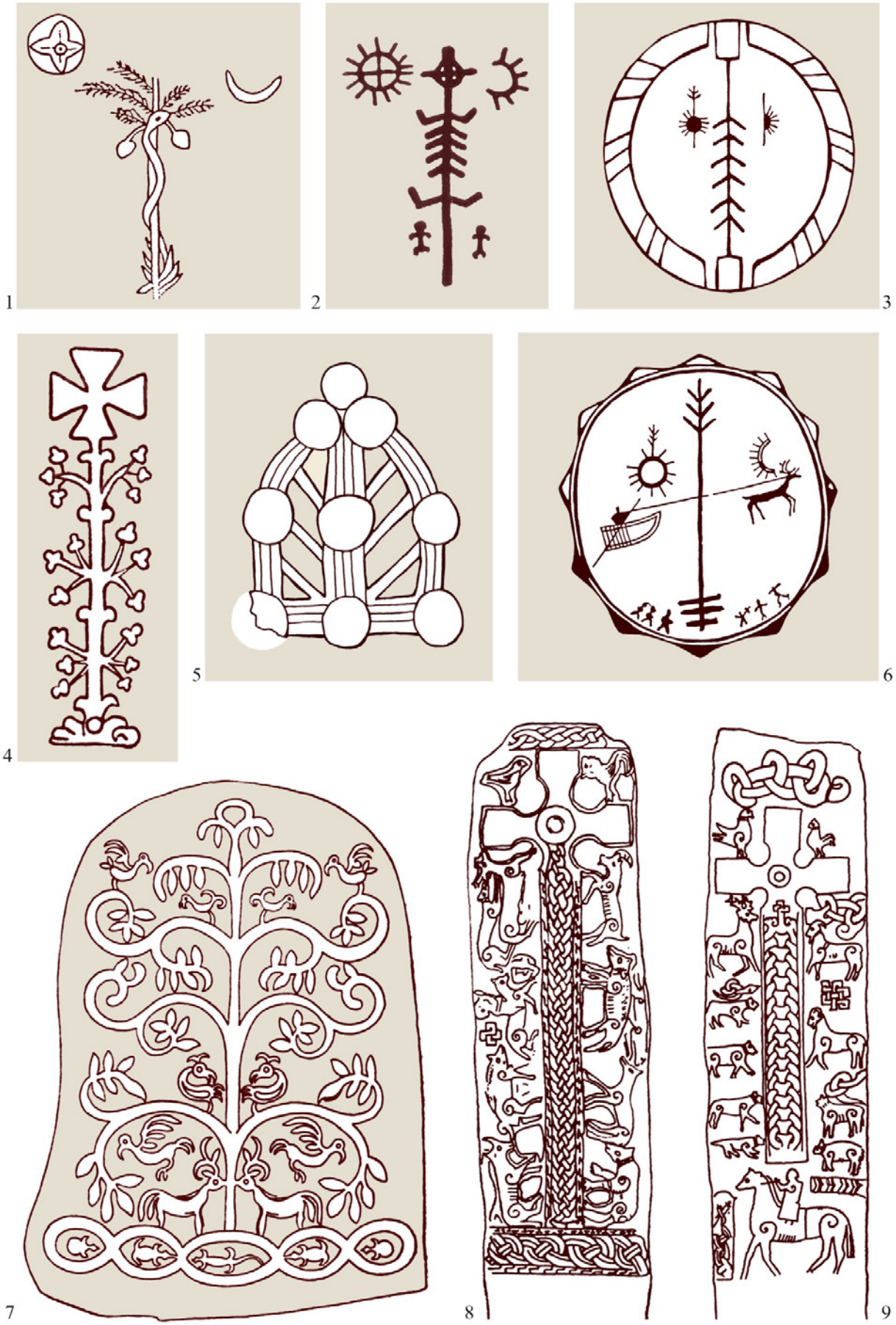
- Combining the tree with anthropomorphic elements

On some of the mentioned Luristan depictions, one can sense the **anthropomorphization of the tree** flanked by the two animals. This process is especially noticeable in the examples of **quivers** in which the image includes some details that are completely unsuitable for the tree, in order to resemble parts of the human body (B30: 1, 3, 4, 7). Thus, the vertical trunk of the tree is complemented by two pairs of symmetrical branches, the upper ones of which allude to **arms**, most often raised in an orans posture, while the lower ones are bent downwards, reminiscent of **spread legs**. The top of the tree with its fan-shaped leaves or branches resembles a **head** with bristled hair or a crown. The two semicircular segments interfere with **breasts**, if they are in the upper part of the trunk, or with the **abdomen** – if it is a single one and placed in the lower part.

These elements are more pronounced on one of the **Luristan pins** with a discoid head (B31: 4) where in the upper part of the tree, under the triangular segment (a cap?), one can recognize the face of a phyto-

[142] On this motif in the verbal forms of myth and in the pictorial depictions from the East (especially in China): Т. Вулета, *Лесновске*, 164-166; an example from Indian culture: Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 314, Д4: 7.
[143] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 243; R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 240.
[144] А. В. Подосинов, *Символы*.

B38



anthropomorphic figure with emphasized eyes, and below it also a pair of circular elements that occupy the position of breasts. A slightly larger circular motif is formed in the middle of the trunk, which alludes to the abdomen, whereby the central point acquires the meaning of the navel, and all of it together – **the abdomen of a pregnant woman**. In this case, too, the lower pair of branches alludes to the figure's legs, spread out in a position typical of **coitus** or **childbirth** (similar motifs B29: 4, 5). On a **pin with an openwork round head** one could recognize some of the final stages in the anthropomorphization of the tree flanked by the animal pair (B33: 4). Here, the columnar torso of the central figure, divided into transverse grooves and spirals, would interfere with the stylized trunk, while the raised long stick-like arms – with the branches of the tree. The hairstyle with wavy curls and especially the clearly designated breasts would indicate the female sex of this hybrid figure.

On a **bronze belt from Luristan**, depicted in the central part is a symmetrical composition with a pair of ibexes facing each other, but instead of the usual tree, between them is a stylized human figure with spread legs and arms raised in the orans posture (B31: 7).[145] Judging by the specific pose, we think that it is a **mythical character or goddess with the function of mother and nurturer**, which in this case, judging by its place in the composition, represents an **alternation of the Tree of Life and the Cosmic Tree**. This is indicated by the circular motifs above and below the character's hands which, in addition to the "golden fruits" of the sacred tree, also symbolize the phases of the sun's movement through the universe – a motif that, as we have seen, often accompanies variants of the anthropomorphized tree (B31: 4). The presence of two more pairs of analogous figures, left and right of the central composition, could be explained by the desire to disperse the categories represented by the central one - through nature or through the abdomen (probably female) on which the belt was positioned.

Several previous researchers have touched upon the anthropomorphic aspect of the central tree from the presented compositions. **A. Porada**, based on analogies, assumes that the central pillar of the Luristan standards, behind which stood the meaning of tree, was associated with the **Mother Goddess**.[146] **G. M. D'erme** thinks that the central depiction of a tree on the discoid-headed pins, as in some other Luristan objects, carries the meaning of the **Cosmic Axis** (axis mundi), functioning at the same time as an aniconic representation of some deity equated with it. The combination of a palmette and rosette present on one such pin (C11: 3), is considered by him as a symbol of the union of the male and female principle and an **equivalent of the androgynous god Zurvān**.[147] Perceiving the Luristan bronzes and some Scythian objects in relation to each other, **S. S. Bessonova** points out that in both cultures the equating of the tree with the **mythical mother** is quite emphasized. She also finds this symbolic interwovenness on the standards of the type "idols with protomes", represented on which, according to her, is the **"totem tree"**.[148] **P. R. S. Moorey** also thinks that in Luristan the tree was a symbol of the local **Mother Goddess and protectress of childbirth**.[149]

The identification of the tree with the human figure, and primarily with that of the woman, is based on some real functional equations between the two elements. Apart from the fact that **both of them give birth to some kind of "fruits"** i.e. they are **bearers of life, fertility and creation**, the fact that they also have the function of **nurturers of man** plays a special role here. Although the tree in these images is often represented by some indeterminate fruit-bearing trees, in this case it is actually present as a symbol of the entire plant world on which human existence is based. The nutritional functions of the woman include both their natural

[145] P. R. S. Moorey, *Adam Collection*, Fig. 118 (according to: М. Н. Погребова, *Закавказье*, 106, 107 – Таб. IX: 5).
[146] E. Porada, *The Art*, 86. This would be indicated by the identification in Sumerian language and script of the tree (palm tree), uterus and vulva (T. van Bakel, *The magical*, No. 3, 4, 5, 16, 17).
[147] G. M. D'Erme, *The Cappella*, 406 (Fig. 3), 413, 414.
[148] С. С. Бессонова, *Религиозные*, 90-97, Рис. 17.
[149] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 149, 150.

(**breastfeeding**) and cultural manifestations (**production i.e. preparation of food**).[150] On a visual i.e. artistic level, this identification is manifested through iconographic depictions in which **the tree is replaced by a figure of a woman**. These are usually images of the above discussed type, with two symmetrical animals flanking a plant motif alternated with a depiction of a phytoanthropomorphic figure with spread arms and legs. In some cases the equation of tree and woman is achieved with a hybrid motif executed in the spirit of realism (B40: 1 – 6), but also occuring are strongly **ornamentalized variants** in which, in the contours of the plant one can recognize the contours of a female figure in the mentioned pose (B40: 7 – 12). Numerous facts indicate that in all variants, the central motif, among other things, could have also represented **the goddess Mother Earth** (see p. 299).[151]

- Supplementing the tree with an anthropomorphic head i.e. face

In some Luristan bronzes, especially in the case of **discoid pins**, the stylized tree is combined with an anthropomorphic head with a regular circular contour (in some cases surrounded by a kind of halo), which is actually depicted on the hemispherical umbo formed in the center of the disc (B41: 1, 2; B33: 1 – 3, 5). These heads have a beardless face of indefinite sex or a hybrid zoo-anthropomorphic face (human-lion). In some cases they are located at the top of the plant (B41: 1), and in others in the middle of its trunk so that the branches of the tree continue above it, and sometimes laterally from it (B33: 2, 3, 5).

This combination can be interpreted in two ways. According to the first, it would be the already pointed out concept of **anthropomorphization of the tree** i.e. its transformation into a phytoanthropomorphic character. But, the ideally circular and hemispherical shape of the head, its separation from the tree with a regular frame that resembles a halo, as well as the presence of other solar features (present in other pins with this shape), give us reason to assume that in these cases it represented the **personalized solar disk placed on the Cosmic Tree**. The presented arrangement could indicate some dominant phase of the solar cycles such as **noon**, **summer** or the **summer solstice**. The interpretation of E. D. Philips also goes in this direction, who defines this element as the face of the sun god **Mithra**.[152] The above proposed interpretation of the rosette above the head as a Polar Star (B41: 1) supports the axial status of the tree, by which the personalized sun at its top also acquires a central position, within the frames of the sky represented by the entire circular composition of the pin's disc.[153]

On this occasion, we present three analogies of this scene, whereby in the first one (a **carpet** from Macedonia from the 19th century) the anthropomorphic face is located on top of a tree supplemented by birds and richly ornamented rhombuses (B41: 3). The solar meaning of the face is indicated by the radiant halo around it, whereby its rhombic shape and such shape of numerous other similar motifs on the tree is due to the specific weaving technique by which the circular motifs are transformed into rhombuses i.e. obliquely placed squares.[154] The second example is a depiction from a Siberian shamanic **drum** followed by a certain reduction of the tree's branches, but with an obvious cosmological meaning (B41: 5). The third example belongs to the illustrations from the European **alchemical writings** where it is obvious that the anthropomorphic figure placed in the middle of the trunk represents the sun surrounded by stars (B41: 4). As a paradigm for this last image probably served some kind of cosmological notion (quite similar to some of the Luristan ones), which in this case was put in service of the esoteric alchemical ideas. In support of the solar character of the depicted figure, one can take the Hindu tree cast in bronze, with clear cosmological features (a pair of zoomorphic and anthropomorphic figures at the trunk and birds at the tips of the branches). In the center of its canopy, depicted

[150] On this symbolic relation: M. Eliade, *Patterns*, Ch. VIII: 102-105; E. Neumann, *The Great Mother*, 240-267; U. Holmberg, *Der Baum*, 63-86; archaic forms of this identification in South India: P. Granziera, *The Indo-Mediterranean*.
[151] Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 163-176, 238-240, 252-256; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 143, 144, 146, 146, 161, 163; N. Chausidis, *Myth. Representations*, 13.
[152] E. D. Filips, *Isčezle*, 226.
[153] Drawing of the pin: A. Godard, *The Art*, 75 – Fig. 77; photography: E. D. Filips, *Isčezle*, 226.
[154] Ј. Ристовска Пиличкова, *Македонската*, 235, 235 (with presented similar examples from Bulgaria).

B39



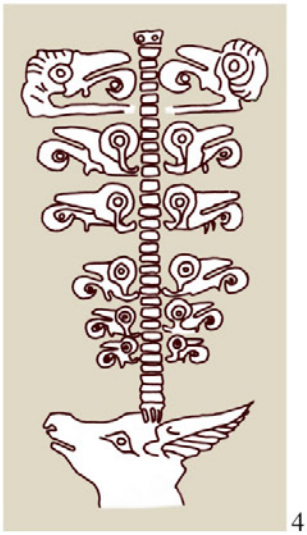
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on the trunk is a rosette that we could interpret as an alternation of our motif with a very probable solar meaning (B39: 5 compare with B41).

In some Luristan examples, the **anthropomorphic face** (this time bearded and with animal ears) is also depicted below - **embedded in the very bottom of the trunk of the tree i.e. palm** (B31: 2 compare with B33: 4 and with B41: 4).[155] We think that, unlike the previous one, this face belongs to some **chthonic deity** with anthropo-zoomorphic features, in the role of a representative i.e. symbol of the chthonic regions of the universe.[156] The presence of only its head could evoke the myth of the Cosmic Tree (symbol of the cosmic axis) or the Tree of Life (symbol of all vegetation and of all life) that grows from the top of its head or from the mouth.[157] This ancient mythologem also found its **Christian variant** in the myth according to which the Golgotha cross was made of the tree that grew from the three seeds placed in the mouth of the late Adam (compare G50).[158] The head in this location could also denote the chthonic phase of the solar cycle i.e. **the stay of the solar disk in the underworld** (for these aspects see p. 547). In a late folkloric variant of the Cosmic Tree with radiant rosettes at the tips of its branches (visible phases of the daily path of the sun), the bottom pair of branches is accompanied by rosettes with embedded faces similar to the previous one - with a dark physiognomy which, given their bottom position, probably also carried an analogous chthonic meaning (B41: 6 – 8).

In one place of the **Greater Bundahishn**, Ohrmazd, creating the world, also creates the **first tree in the middle of the earth**: “Fourth plants were created: first one plant only grew in the middle of the earth ‘without branches, bark, or thorn, moist and sweet’; and from this all vegetable life proceeded”; „and every manner of plant life was in their seed“.[159] It seems that this tree is identical to the **Hōm tree**, mentioned elsewhere in the same source: “The white, healing, immaculate Hōm grows in the fount of Ardvisur: whosoever drinks thereof becomes immortal.”[160] An essential characteristic of both is that they are the source of life understood as the creation of new beings and as the provision of immortality. A similar function is also held by the **rhubarb herb**, which sprouted after the seed of the murdered Gayōmard fell to the ground. The first married couple Māšye and Māšyanē was born from its stem, and subsequently from them the whole human race.[161] The cosmological symbolism of this tree (as Center of the World and as Cosmic Axis) is denoted by its location in the middle of the earth. This corresponds to one of the Luristan pins, in which such a character of the tree is determined by the placement of a star-like motif above it, which denotes the Polar Star also located in the middle of the sky (B41: 1).

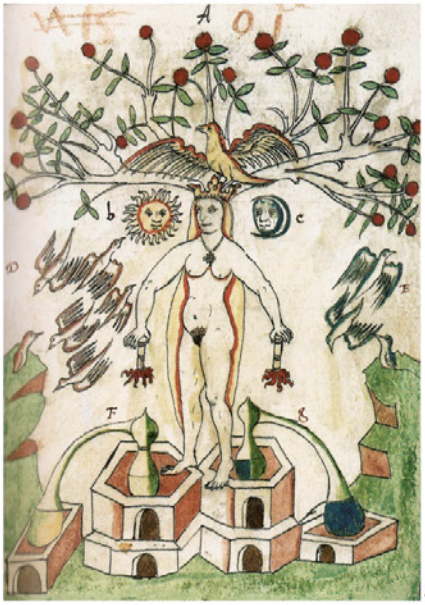
- Excurse on the tree growing from the lap

Studying the relations between the tree and the human figure, here we decided to analyze a few more Luristan objects, although they generally do not belong to the "zoomorphic standards", but are important to the topic we are analyzing. Common to them is the stylized tree depicted on the abdomen of a human figure, giving the impression that it grows from its pubis i.e. genital area. The immediate reason for this analysis is a **standard from the type "idols with protomes"** in which, depicted on the part corresponding to the abdomen of the central character that encompasses the object, are four broken lines that allude to branches of some kind of tree or other plant (B42: 8). Engraved below them, in the area of the figure's hip, are two bundles of bent

[155] Drawing: A. Godard, *The Art*, 54 (Fig. 30).
[156] About the abode of the chthonic god in the roots or trunk of the Cosmic Tree: В. В. Иванов, В. Н. Топоров, *Исследования*, 31-39; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 271, 272, 303-304, 399-401, 415.
[157] On this mythical image: Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 226-240.
[158] G. Lechler, *The Tree of Life*, 370.
[159] (Videvdat A20. 220-225); R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 136, 319 (in the presented translation the tree is referenced in plural form).
[160] (Greater Bundahishn 116. 2); R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 215.
[161] (Greater Bundahishn 100. 14. 5-7); R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 137, 177, 192, 367; R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 267.


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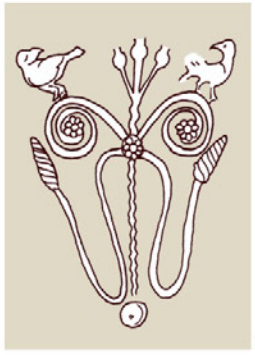

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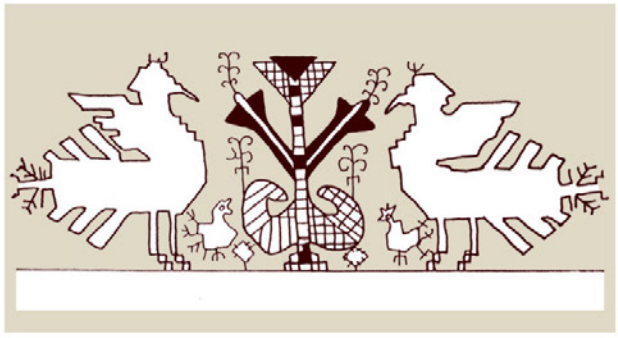

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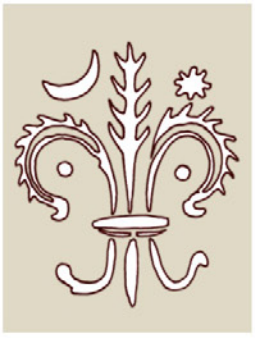

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vertical lines that are followed by an elongated segment which, extending between the spread legs, can be identified as an oversized phallus.[162] In the interpretation of the broken lines as a tree, we are encouraged by a **bronze relief plaque** discovered in the Luristan sanctuary at Sangtarashan, which depicts a stylized figure of a woman (B42: 7). Her head and swollen abdomen are executed plastically, by hammering, while her breasts, arms (probably arched below them), legs, and another circular motif at the knees, are designated by puncturing. Extending from the abdomen towards the chest is an engraved "herringbone pattern" motif, which researchers have interpreted as ribs of the figure.[163] We cannot agree with the proposed interpretation of the last motif, primarily because of the inappropriate location that is far below the chest, but also the shape that does not at all correspond to ribs. It is much more likely that it represents a **stylized tree or branch**, for which numerous analogies can be presented. However, it is not excluded that, in some older pictorial template, these lines represented the bones of the depicted character (**ribs and spine**) equated with the Cosmic Pillar and the Cosmic Tree. In that context, the shamanic aspect of such figures would not be excluded either, taking into account that an important place in shamanic rituals (especially in Siberia) was occupied by the bones i.e. skeleton of the shaman, on which his supernatural powers were actually based, specifically as a factor of connection with "the other world". At the pictorial level, these aspects are manifested through the "radiographic" images of the figure of the shaman with a depiction of his ribs and spine, which, perceived together, also refer to the Cosmic Tree, thereby giving the figure a macrocosmic nature as well (B42: 8 compare with 13 and with E2: 9).[164]

Of the presented analogies, they are mainly prehistoric objects quite widespread in the Middle East and Central Asia, which depict a more realistic or stylized female figure from whose pubis rises the same motif for which there is no doubt that it depicts a stylized tree. The first group consists of ceramic figurines from the Eneolithic **"Anau" culture** of South Turkmenistan (B42: 1).[165] The second one is represented by gold pendants-amulets from **Palestine** (Middle Bronze Age i.e. 16th century BCE) which are assumed to depict the Canaanite goddess **Astarte** (B42: 2, 3). The previously mentioned composition, in these objects is broken down into its basic constituent elements: depicted in the upper part is only the face of the figure and the breasts are reduced to small bulges, while in the lower part, instead of the hips and legs, only the triangle is present, as a sign of the pubis, as well as the tree that grows from it.[166] These forms of schematization can be traced back to the bone objects from the Late Neolithic or Early Chalcolithic period, discovered on the territory of Israel (B42: 10 – 12). On them one can detect a very interesting form of fusion i.e. **equation of the figure of the female character with the universe**, whereby the pubis, in combination with the tree, takes on the meaning of the earth, while the face, represented only through the eyes, seems to be equated with the sky.[167] This motif in a slightly different format can also be found in the prehistoric cultures from the Mediterranean and Eastern Europe (B42: 4 – 6), all the way to India.[168]

The Sangtarashan plaque does not depict the pubis - the key element of this mythical image (B42: 7). In that case, its meaning is taken over by the protruding abdomen of the figure, which, alluding to pregnancy, defines the tree as a symbol of fertility.

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[162] Basic information (without the presented interpretations): P. R. S. Moorey (et al), *Ancient Bronzes*, 58 (No. 241). The Sumerian sign "gis" i.e. "gish" means tree, but also penis (T. van Bakel, *The magical*, No. 8, 9, 17).

[163] M. Malekzadeh et al, *Fouilles*, 87.

[164] E. Devlet, M. Devlet, *Siberian*, 132-134; Е. Г. Дэвлет, *Альтамира*, 196-202.

[165] On this mythical image: Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 138, 150-152, on the Eneolithic figurines: В. М. Массон, В. И. Сарианиди**,** *Среднеазиатская*; Е. В. Антонова, *Археологические*, 163, 165, 166, 168; M. Hoppál, *The Birth*.

[166] I. Cornelius, *The Many Faces*, 46, Fig. 35c; U. Holmberg, *Der Baum*, 117 (Abb. 54, 55).

[167] On the objects, without the presented interpretations: E. Galili et al, *Figurative*.

[168] M. Gimbutas, *The Language*, 101-103; M. Hoppál, *The Birth*; examples from India: P. Granziera, *The Indo-Mediterranean*, 611.

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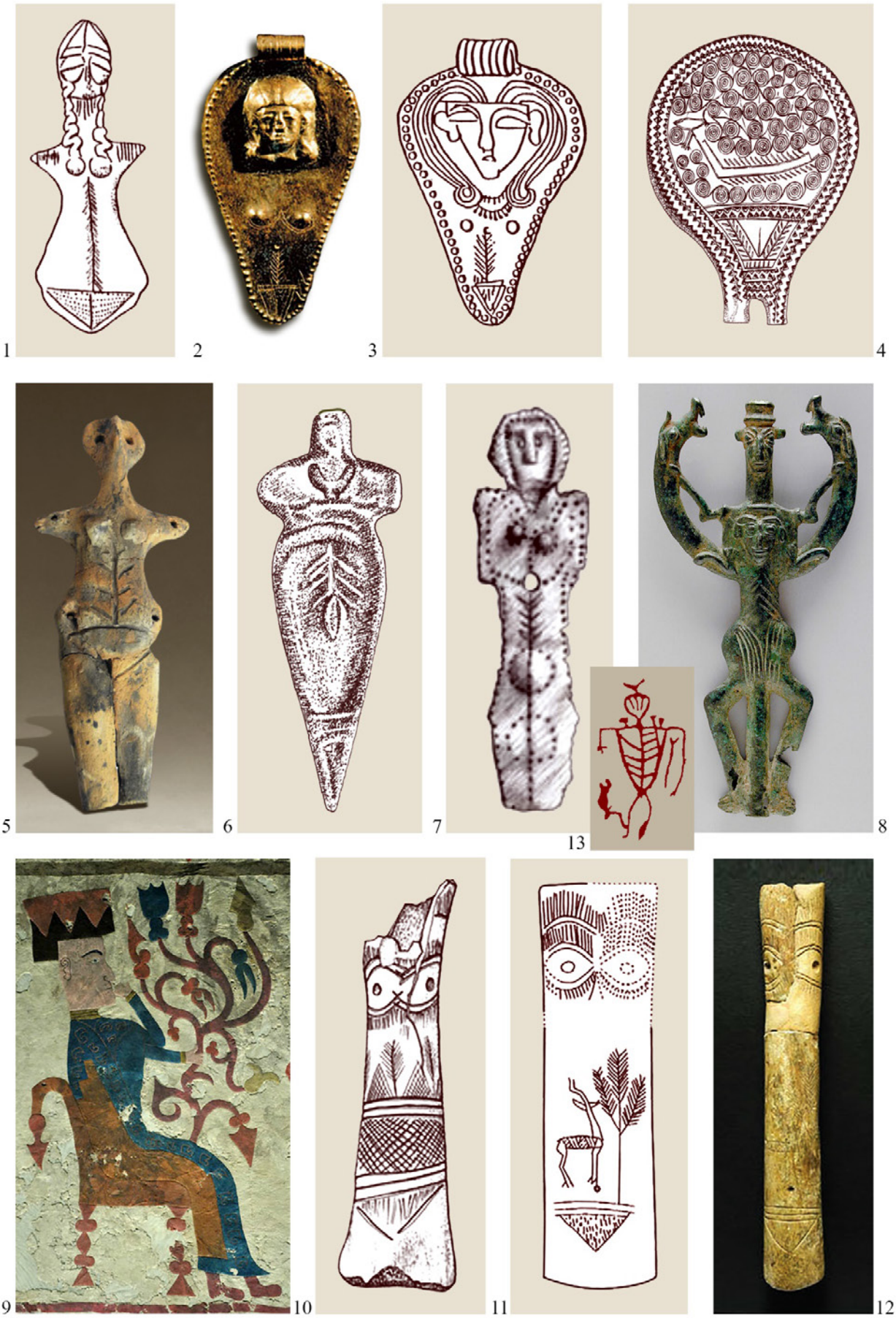


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B42



Going back to the Luristan bronzes we can try to connect the analyzed objects with a **cosmogonic myth from Central and East Asia** which is believed to have been created under the influence of Iranian traditions and specifically the myth of Zurvān and the birth of his two sons (for more details see p. 366). In one of its variants, the choice of which of the two brothers will rule the world will belong to the one whom, during the night, will have a flower grown from his knees.[169] The context of the whole action indicates that in this case the word *knees* is present in its second meaning - as an equivalent of the thighs i.e. the lap. As a visual manifestation of this myth, we can take a figure depicted on the carpet from Pazyryk, dating to the 5th century BCE (B42: 9). It shows a figure sitting on a throne, whereby growing from its thighs is some kind of floral motif.[170]

3. Gigantic (macrocosmic) character of the composition

The macrocosmic character of the central pillar of the "zoomorphic standards", presented in the previous chapter, at the same time implies such dimensions for the two animals flanking it, which are the same height as it (B17: 1). The gigantic and supernatural character of these animals is indicated by E. Porada based on parallels from Middle Eastern seals.[171] In support of this we can take the above mentioned examples in which, depicted on their backs are other much smaller animals, which seem as climbing along their giant body. We believe that **the myth of the universe's creation by the division of the figure of some primordial macrocosmic animal** can be placed at the basis of the gigantic dimensions of these animals. Supporting this are numerous myths from the North Asian regions speaking of some kind of **giant deer or moose** that is located in the underworld (while its horns protrude from the ground like a tree) or moves across the sky carrying the sun attached to its horns.[172] Taking into account the equivalence of the deer i.e. moose and the horse, as a manifestation of the indicated cosmogonic act we can also take the **Vedic ritual aśvamedhá** which consisted of dividing the sacrificial horse into three parts (front, middle and rear) equated with the three levels of the universe.

If we view the pair of animals from the "zoomorphic standards" through such a macrocosmic perspective, the front (in this case upper) parts of their body with their heads, horns, wings and curved protomes, acquire the meaning of the elements of the upper zones of the universe (**sky, sun**). Going in support of this would be their deformation, especially regarding the protomes that within this iconographic level transform into some kind of abstract **zoomorphized arcs** which, in our opinion, is motivated by the desire for them to represent the **two halves of the "celestial circle"** (B8: 2 compare with 4 and the others). Within this context, one could also explain the supplementation of these animals with **stylized wings**, present in some of the "zoomorphic standards" in the role of **celestial classifiers** (wing = bird = sky). The transformation of the hind legs into a **rhombus** (quadrangle/vulva = earth), and the tails into **dragons** (snake = earth/underworld) would encode the creation of the **lower cosmic zones** from these parts of their body (B8: 2 compare with 3, 8; B17: 1). The presence of the multiplicated geometric and other **symbols of the sun** placed on the body of the animal pair indicates not only their equation with the cosmos in its **spatial**, but also in its **temporal** sense (B19: 1). In this context, these zoomorphic figures can be understood not only as **symbols of the space through which time takes place**, but also as **symbols of time itself objectified in a concrete form**.

[169] M. Waida, *Some remarks*.
[170] On the motif, without the presented interpretations: В. Б. Кузьмина, *Мифология*, 62, Т.XIII: 2.
[171] E. Porada, *Nomads*, 14, 15.
[172] Н. Чаусидис, *Елен*, 40-42; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 347, 348.

4. Dual i.e. complementary meaning of the pair of animals

In most of the "zoomorphic standards", the **male sex of the ibexes** is clearly indicated (B6), which could be justified by the character of the **goat** as an eminent **symbol of male fertility** also represented by the anthropomorphic gods with traits of this animal (Verethragna, Daksha, Pushan, Pan, Satyr). But, the presence of these animals **in pairs** is an indicator that, besides the indicated fertility function, it was also motivated by some other meanings. Multiple researchers point to the dual i.e. oppositional meaning of the two animals from these standards, assuming that they reflect **two complementary aspects** of some phenomenon, which in itself is indicated by their **symmetry i.e. confrontational posture**.

One aspect of this complementarity is clearly indicated by the mentioned **standard from the Metropolitan Museum**, in which the two symmetrical figures, in this case represented by their horned zoo-anthropomorphic variants, are depicted with different sexes - one with an emphasized phallus and the other with a vulva executed in relief (B6: 1).[173] Taking into account the unequivocal belonging of this object to the "zoomorphic standards" type, whose composition is usually constructed by two purely zoomorphic figures with the same goat horns, this could also indicate the **different sexes of these animals**, although they are not depicted with female sex characteristics.[174]

However, many examples clearly show that this concept did not stand behind the multitude of "zoomorphic standards". Here we have in mind several such specimens, in which **both horned figures are male**, indicated by the clearly designated and even overemphasized phalluses, and indirectly by the presence of a beard that is specific only to males of this animal species (B6: 3 – 5, 9). It seems that in the mentioned **specimen from the Ashmolean Museum**, both animals had the same sex, this time **female**, given that, viewed from the side, an anthropomorphic female figure was embedded within each of them as a parallel image (B26: 7, 8).

The observations of some researchers also indicate the **more general (cosmological) aspect of the complementarity of the pair of Luristan animals**. **G. M. D`Erme** in his comparative studies points to the painted symmetrical compositions, analogous to the Luristan ones, in which one of the animals (in the specific case lions) is painted in a light color, while the other in a dark one. He also gives examples where at the junction of the lions' heads a single head is formed, common to both animals (compare C11; C12). Based on comparisons with analogous structures preserved in myths and rituals, he points to some complementary (dualistic) meaning of the two animals, manifested through **sun and moon, light and darkness**. He thinks that they also carry this oppositional meaning in the variants in which an anthropomorphic character appears between the animals, holding them or otherwise signifying his **dominance** over them, such as the scenes from a Luristan quiver from the "Heermaneck Collection" (today in LACMA – F5: 6).[175] The same concept is also present in the interpretations of **C. Lancaster**, although they do not refer to the pair of identical and symmetrical animals but to two different (often confronted) zoomorphic figures such as the lion and the bull. According to him, they symbolize "the conflicting forces of the universe, the alternating hegemony of summer and winter, heat and cold, drought and flood".[176]

Some authors seek another reason for the symmetrical duplication of the animals from the standards. Thus, **H. Potratz** thinks of the **concept of multiplication**, aimed at visualizing the potency of the depicted

[173] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 143 (No. 218).

[174] A pair of goats (or mouflons) which on a Mesopotamian cylindrical seal are flanking a central tree growing on a mountain, are interpreted by T. van Bakel as representations of the married couple of deities Ashur and Mullissu (T. van Bakel, *The magical*, No. 18).

[175] G. M. D'Erme, *The Cappella*, 409, 410 (Fig. 8); for our observations on the image of two animals with a common head see further (p. 196).

[176] C. Lancaster, *Luristan*, 96.

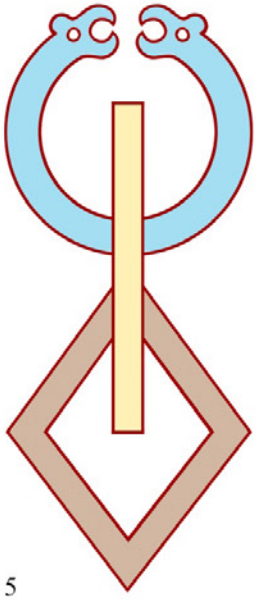
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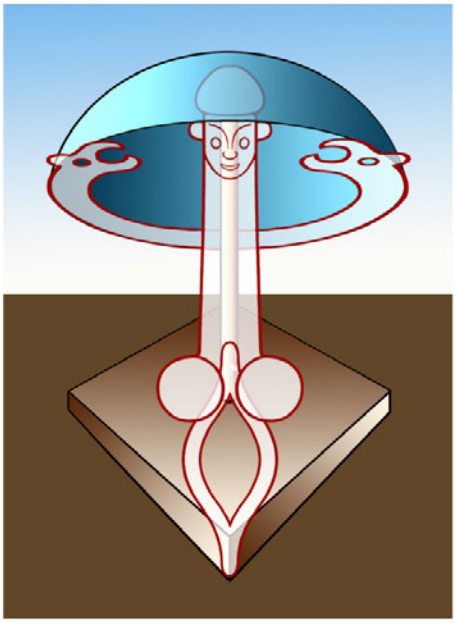

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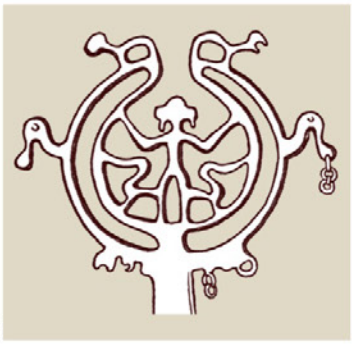

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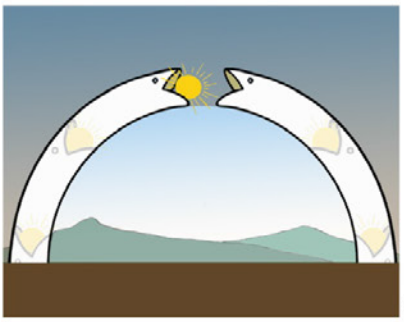

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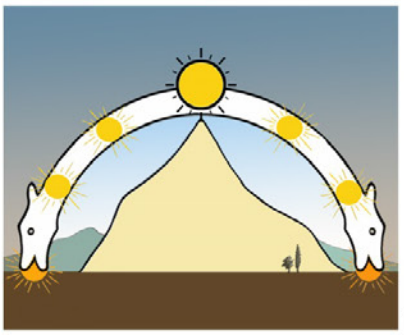

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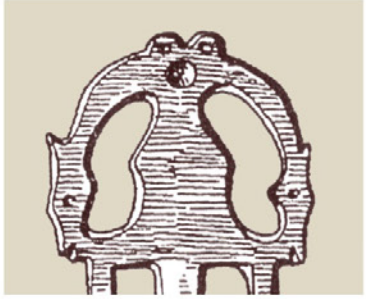

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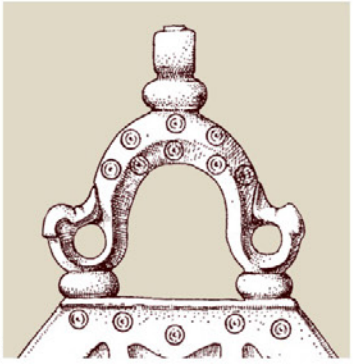

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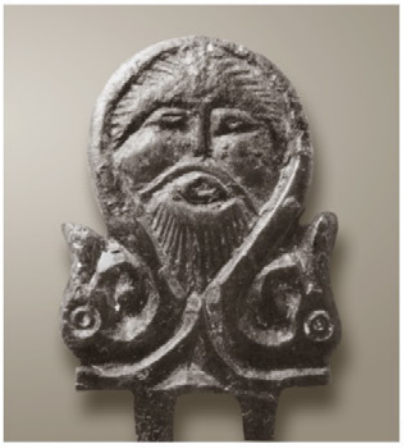

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subject, or **avoiding the depiction en face**, which in ancient cultures bore the meaning of confrontation.[177] In his interpretation of the Luristan bronzes, **R. du Mesnil du Buisson** introduces a concept based on the appearance and disappearance of the planet Venus, represented by animal figures. The appearance of this star in the morning and evening was first interpreted as **the presence of two different stars** - in the morning as the Morning Star (Étoile du matin), symbolically represented by the figure of a lion, while in the evening as the Evening Star (Étoile du soir) – represented by the figure of a lioness. Thereby, the lion was treated as a negative character because it introduces the deadly heat of the day, symbolically represented by the figure of the bull (le taureau de la chaleur) and eliminates the freshness of the night (la fraîcheur nocturne) denoted by the figure of the antelope.[178] Although to our knowledge the author does not apply this concept specifically to the pair of feline figures from the standards, such implications can be indirectly detected by his references to the assumptions of **R. Dussaud** regarding the pair of lions that **support the sky**.[179]

In some standards, including those of the type "zoomorphic standards", several parallel transverse grooves or ribs extend in the middle of the bodies of both animals, giving the impression of some kind of **cords**, **belts** or **girdles** by which the **two animals are tied to each other** (B7: 1; B9: 4; B15: 2, 7). This element could be understood as a justification for the inexplicable cohesion, and even complete mutual fusion, of these figures. But it could also be interpreted as a symbolic element that signifies some essential component of the categories that stand behind them.[180] Building upon the indicated interpretations of the animals as symbols of the two complementary principles standing at the basis of the dual systems (male and female principle, principles of creation and destruction, of progression and regression) we think that the tying of their figures could indicate the **causal relation between these principles**: the mutual affinity between the male and female principles, the conditionality of life and death, of light and darkness, of creation and destruction.

It is obvious that a system of solid canons did not function among the Luristan bronzes, due to which each iconographic type developed relatively freely, in numerous sub-variants and in interaction with the iconography of other Luristan objects, and it seems with other pictorial paradigms from the same or surrounding cultures. Thus, in this case too, in addition to the **"zoomorphic standards" with two animals**, although less common, there are **variants with three analogically conceived figures** (so far known only through specimens with ibexes B2: 7 – 9). It is hard to believe that this change applies only to the form of these objects, created as a result of the innovations of artisans. Taking into account that these are objects with a religious character, it seems more likely that they are the product of certain hesitations or innovations within the framework of the religious paradigms that generated these objects. Specifically, here we have in mind the esoteric speculations regarding the advantage or primacy of the binary systems and the systems of triads and their mutual interactions, which will be discussed in the following chapters (see pp. 217, 520 – 525).

- Double-zoomorphized sky

We have already mentioned that in the "zoomorphic standards", shaped less naturalistically and more stylized, which are at the same time considered to be later, occurs **extreme elongation and curvature of the necks of the animals** to such an extent that they transform into **abstract geometric elements** that form some kind of separate ring, almost enclosed, with ends in the form of animal protomes. The **rear part** of of animals' bodies enters a similar process of stylization (B7; B8). This process will be finalized in the "idols with

[177] „Gewiss bediente sich die Kunst der Alten des Mittels der figuralen Dopplung u.a. auch, um die Massierung der Potenz im dargestellten Sujet optisch anschaulich zu machen. Ebensosehr galt aber auch ein anderes und diesmal rein bildnerisches Formprinzip, die Dopplung von Profilansichten zur gewissermassen vervollkommneten Darbietung im Sinne einer vermiedenen *En face*-Wiedergabe zu praktizieren.“ (J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 40, 41).

[178] R. du Mesnil du Buisson, *Nouvelles*, 201-227.

[179] R. du Mesnil du Buisson, *Nouvelles*, 220; R. Dussaud, Hanches, 257.

[180] The belt that connects the two animals is considered by H. Potratz as an emblem of the female sex, but also as an element that unites them (J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 50-52).

B44


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protomes" to the extent where the protomes, with their rear part, will completely merge with the vertical pillar, marginalizing the connection with the torso and hind legs of the animals which, incidentally, completely lose their original meaning (B8: 1; B11: 4; B14: 5). These features have been considered by previous researchers as a **degradation of the original image** contained within the oldest standards ("zoomorphic standards"), which occured as a result of the application of a specific stylistic manner.[181] We consider it primarily as a result of the **process of resemiotization of the standards** aimed at introducing within them of new meanings that are born inside the framework of the old composition inherited from their older iconographic prototypes.

The perception of these protomes within the context of the celestial meaning of the circle from the geometric iconographic level, leads us to assume that they acquire such an unreal and partial shape (extremely elongated and with semicircularly curved necks) to deviate from the real appearance of the animals, in order to **redirect the old meaning contained within them towards the cosmological spheres** (B43: 5, 8 compare with 1 – 4; B8).

In support of this assumption, we can reference numerous prehistoric and medieval parallels in which a similar **combination of symmetrical protomes represents the sky** (B43: 6, 7, 9 – 13). We seek the reasons for such depiction in the need of the mythical consciousness to actualize t**he two dual structured tendencies of the sky**: one of which manifests itself through the **progressive phases** of the cyclical processes that take place in it (sunrise, day, spring and summer, increase of daylight, warming of the weather, growth of the moon), while the other - through **the regressive ones** (sunset, night, autumn and winter, reduction of daylight, cooling of the weather, waning of the moon). The merging of protomes into a single whole (circle i.e. ring), analogous to the above-mentioned binding of animals to each other, can be justified by the aspiration to signify the **causal connection between the activity of these two** tendencies. We still consider this interpretation of the protomes from the standards insufficiently argumented because in the mentioned analogies their heads are usually oriented from top to bottom, which fits better with the notions of the "celestial vault" as a vertical projection of the sky (B43: 11 – 13). The fact that in the Luristan standards they are oriented from bottom to top and form an almost completely closed ring (B43: 1 – 4), could be justified by the intention to **represent the sky in its horizontal projection - as a "celestial circle", "celestial ring" i.e. "sky wheel"** (B43: 5, 8 compare with A3: 1 – 4).[182] This image, in a much more explicit form, combined with the same triad consisting of one anthropomorphic and two symmetrical zoomorphic elements, appears in the already presented category of Luristan openwork objects, used as **cheekpieces and some kind of decorative rings** (B28). In these objects it is far more obvious that the two animals participate in the rotation of the circle, here much more clearly defined as a ring or a spoked wheel, whereby in some cases they even form the wheel with their metamorphosed bodies: the two halves of the hoop are made up of their torsos, heads and tails, while the spokes - from their limbs (B28: 1, 4). In the interpretation of these objects, a second possibility is imposed according to which the ring and the circle **would not be symbols of some visible spatial element** (the sky or the whole universe), but of some **invisible abstract category**. Here we have in mind **time** in some of its specific (day, year) or more general sense (time without a beginning or infinite time).

Besides the relations with the geometric level, the cosmological meaning of the pair of arched protomes from the standards would also be supported by the above-presented interpretations according to which the vertical bar, with which the protomes are combined, actually represents the Cosmic Axis, be it depicted as a Cosmic Tree (B17: 1), Cosmic Pillar or a Cosmic Pivot (B19).

Analyzing the extreme stylization of the animals' bodies from the "zoomorphic standards", **H. Potratz** rightly concludes that this process was influenced more by their cultic context than by their realistic appearance.[183] Building upon this view we can add that this "cultic context" actually consisted in the

[181] E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 109-111; O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 142.

[182] An analogous arrangement is very common in medieval jewelry (especially on buckle rings), also in combination with a central anthropomorphic motif (examples: А. Г. Шпилев, *Украшения*, Рис. 1, Рис. 2, Рис. 3).

[183] H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 24.

cosmization of the animals, due to which both the curvature of their necks and the supplementation with various other accessories (animals, circular motifs) was increased - all in order for these parts **to be equated with the sky**. We will address this issue several more times during the analysis of the subsequent iconographic compositions from the standards.

Ferdowsi has another riddle that could be linked to the "zoomorphic standards" – this time with the pair of animals. Although it does not mention the tree, it is possible that it was present in the template from which the poet took this motif, especially since this riddle is located between the two previously mentioned ones in which the tree is equated with the sky along which the sun moves. Here is how it reads: "Two horses, precious and fleet of foot, move forth, the one like unto a lake of pitch, and the other lustrous as white crystal: they move, and they both hurry on, but never do they catch each other up." The answer says that the **two horses are time i.e. day and night** that "measure" time in the celestial vault.[184] This is another key for the proposed cosmological and dual interpretation of the pair of animals from the "zoomorphic standards" and not only of the horses, but also the other animals depicted in the same arrangement, especially the **ibexes** whose connection with the sun, sky and universe was indicated by several elements. In the absence of the chromatic code (white – black = day – night), on the standards (B1 – B10; B13), as well as on the Luristan openwork rings and wheels (B28), their complementary character is encoded through their position oriented symmetrically in reference to the central axis which, in this case, denotes the Cosmic Axis that divides the sky and time cycles into two equal but complementary halves.

5. Pins with a flat or openwork head fastened onto the "zoomorphic standards"

a) Previous assumptions and observations

Multiple previous researchers have assumed that inserted into the tube or rings formed at the front and hind limbs of the animals from the "zoomorphic standards" (as well as in the cavity of most other standards), were the Luristan pins with an openwork or flat head, and according to some – only those with a discoid head (B27: 1; B30: 5, 6; B31; B33; B44: 1 – 3; B45: 1 – 6; B47: 1 – 3; B48: 2, 3, 6, 7).[185] P. R. S. Moorey assumes that, passing through the support, they also penetrated the ground on which it was placed, ensuring the fixing of the whole set to the substrate (H1: 4; H2: 7).[186] Some researchers, such as H. Potratz and O. W. Muscarella, and it seems also P. Amiet, do not accept this assumption given the fact that there is no known specimen of a standard supplemented with such a pin, not even among the several finds discovered in situ.[187] E. Porada, E. de Waele and some other authors give examples, even joint together by corrosion, in which the authentic combination of a bottle-shaped support with a standard is preserved, but no pin with any kind of decorative head was used as a shaft (B5: 8).[188] In the monograph of A. Godard there are such examples of pins with heads shaped like a ball, a bird or a more complex motif.[189] On one "zoomorphic standard" from the Louvre Museum, inserted between the protomes is a pin with a circular discoid head (B45: 10, an analogous pin – 9),

[184] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 243, 244; R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 240, 241.
[185] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 141; E. Schmidt, *The Second*, 210, 211; E. Porada, *The Art*, 81, 86; C. Lancaster, *Luristan*, 95; an overview of these theories: O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 139.
[186] "A pin with long shank and decorated head was passed down the central aperture joining finial and mount, perhaps also fixing it to the ground" (P. R. S. Moorey, *Ancient*, 29, 32).
[187] H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 19; O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 139; P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 72, 88.
[188] E. Porada, *The* Art, 86 – footnote 13; E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 92 (Fig 74: 106), 109, 120, 121 (Fig. 97: No.126, 131, 106, 141).
[189] A. Godard, *Bronzes*, 84, 85, Pl. LIV: 200, 202 ("zoomorphic standards"); Pl. LII: 195, 196, ("idols with protomes"); 87, 88, Pl. LVI: 205, Pl. LVII: 209 ("columnar figurines"). Some of these supplements are missing from later photographs of the same object, probably because they were deemed inauthentic and therefore removed.

B45




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while on another – a truly unusual pin, with a large ball-shaped head, for which P. Amiet says that it is not a modern montage (B49: 7).[190]

O. W. Muscarella, polemicizing with E. de Waele, suspects that these are modern compilations of old objects, which is why he proposes to check if they are authentic ensembles and whether the corrosion formed between the joined elements is old or created secondarily, in more recent times.[191] H. Potratz supports the disagreement with these proposals with one, in our opinion, completely inadequate argument: that the pins would be too valuable for such an inferior purpose ("für einen solchen inferioren Zweck").[192] We ask ourselves: is it possible that the cultic purpose of the standards (which is accepted also by this author) could be considered inferior? He also finds arguments for this view in the iconography of the pins and standards.[193] P. R. S. Moorey hypothesizes that some of the pins inserted into the "zoomorphic standards" ended not only with a phytomorphic motif but also with an anthropomorphic head.[194] One such specimen is present in the Nasli M. Heeramaneck Collection (LACMA), with a pin in the upper part of which there is a cast anthropomorphic head (B45: 11).[195]

Some previous researchers cite another fact which, although indirect, supports the presented assumptions. Namely, many of the Luristan pins with a discoid or openwork head could not function as jewelry for wearing on the body due to their large dimensions and weight. It is much more likely that they were used as standards by being fastened onto some other objects.[196]

We think that a shaft with some kind of impressive tip must have been fastened onto a series of standards that simultaneously bear the features of the "zoomorphic standards" type (due to the absence of a central anthropomorphic head), but also of the "zoomorphic standards with a human head" and the type "idols with protomes" (due to the fusion of the two animals) (B44: 5 – 8). We are led to this conclusion by their central tubular corpus, which ends abruptly at the top, with a sharp horizontal edge.[197] It is hard to believe that there was no finial above it i.e. that the animal protomes i.e**. their eyes were focused on the empty space above the corpus**. We are convinced that there must have been some kind of element with a higher iconographic and symbolic status, and probably the very point of the whole composition.

A. Godard presents an (as he calls it "rare") example in which, fastened onto the bottle-shaped support is not a standard, but **only an openwork pin** with a ring-like hoop formed by a pair of zoomorphic protomes and a central anthropomorphic figure whose hands are placed on their necks (B48: 4). The pin is attached to the support so that its shaft (the pin itself) is inserted into the cavity of the support, whereby the thickening at the upper part of the pin did not allow contact between its upper edge and the protomes.[198] This combination seems convincing i.e. authentic to us due to two reasons. First, because it explains the **iconographic**

[190] Photographs: *Сокровища* 2020; P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 72, 89 (Fig. 48); a pin with a discoid head, identical as in the first of the specimens: *A Luristan Br. Pin* 2020.
[191] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 139, 141 (footnote 5).
[192] H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 19.
[193] „Die in den Sammlungen relativ häufig zu sehenden durchgesteckten Bronzenadeln mit Kopfdekor scheiden für derartige Zwecke mit absoluter Sicherheit aus. Der Grund ist seht einfach, weil nämlich die Figurationen mit ihrem geheimnisvollen Symbolgehalt von Ständerling und Nadelkopf hätten absolut kongenial sein müssen, damit nicht die von ihnen vertretenen Obermächte sich gegenseitig aufhöben oder gar konträr zueinander agierten, was dem kerzenstiftenden Erdenmenschen nicht bekömmlich hätte sein können.“ (J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 39, 40).
[194] P. R. S. Moorey, *Ancient*, 30; P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 141, 142. The author concludes that such combined objects would not be particularly stable.
[195] *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020, M.76.97.20.
[196] “... elles prirent de plus en plus d’importance, en dimensions comme en valeur artistique, jusqu’à devenir les splendides objets que représentent les planches (...), qui n’ont d’ailleurs plus rien à voir avec la parure.” (A. Godard, *Bronzes*, 70); А. В. Мельченко, *Луристанская*, 200, 201.
[197] On one of the specimens (B44: 5): E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 92 (Fig. 74), 106 (No. 126).
[198] A. Godard, *Bronzes*, 84, Pl. LI: 194.

similarity between the standards (especially those of the type "idols with protomes" – B48: 1, 5) and the openwork pins of the here-presented type, depicted on which is a scene that not only has the same content (the so-called "Master of Animals"), but also the same composition consisting of a central columnar anthropomorphic figure surrounded by a ring of elongated and arched animal protomes (B48: 2, 3, 6, 7). The second reason is that they are a **more compact and simpler variant of cult objects** which, containing all the visual and iconographic elements characteristic of the standards, could also function as their **cheaper and simpler version**, affordable to people with less financial power who could not afford a more luxurious standard, or for those who preferred such objects that would be more compact and easier to manipulate. The mentioned specimen also raises an essential question: it may have been one of the **templates that influenced the formation of certain types of standards** - specifically some **"zoomorphic standards"** (those with arched necks of the animals B9), the "zoomorphic standards with a human head" (B46: 1, 2, 5) and especially the **"idols with protomes"** (B48: 1, 5; C15: 8 compare with the others).

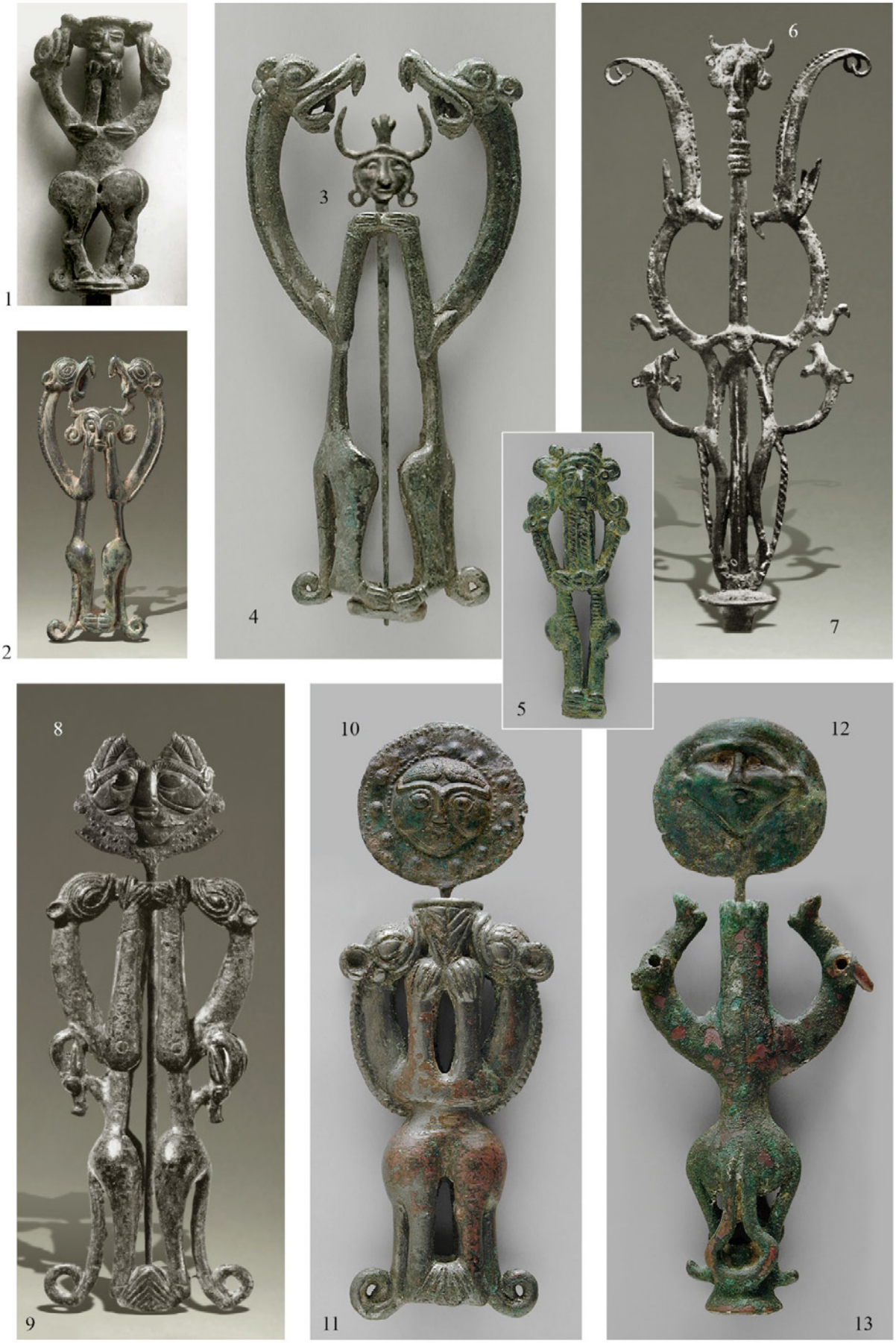
In support of the combination of standards and openwork pins, we can take a standard from the antiquities market in Frankfurt am Main (B49: 1), but conditionally, given that H. Potratz seems to treat it as a **modern compilation** composed of parts of several original standards.[199] As arguments for this he references the unusual combination of some iconographic elements in this specimen and especially the presence of **visible joints** between the parts that make it up, which he had the opportunity to notice during his personal observation of the object (he especially emphasizes the "seams" at the front legs of large animals). This conclusion is supported by the unusual shape of this specimen due to which it cannot be strictly classified into any of the typological groups of standards, because it bears the characteristics of several of them: of the "zoomorphic standards" due to the still fully preserved rear part of both animals (B49: 1 compare with 3); of the "zoomorphic standards with a human head", because between the animal protomes is an anthropomorphic head that gives the impression that it was cast together with them (B49: 1 compare with 6); of the "idols with protomes", because this head is also accompanied by the upper part of an anthropomorphic figure with a torso, shoulders and arms and because of the birdlike appearance of the large protomes (B49: 1 compare with 5). If it were an authentic specimen, it would be the most direct link between the "zoomorphic standards with a human head" and the "idols with protomes" (B49: 6 compare with 5) i.e. an early prototype of the latter, in which both animals are complete, with preserved front legs, but at the same time the function of "master of animals" is not yet expressed in the central anthropomorphic character i.e. his hands are not directed towards their necks (such a borderline specimen does in fact exists – B49: 4 compare with 1).

In addition to the above, this object has another unusual feature - in this case the most interesting for us. It is the **presence of another smaller and simpler triple composition formed above the head of the central human figure, consisting of two protomes and an anthropomorphic bust between them** (B49: 1 – top of the object). From the words of H. Potratz we cannot discern whether it is a **special segment** that was secondarily fused with the anthropomorphic character located between the large protomes or of it was **cast together with him**. Judging by the shape, the first variant seems more probable to us, whereby it could be a **pin with a decorative head fastened onto the top of the standard** (B49: 1 compare with 2 and other examples of such pins B48: 2 – 4, 6, 7). The second possibility is also not ruled out, for which the arrangement of the first option would serve as a paradigm. Namely, it is not excluded, that the practice of combining the standards with such pins, over time had led to the casting of that element together with them i.e. as their integral part, in order to obtain a more compact and stronger structure, which would prevent the pin from coming out of the standard and its loss, or the mixing of the pins from different standards.

In any case, we consider this specimen very important, especially because of this last element. If it were an ancient compilation, it would show that the pins with a decorative head (and specifically those with a pair of protomes) really were **fastened onto the top** of the standards. The same conclusion, in an indirect way,

[199] J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 56, 57, Taf. XXXV: 223. The author does not consider the option (which is quite possible) that the indicated compilation happened within Luristan culture.

B46



comes to the fore if it turns out that it is a **modern assembly**, because through that procedure, regardless of whether it was inspired by completely different motives, **the elements themselves found their place for which they were intended**. In fact, H. Potratz, too, rightly concludes that "this structure, according to the composition, in itself should not be incorrect."[200]

In our analyzes we decided to include a type of **asymmetric Luristan pins** because they contain the same iconographic arrangement as the "zoomorphic standards", but in a single form instead of a pair. Here we have in mind such openwork pins whose head is shaped like an ibex protome, supplemented with figures or protomes of other smaller animals placed on its back and on the front or back side of the neck (B50: 3 – 5, a **whetstone handle** with the same iconography – B27: 6).[201] We made an attempt through photomontage to group two such pins symmetrically and to place them on a bottle-shaped support. The motive for this were some variants of these pins whose base is not consisted of one, but of two ibex protomes, placed not symmetrically, but parallel to each other (B50: 7, 9).[202] It turned out that such a combination would result in a composition quite corresponding to some zoomorphic standards (B50: 2, 8 compare with 1, 6 and B9; B10). This does not necessarily mean that this type of pins were really used in such a way, especially in the second of the variants where it would not make much sense to duplicate an object in which such a procedure has already been done by doubling the main ibex protome (B50: 8 compare with 7, 9). We think that the second variant can be taken as another argument in favor of the iconographic and semiotic relations between these pins and the "zoomorphic standards", because it points to some kind of iconographic and mythical-symbolic paradigm common to them, according to which the ibex (with an obviously high mythological and symbolic status) had to appear on various objects in duplicate form.

a) Photomontages, comments and dilemmas

We have tried to test the assumptions made in previous chapters through photomontages in which we combined several "zoomorphic standards" and pins with an openwork or discoid head. We consider the obtained results to be quite acceptable because they give sense to many components regarding the pictoriality, iconography and semiotics of the standards (B44: 4, 5; B46: 3, 4, 6 – 13; B47: 3 – 8; B48: 8, 9). We will comment on these components in the following paragraphs.

- The stated assumptions, accompanied by the indicated photomontages, give explanation on **the great similarities** and even **identities between the standards and the pins with an openwork or discoid head**, at the level of their pictoriality, composition and iconography. The head of the openwork pins is formed very similarly to the upper part of the most common type of standards - the "idols with protomes", as both are composed of two semicircularly bent animal protomes flanking a central vertical anthropomorphic character (B48: 2 – 4, 6, 7 compare with 1, 5). The same arrangement also occurs on the pins with a discoid head, with the difference that it those cases the central anthropomorphic character is often alternated with an anthropomorphic or zooanthropomorphic head, or with a stylized (and anthropomorphized) tree, while the pair of zoomorphic motifs is present analogously as in the "zoomorphic standards" – in the form of complete animal figures standing upright on their hind legs (B31; B33).[203]

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[200] „In sich brauchte dieses Gebilde kompositionell nicht einmal falsch zu sein, wenngleich dem Verfasser auch kein eindeutiger Vergleichsfund vorliegt." (J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 56, 57).

[201] P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 78 (No. 168); *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020, M.76.97.239, M.76.97.234.

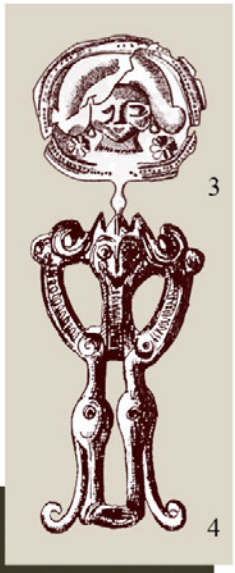
[202] P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 78 (No. 167); E. F. Schmidt et al, *The Holmes, 494, Pl. 260 d. (incorrectly defined as "whetstone handle").*

[203] Despite these obvious similarities, H. Potratz thinks that the figural ornaments and symbolic content of these pins do not correspond to those of the standards (" … zum andern aber tragen die Köpfe dieser Nadeln Figurenschmuck, dessen symbolischer Inhalt sich nicht einfach zur Motivik der Aufsätze konform verhalten haben wird."): H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 19.

B47


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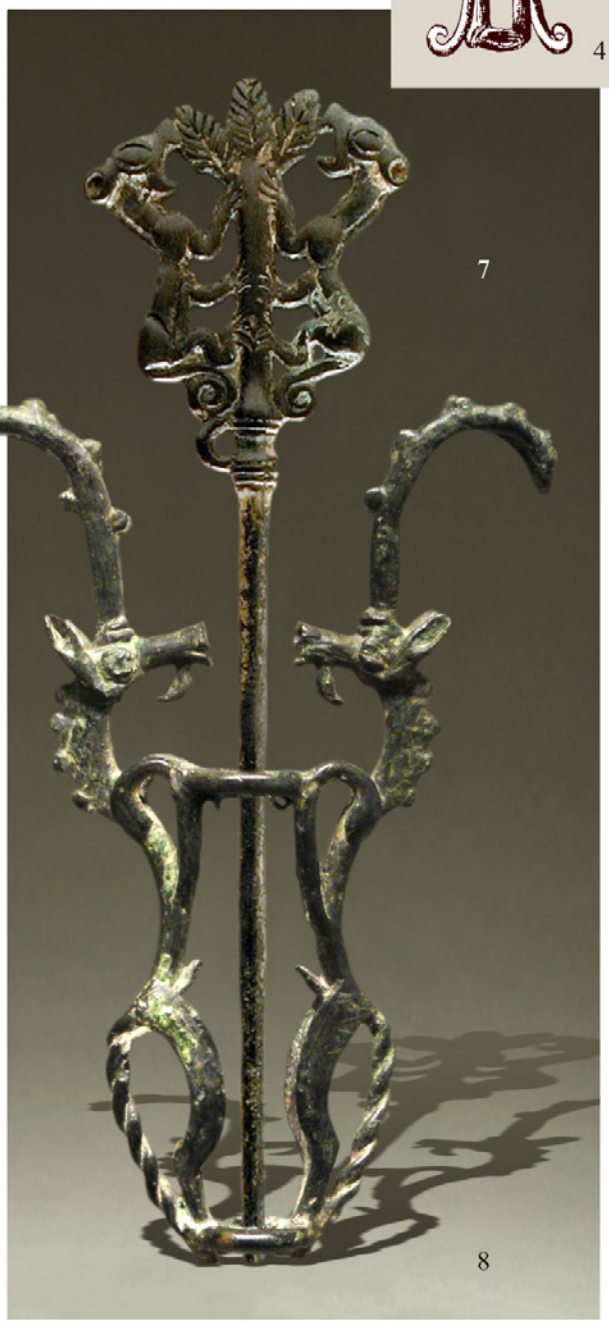

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- On a global visual level, the composition of the "zoomorphic standards" through the anthropomorphic or hybrid head acquires a point that completes their symmetry, verticality and iconographic composition (B46: 3, 4, 6 – 13). The pins with a centrally depicted tree **complete the meaning of the pillar of these standards as a Cosmic Tree or Tree of Life** (B47: 7, 8).

- By placing the "decorative" tops of the pins between the animal protomes of the "zoomorphic standards", they, with their roundness and the presence on them of an anthropomorphic head or an entire anthropomorphic figure (B46: 3, 4, 6 – 13; B47: 3, 4; B48: 8, 9), receive the status of a **protomodel i.e. paradigm for the emergence** (hitherto treated as "sudden"), **in the same place, of a centrally positioned anthropomorphic head or a more complete anthropomorphic figure** that were cast integrally, as part of the object itself (in the "zoomorphic standards with a human head" – B46: 1, 2, 5; in the "idols with protomes" – B48: 1, 5). Besides the pins, this iconographic element could have been represented by **cast tubular objects with a head at the top** specially intended for inserting into the rings between the legs of the animals in which the shaft would then be implanted. We believe that one such Luristan object from the collection of the Royal Museum of Art and History in Brussels could have bore this function (H2: 11; G8).[204]

- At the iconographic level, the pin and its head can bear three interwoven meanings that correspond to the proposed global cosmological concept of the standards: **the sky as a circle**, depicted above the Cosmic Axis (B44: 1, 4, 5; B47: 2, 5, 6); **as the canopy of the Cosmic Tree** (B47: 7, 8); the **sun** depicted in the form of a **rosette** or the **head of a man or a lion** (B46: 8 – 13). All three meanings are intertwined because the sky is equated with the canopy of the Cosmic Tree, the sun is a central element and key component of the sky and its dynamics, while the head (human and leonine) often functions as a symbol of the personalized and deified sun. This interwovenness also corresponds to the iconography of the pins with a discoid head in which the anthropomorphic or leonine head occupies a central position (probably as a personification of the sun and possibly of the celestial light) often combined with a depiction of a stylized tree and a pair of symmetrical animals (B31; B33).

- The presence of these central supplements can be taken as **another reason for the enlargement and curvature of the pair of protomes in some "zoomorphic standards"**, presumably to form a space and a kind of "frame" around them, which will direct the observers' gaze towards the central circular element placed above them (B46: 6 – 13; B47: 3 – 8), and in some cases between them (B46: 3, 4; B48: 8, 9).

In the following paragraphs we present some of our dilemmas regarding these solutions, formulated as rhetorical questions, followed by answers that we deem the most appropriate.

- *Do our observations of the iconography and semiotics of the "zoomorphic standards" provide guidance on what the top of their pillars should have looked like i.e. what could and could not have been present in their iconography?*

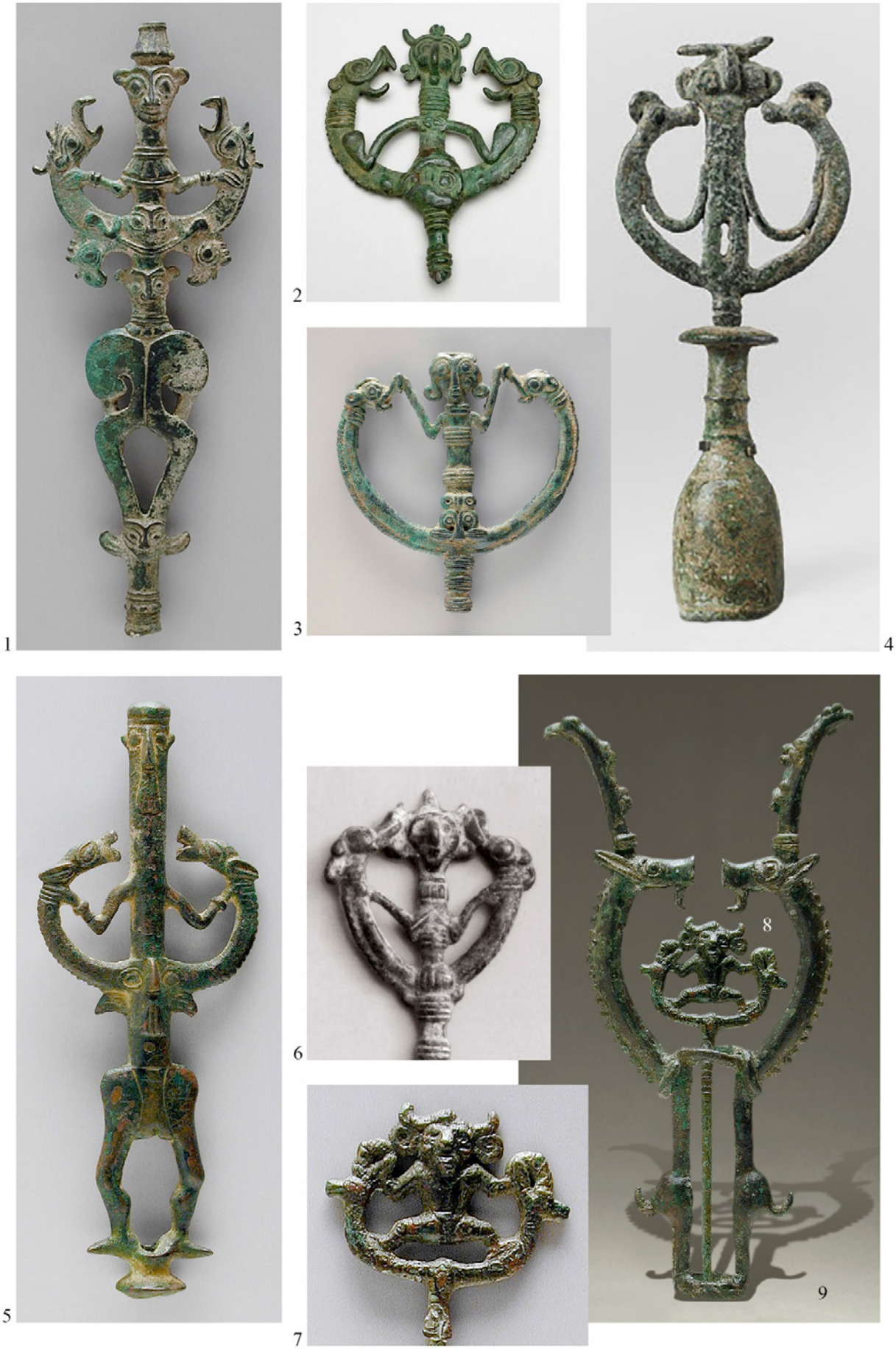
- *How would it function on a compositional and iconographic level if above or between the curved protomes of the animal pair of the "zoomorphic standards" one would add an openwork pin on which a pair of such protomes or animals are also present? Wouldn't that mean unnecessary duplication of the same iconographic elements?* (B44: 4, 5; B47: 5 – 8; B48: 8, 9)

In support of the justification for such a combination, we can reference some standards that **themselves have two pairs of protomes arranged one above the other** (E7: 11; debatable B49: 1). We are also familiar with a Luristan pin in which the central figure is **surrounded by two pairs of protomes** structured as concentric rings (B44: 1). This is also supported by the **plaques from Armenia** and some other similar pictorial representations in which the sky is depicted as a set of closed or open concentric rings. Within that framework, the central anthropomorphic figure also receives justification, which in a stylized form is also present on the mentioned plaques (A4; A5).

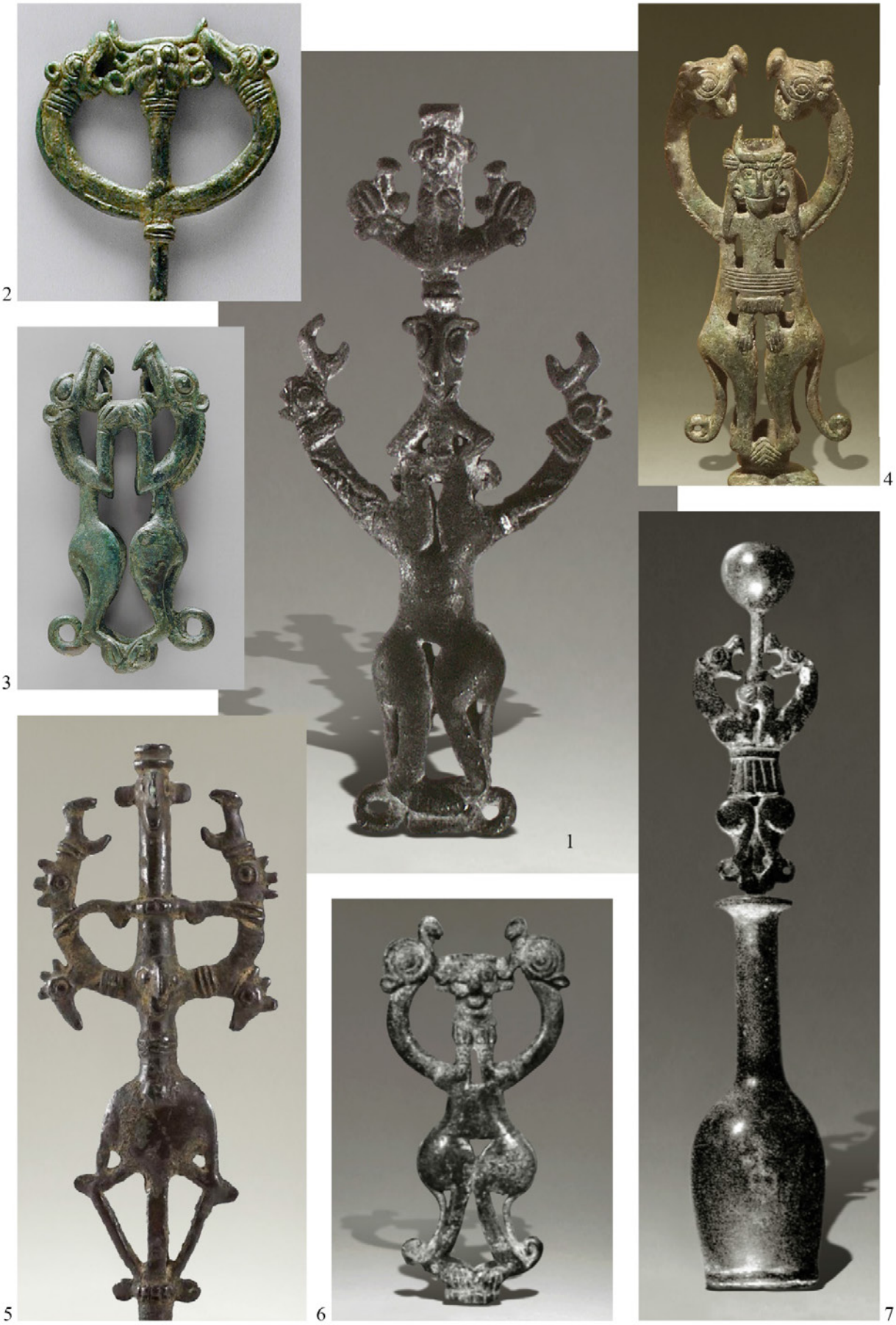
- *Was the depiction of a human head allowed on the decorated top of the pins if it already existed on the standards onto which the given pin was fastened?* (B47: 3, 4)

[204] *Idol (IR.0553)* 2020, IR.0553; *Torch* 2021, IR.0555; E. F. Schmidt et al, *The Holmes, Pl. 260: b*.

B48



B49



In this case, too, the specific types show that on the pillar of one standard there **are often two or more human heads arranged vertically on top of each other**. Then why would not there be another one at its very top (examples B48: 1; E7: 1, 3, 6, 11).

- Was the pin with a human head combined with all zoomorphic standards or only those with herbivorous (B44: 4, 5; B45: 11; B46: 6, 7) *or with carnivorous animals?* (B46: 3, 4, 8 – 13)

Based on the later "zoomorphic standards with a human head" (B46: 1, 2, 5) and "idols with protomes" (B48: 1, 5), which may be considered a product of the indicated combination, it seems that it were mainly the **standards with figures of carnivorous animals**. Herbivorous animals are very rare in the first of the mentioned two types (C2: 3) and, in our observations, completely absent in the second one, which is why they may have been combined with pins in which dominated a phytomorphic depiction flanked by two such zoomorphic or zooanthropomorphic figures (B47: 7, 8). However, one such real-existing combination (B45: 11) shows that the **existence of such examples should not be ruled out** (B46: 6, 7).

- Does this assumption contradict the fact that discovered in the sanctuary of ***Surkh Dum*** *(Sokhdom-i-Lori) were only pins with a circular head, but not standards?*

It does not have to contradict it if the ritual in which they were involved meant the **bestowal of only the pin, but not of the standard with the pair of animals, as well as the bottle-shaped support**. The separation and deposition of only this part may have been due to the **higher degree of its sacredness** or, more specifically, **its belonging to the "heavenly" or "light" spheres**. It could have also been a case of ritual separation of the two parts of the set as a symbolic repetition of the cosmogonic act understood as the **separation of heaven and earth**. In the same way we tried to justify the presence of the circular and rhombic elements from Armenia as separate types of jewelry, perhaps created secondarily, through the ritual halving of the older prototypes in which the two segments formed a single object (A4).

We have seen that many researchers have expressed doubts about the authenticity of several existing ensembles consisting of a standard and a fastened pin. Within the framework of this topic too, we present several rhetorical questions and answers that refer to such hypercriticism.

- Whether the pin fastened onto a standard, according to the composition of the bronze alloy, the technique of manufacture, the style of execution and the patina, should correspond to the same components present in the standard?

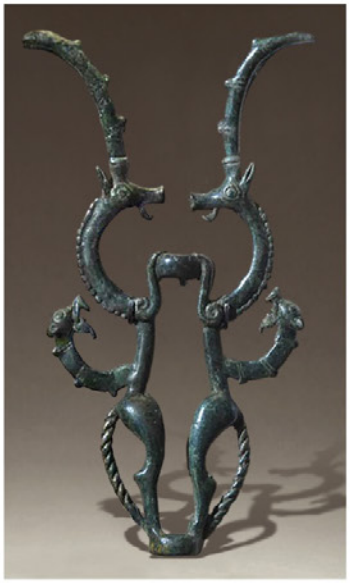
Such homogeneity would be logical, if all the elements of the ensemble would be produced at once, in the same workshop. But, it is quite possible that, due to the specific manufacturing process, **the pins were produced in other workshops** specialized only for that process, which in itself entails differences in the composition of the bronze, as well as in the technique and style of their execution. This is especially true of most pins with a discoid head, for which is certain that they did not come from the same workshops as the standards, because they were not produced and decorated in a **lost-wax casting technique**, but in a **technique of hammering, puncturing and chiseling** of a beforehand prepared disc made of bronze or copper sheet.[205]

Even if the pin would have been manufactured in the same workshop, of the same material and in the same technique and style as the standard, during its existence **it could have been replaced by another**, due to damage, deposition in sanctuaries or graves, or as a result of unintentional replacement with the pin of some other standard. If we take into account that the structure and appearance of the patina on bronze objects, among other factors, are influenced by the composition of the alloy, then it is clear that the differences between the patina of the pillar i.e. pin and the standard **cannot in and of themselves be proof that we are dealing with an ensemble compiled in modern times**.

- In some of the Luristan pins, formed under the openwork or discoid top is one, and in some cases two small rings (B27: 1; B30: 5, 6; B31: 6; B44: 1; B47: 2; H4: 3, 4), *while in others they do not exist. Can this element be taken as a criterion for differentiating the purpose of these objects in terms of whether they were fastened onto a human body (its clothes or hair) or onto the standards?*

[205] On the technique of manufacture of the Luristan discoid pins: S. Ayazi, *Luristan*, 19, 20.

B50


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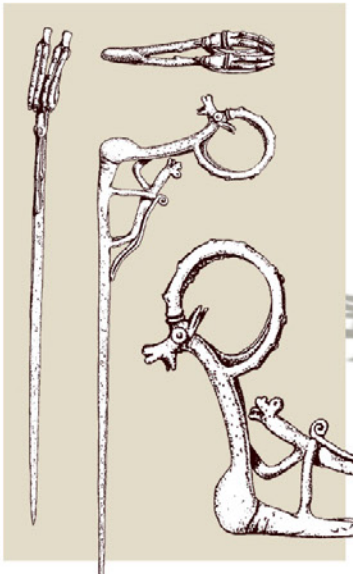

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This ring could have been used for at least two purposes - **to attach some additional pendants** (perhaps some kind of amulets made of organic materials) or for **tying the pin to the object onto which it was attached**, in order to prevent it from being pulled out and falling (H12: 3).[206] The first function seems less probable to us because, given the dominance of the **principle of symmetry** within the Luristan bronzes, it would be more likely that this ring, as an integral part of the appearance and iconography and the cultic character of the object, would have its counterpart on the other side, as is the case with other similar objects from this and other cultures (example B33: 4; H4: 3). In the second case, this principle did not have to be met because it would be a practical element that does not participate in the visuality of the pin, so its shaping would be done according to the principle of economicity – one ring is enough to keep the pin from being pulled out of the standard. This is supported by another factor: the pin attached onto the clothes or in the hair would not be so susceptible to pulling out due to the higher degree of friction that would be due to the elasticity of these materials (leather, textiles, hair). Such a risk would be much higher in pins combined with the standards due to the gap between them and the tubes i.e. rings in which the pin was implanted. This certainly does not mean that all implanted pins had to have such a ring, for which the best example are the two specimens from the Louvre that are believed to be authentic, but do not have such a ring (B45: 10; B49: 7).[207] It is quite obvious that not fastened onto the standards were the discoid pins with a composition oriented at 90 degrees in regards to the axis of their pin and of the standard (B31: 1, 3, 4), because, in that case, the composition would find itself in a horizontal position that would be completely unsuitable for the perception of its vertically structured scene.

In this chapter, among other things, we have tried to open and discuss some questions related to the appearance, character and purpose of Luristan standards. We will try to round up these questions in Chapter X dedicated specifically to these aspects (see p. 585).

[206] On the second option: P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 142; also see: А. В. Мельченко, *Луристанская*, 201.
[207] P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 72, 88.

Chapter V

PAIR OF SYMMETRICAL ANIMALS AND A CENTRAL ANTHROPOMORPHIC CHARACTER



V. PAIR OF SYMMETRICAL ANIMALS AND A CENTRAL ANTHROPOMORPHIC CHARACTER

According to current knowledge, the oldest standards (the type "zoomorphic standards") consisted of two symmetrical animal figures standing upright on their hind legs and facing each other i.e. oriented towards the centrally placed pillar (C1: 1, 4). Summing up the observations from the previous chapter, it can be concluded that they encoded the dual structure of the universe, with its complementary forces i.e. tendencies - the progressive and regressive one. In later more stylized specimens, the elongated and arched necks of these animals probably indicated both halves of the circular sky, the rhombic contour formed by their hind legs suggested the earth, while the pillar between them acquired the meaning of the Cosmic Axis. In some "zoomorphic standards", another element was introduced in this arrangement - an anthropomorphic head placed between the protomes of the two animals, thus beginning the formation of new types, with specific iconographies and meanings, to which we dedicate this chapter (C1: 2, 5).

1. Centrally placed anthropomorphic head between the animals: type "zoomorphic standards with a human head"

This arrangement occurs on a specific category of standards that many researchers consider to be a separate type (C1: 2, 5) and a transitional link between the "zoomorphic standards" (C1: 1, 4) and the "idols with protomes" (C1: 7 – 9). O. W. Muscarella suggested that it be treated as a separate intermediate type which he calls "Idol Standards", E. Porada defines it as "Second group" (of Standards), while H. Potratz classifies these standards within "II. Gruppe", along with some categories which we call "idols with protomes" (for other terms see p. 11 and Fig. 2; 2a on pp. 9, 10).[1]

This type is quite similar to the "zoomorphic standards", whereby it differs from them only in the human head, with a face on both the front and back side, placed at the raised front legs of the animals (C1 - C5). It was formed with their transformation, mainly in those variants where the pair of animals does not belong to the herbivores, but to the animals from the family of felines. With the development of this, in a

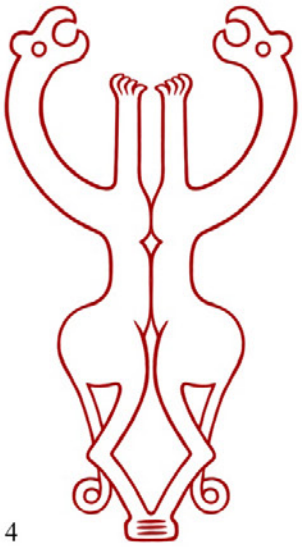
[1] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 146, 147; E. Porada, *Nomads*, 20; J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 51- 59. For the views of other researchers see pp. 11, 12.

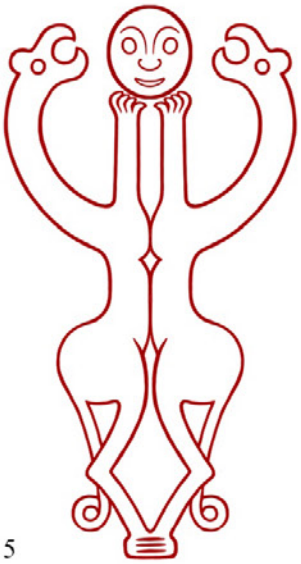
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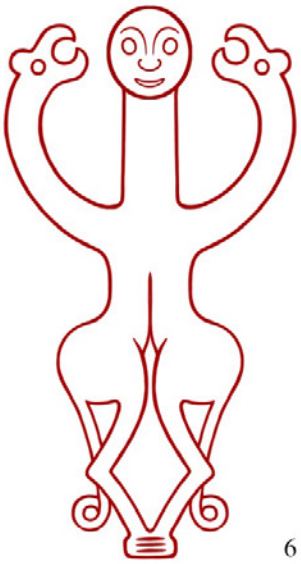

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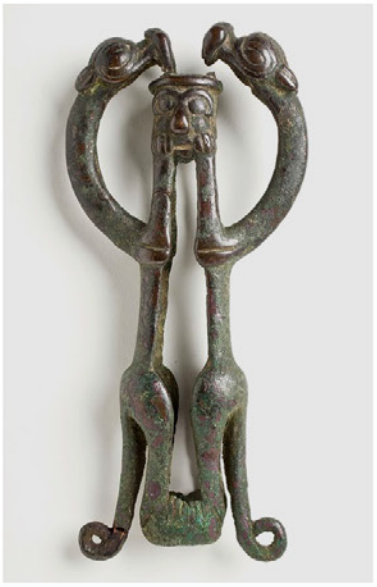

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sense transitional type, it increasingly lost the connection with the category from which it originated, eventually leading to the formation of a separate type "idols with protomes". Within the frames of this type there are numerous borderline specimens that bear the features of the two groups, due to which they can be classified in both one and the other (for example C3: 7; C5: 7; C13: 1 – 3).

The basis for this type were the "zoomorphic standards", and judging by the currently available material, mainly the variants with carnivorous animals, primarily those from the family of felines. We know of rare specimens with ibexes whose genesis is certainly based on the variants with herbivorous animals (C2: 3 compare with C19: 5).[2] These are objects in which the figures of the two confronted animals from the "zoomorphic standards" have been preserved to varying degrees - in some cases completely separate (C2: 1 – 6), while in others - fused into a single structure (C2: 7, 9). The main innovation in this new type was the introduction of an anthropomorphic or zoo-anthropomorphic head between the protomes of the two animals. In most standards it is quite realistic, in some cases also with clear masculine features, mainly placed at the raised front legs of the animals, giving the impression that they are holding it, pointing their muzzles towards it (C2: 1 – 7, 9).[3]

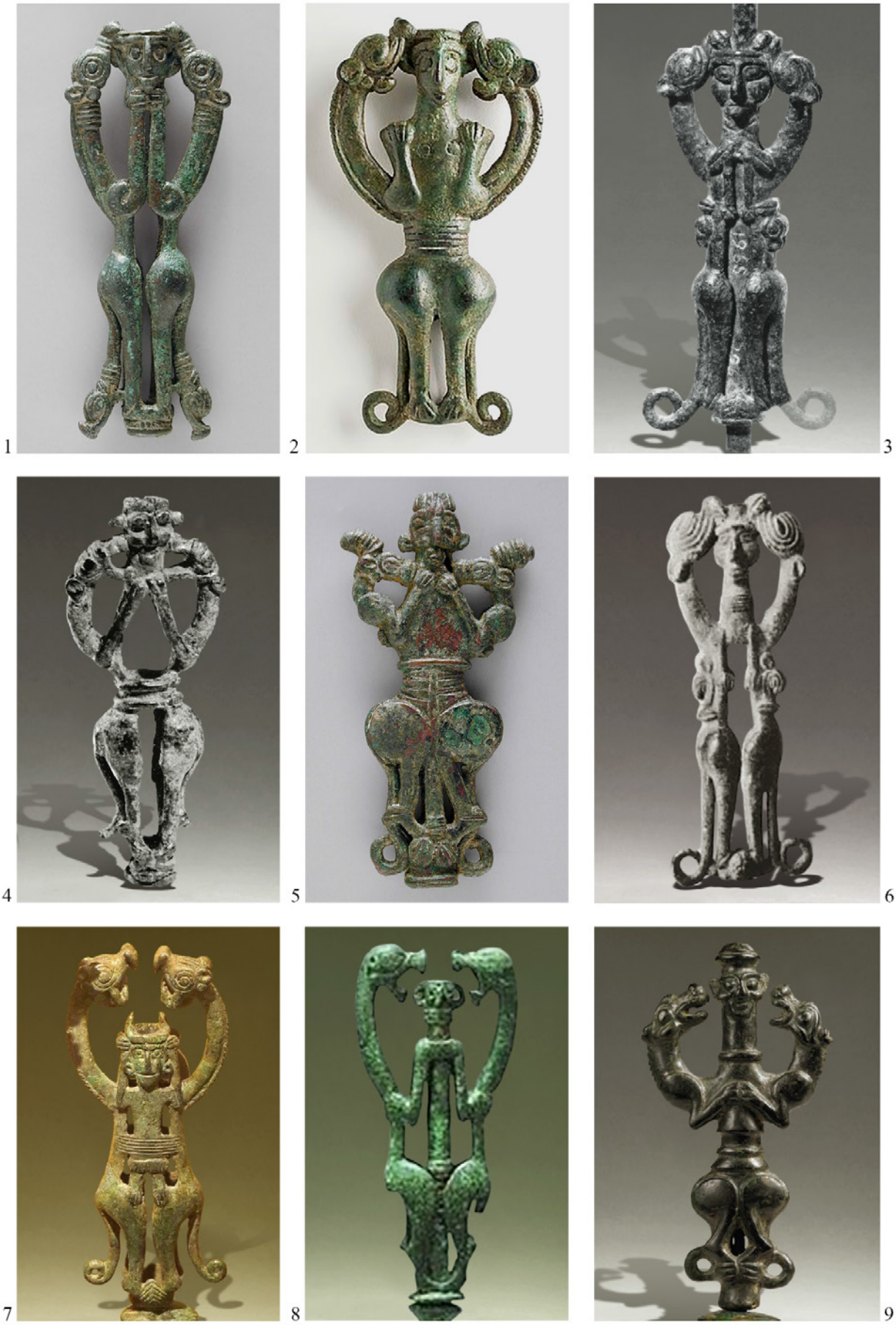
The enigmatic and seemingly sudden appearance of the mentioned head is explained in various ways. In some specimens it is accompanied from below by a segment that alludes to a neck (C1: 3, 6; C3: 6),[4] bringing them closer to the "idols with protomes" in which a similar motif occurs in the same place (C1: 3 compare with 7 – 9). But, this closeness should by no means be treated as an indicator of the formation of the "zoomorphic standards with a human head" under the influence of the latter type because they are older than it. H. Potratz, describing in detail the transformations of the animals' front paws into the neck of this anthropomorphic head, thinks about the possibility that it is the result of forgetting their original meaning.[5] It seems that R. Dussaud considers the variants without a central human head as secondary i.e. formed from those with a head, as the result of its disappearance from these objects.[6] We are not convinced of the accuracy of these theses for several reasons which we will present in the following paragraphs.

The first reason is that the introduction of the human head can be traced back to specimens that bear all the characteristics of the "zoomorphic standards" with quite plastically and realistically executed figures, which points to the older stages of the existence of this type when it is considered that the "idols with protomes" did not exist at all (C2: 1, 4; C4: 1). In another specimen, with features of the later "mannerist style", the head (this time a leonine one) is depicted below the shoulders of the animals, reflecting the phase of hesitation in relation to the shape and position of this element (C2: 8).[7]

The second reason is that the phallic tip is not common to the head in the older "zoomorphic standards with a human head", while, on the other hand, it is typical of the "idols with protomes" (C1: 7 – 9; C3: 9) and the "idols" (G1 – G3). If the head originated from there, then it should carry the mentioned detail even in the earliest specimens. Inversely, this element occurs in those specimens of the type "zoomorphic standards with a human head" that are considered to be later, which is why their formation can be explained in two ways - as a result of the influence of the "idols" on them (C15: 9, 4, 5) or of the reverse influence of the "idols with protomes", but after the basic type of the former had already been constituted (C15: 7, 6, 5, 4). At the same time, these common components indicate a certain chronological overlap of all three types (C13; C22; G7).

[2] For the indicated specimen: Ph. Verdier, *Les bronzes*, 46, 47 (Fig. 33); another specimen with a human head combined with herbivorous animals: P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 92 (No. 211).
[3] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 146, 147, 150.
[4] In the specimen C3: 6, the human head and neck are formed quite realistically, giving the impression as being literally amputated from a human body (J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, Taf. XXXII: 209).
[5] H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 25, 26; H. Potratz, *Die Luristanbronzen*, 209; J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 59.
[6] R. Dussaud, *Haches*, 256 (Fig. 15).
[7] For the specimen: E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 96, 110 (Fig. 77: 110).

C3



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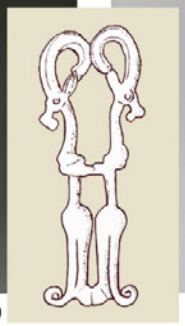

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If the human head in the earliest "zoomorphic standards with a human head" did not get there from the "idols" or from the "idols with protomes", then its origin should be sought elsewhere. It could once again be the "zoomorphic standards" - the undoubted precursors of this type, given the observations and specific examples presented in the previous chapter. Here we have in mind the indications for the insertion of pins in the rings or tubes formed between the two animals, on whose openwork or dioscoid decorative part was a depiction of an anthropomorphic or zooanthropomorphic head (B45 – B48). This would mean that the "zoomorphic standards" contained not only the template for the pair of confronted animals from the "zoomorphic standards with a human head", but also for the human head placed between them or above them. From these findings comes the conclusion that this new type did not actually represent an innovation at the iconographic level, but only at the technological one. Namely, the anthropomorphic or zooanthropomorphic head also present previously between the protomes of the two animals from the "zoomorphic standards" through the inserted pin, in this type for the first time was organically integrated within the object, so that **it started being cast together with all its others elements, through a single wax matrix**.[8]

These are the reasons why the "zoomorphic standards with a human head", despite being close to the type "zoomorphic standards" on an iconographic level, completely differ from them in their material structure i.e. technological execution. The complex composition of the oldest "zoomorphic standards" was usually formed from separate elements: separate casting of the animals and their subsequent fusion; secondary formation of rings or a small tube between their legs; insertion through them of a pin with an openwork, discoid or some other type of head (H2: 7). As we have said, in the "zoomorphic standards with a human head" all these elements were cast at once, from one wax matrix, which, in our opinion, also reflects on the appearance of these objects (H2: 7 compare with 9, 10). In particular, here we have in mind the increase in the compactness of their composition and the higher degree of visual cohesion of the elements that make it up.

Although these are numerous and significant standards, not enough attention has so far been dedicated to them as a separate type with all its typological specifics and varieties. We will try to supplement that in the following paragraphs.

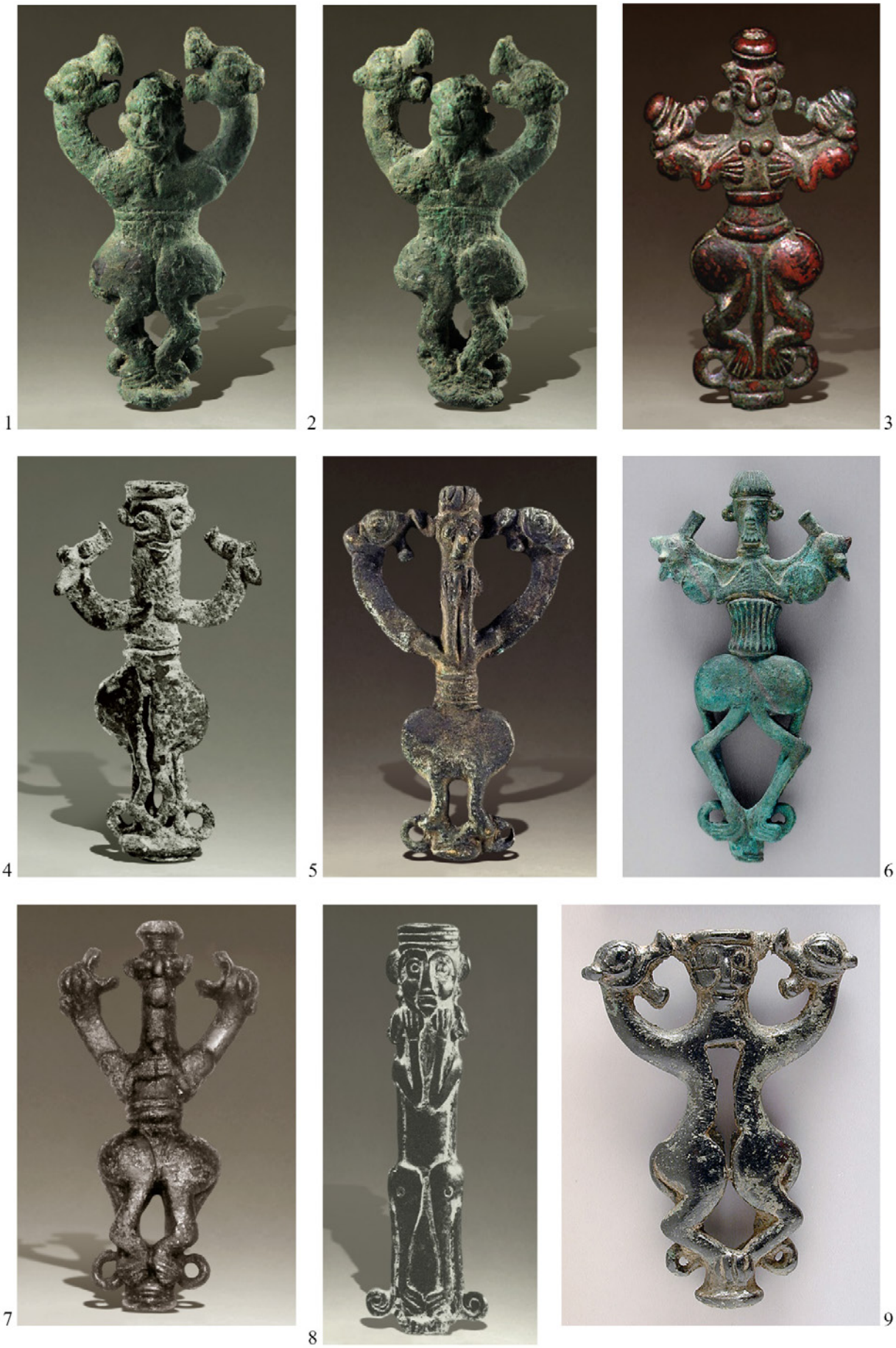
In the "zoomorphic standards with a human head" one can distinguish two especially impressive subtypes, based on the orientation of the two protomes. In the first one, without a doubt more numerous, they are oriented inwards i.e. towards the anthropomorphic head (C2; C3; C5: 1 – 7, 9), while in the second one - outwards (C4: 1 – 7, similar specimens with features of the "standards - statuettes" 8, 9). It is logical to assume that the template for these types could have been the "zoomorphic standards" with analogous orientation of the animal protomes present therein. It is quite indicative that currently we know of only one such specimen (C4: 10).

Strongly argued assumptions have been made that the "zoomorphic standards with a human head" had an important role in the formation of the "idols with protomes", which means that they were at least slightly older than them.[9] Taking into account that in almost all standards of the latter type the large protomes are turned inwards, it is evident that during their formation, the first subtype served as a template (C2; C3; C5 compare with C13 – C18). Given the pronounced semicircular shape and the high degree of stylization, it can be concluded that the variants executed in this way have their roots in the more stylized "zoomorphic standards with a human head" (C1: 2, compare with 1; C2: 2, 5, 6, 8, 9). We are familiar with only a few potential "idols with protomes" in which the heads are oriented outwards, whose protomodel could have been the second subtype (example C4: 6 compare with 1 – 5, 7). But, as we shall see, it had a somewhat greater influence on the formation of some subgroups of the "columnar figurines" (C27; C28) and the "standards - statuettes" (C4: 8, 9).

A certain classification of the "zoomorphic standards with a human head" can be also done based on the degree of mutual intertwinement of the two animal figures. Putting this feature in correlation to the

[8] On this technological innovation see: O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze* 147.

[9] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 150.


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C6



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"zoomorphic standards" understood as their prototypes, it could also take on a certain chronological context. Namely, one gets the impression that the more the two animals are separated from each other, the closer they are typologically to the prototype or, conditionally speaking, are older i.e. more archaic (C2: 1, 2, 4, 5; C4: 1) and vice versa - the more intertwined they are, the younger they are (C3: 2, 5; C4: 2 – 7).

At the end, we would like to single out several unusual specimens that do not fit into the proposed patterns and classifications, probably due to some specific concept of theirs regarding their creation, which, judging by the specimens known to us, did not develop i.e. did not result in a larger number of specimens that would round out some kind of separate subtype or variant.

On the standard from the Princeton University Art Museum, the animal protomes, together with the anthropomorphic head, enclose an almost regular ring, while their forelegs do not extend towards the head vertically, but obliquely (C3: 4; a specimen with an analogous position of the front legs – 5).[10] The heavily geometricized derivatives of this variant, with oblique forelegs, can also be traced among the "idols with protomes" (E17). The specimen from the Copenhagen Museum is exceptional not only from an iconographic, but also from a typological aspect (C3: 7). It explicitly shows what implicitly, in compressed form, would appear on the "idols with protomes": the so-called "Master of Animals" represented by his whole figure, horned, with raised arms, mounted on the hind legs of the pair of animals, but also tied to them with some kind of rope, belt or hoop. According to the position of the head, it is evident that this specimen also evolved from the "zoomorphic standards with a human head", pointing to a potential branch of standards which, judging by the finds that we know of, did not develop i.e. would not be very productive. We assume that closer to the taste of the users was the compressed version where the body of the "master of animals" was fused with their pillar.

In various specimens of the "zoomorphic standards with a human head", the here-presented elements, with their appearance and position, can build specific iconographic depictions, depending on which of them is placed in the foreground, and which in the background, which of the elements are placed in mutual connection, and in which of them that connection is marginalized. One and the same arrangement of these elements can form completely different scenes, not only in different objects, but also parallel i.e. ambivalent scenes within the frames of the same object, which are difficult to differentiate and follow at the level of the typology of these standards. They introduce us into the spheres of the iconography of these standards, which was not based entirely on their actual material form, but also on the mental notions of the people who created and used them.

a) Iconography and analogies

We have seen that O. W. Muscarella, treating the type "zoomorphic standards with a human head" (C1: 5, 6) as a link between the "zoomorphic standards" (C1: 4) and the "idols with protomes" (C1: 9), also notices in them certain differences at the level of iconography, especially in relation to the latter. According to him, the first type differs from the "idols with protomes" (called by him as "Master-of-Animals Standards") because its iconography cannot reflect the image of the "Master of Animals" typical to them. Namely, the head, which in the latter represents the character of the "master", in the "zoomorphic standards with a human head" does not denote the active, but the passive entity, because it is situated in the paws of animals (C1: 2, 5 compare with C1: 8, 9). This author is aware that it reflects some other meanings that are absent in both the "zoomorphic standards" and the "idols with protomes", which is supported by the presence of the same element in other Luristan bronzes such as the pins with a discoid head and the quivers.[11] H. Potratz, too, believes that in the formation of this specific type of standards, in addition to the simple transformations of the

[10] J. C. Waldbaum, *Luristan*, 11 (Fig. 11).
[11] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 146, 147.

C7



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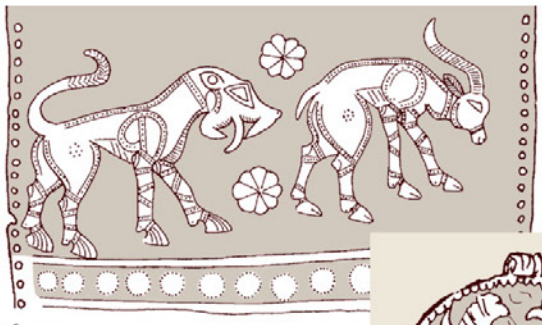
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older prototypes, also participating were the local varieties of some unified i.e. general myth.[12] In the following paragraphs we will try to delve into these "other meanings" and "local mythical specifics" sensed by the mentioned researchers.

The presented arrangement consisting of a central human head placed at the front legs and the wide open muzzles of the pair of animals, on an iconographic level can be justified by two actions - the animals hold the head in their front legs as an act of **attack on it** i.e. **its devourment**, or as an act of **handing it over from one animal to the other** (C1: 2, 5; C2; C3: 1 – 6). Of course, this action does not interfere with the specimens in which the protomes are oriented outwards (C4: 1 – 7). The attack i.e. devourment seem more probable to us since this action in most standards is further emphasized also through the direction of the animals' wide open mouths towards the head. This interpretation is also pointed out by P. R. S. Moorey, who believes that the occurrence of the head precisely among animals from the family of felines reflects their predatory nature.[13] Although it seems less probable to us, it can also be some act of **raising the head** by the animals, in the sense of **glorification** i.e. **apotheosis** of the character that it represented.[14]

The same arrangement, in implicit form, also occurs on other Luristan objects executed in the technique of casting or hammering and engraving. First we will mention two objects that had a character similar to the standards i.e. served as finials intended for fastening on some kind of pillars (H. Potratz calls them "Stangenbekrönung") (C8: 4, 8). They consist of a central tubular socket, depicted above which is a human head that, according to the author, represents the Moon Goddess ("Mondgöttin"). In one of the cases it has bovine horns and is flanked by a pair of ibex protomes, while in the other - by a pair of complete figures of animals from the family of felines.[15]

The centrally placed head, flanked by a pair of symmetrical animals, is one of the main scenes of the Luristan discoid pins on which it is present as both the main and as a peripheral scene. In the first case, the head (anthropomorphic, zoo-anthropomorphic or zoomorphic) is depicted in the center of the disc, sometimes within the there-formed central umbo or medallion or slightly below it (C6: 5, 6; C7: 1, 2). In the second one, it appears as one of several scenes (even duplicated) arranged in the cassettes into which the circular field of the disk is divided (C6: 3, 4, 7, 8). In the main compositions, which are larger in scale, the head is often larger than the animals, whereby with its position gravitates towards the upper or middle part of the scene. In the peripheral ones, which are with smaller dimensions, it is smaller and located in the lower part, at the hind legs of the animals. In various cases, the centrally placed head has a more pronounced anthropomorphic character, mainly of indeterminate sex or with more or less pronounced zoomorphic features. In some cases, the animals surround it with their bodies and limbs, and in some cases they may even trample it i.e. strike it with their front legs (C6: 3 – 8; C7: 2). On a pin from Surkh Dum, the two lions reach with one of their forelegs towards the large anthropomorphic head placed between them in a gesture that indicates its supporting, raising, or glorification (C7: 1). On another fragmented pin from Surkh Dum, it seems that this scene covered the upper frame zone, with a large centrally placed human head flanked by two small symmetrical figures of lions (C6: 4). Due to the damage, we cannot be completely sure whether the head appeared as a separate element, as part of a more complete figure or some other kind of depiction. Under this section, the same iconographic type is repeated once more, this time with upright standing animals and bottom positioned head (see below).[16]

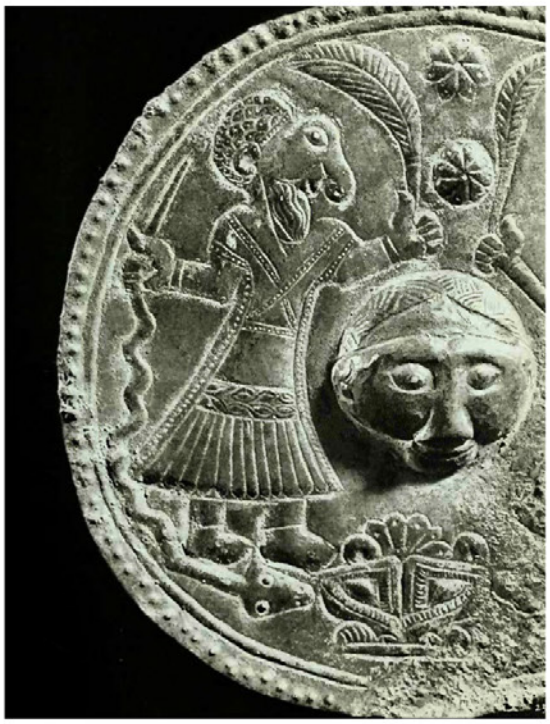
On several discoid pins, the central head is placed at the very bottom of the scene, at the hind legs of the two upright standing animals. One of the two pins from the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts depicts such a scene with carnivorous animals, while the other - with winged horses or bulls (C6: 5, 6).[17] In the pin from the

[12] H. Potratz, *Die Luristanbronzen*, 209, 210.
[13] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 149.
[14] H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 25, 26.
[15] H. Potratz, *Das "Kampfmotiv"*, 33, Tab. XVI: 61, 63.
[16] Basic information: S. Ayazi, *Luristan*, cat. 40.
[17] Ph. Verdier, *Les bronzes*, 44, 45 (Fig. 30).

C8



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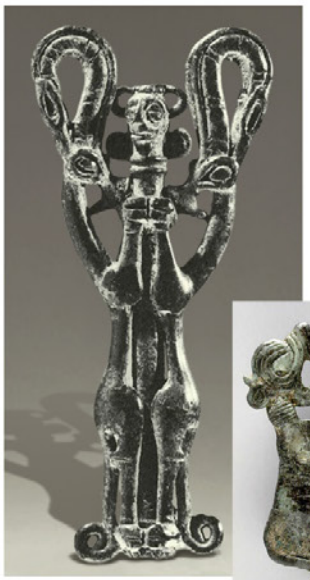
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Metropolitan Museum, the head is accompanied by horned winged animals (C7: 2),[18] while in the one from LACMA - by animals resembling horses (C6: 3).[19] On the flat-headed pin from the collection of Baron von der Heydt, this scene is depicted twice, in almost the same form, whereby the head in one of the cases is anthropomorphic, while in the other - zooanthropomorphic, with animal ears (C6: 7, 8). In both cases, formed above them, between the front legs of the animals, is a supplementary circular motif, without any additional elements.[20] A depiction with an analogous composition and location (perhaps duplicated this time as well) is shown on the aforementioned pin from Surkh Dum, whereby the circular motif is divided in the form of a rosette (C6: 4).[21]

In our analysis we decided to also include two examples in which the animals are not accompanied by a detached head, but by circular motifs or rosettes, considering these elements as its alternation. These are bronze plaques that served as coverings for quivers or some other objects. On the bronze plaque from the Louvre, depicted in the lower zone is a frieze with lions or gryphon-like creatures looming over some kind of circular objects (C7: 9),[22] while on the scene of the quiver from the Metropolitan Museum - a similar creature is oriented towards the antelope standing in front of it, but also towards the two circular motifs i.e. rosettes (C7: 6).[23]

At the end, we should also mention iconographic variants, mainly present on Luristan discoid pins, in which the centrally placed human head is flanked by a pair of standing male figures equipped with palm branches, and one of them also with a snake (C8: 1 – 3).[24] In this context, the mentioned scenes can be treated as two iconographic variants of the same mythical image in which there is alternation of the zoomorphic with anthropomorphic figures (C8: 1 – 3 compare with 4 – 8 and with C6; C7).

b) Analysis and interpretation

We know of only one more specific interpretation of the scene from the "zoomorphic standards with a human head" in which the head is placed in the front paws of the two animals. It is the interpretation of H. Potratz who recognizes in it the character of the Moon Goddess, whereby the presence of her head in the paws of the animals is considered by him not as a sign of an enemy attack, but as a friendly touch and her apotheosis. He bases this view on the horns present on some of these heads, which, according to him, resemble a lunar sickle (C1: 2; C2: 6).[25]

In regards to the central head present on the Luristan discoid pins, predominating are the solar interpretations. H. Potratz thinks that the pin as a whole, with its circular disk, symbolizes the sun, whereby the central umbo with a depiction of a head represents the solar disk itself, while the surrounding surface - the space through which its rays spread. Within that context, he concludes that these pins reflect the veneration of the sun by the users of the Luristan bronzes. [26] A similar solar interpretation of the head within the same pins

[18] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 202, 203 (No. 312).
[19] A. Godard, *The Art*, Fig. 44.
[20] H. A. Potratz, *Scheibenkopfnadeln*, 45 (Abb. 3), 46.
[21] S. Ayazi, *Luristan*, cat. 40.
[22] P. Amiet, *Un carquois*, 250 (Fig. 3).
[23] For the object: O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 192-202.
[24] A. Godard, *The Art*, 60-62 (Fig. 45, Fig. 48); R. Dussaud, *Anciens*, Fig. 2, Fig. 3, Fig. 4, Pl. IX: 1.
[25] „Nach dem ganzen Zusammenhange kann ich nur glauben, dass auch dieses Bildgefüge nur eine Spielform jenes einfacheren ohne Arme ist, dass auch dieses Bild in den Zusammenhäng des ausgedehnten Motivbereiches der "Apotheose der Mondgöttin" gehört." (H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 26, 27); „Damit wird aber der Gedanke eines Kampfes logisch unmöglich gemacht; denn es wäre schon eine merkwürdige Tatsache, dass man eine ganze Zeitlang nur die Feinde, die Dämonen dargestellt hätte, ehe man dazu übergegangen wäre, auch den heroischen Überwinder hinzuzufügen." (H. Potratz, *Das "Kampfmotiv"*, 29).
[26] H. A. Potratz, *Scheibenkopfnadeln*, 39, 53, 54.

is suggested by Ph. Ackerman, whereby she identifies the rosettes that often fill the space around it as stars. She attaches the same meaning to the anthropomorphic face depicted on the skirt of the male figure from the Metropolitan Museum quiver, interpreting it as a "sun-face" (F5: 5).[27] The leonine head from the umbo of one such pin is interpreted by R. du Mesnil du Buisson as a symbol of the planet Venus.[28]

Analyzing the iconography of a pin from Surkh Dum, R. Dussaud thinks that the large head depicted there represents the god Mithra, whereby the lions that accompany it are present as his attributes (C7: 1).[29]

In support of the solar meaning of the above presented compositions from discoid pins (C6; C7: 1, 2), there are some other specimens of this type in which such a character is more transparent. On one pin this meaning is suggested by the central umbo, divided in the form of a rosette (= solar disk), but also the few (probably 8) half-rosettes that appear from the outer frame of the disk (= rising or setting of the sun from the horizon) (C9: 2). The cruciform bordure that extends through the circular field, transforms it into a wheel that can function as a symbol of the solar dynamics. Thereby, the four sections between the spokes would encode the phases of the day-night and annual solar cycle (morning, noon, evening, night; spring, summer, autumn, winter). The four animals depicted in each of the sections could symbolize these same phases or the forces that realize their dynamics (C9: 2 compare with 5).[30]

On another already mentioned pin from the Louvre, depicted above the umbo (this time empty) are two confronting lions and another one below it (C9: 1).[31] In this case, too, the figures are accompanied by half-rosettes, this time four in number, which we believe represent the phases of the solar cycle. The lions in this case could be equivalent to the sun itself (head = solar disk, mane = rays) but, even more likely, to the forces i.e. principles according to which it moves i.e. the solar cycle is realized: the upper two - the principles of progression (sunrise, spring) and regression (sunset, autumn), while the third one - the principle of stagnation (night, winter), which would be indicated by the lower placement of the last lion and its detachment into a separate framed field. In the mouth of the three lions there is a head, which this time belongs to some kind of horned animal. Another similar Luristan pin is known in which the central umbo, this time supplemented by a zooanthropomorphic head, is surrounded by four lions, the upper two of which dismember a herbivorous animal, while the lower ones have their tails held by some kind of centrally placed human figure (C9: 5).[32] Many researchers have pointed to a composition very similar to the previous ones (especially the first one), present on a shield umbo connected to Etruria, with the difference that in its center, instead of a hemispherical protrusion (with or without a face), appears a rosette i.e. circle surrounded by rays (C9: 3 compare with 1).[33] The high level of similarity initiates the question of some kind of more direct contacts between Luristan and the Apennine Peninsula, which we leave for the last chapter of this monograph. These depictions, to some extent, fit into the mentioned conception of R. du Mesnil du Buisson, in which the lion as a symbol of Venus i.e. the Morning and Evening Star appears in the role of a symbol of the heat of the day that eliminates the freshness of the night represented by the antelope.[34] In the first pin, the mentioned act would be encoded through the head of a horned animal (gazelle, antelope) in the jaws of the three lions (C9: 1).

[27] Ph. Ackerman, *The Gemini*, 28 (Fig. 3), 29 (Fig. 4), 30; the solar meaning of the centrally placed circle, rosette or head (often surrounded by radiant motifs) is also indicated by S. Ayazi (S. Ayazi, *Luristan*, 26, 28, 31, 36, 37, cat. 5, 9, 10, 16, 17, 18, 56, 57).

[28] R. du Mesnil du Buisson, *Nouvelles*, 208 (Fig. 103).

[29] R. Dussaud, *Anciens*, 202, 203 (Fig. 6).

[30] Basic information on the object: G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 66, 69 (kat. 132); on this type of circular friezes of animals: H. A. Potratz, *Scheibenkopfnadeln*, 42; another example: S. Ayazi, *Luristan*, cat. 11.

[31] G. M. D'Erme, *The Cappella*, 415 (Fig. 16), 416.

[32] H. A. Potratz, *Scheibenkopfnadeln*, 39-44 (Abb.1).

[33] G. M. D'Erme, The Cappella, 416 (Fig. 17); H. A. Potratz, *Scheibenkopfnadeln*, 42, 43 (with other presented analogies from Armenia, Urartu and Crete).

[34] R. du Mesnil du Buisson, *Nouvelles*, 201-227.

C9



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The whole concept of depiction on the Luristan discoid pins of the cyclical movement of the sun through the universe, personalized in the form of a human head, could be rounded off with the specimen from the Louvre where in the human head that appears between the spread legs of the female figure (= Mother Goddess) one could recognize the birth of the sun i.e. the beginning of the new solar cycle (C9: 6; see pp. 287, 289).[35]

A different aspect of this solar dynamic can be recognized on the disk of another Luristan pin where the centrally placed head (this time horned), combined with rosettes, is surrounded by fish and some other hybrid creatures (C9: 4). A similar composition is also present on other pins: from Surkh Dum and another unknown site,[36] from the collections of E. Graeffe[37] and David-Weill.[38] In this case, they could symbolize the dynamics of the sun through the chthonic regions represented as waters of the underworld, but at the same time to indicate some kind of completely different chthonic character of the head.

Such a completely different suggestion for the meaning of this motif is given by R. Ghirshman, according to which "The face in the centre of the pinheads may be assumed to be that of the mother-goddess of the Asianic peoples, who was worshipped everywhere from Asia Minor to Susa." Thereby, he considers the possibility that standing behind this character could eventually be the goddess Ashi, sister of Sraosha.[39] The chthonic character of this motif is also indicated by B. Goldman, who connects the depiction of the detached head with the great goddess of fertility, although he believes that in such Luristan examples it is not possible to determine her name. At the same time, he considers it the inspiration for the later analogous depictions of the Greek Gorgon.[40] D. de Clercq-Fobe, obviously accepts the previous proposals, whereby she believes that the character of these heads from the Luristan discoid pins is determined by the additional pictorial elements depicted next to them. Thus, the presence of garlands composed of leaves and/or pomegranates is, according to her, an indicator that it represents a goddess of fertility, while the star above the head indicates the celestial nature of the depicted character. However, it seems that she does not to rule out the possibility that some of the heads also belonged to ordinary worldly people. In her overview of the iconographic motifs from Luristan pins, she treats the detached human and leonine head also as "masks".[41]

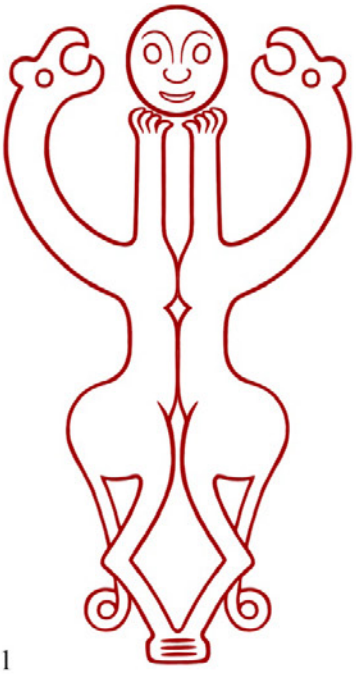
Without excluding the indicated chthonic meanings of this motif, we will focus our attention to the solar ones, considering them more dominant within frames of the Luristan bronzes.

The analysis of the mentioned Luristan pins and the interpretations of their iconography given by previous researchers encourage us in the conclusion that the scene with a human head placed between two confronted animals had a solar meaning. If we take into account that the separated head, in general and in the specific objects, represented the solar disk, then we think about the possibility that the composition as a whole represented the mythical "devouring of the personalized sun". Within the framework of this action, the two animals acquire the meaning of complementary forces i.e. tendencies that realize the movement of the sun through the universe: the first one in the evening swallows it with its mouth (= sunset, "death" of the sun), while the other in the morning disgorges is from there (= sunrise, "resurrection" of the sun) (ideal paradigm – C10: 3). Given the active participation of their paws in these depictions (C10: 1, 2, 8), a second, less dramatic, variant of this mythical action is also possible, in which these two creatures would realize the solar dynamics by handing the sun one to another.

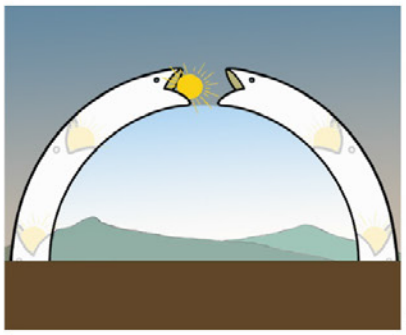
Why would the sun be depicted in the form of a detached human head?

[35] Basic information: N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 163-165 (no. 152).
[36] S. Ayazi, *Luristan*, 30, 33, Cat. 18, 20.
[37] Y. Godard, A. Godard, *Bronzes*, Pl. 27 (cat. 312).
[38] P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 75, 76, 81 (No. 187); R. Ghirshman, *The Art*, 49 (Fig. 58). Other examples: Z. Moradi, *Fish*, 249, 250 (Fig. 16-18); D. de Clercq-Fobe, *Epingles*, 22, 23.
[39] R. Ghirshman, *The Art*, 46 (Fig. 54); D. de Clercq-Fobe, *Epingles*, 20-23.
[40] B. Goldman, The Asiatic Ancestry of the Gorgon, *Berytus* 14/1, 1961. (according to: D. de Clercq-Fobe, *Epingles*, 21).
[41] D. de Clercq-Fobe, *Epingles*, 6-8, 20-23, 49-52, 105-108.

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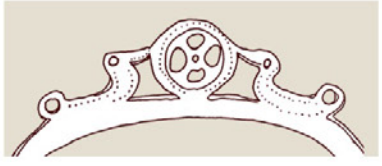

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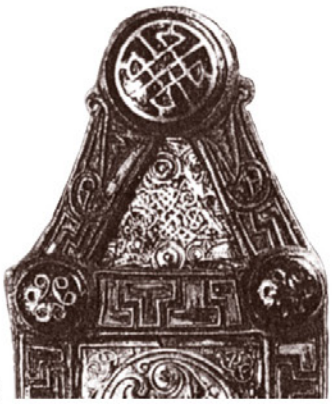

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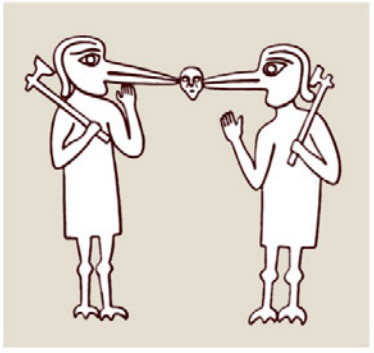

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It is thought that the key motive for that is the aspiration of mythical consciousness to animate and personalize this celestial body i.e. present it as a living being, a mythical character i.e. a deity that is born, has its own lifespan, dies, but also rises again. As a motive for this process one can also take other reasons, which we have pointed out in our previous studies.[42]

This motif is present in European early medieval jewelry. Among the Slavic two-plated bow fibulae it appears exactly on the semicircular plate that denotes the celestial vault (C10: 4, 5), and in a similar form it is also present on synchronous jewelry from Central and Western Europe which is associated with populations of Celtic and Germanic origin (C10: 6, 10, depiction on a funerary monument – 11).[43] É. Salin, in his comparative studies (in which the Luristan bronzes are also included) references several examples of medieval jewelry with this motif which he treats as a "mask of the sun" ("masque du soleil"), whereby he also identifies the two gryphons accompanying it as solar animals (C7: 3, 7). He thinks that in medieval Europe this motif arrived from the Orient, under the influence of Scythian-Sarmatian prototypes.[44] Its roots, in an indirect way, can be traced back to the Neolithic depictions from Çatalhöyük, in which two hybrid winged creatures are oriented towards a human figure, whereby the attack on the head is encoded precisely through its absence from the body (C7: 8). The mythical images presented here also appear in a more moderate form, with a wheel or a rosette placed between the muzzles of the two animals (C10: 9; B22: 11).

From a geographical and chronological aspect, as much more direct parallels for the mentioned Luristan scenes, one can take two motifs from the Karkuk seals dating between 1600 and 1200 BCE (C6: 1 compare with the rest; C7: 4 compare with 1, 2). They were probably created at the time when Mitannia was ruled by an Aryan dynasty. Based on the similarity with some motifs from the Luristan bronzes, assumptions have been proposed that these objects played a part in the creation of their iconography (see pp. 685 – 687).[45]

On the Luristan discoid pin with three lions, situated in their jaws is the head of some horned herbivorous animal (C9: 1) which, within the mentioned context, could encode the dynamic aspect of the sun i.e. the aspect of its cyclical appearance in the universe understood as periodical dying and resurrection, in this case symbolically depicted as its devouring and disgorging by the cosmic forces represented by the lions. We have also had examples in which it (in anthropomorphic format) was combined analogously as in the "zoomorphic standards with a human head" - flanked by two lions that hold it in their front paws (C7: 1). In this case, the whole ambient of the composition refers more to the glorification of the character it represents than to its devourment.

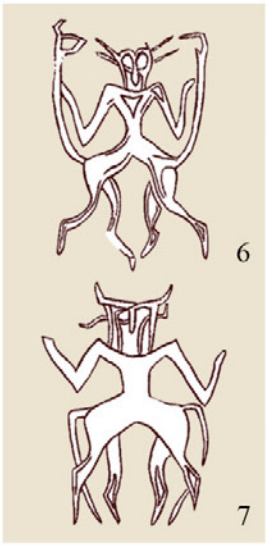
If the mentioned images are placed in a macrocosmic spatial context, then their separate variants could be connected to the different phases of the sun's movement through the universe. In this context, the **head placed at the top - between the two animals** (C6: 4, 6; C7: 1) could denote the culmination of the cycle (noon, summer, summer solstice) when its progressive phase ends, whereby the force that had led it (one of the animals) passes it to the other one (second animal) which would lead the regressive phase of its trajectory (compare with C10: 3). On the other hand, **the head depicted at the bottom of the composition** should denote the culmination of the regressive phase, when the sun stays in the lower zones of the universe i.e. the underworld or the earthly waters. In this context, one can justify the frequent presence of the head at the bottom of the composition – at the hind legs of animals (C6: 3 – 5, 7, 8; C7: 2). The depiction of the additional disk above it may reflect the reverse (culminating) phase of the cycle (C6: 4, 6 – 8). Multiple elements indicate that this chthonic phase of the solar cycle was also encoded on the plaque from the Louvre, depicted on which are lions or gryphons that loom over a circular motif (C7: 9). We believe that precisely the

[42] Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 260-275; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 328, 337-344.
[43] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 343, 344 (Д14; Д15).
[44] É. Salin, *Sur quelques*, 229 (Fig. 5), 233, 234, 238.
[45] E. Herzfeld, *Iran*, 161-165; E. Porada, *The Art*, 81; E. Porada, *Nomads*, 21, 28;
monographic presentation of the seals: E. Porada, *Seal*.

C11


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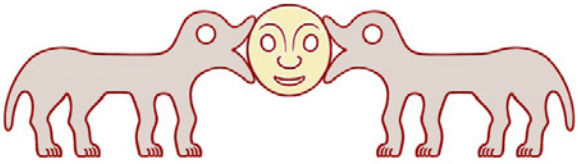

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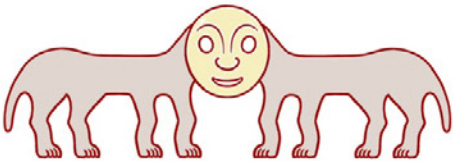
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absence of a face in this motif further indicates its solar significance, perhaps as a sign of the devourment of the solar disk in the underworld by the chthonic forces, followed by the loss of its personality and power. The scene was multiplicated in the form of a bordure, which could indicate the continual repetition of the process that it symbolizes. A similar meaning can be attributed to the scene of the quiver from the Metropolitan Museum, with a depiction of a similar gryphon-like creature oriented towards two things that could denote the sun in different ways - on one hand, the circular motifs i.e. rosettes as a reflection of its shape, and on the other, the antelope as a symbol of its dynamics (C7: 6).

We think that the separate phases of this mythical action could be sensed on an unusual specimen of the "idols with protomes", created under the influence of the mythical image presented here. There, a human head protrudes from the mouth of each of the two zoomorphic protomes (C10: 7).[46]

The Metropolitan Museum houses a gold buckle which, although from the later Achaemenid period, in its composition comes quite close to the standards (C7: 5 compare with C4).[47] It is important for us that on it, as in the examples analyzed here, a circular disk appears in the front paws of the animals (in this case hybrid ones, with the head of a lion, wings and horns), but also four other identical discs placed under their hind legs, left and right of them and in the center. We think that in this case, too, the multiplication of the disk can indicate its solar meaning and specifically the mentioned phases of the solar cycle. The general similarity of this object with the standards indicates the existence in them (or behind them) of some kind of more complete image that represented all the key phases of the sun's movement through the universe (compare with B19).

If we would agree with the views (expressed by multiple researchers) that the iconography of the "zoomorphic standards" represents the traditions of the indigenous cultures of Luristan and the surrounding Middle Eastern regions, then the introduction of the anthropomorphic head, and the anthropomorphic figure between them, could reflect the mythical-religious contents introduced to these objects by the new (perhaps Indo-Aryan?) settlers in these areas.

c) Fusion of the composition: a pair of animals with a shared/common head

The scene that we presented in previous chapters, perceived on a visual i.e. compositional level shows relations with another mythical image that is also present on the Luristan bronzes. We are talking about the depiction of two symmetrically placed animal figures that are facing each other, whereby, in this case, they have one common head. Here we can reference several such explicit examples from the Luristan pins with a discoid head (C11: 1 – 4) and three implicit examples belonging to the not particularly typical standards (C11: 8, 9; I2: 2). On the pin from Surkh Dum this scene is depicted twice, in the upper and lower part of the circular disk, in the first case accompanied by a pair of birds (C11: 2).[48] On the specimen from LACMA it is depicted in the lower half of the disc (C11: 3), while on the fragment from the Louvre and the specimen from the David-Weill collection - in the upper half (C11: 1, 4). At the basis of the scene from the first (C11: 2) and the last pin (C11: 4), G. M. D'erme places the tree in the meaning of Axis mundi and as a symbol of the god Zurvān.[49] R. Ghirshman thinks that the objects with this motif were dedicated to the Avestan goddess of fertility Ashi. He seeks its genesis in the structure of a specific type of axes whose blade protrudes from the jaw of a lion, whereby its body is depicted twice, on both sides of the object.[50]

The first example of the mentioned standards most closely resembles the group "zoomorphic standards with a human head", whereby the back of the bodies of the animal pair is clearly visible, but the front, along with the legs, is completely unrecognizable (C11: 8). Thereby, instead of the heads of the animals,

[46] Basic information: N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 194 (cat. 196).
[47] Information on the object: O. W. Muscarella, *Archaeology*, 1059, 1060, 1083 (Fig. 12).
[48] S. Ayazi, *Luristan*, 32, 33 (Cat. 20); P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 76, 81 (No. 188).
[49] G. M. D'Erme, *The Cappella*, 406 (Fig. 3), 413, 414.
[50] R. Ghirshman, *The Art*, 50, 51; А. В. Мельченко, *Редкие*, 625-627.

C13



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C14


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depicted here is a large anthropomorphic face, while above it - a spherical segment which, although located in the place of the usual head, does not bear any elements of a face.[51] The other specimen is also similarly conceptualized, with the difference that the shared head is not depicted on the chest but in its proper place (I2: 2). The third standard, according to its basic constitution, belongs to the type "columnar figurines", but it is quite far from them in regards to the execution of the details (C11: 9).[52] Unlike other objects of this type, it shows direct relations with the "zoomorphic standards with a human head" in terms of the lower part of the body where the symmetrical hind legs of the pair of animals and the characteristic tails with a spirally curved tip are still recognizable (C5: 8 compare with the rest). Starting from this point of view, the upper part of the figure could also be treated as a result of the transformation of the mentioned type. The specificity of this specimen is that in it, as in the previous cases, the protomes of both animals are completely eliminated, and their place is taken by the strongly accentuated human head towards which the former front legs of the animals should have reached for. But, in this case, their shape is completely changed, gaining the appearance of human arms, which leads to a change in the meaning of the global composition. The whole standard now takes on the form of a human figure with zoomorphic legs, which with its hands touches the lower part of its anthropomorphic head. This specimen, although formed within the frames of the "zoomorphic standards with a human head" or the "columnar figurines", moves so far away from them that, in our opinion, it becomes closest to the group "standards - statuettes" (C33).

The iconographic parallels for the composition presented here can be found within the ancient civilizations of the Middle East, the Mediterranean, but also later among the medieval cultures of the East and Europe, crossing over even into the motifs created within the frames of Christianity (C12: 4 – 11). Most researchers agree that this motif originated in the Middle East, sometime in the 2nd millennium BCE and that it then moved to the west along the route Iran - Greece - Etruria. O. W. Muscarella disagrees with the view of R. Ghirshman and some other authors that the Greek examples are the result of the cultural contacts of Greece with Iran, in support of which he points to older Greek examples from the Bronze Age and to other facts indicating that the oldest examples of this motif were not created in Iran. Particularly enigmatic is its presence in Etruria which, despite the clear relations with Greek prototypes (mainly Corinthian painted pottery), sometimes also suggests direct links with the East, without the mediation of Greece. In the Middle Ages, through ancient traditions or through Syria, it entered the corpus of decorative motifs of Christian stone plastics from the Romanesque and later styles. There are still dilemmas in academia whether in ancient Europe this motif was used only as a decorative motif or it also had a certain symbolic, mythological and religious meaning. The justifications for its unusual structure are sought at various levels: the spheres of optics i.e. the pictorial concepts of "logical realism" (depiction of the two lateral sides of the animal, although they are not visible from a single point of observation); the depiction in these images of three-dimensional objects i.e. angular surfaces adapted for observation from two different positions); the spheres of semiotics (representation of the two natures and/or functions of the depicted mythical character).[53]

In this context, due to the geographical and cultural proximity, the parallels from the **Mesopotamian seals** are especially important to us (C11: 5 – 7 compare with the rest). As in the previous examples, depicted on two of them is a hybrid creature, which from the waist down is composed of the rear half of the bodies of

[51] *Idole du Luristan* 2018; an object with a similar appearance: P. Amiet, *Les antiquités*, 93 (No. 220).

[52] Ph. Verdier, *Les bronzes*, 46, 47 (Fig. 34). For the observations of previous authors: S. Ayazi, *Luristan*, 32, 33 whereby she points out the aforementioned assumption that this motif was inspired by a type of double axe (the two blades = mouth of the lions; the two handles = their bodies) together with corresponding literature (by R. Ghirshman and P. R. S. Moorey).

[53] L. C. Koch, *Der doppelleibige*, with bibliography and emphasis on the Etruscan examples and their genesis; W. Deonna, *Êtres*, with a catalogue of numerous examples; O. W. Muscarella, *Archaeology*, 671; on the quite similar examples from China, America and Oceania and the reasons for that similarity: К. Леви-Строс, *Структурная*, 252-280; F. Eber-Stevens, *Stara*, T.XII, with a comparative table of different cultures around the planet; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 248, 249 with emphasis on the triple nature of the character and its chthonic meaning.

C15



two terrestrial animals (back, abdomen, rump, hind legs and tail) (C11: 6, 7). At the point where they merge into a symmetrical composition, a human bust is attached with arms spread and bent at the elbows, which in one of the cases hold the tails that grow from the animal parts of the hybrid figure. Formed above the shoulders of the bust is a head with zoomorphic and even demonic features (large eyes, open mouth, horns or animal ears, hair and/or beard). In the third example, the lower part of the composition is not clear, and it even seems that depicted there, instead of legs, are the fore parts of the animals, whereby their tails appear to end in heads or protomes (C11: 5).[54] Unlike most others, these examples are conceptualized vertically, which makes them close to the examples from the standards, which is another argument in favor of their more direct contribution to the emergence of this motif in Luristan standards (compare C11: 5 – 7 with 8, 9 and with C2 – C5).

The genesis of the pictorial motif presented here could have also taken place on an iconographic level as a result of the transformation of the image that is in the focus of this chapter of our monograph. During that process, the central anthropomorphic or zooanthropomorphic head, due to the emphasized visuality and significance, came to the forefront, thereby marginalizing the heads of the two animal figures (C12: 1 – 3). The newly formed hybrid character also acquired an appropriate meaning - of two animal bodies with one common/shared human head. We think that the symbolic implications of this hybrid character should again be sought in the ambivalence of the single, the double and the triple - a topic with which the creators and users of the Luristan bronzes were obviously preoccupied, and with which we will also deal in the following chapters.

* * *

Within the frames of the presented arrangement of iconographic elements from the "zoomorphic standards with a human head", besides the mythical images elaborated here, one can also identify three more compositions:

- A central human figure placed between two lateral animal ones.
- An ambivalent composition consisting of the bodies of a central human figure and two lateral animal ones which are fused with it.
- A hybrid figure with zoomorphic hips and legs, an anthropomorphic head and arms in the form of animal protomes.

Given that these three compositions occur primarily in the "idols with protomes", we will discuss them in the next chapter dedicated to the presence of the arrangement "pair of symmetrical animals and a central anthropomorphic character" on the standards of this type.

2. Anthropomorphic figure between a pair of animals

This iconographic arrangement is characteristic of the most typical and numerous type of Luristan standards, which in academic circles is named by several terms. We decided on the name **"idols with protomes"** because of the two key features of these standards - the pillar-like shaft with a head at the top that has the same shape as in the standards of the type "idols" (C22: 2, 4, 6 – 8 compare with 1, 3, 5; G7) and the pair of large, arched protomes that protrude from it (C14 – C18). Like the "zoomorphic standards", the "zoomorphic standards with a human head" and the "idols", this type has two faces, which means that it was conceived to be viewed from all sides.

[54] Some of the mentioned motifs are connected by W. H. Ward with Gilgamesh: W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 46, 47 (No. 121, 125), 61 (No. 145).

a) General features of the standards of the type "idols with protomes" and their relations to other types

P. R. S. Moorey calls these standards **`Master-of-Animals` Finials** or **Standard finials**,[55] O. W. Muscarella - **Master-of-Animals Standards**,[56] E. de Waele - **Idoles tubular** ("représentant un dompteur ianiforme entre deux lions affrontés")[57] (for other terms see p. 12 and Fig. 2; 2a on pp. 9, 10). Apart from being the most numerous, this type is also the most divided into subtypes and variants. Based on stylistic and typological comparisons, as well as according to certain archaeological indicators, it is considered to be younger than the "zoomorphic standards".[58] In newer publications, these standards are defined as **second type**, and are dated to Iron Age II-B and the beginning of Iron Age III.[59] Specifically, in Tattulban, such a standard was discovered in situ in a grave dating to Iron Age III (800/750 - about 650 BCE) (C22: 7, 8; H10: 1 – 8).[60]

Although there is no doubt that many of the components of the "zoomorphic standards" were transferred onto the "idols with protomes" (C1: 1, 4, 7 – 9), more recent analyzes indicate that this influence was not direct. It happened through the "zoomorphic standards with a human head" because the human head, as an essential part of the "idols with protomes", is present in them (C1: 2, 3, 5, 6) but not in the "zoomorphic standards" (C1: 1, 4).[61] However, this conclusion does not have to be accepted if we take into account the mentioned assumptions that in the "zoomorphic standards", it existed as a supplemental component, represented by the pin that was inserted between the animals (B45 – B48). In any case, the comparisons clearly show the more direct relations of both types with the "idols with protomes", especially with its subtype where the central human figure placed between the two large protomes is without arms (C1: 6, 7; C14), which, in principle, should mean that it is older than the one with arms (C1: 8, 9; C16 – C18).[62]

The subtype without arms, in turn, is divided into two main variants - one shorter and robust (C14: 1 – 3) and the other longer and with more graceful elements (C14: 4 – 6), whereby the first one shows more direct relations with the "zoomorphic standards with a human head" (C14: 1 – 3 compare with C13: 1 – 3).[63] The robust variant of the "idols with protomes" is so close to some subtypes of the "zoomorphic standards with a human head" that it is often not possible to distinguish between them (C13: 2 compare with 1 and 3). In these variants one could also notice differences in regards to the shape of the large protomes. In the first one, they form a semicircle or extend obliquely upwards, bent quite slightly (C14: 1 – 3), while in the second one, they are always arched and form an almost completely rounded ring (C14: 4 – 6). The elongation of the neck of the central anthropomorphic character is noticeable, which, according to some researchers, was aimed at its elevation above the protomes.[64] Some additional elements that are common to the subtype with arms are not typical of the one without arms. Thus, within the frames of the armless subtype, at the junction of the large protomes with the pillar, appearing quite rarely are an additional anthropomorphic head (C14: 3, 4) and an

[55] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 153-160; P. R. S. Moorey (et al), *Ancient Bronzes*, 58-62.
[56] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 147-150.
[57] E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 98-103, 114, 115.
[58] B. Overlaet, *The Early*, 189 (Fig. 156: 7), 216 (Fig. 184).
[59] E. Haerinck et al, *Finds*, 115; B. Overlaet, *The Early*, 189, 216 (Fig 184).
[60] E. Haerinck, B. Overlaet, *The Chr. of the Pusht-i Kuh*, 134 (Fig. 6: 23); E. Haerinck et al, *Finds*, 114, 115; B. Overlaet, The *Chronology*, 15, 16, 33 (Pl.14: 11); B. Overlaet, *The Early*, 188-189, 216 (Fig. 184). B. Overlaet, The *Chronology*; L. Vanden Berghe, *Excavations*, 264-268; P. R. S. Moorey, *Towards*, 125 (Fig. 8); color photograph: E. Haerinck, B. Overlaet, *Les montagnards*, 153 (Fig. 6).
[61] For this development line, from "idol standards" towards "master-of-animals standards": O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 150.
[62] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 149.
[63] Division of this type according to the degree of elongation: J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 58.
[64] J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 59.

C16



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additional pair of animal protomes (C14: 6), whereby the multiplication of the first element is completely absent.

But, some elements of the "idols with protomes" are absent from the "zoomorphic standards with a human head", which means that their templates should be sought elsewhere.

The first such element is the mentioned pair of **small symmetrical heads** (most often of roosters) formed at the junction of the large protomes and the pillar, but also **the protomes or whole animal figures** that protrude laterally from the lower part of the standards.[65] They can be found on the "zoomorphic standards" in the same or a similar position (C19: 2, 3, 7 compare with 1, 4, 5), which shows that this type also directly participated in the formation of the "idols with protomes", not just indirectly - through the "zoomorphic standards with a human head" (the only such specimen with additional animals C19: 6). This could mean that in the time of the production of the "idols with protomes", their makers also had insight into the older "zoomorphic standards".

The second element is the already mentioned **arms of the central anthropomorphic figure**, placed between the large protomes (C16 – C18), which are not found in the "zoomorphic standards with a human head" (C2 – C5, exception C3: 7), nor in the "zoomorphic standards" (B1 – B10). In regards to their emergence in the "idols with protomes" one can suggest two possibilities. In some "zoomorphic standards with a human head", the **front legs of the two animals** reaching towards the anthropomorphic head, observed at the level of the basic contour, can also be perceived as the **arms of the central anthropomorphic figure** that extend towards the animals (C20: 8). Perhaps it was precisely this association that could have initiated the emergence of the arms in the central character of the "idols with protomes". According to the second possibility, this element could have entered through a subtype of Luristan openwork pins where it is present in a similar and even identical form (C20: 1 – 6 compare with 7, 9; C15: 6 – 8). This thesis becomes even more plausible if we take into account the aforementioned assumptions according to which such or similar pins were fastened onto the "zoomorphic standards" (C21: 1; B47: 5, 6; B48: 8, 9), and possibly onto some "zoomorphic standards with a human head" and "idols" (C21: 3 – 5). In this context, one could justify the parallel existence of the two subtypes - the one with arms, which was influenced by these pins (C16 – C18) and the one without arms, which these pins, due to certain circumstances, did not influence (C14).

In regards to the emergence and origin of the emphasized **columnar corpus** and its **phallic tip** in the "idols with protomes", there are two possible solutions that are not mutually exclusive. According to the first one, this influence could have taken place directly from the "idols" in which the said feature is most strongly expressed and present in its purest form (C15: 9, 6, 7; C22: 2, 4, 6, 7, 8 compare with 1, 3, 5; G7). According to the second one (perhaps more likely) it could have taken place indirectly - through the "zoomorphic standards with a human head" where the indicated element could have also (previously) entered through the "idols" (C15: 4 – 7; C13: 1, 2, 3). This second line seems to us as less intense, because of the not so high degree of morphological overlap of this element in the two groups. Thereby, one should also not rule out the aforementioned reverse influence of the "idols with protomes" over the "standards with a human head". These relations are also indicated by the **two-facedness** of the centrally placed anthropomorphic head, which is common to all three types. A common element of the "idols" and the "idols with protomes" are also the transverse ribbings of the columnar corpus, which are not particularly typical of the "zoomorphic standards with a human head". In both types they occur in similar forms and in the same positions, most often under the anthropomorphic head, in the middle, and at the bottom (C22; G7).

In addition to the special morphological and iconographic features, the standards of the types "idols with protomes", "idols" and "zoomorphic standards with a human head" are also characterized by **common technical-technological specifics**. Here we mean the casting of the whole object as a single piece i.e. from

[65] Several examples with figures of four-legged animals and birds and zoomorphic protomes: J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 63, Taf. XLI: 256-259.

C17


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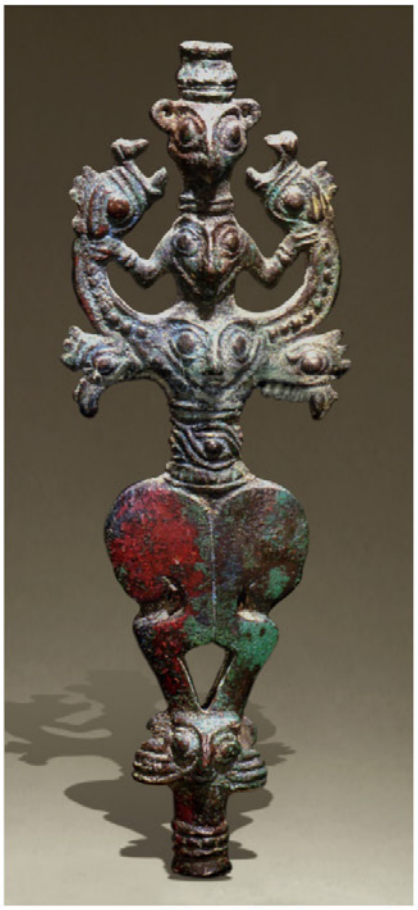

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C18


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one wax matrix, in contrast to the "zoomorphic standards" in which the two animals were often cast separately from the central tubular pillar and then merged into one whole.

If the "idols with protomes" are compared to the "zoomorphic standards with a human head", we get a hypothetical developmental line that seems logical and plausible, although it currently cannot be proven in a chronological sense through concrete, precisely dated specimens. As we have already mentioned, the separate anthropomorphic head in the "zoomorphic standards with a human head", placed between the muzzles of the animals, prompted the formation of a more complete anthropomorphic figure, so that its neck and torso were recognizable in the raised front legs of the animals, which was in fact the main component in the constitution of this new type of standard (C1: 4 – 6; C15: 3 – 7).[66] In the typical "idols with protomes" this indicated half-phase is not transparent because the front legs of the animals are completely embedded into the torso and neck of the newly formed anthropomorphic character (C14; C15 – C18). However, in numerous examples, at the junction of the protomes and the pillar, the front legs, or more often only the paws, of the former pair of animals survive, but as an isolated motif with almost completely lost meaning (C14: 2 /as most preserved/ compare with the rest; C16: 6). Their appearance points to a specific prototype in which the front legs of the animals were not vertically extended towards the anthropomorphic head, but bent (C14: 2 compare with C13: 1, 2, 3).

In the same way, within this type, the remaining parts of the animal pair's bodies are also becoming lost, although they factually are still present, but as separate disintegrated details that no longer construct their figures, and are even difficult to recognize without comparison with the more realistic prototypes. These are the following elements (C1: 5, 6, 9):

- The rumps are transformed into indeterminate semicircular segments.
- The hind legs are turned into bars that form a rhombic frame.
- The bent tails are reduced to thin strands whose round bent tips transform into small loops.
- With the disintegration of the animals, the primary meaning of the pair of protomes as an integral part of their bodies is completely lost (C23: 1 – 3).[67]

H. Potratz, thinks that this newly formed composition enters a crisis and becomes meaningless as a consequence of the desire to suppress the pair of animals at the expense of the newly emerged central human character (with a divine status). Thereby, the lateral animal figures are increasingly marginalized until this character, at the end (in the other types of standards), is left alone.[68] E. Porada, speaking globally about the Luristan bronzes of the developed phase, accentuates the "fragmentation of the animal forms" and the formation of a composition based on "abstract formal design". Thereby, she even points to the possible influence of these concepts on Elamite artists.[69]

The large pair of arched protomes moved further away from the "leonine" appearance and got closer to the appearance of a bird – specifically a rooster or a gryphon (C13 – C19). In a significant number of specimens, a three-pointed comb appeared on their heads, analogous as in the smaller rooster protomes which, in some subtypes, became a mandatory element (B3: 13 – 15 compare with the rest; C16: 4, 5; C17: 2; C18: 2 – 4; C19: 3, 7).[70] W. Culican, although considers the possibility that the heads are of "hoopoes or some mythical bird of prey", still decides on the rooster, in support of which he references the fact that these birds

[66] For these lines of transformation: H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 25; J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 52.
[67] H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 29, 30; H. Potratz, *Die Luristanbronzen*, 212.
[68] H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 29, 30: H. Potratz, *Die Luristanbronzen*, 212-214; J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 54, 55.
[69] E. Porada, *Nomads*, 31.
[70] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 154; H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 28; H. Potratz, *Die Luristanbronzen*, 211; J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 60.

C19


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were brought to the Mediterranean precisely through Persia.[71] Formed along the protomes of some specimens is a bordure of small granular segments (C17: 2, 4; C18: 2, 6; C19: 3, 7).

The large pair of arched protomes is now subject of the imposition of some kind of meaningful connection to the central anthropomorphic pillar that has the tendency to transform into a fully formed anthropomorphic character. Most "idols with protomes" give the impression that they, in some indeterminate way, originate from its columnar body, which in itself is also not quite clearly formed. H. Potratz evidently has doubts regarding the meaning of the lower half of these standards. In some articles he says that the lower part of the anthropomorphic figure couldn't emerge there due to the fusion of the two animals with the central tube.[72] But, in other of his analyzes, he nevertheless suggests that the hind legs of these animals impose themselves as the lower part (hips and legs) of this central hybrid zooanthropomorphic figure.[73]

We think that within the usual "idols with protomes", this integration into a full figure will generally not be finished, unlike the "zoomorphic standards with a human head" where we find it in a more complete form (C4: 3 – 4; C5: 1 – 3). This tendency is indirectly indicated by two more specimens that we are inclined to classify under the type "standards - statuettes". Despite moving away from the standards, they can be connected with them due to the bottle-shaped support that is usual to this group of objects (C23: 11; C33: 6 compare with C16: 4 – 6). They depict a relatively realistic female figure, with denoted breasts, in one case with a hat on her head and a biconical motif above it (perhaps a vessel). Both her arms, denoted by incised lines, are lowered towards the genitals (examples of "standards - statuettes" with similarly stylized shoulders and arms: C33: 1, 7, 8 compare with 6; analogies for the posture – C31). In this case, important to us are the **oversized hips**, in the silhouette of which one could simultaneously also recognize the contour of the rear parts of the two animals, usual for the standards (C23: 1 – 3, 11 compare with 4, 5, 7, 8, 10). We believe that these specimens should be treated as late products of the process of anthropomorphization that began with the "zoomorphic standards with a human head" and also took place within the "idols with protomes", but never in such a complete form. Such extreme emphasizing of the hips coincides with the terracotta figurines from northwestern Iran, synchronous to the Luristan bronzes (C23: 6) and especially with those from Susa (C23: 9 compare with 11 and 3) dated to the Middle Elamite period ca. 1300 - 1200 BCE.[74] They are brought closer to the Luristan bronzes also by another feature – the hands placed under the breasts (C23: 6, 9 compare with D19; analogies for the posture C29; C30; for more details see p. 271).

In some "idols with protomes", the tendency for complication is clearly expressed, among other things followed by the supplementation of the pillar with new protomes which, in addition to its junction with the large protomes, are also added at their heads (C18: 4), but also at the top of the pillar - left and right of the anthropomorphic head (C17: 3, 6; C18: 1, 5). The same applies to the anthropomorphic heads that are multiplicated along the central axis, in some cases up to a number of six (C18: 1, 3, 5, 6; E7, a similar concept in the pins G48: 3), and in rare cases, it also applies to the pair of large protomes (E7: 11).[75]

As we have said, an important and even mandatory element of these standards becomes the two-facedness i.e. the presence of two anthropomorphic faces depicted on both sides of the pillar's top, but also the regular doubling of other parts of the composition within the same contour of the objects (see further) (C13: 4 – 6; C24: 6, 7). Although very rare, there are also examples where the human head at the top is completely eliminated (C17: 4).

[71] W. Culican, *Bronzes*, 2, 3.
[72] H. Potratz, *Die Luristanbronzen*, 208.
[73] H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 30; O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 149.
[74] On these figurines: A. Spycket, *Les figurines*.
[75] J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 62, 63 (on the multiplication of the anthropomorphic heads), 64 (on the small protomes added to the central head).

C20


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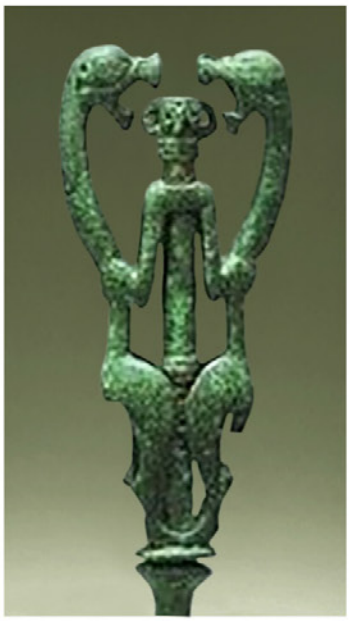

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Given the large production of specimens of this type, occurring within it are numerous subtypes and varieties of which only a part was noted in the previous paragraphs. We will mention and analyze the others in the chapters dedicated to the iconographic representations that these varieties form.

b) Previous interpretations of the iconography of the "idols with protomes"

In the works of some (mostly earlier) scholars of the Luristan bronzes, the motif formed in the upper half of the "idols with protomes", consisting of two zoomorphic protomes and a central anthropomorphic character that holds them with its hands, is related to the epic of Gilgamesh and Enkidu whose genesis is associated with Sumerian culture. This even resulted with the naming of those standards as **"Gilgamesh" finials**. But, with the newer, younger datings of these objects, this interpretation lost its relevance because it did not coincide with the time in which this epic was experiencing its heyday.[76] In that context, **A. Godard** presents a possible iconographic parallel for this motif executed on the partially preserved relief of a stone vase from the royal necropolis in Ur (C16: 2 compare with 4 – 6).[77] This parallel gains in importance if we also take into account other similar Western Asian analogies present on the Mesopotamian seals that were discussed in previous chapters (pp. 196, 199), and will be discussed in the following chapters (E15: 3, 5, 6).[78] In some of the motifs depicted on them, W. H. Ward identifies Gilgamesh in a fight with animals that he holds by the tails, turned with their heads upside down, but does not paying attention to the fact that their tails end in heads i.e. protomes (C11: 5, 6).[79]

The above-presented arrangement formed by the "idols with protomes" is treated by **H. Potratz** as a grotesque, and even as a comic human figure (actually a reduced version of his "Moon Goddess, Mistress of the Moon and of Water") depicted with two winged extensions in the area of the shoulders and a pair of animal tails that come down on either side of her hip (compare C23: 3). He thinks of the possibility that the open mouths of the protomes are a consequence of the suffocation caused by the grip of this central character on their throats.[80] He believes that this goddess is the main character of the "idols with protomes" and the "columnar figurines", assuming that she belongs to the indigenous traditions of this region and that she survived the invasions of the Aryans in Luristan and the influence of their gods. According to him, we later find her under the name of the pre-Persian, Avestan goddess Aredvi Sura Anahita which, together with the gods Ahura Mazda and Mithra, would dominate the religious life of the Aryans.[81]

C. Lancaster thinks that the paired protomes of these standards represent the dynamic, chaotic, and destructive forces of the universe. The central character between them, formed on the pillar of standards, according to him represents the constant force equated with the Polar Star ("Immovable Polaris", "the North Star, the Stationary") that maintains their balance and around which the cyclical processes in the universe take place. In it he recognizes the deity as the creator and controller of the cosmos whom, in a modern context, he calls "the Great Mechanic of the Universe".[82]

G. M. D'Erme, based on the analysis of other Luristan bronzes, concludes that the central figure of the "idols with protomes" also depicts the god Zurvān that holds the two lateral animals “in the traditional posture of self-introduction and self-declaration to the observer”.[83]

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[76] A. Godard, *Bronzes*, 83-85, in other standards 88, 94; E. D. Phillips, *The People*, 225, 244; on this problem: P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 15, 21, 154; E. Porada, *Nomads*, 23, 24; B. Goldman, *Some*, 179, 180.

[77] A. Godard, *Bronzes*, 73, 111, Pl. L: 186.

[78] A. Parrot, *Assur*, 131 (Fig. 153, 154); A. Parrot, *Sumer*, XXXIII-A, 140 (Fig. 169-c), 141, 360.

[79] W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 46, 47 (No. 121, 125), 61 (No. 145).

[80] H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 30-32 (“Mondgöttin, die Herrin über Mond und Wasser“); H. Potratz, *Das “Kampfmotiv”*, 26-28.

[81] H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 32, 33.

[82] C. Lancaster, *Luristan*, 96, 97.

[83] G. M. D'Erme, *The Cappella*, 411, 413.

C21



In the usual and most numerous standards of this type, the central character is shown with outstretched arms, holding the protomes by the neck - an essential component that gives it the character of "Master of Animals". But, we saw that in some specimens this character actually has no arms (C14). Because of that, given their closeness to the previous "zoomorphic standards with a human head" (C13: 3 compare with 1, 2), some researchers treat them as the oldest "idols with protomes", believing that they reflect the transition in regards to that type. According to **O. W. Muscarella**, with the appearance of the arms of the central character and their reaching towards the necks of the protomes, the "Master of Animals" is constituted and all ambiguities inherent to the previous types are lost.[84] We cannot fully agree with this view for two reasons. Firstly, because ambivalent iconography is an essential specificity of almost all Luristan bronzes. Secondly, because the author himself perceives that the ambivalence of this character still exists within the frames of its body (from the waist down), but also in terms of the protomes themselves.

In the following paragraphs we will try to answer several questions that we consider essential in regards to the iconography and meaning of the "idols with protomes".

Is the main pair of protomes a part of the body of the central character (as it is depicted) or are they some kinds of separate creatures?[85]

What is the meaning of the other symmetrical zoomorphic elements such as the smaller protomes (most often avian and specifically rooster-like), formed in the lower part of the large protomes or at the hind legs of the former animals?[86] (C19: 2, 3, 7)

What is the meaning of the additional anthropomorphic faces placed on the columnar torso of these standards? (C18)

In most of the hitherto known "idols with protomes", the sex of the central figure is not determined, with the exception of a few specimens where breasts are designated (D20: 2; D29: 7, 8), in one case perhaps even four in number (C24: 3), indicating its female sex. In some objects, between the thighs of the former pair of animals one can recognize a pubis with or without a protruding element (phallus) (C24: 1, 3, 5 – 7) or a circular motif that could represent the navel or the female genital organ (C24: 2, 4; C25: 1). In most cases this central character has a youthful or feminine face, and only in rare exceptions elements that allude to a beard (C17: 3; E10: 2, 3). It is mostly without clothes, although, in numerous cases, in the ornamented elements one can recognize some kinds of belts, crossed straps, sleeves, collars, pectorals and vests, as well as the obligatory hat or some other type of headgear.[87] In all specimens the ears are clearly represented (usually in the form of small loops) or are additionally accentuated by their elongated and downward arched shape, which may indicate long animal ears or horns (C19: 7; C20: 7). This would go in favor of the anthropo-zoomorphic nature of this character, unless standing behind these elements is some specific part of a costume i.e. ritual prop intended for wearing on the head.[88]

"Master of Animals" is the most common paradigm for the interpretation of this type, and also more broadly of the Luristan standards. It much more often functions as a stereotype intended for the classification of these objects and an occasion to invoke theses about the cultural influences that participated in their

[84] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 149, 150.

[85] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 149. It seems that H. Potratz here sees another small figure with protruding extensions in the form of wings (H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 30, 31).

[86] Speaking of the small avian i.e. rooster-like protomes of the standards, we should also mention the view of E. de Waele who thinks that they, within the frames of Luristan bronzes, carried some kind of "apotropaic or religious" meaning (E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 264).

[87] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 150 – no. 230 (depiction of a pubis), no. 231 (a pubis and a protruding phallus). For a possible depiction of a phallus: E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 100, 114 – no. 116 (in our opinion, there may also be a vulva among the protomes of this specimen, which would indicate its hermaphroditism); J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 55, 60 (a pubis, a circular motif like a navel, belts and necklaces at the waist, pectorals, crossed straps).

[88] An example of similar two-horned hats in Russian folklore: Д. Зеленин, *Женские*, 320-326; Г. С. Маслова, *Народная*, 670-674; Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 325, 228 (B13a: 18, 19).

C22


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creation. In far fewer cases it is used as an element to explain their symbolic meaning and mythical-religious content.

P. R. S. Moorey, presents a detailed overview of previous interpretations of the iconography and symbolism this scene. Thereby, he elaborates on the theses of its relations with the myth of Gilgamesh, as well as the denials of such interpretations. He also references the interpretations of **H. Potratz** about the "Moon Goddess", as well as those of **E. Porada** about the "demons of nature" and of **R. Ghirshman** - in regards to Sraosha. He also mentions the interpretation of **R. Dussaud**, who thinks that the rooster-like protomes are actually of eagles, connecting them with the veneration of the sun in Syria, and Bel-Marduk as a solar deity.[89] The solar meaning of the rooster protomes is also indicated by **C. Lancaster**, according to whom they proclaim the coming of the sun.[90] **B. Goldman**, citing the Avesta, refers to the rooster as an attribute of the god Sraosha, in the role of the one who awakens the believers and calls them to fulfill their religious duties.[91]

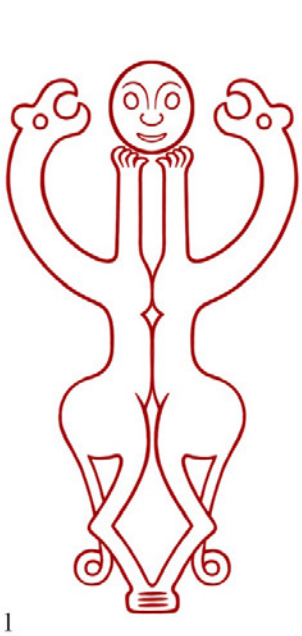
A. Roes highlights the cosmological dimension of these objects by recognizing within them the gods of light who gain cosmic victory over the lions.[92] **W. Deonna** carries out a diachronic overview of the scene (through a diffusionist approach), starting from the oldest cultures of Mesopotamia, up to Christian Europe, also including the Luristan bronzes.[93] **B. Goldman** seeks the origin and meaning of this character within the framework of a comparative study of similar finds from Luristan, Tibet, Italy, and even more broadly from Babylon, Greece, and China.[94] In regards to the vertical axis of the "idols with protomes", **C. Lancaster** thinks that it reflects the calm constant force complementary to the two dynamic components embodied through the productive and destructive nature of the sun represented by the lions and roosters. He seeks its paradigm in the stationary Polar Star (Immovable Polaris) around which all the constellations revolve, as the personification of the God who stands at the base of the universe.[95] **L. Vanden Berghe**, analyzing the standard from this group discovered in situ in a grave at Tattulban (C22: 7, 8), identifies the character incorporated into the object as "a divinity from ancient Iranian mythology before the Zoroastrian refoms".[96] Serious attention to this topic is also dedicated by **D. de Clercq-Fobe**, though not in relation to the standards, but to the Luristan pins with a discoid head, followed by a chronological overview of the analogies for this motif, the possible nuclei in which it originated and developed, and the lines of its transmission throughout the Middle East.[97]

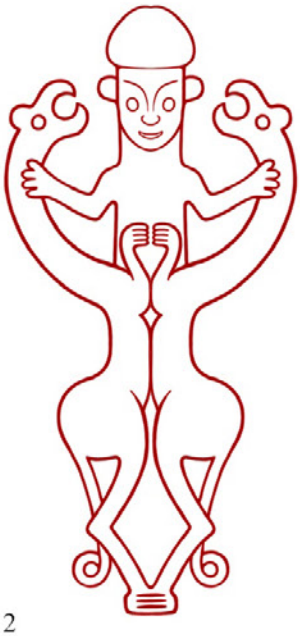
c) Our observations on the iconography of the "idols with protomes"

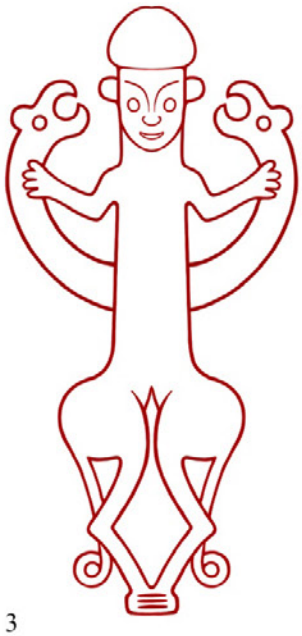
Our observations on the iconography of the "idols with protomes" build upon some of the interpretations of previous researchers and our conclusions regarding the elements of the previous types of standards that participated in their constitution.

If we agree that the pair of large protomes, especially separated like this from the bodies of the former animals, represent the celestial circle, and the central corpus - the Cosmic Axis, then, following the concept of C. Lancaster, the transformation of the latter into an anthropomorphic figure should mean that it, retaining the same function, represents a mythical character with the role of Atlas who supports or in some other way maintains i.e. controls the sky. If both protomes represent the two forces i.e. tendencies of the sky that drive

[89] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 154, 155.
[90] C. Lancaster, *Luristan*, 96.
[91] "In the Avesta the cock is an attribute of the god Srausa in his role of rouser of the faithful, calling them to their religious duties." (B. Goldman, *Some*, 183, 184).
[92] A. Roes, *Greek*, 42.
[93] W. Deonna, *Daniel*.
[94] B. Goldman, *Some*.
[95] C. Lancaster, *Luristan*, 96, 97.
[96] L. Vanden Berghe, *Excavations*, 268.
[97] D. de Clercq-Fobe, *Epingles*, 13-16, 104.


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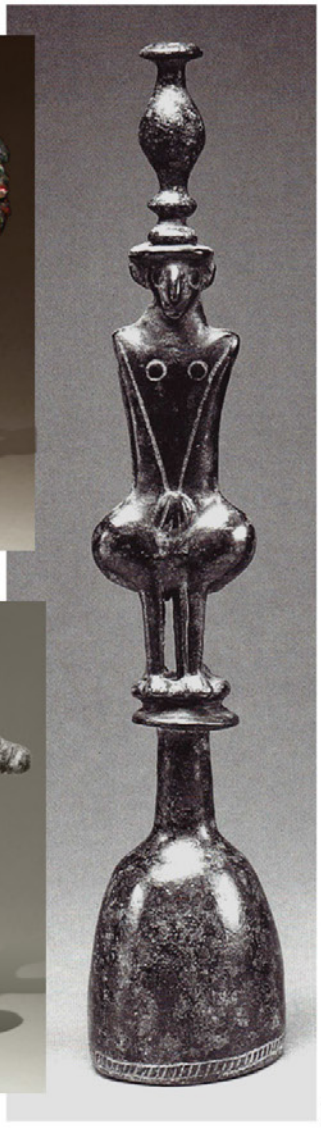

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the cycles that take place there ("conflict forces of the universe"), then this control should refer to the management or balancing of these forces ("the Great Mechanic of the universe") (see pp. 155 – 160).[98]

We noted that in some specimens, a bordure of small granules or similar divisions extends along the large protomes (C17: 2, 4; C18: 2, 6). We propose a hypothesis according to which this bordure, analogous to the outer bordure at the curved protomes of the "zoomorphic standards" (there in the form of circular motifs in the composition of the still visible animals - B19), could bear the meaning of multiplicated solar disks that denote the movement of the sun across the sky.

In support of the celestial-solar interpretation of the "Master of Animals" i.e. the triad consisting of a central anthropomorphic character and a pair of lateral zoomorphic elements, one could present numerous parallels (see p. 406). In this context, a petroglyph from the Mongolian part of the Altai seems quite illustrative to us, where the central anthropomorphic figure holds the necks of a pair of bulls, between the horns of which is a circular motif that most probably denotes the solar disk (C16: 1 compare with B19; B20).[99]

3. Ambivalent triune zooanthropomorphic character

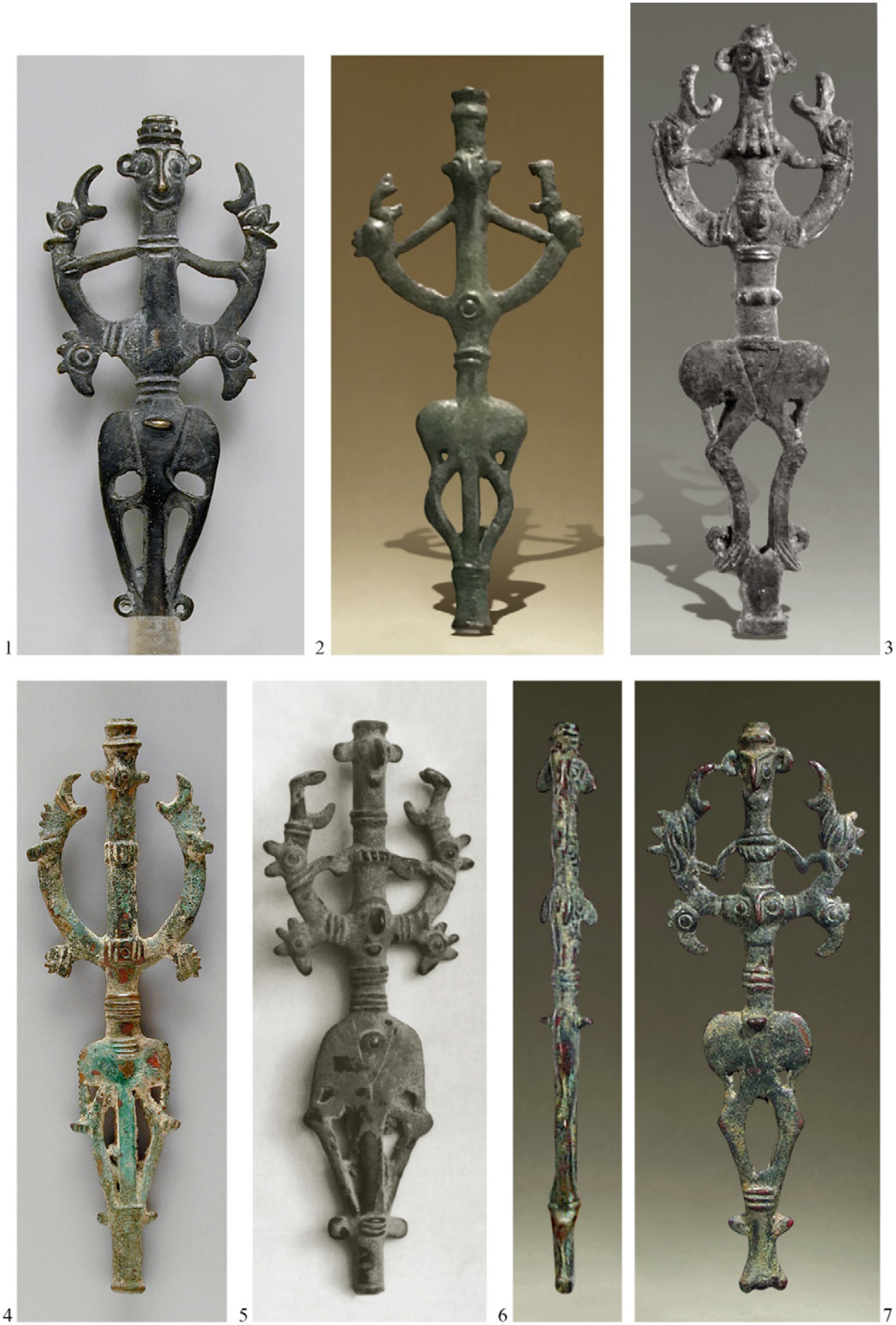
We have already mentioned that in some of the "zoomorphic standards with a human head", there occurs an ambivalent image in which the two animals, together with the central anthropomorphic head, unite into a singular zoo-anthropomorphic figure, whereby the thighs and hind legs of the animals form the hips and the legs of this character, their backs (apparently tied together with some kind of belt) make up its waist and torso, the elongated necks - its raised arms that end in animal protomes instead of palms, while the front legs and withers form its neck with the shoulders and chest (C3 – C5; C23). This image, in an even more complex form, can also be recognized in the "idols with protomes" (especially in the first subtype, without arms) whose realistic approach and composition indicate evident closeness with the "zoomorphic standards with a human head" (C13: 1 – 3; C14). These elements could also indicate the relative dating of the emergence of the second type, after the "zoomorphic standards", and before the "idols with protomes".

In numerous specimens, especially those of the type "zoomorphic standards with a human head", it is evident that the manufacturers deliberately enforced and maintained the indicated ambivalence (especially C4: 3, 4; C5). We are convinced that behind this concept is not chaos, ignorance and disorder (as some previous researchers have concluded), but a serious religious idea. In our opinion, it is the idea about the intertwinement of the dualistic and monistic concept, which, as it is known, occupied an important place in later Iranian religious traditions. In that context, the two animals could symbolize the mentioned pair of mutually complementary and causally connected forces, principles i.e. tendencies of the universe as necessary factors without which its dynamics cannot be ensured. The human figure that appears at the junction of these two animals represents the entity, with the character of supreme (and probably only) god, who stands behind the seeming individuality and confrontation of the two mentioned categories, ensuring the order of cosmic dynamics.

When it comes to the religious traditions of ancient Iran, the first association that usually comes to mind is Zoroastrianism, and as a stereotype of a dualistic religion that is based on a pair of complementary categories personified in the form of two confronting deities. On one side is **Ohrmazd**, as the embodiment of the positive principle, of light, the spiritual, progressive and good, while on the other - **Ahriman**, as the embodiment of the negative principle, of darkness, the material and evil. It is not always taken into account that in addition to this strict and consistent dualistic system, in Iran there was also another in which, behind the two mentioned principles, there is also a third. It is primary in relation to them and encompasses both within itself, so from an ethical aspect it is neutral, while from the aspect of sex - androgynous. It represents the category **Time**, in some cases also **Infinite Time**, and **Space**, personified in the character of **Zurvān** - the

[98] C. Lancaster, *Luristan*, 96, 97.
[99] В. Д. Кубарев, *Мифы*, 46 (Рис. 13).

C24



primordial deity, infinite from a temporal and spatial aspect, from which the mentioned two characters would be born, and subsequently through them the whole universe. This religious system, in academia known as **Zurvanism**, existed in parallel with Zoroastrianism, according to some opinions as a separate religion, while according to others as a heresy within its frames, which would even succeed in reversely influencing it with its system. Consequently, elements of its triple structure are also present in the Zoroastrian dualistic system, whereby the features and functions of Zurvān can often be recognized in the character of Ohrmazd. In a modified form they would also be incorporated into Manichaeism.[100]

Zurvān is a mythical character superior in regards to Ohrmazd and Ahriman, who controls the inevitable Fate in relation to which even Ohrmazd is powerless.[101] The celestial vault (**Spihr**), as one of the hypostases of Zurvān (called **Zurvān of the long Dominion**), has a dual nature. It distributes both good and bad fortune, hence the names "the good Spihr" and "the evil Spihr".[102] Zurvān himself represents neither good nor evil. He is the Infinite God who embodies Infinite Time and Infinite Space.[103] He is no more the personification of light than of darkness.[104] He is neither good nor evil, but represents the natural laws that favor neither good nor evil.[105] He is not concerned with either good or evil, righteousness or sinfulness, salvation or damnation, rewards or punishments, nor with moral values or the fate of the soul.[106] His "law" refers to the proceeding from primordial infinity and the return back to it.[107] The inclusion of Zurvān in the dualistic system of Zoroastrianism would lead to its transformation into a kind of implicit "**trialism**" that is based on not only two, but three principles: Ohrmazd - the good god; Ahriman - the evil god i.e. the devil; and the Neutral principle as "prima materia", the infinite Time-Space that is beyond good and evil, and possesses neither intelligence nor will.[108]

We will return to Zurvān and Zurvanism many more times in the following chapters. On this occasion we only want to point out the interference between the trinity of the indicated type of ambivalent images from Luristan standards and the analogous triple system of this religion. In that context, the two mutually confronted animals, of the same size and position but with different orientation, would coincide with the indicated two complementary principles. The binding of the two animals to each other would suggest the connection i.e. the causal conditionality of both principles, while the hybrid zooanthropomorphic character that appears at the junction of their bodies would denote the presence of Zurvān as their common principle from which they originate and in which they eventually reintegrate.

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[100] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*; R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 175-283.

[101] " ... mythical figure of Time who is superior to Ohrmazd and Ahriman, and who controls an inexorable Fate against which Ohrmazd is powerless". (R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 108).

[102] "But Spihr, the firmament, like Zurvan of the long Dominion, has a dual nature; it distributes both good and bad fortune, and is therefore called either 'the good Spihr' or 'the evil Spihr'." (R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 111).

[103] "Zurvan is the Infinite God – Infinite Time and Infinite Space – neither light nor darkness, neither good nor evil." (R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 182).

[104] "Zurvan is himself not a god of light any more than he is a god of darkness." (R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 206).

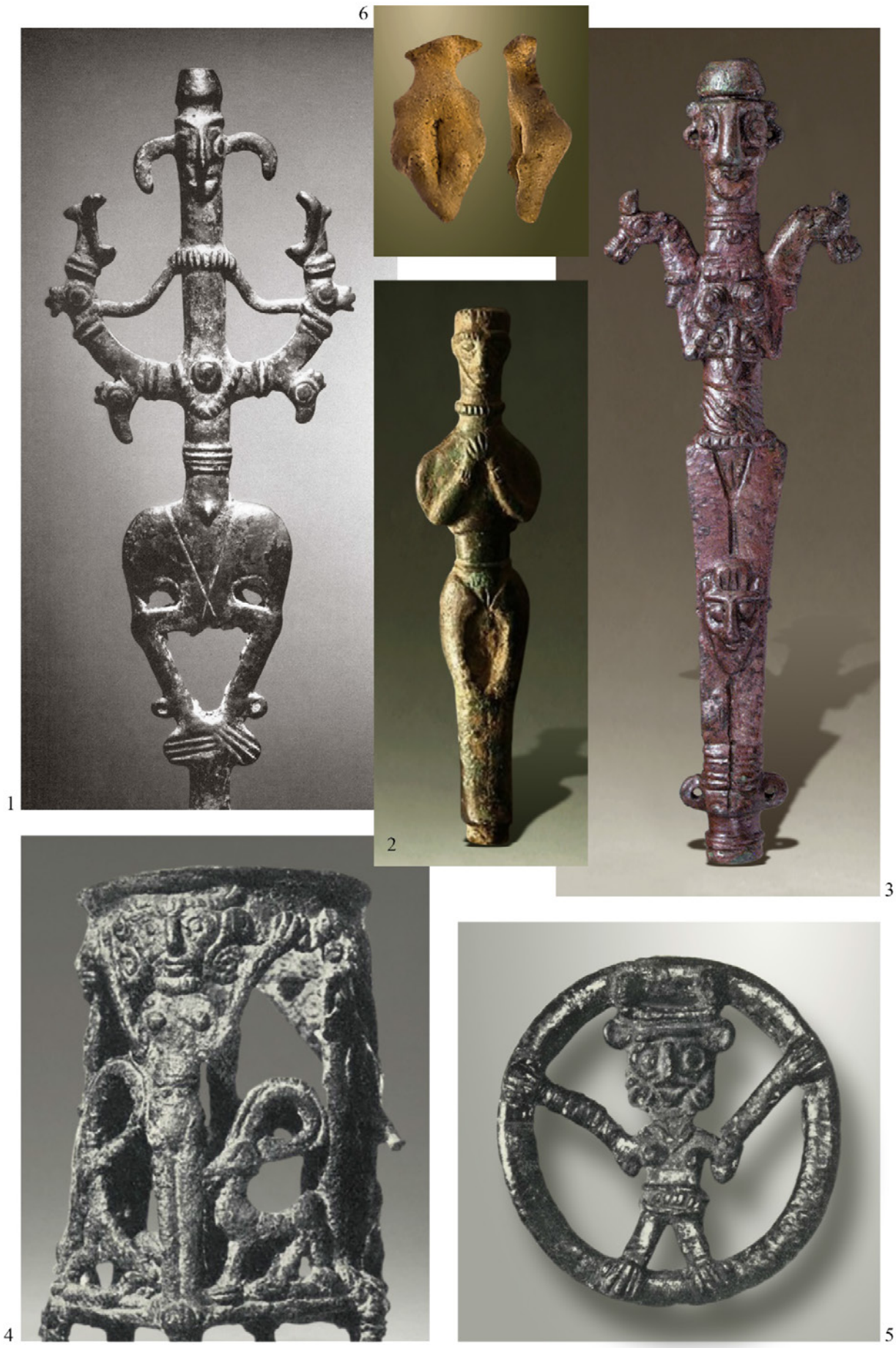
[105] "Zurvan is not good; he is the natural law which takes no cognizance of good or evil." "His law favours neither good nor evil". (R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 236, 237).

[106] "He is concerned with neither good and evil, right and wrong, salvation and damnation, rewards and punishments, nor with moral values, nor with the destiny of the soul." (R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 260).

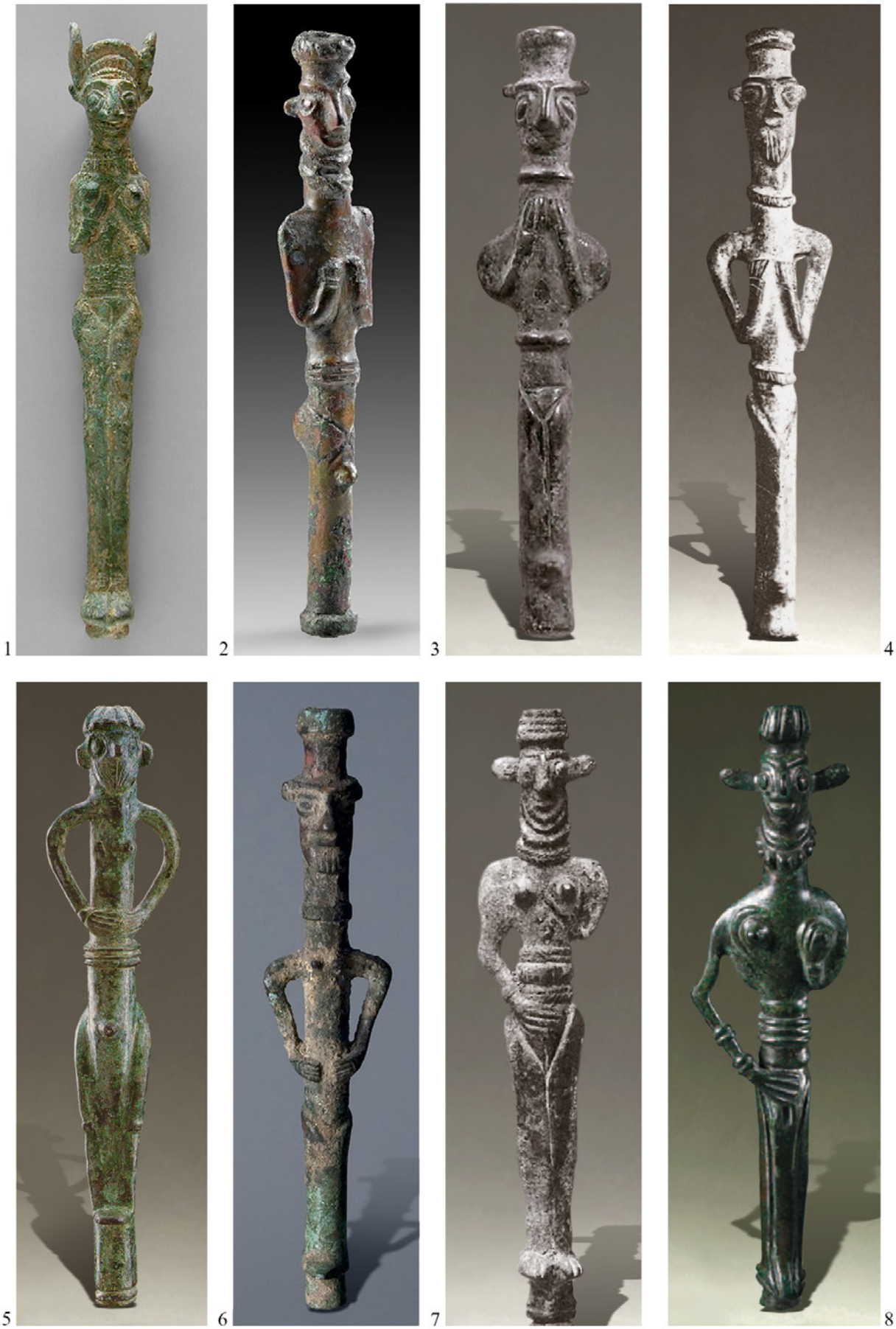
[107] "'The law *(dātastān)* of Time' is simply to proceed 'from original infinity through limitation involving action, motion and passage, and finally to return back to ultimate infinity'." (R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 236).

[108] "The result was that in the end their rigid dualism gave way to an unsure 'trialism' in which there were not two principles only, but three – Ohrmazd, the good God, Ahriman, the Devil, and a neutral principle of primal matter, infinite Time-Space which is beyond good and evil and possessed of neither intelligence nor will." (R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 199).

C25



C26



In continuation, as support for this esoteric interpretation, we present citations from some ancient and modern philosophers and mystics regarding the relation monism - dualism - trialism, which could stand as a textual paradigm for the elaborated pictorial composition.

This image could be understood as a pictorial i.e. visual proto-version of the famous **sentence by Heraclitus** according to whom: *"That which is in opposition is in concert, and from things that differ comes the most beautiful harmony; harmony consists of opposing tension, like that of the bow and the lyre"*.[109] According to **E. Cassirer**, in this remark, *"the temporal no longer appears as a deficiency pure and simple, as limitation and suffering; in it, rather, is disclosed the innermost life of the divine. There is no peace and beatitude in the negation of change, in perfection without tension; rather, `disease makes health pleasant and good, hunger satisfaction, weariness rest`. Now, even the opposition of life and death becomes relative. `And what is in us is the same thing: living and dead, awake and sleeping, as well as young and old; for the latter having changed becomes the former`"*.[110] The indicated relations gain their possible more concrete cultural-historical justification if we take into account the hypotheses about the eastern (according to some and specifically Zoroastrian) elements in the teachings of Heraclitus.[111]

This concept can also be illustrated through the teaching of the **Pythagoreans**, according to whose system the triad reconciles contradictions, brings harmony to uniformity and diversity, and also transcends both undivided singularity ("one") and the rivalry of the individual elements ("two").[112] The phenomenon of triunity is also discussed by **R. Guénon**, defining it as "type of ternary composed of two complementary terms plus a third term resulting from the union - or, if it be preferred, the reciprocal action and reaction - of the first two."[113]

E. Cassirer also emphasizes the archetypal character of the triple structure mentioned here, which occurrs in all of humanity, in different places and in different historical periods, independently from one another. *"The problem of the unity, which emerges from itself, which becomes "another" second entity and is ultimately reunited with itself in a third - this problem belongs to the common cultural heritage of mankind. Although it takes this purely intellectual formulation only in the speculative philosophy of religion, the universal distribution of the idea of a "triune God" shows that this idea must be based on some ultimate and concrete foundations in feeling, to which it points back and from which it continually arises anew."*[114]

4. Human with arms in the form of animal protomes

This image in the standards is actually formed within the previously presented ambivalent triune zoo-anthropomorphic character, but also in some other compositions, through the equation of the protomes of symmetrical animals with the arms of the central anthropomorphic figure. Given its affiliation with another topic, it will be elaborated in detail in the next chapter devoted to the macrocosmic giant (E1; E16; E17; see p. 349).

5. Human with bird protomes on the shoulders

Another variant of the triune zoo-anthropomorphic compositions, similar to the previous one, appears on the Luristan bronzes. This time too, in them, the pair of symmetrical protomes are depicted left and right of the head of the anthropomorphic figure, but because it already has arms, they acquire the meaning of

[109] (Heraclitus. fr. 8), according to: E. Cassirer, *The Philosophy. Vol. II*, 135.
[110] E. Cassirer, *The Philosophy. Vol. II*, 135, 136.
[111] In detail regarding these hypotheses: М. Н. Вольф, *Ранняя*, 133-184.
[112] И. Маразов, *Хиерогамията*, 10; F. M. Cornford, *Mysticism*.
[113] R. Guénon, *The Great*, 11-23, citation on p. 13.
[114] E. Cassirer, *The Philosophy. Vol. II*, 145.

C27



C28



some kind of elements growing from its shoulders. This iconographic arrangement, among other things, also occurs on some types of standards, whereby it is particularly specific to certain variants of the "columnar figurines" (C27; C28) and the "standards - statuettes" (C33: 2 – 5). That is the reason why, in the following chapter we will present these types of objects in more detail. We will try to prove that it is also present within the "idols with protomes" but as a feature of the figure formed in their lower part (C32: 1 – 3).

a) General features of the standards of the type "columnar figurines"

Previous researchers have generally classified this type within the group of "tubes" wherein other standards also belong, which, despite the similarities, also show significant differences in relation to it. This is why this group was divided into two separate types, one of which is dominated by the anthropomorphic figure (C26 – C28), while the other - by the tubular corpus that at the upper end (and in some cases at the bottom) is shaped in the form of one or more anthropomorphic, zoo-anthropomorphic or zoomorphic heads (C22: 1, 3, 5; G1 – G5). P. R. S. Moorey calls this group **"Decoratet Tubes"**, whereby he names the first type as **"Anthropomorphic `Fertility` Tube"** (due to the hands of the figure that are placed on the breasts), while the second - **"Other Anthropomorphic Tube"**.[115] A similar classification, with different terms, is used by E. de Waele - the first ones as **"Idoles tubulaires représentant un homme ou une femme nus avec une face et un dos"**, while the second ones as **"Idoles en forme de tube surmonté d'une tête janiforme"**.[116] Other researchers name them as **Third type (with tubular "human" figure)** or **Third Groupe**, but within this group they also include the "idols" and "standards - statuettes".[117] We decided to name the first type as **"columnar figurines"**, while the second one as **"idols"** (for other terms see pp. 13, 14 and Fig. 2; 2a on pp. 9, 10).

Despite the differences in form, it is thought that both types were used analogously, as the other standards, so that they were fastened on a bottle-shaped support by using a pin with a "decorated" head or some other metal or wooden shaft (photomontage: H3: 4; H12: 6).

The standards of the type "columnar figurines" are shaped in the form of an anthropomorphic figure with elongated columnar contours and without a particularly pronounced profile (C26 – C28). Unlike most other standards, the figures of this type have a front and a back side, and in accordance with that – a head with one face (examples with a depiction on both sides C27: 5, 6; C28: 3, 4). Based on the general contour, this type can be divided into two principal subtypes - **"columnar figurines without protomes"** (C26) and **"columnar figurines with protomes"** (C27; C28). Rare specimens are also known which, more or less, would deviate from this division (C27: 3).

The standards of this type can also be classified on other grounds. Thus, in the subtype with protomes, the figure is most often depicted with plastically formed breasts which, from below, are accompanied by its hands (C25: 3; C27; C28). Breasts are also present in the subtype without protomes, although often reduced to small nipples (C26). According to the position of the hands, this type can be divided into three variants: with **hands placed in the area of the breasts i.e. chest** (C25: 2; C26: 1 – 4 most common variant), **on the abdomen i.e. in the genital area** (C26: 5, 6) and a **combination of both poses** (one hand at the breasts and the other on the abdomen) (C26: 7, 8). It is quite indicative that in all specimens with protomes on the shoulders, the hands are placed at the breasts so that, hitherto, we do not know of any example where the protomes are accompanied by the other two mentioned positions of the hands (C25: 3; C27; C28).

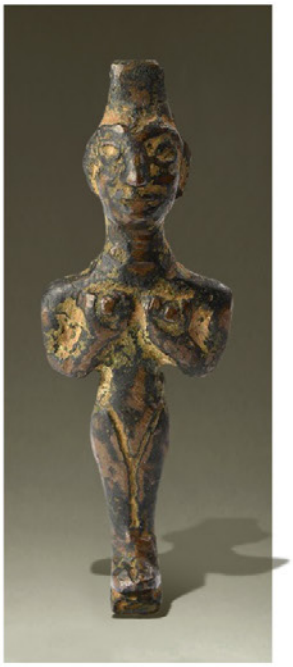
The two mentioned subtypes also show differences in regards to the surface finish. Thus, usual for the group with protomes is a high level of **ornamentation** (C27: 3, 5, 6; C28: 1, 6, 7) or a moderate level (C25: 3; C27: 1, 2, 4, 7; C28: 1, 3 – 5; a rarer unornamented specimen – C28: 2), while more typical for the group

[115] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 160-166; this terminology is generally also accepted by O. W. Muscarella (O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 151, 152).
[116] E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 114, 115. Similar terms: P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 93 (No. 222-224).
[117] E. Haerinck et al, *Finds*, 114, 115; B. Overlaet, *Luristan Bronzes*.

C29


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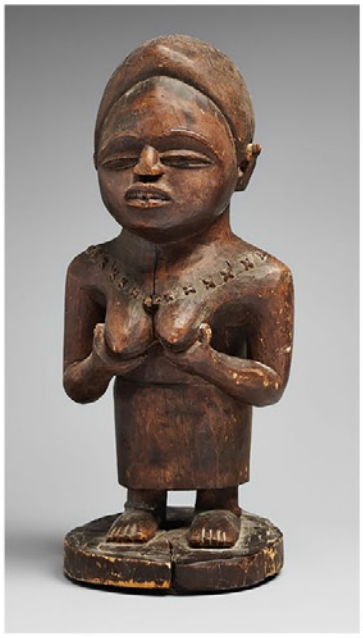

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without protomes is more modest ornamentation (C26: 7, 8) and especially - the complete absence of ornaments (C25: 2; C26: 1 – 6). Mainly present in the modestly ornamented or unornamented specimens are ring-like ribbings, which resemble elements of jewelry and clothing, almost always around the neck (= torc, necklace) and waist (= belt, girdle) (C25: 2; C26). In the richly ornamented specimens, the plastically executed ornaments often cover their entire surface, suggesting the rich clothing, jewelry, and possibly tattoos of the depicted figure (C27; C28).[118] The bare buttocks and the absence of ornaments on the back side of the legs clearly show that, in some of the cases, the figures are not dressed in a skirt, but in an apron that covers only the front of their legs and groin (C27: 5, 6; C28: 3, 4).[119]

In almost all specimens of the first subtype, the protomes on the shoulders belong to birds, always supplemented by a comb that identifies them as roosters. Rare are the exceptions where other, most often undetermined, animals are depicted (C25: 3; C28: 2, probably horses), or another pair of protomes occurs (C28: 7). In one specimen, the pair of protomes are fused into some kind of single object that is placed on the chest of the figure (C28: 6).

There are various opinions about the relationship between the "columnar figurines" and the other standards. **H. Potratz** treats them as the penultimate stage in the development of the whole group of standards, while **P. R. S. Moorey** considers them synchronous with the other types.[120] We do not consider the efforts of previous researchers, to explain the creation of these objects as a result of the transformation of the "idols with protomes", to be very justified. As a key argument for this, we take the absence of the most characteristic features of the latter - the pair of large arched protomes in the upper part, and the remnants of the hind legs of the former pair of animals from the "zoomorphic standards" (compare C14 – C18 with C26 – C28). We are familiar with only one specimen (from the Rietberg Museum in Zurich) where the figure, with features typical of the "columnar figurines" (basic contours, rich ornamentation, hands on the breasts), is combined with a pair of large arched protomes and another pair of arms that hold them by the neck (C27: 3; E9: 2 compare with 1, 3).[121] We think that this rare specimen cannot be proof that the transformations took place in the direction from the "idols with protomes" towards the "columnar figurines". Maybe it was the other way around or it is an "eclectic" or "borderline" specimen in which elements of both types simply merged together. It is especially interesting that the character in the presented specimen is depicted with two pairs of arms that reflect the features of both groups: the upper ones hold the protomes by the neck, which is typical for the "idols with protomes", while the lower ones grasp the breasts from below, as a usual feature of the "columnar figurines". In this arrangement, the lower (rooster-like) protomes seem to protrude not from the shoulders, but from under the armpits of the figure. It should be noted that the contours of the lower part of the figure and the high degree of ornamentation of the object are more typical of the "columnar figurines" than of the "idols with protomes" (C27: 3 compare with 4, 5 – 7).

E. de Waele, among the "columnar figurines" notes a tendency towards complete anthropomorphization. According to him, it started with a tube-shaped object, supplemented at the top with a human face (C22: 1, 3, 5; G1 – G3), to which shoulders and arms were later added, thus gradually transforming the tubular corpus into a relatively realistic human torso (C26: 2 – 6).[122] From this statement one can deduce his view that the "columnar figurines" actually originated from the "idols".

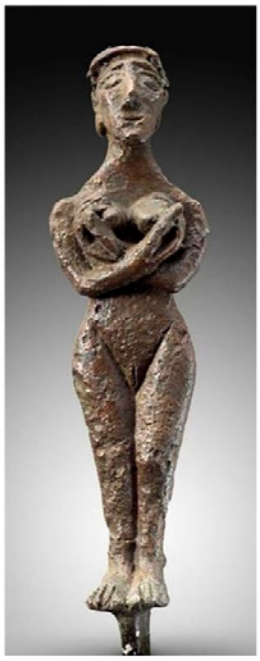
The mentioned heads of roosters above the shoulders of the "columnar figurines" of the second subtype (C27; C28), according to their appearance and position, correspond to the analogous heads present at the junction of the two large protomes with the corpus in the "idols with protomes" (C16 – C18). This may

[118] On the jewelry of the figures from these standards: H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 28.
[119] The first example: A. Godard, *Bronzes*, T.LVII: 209.
[120] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 160-162; O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 151.
[121] Basic information: N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 196 (cat. 199).
[122] E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 114, 267. P. Amiet points out the similarities between these standards and the pre-Achaemenid ivory statues, indicating some kind of mutual genetic relations (P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 90).

C30


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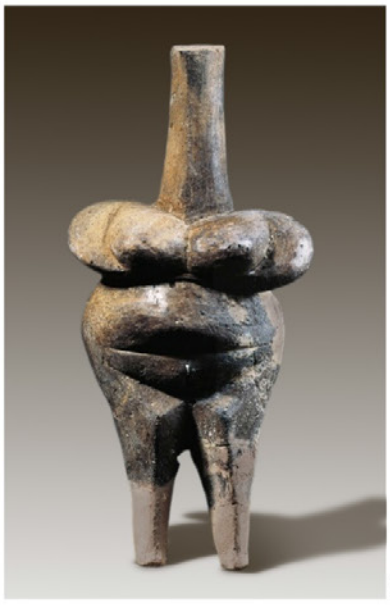

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indicate some kind of genetic relations between the two types and, judging by the opinions of previous researchers, more likely as influence of the latter on the former. Another common feature occurs in the same types - the addition in the form of a cap i.e. glans penis on the head of the basic figure. But, if we take into account that the same element in an even purer form is present in the "idols", it seems more probable to us that it found its way in the "columnar figurines" from there, which would be supported by the similar columnar contour of both types, also pointed out by the above-mentioned view of E. de Waele (C22: 1, 3, 5 compare with 2, 6 – 8; C26: 5, 7, 8; C28: 1, 6 and especially C25: 3; G7: 13, 14).

b) Iconography of the standards of the type "columnar figurines"

- Sexual features and hermaphroditism

Unlike the "idols with protomes" where the central human figure is usually sexually indeterminate, in the "columnar figurines" it often has denoted breasts, accompanied by hands that grasp them from below (C26 – C28). The latter element is considered by scholars to be a feature accepted from Middle Eastern traditions, given the long preceding existence of similar figures in the region (compare with C23: 6, 9). P. R. S. Moorey presents allegedly such Elamite prototypes.[123] Although the position of the hands placed on the breasts is mainly associated with the autochthonous (Mesopotamian and wider Middle Eastern) traditions, it should be borne in mind that this is an archetypal phenomenon present throughout the whole world in various periods, from the Paleolithic up to contemporary folklore (C29; C30). The same applies also to the second position with the hands placed on the abdomen (C26: 5, 6 compare with C31).

Although rarely, these poses can also be found on other types of Luristan bronzes. We have seen that the one with arms stretched towards the abdomen is present on several standards of the type "standards - statuettes" (C23: 11; C33: 1, 6 – 8), while occurring in some Luristan anthropomorphic figurines used as pendants, is the variant with semicircularly curved arms.[124]

The female features of the "columnar figurines", especially those of the first subtype, are also represented by the contours of the torso, which has a narrow waist and slightly accentuated hips (C27; C28). Despite the dominant female features (breasts and pubis), we must not ignore the fact that in many specimens of this group they are combined with clear male elements – a beard and a phallus (C25: 3; C26: 2, 4 – 6).[125]

As an argument in support of the male sex, one can also point to the marginalization of the breasts in some "columnar figurines", especially in those without protomes (C25: 2; C26: 2 – 6). Their depiction in the form of very small nipples may mean that they do not denote the breasts, but just the nipples, due to which they could also be part of a male figure.

There is no agreement among scholars on the character of these Luristan figures. Regardless of the significant masculine features, O. W. Muscarella considers them to be "distinctly female",[126] while E. de Waele, although noticing their sexual ambivalence, defines them as sexually indeterminate.[127] Although, according to R. Ghirshman, these figures wear a costume appropriate to that of the god Sraosha, he nevertheless thinks that it is a goddess depicted holding her naked breasts, while in cases when she is completely naked, has the pose of Venus Pudica.[128] G. Contenau, too, like some other authors, defines these characters as goddesses, while H. Frankfort, as people - believers (votaries) standing in a specific priestly

[123] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 160-162.
[124] E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 179, 180 (No. 293 – No. 295, Fig. 149).
[125] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 161; H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 32; O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 151, 152; E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 267, 104, 105 (Fig. 85: 123); G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 116 (Kat. 241).
[126] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 151, 152.
[127] E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 104, 114, 267.
[128] R. Ghirshman, *The Art*, 47.

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posture.[129] H. Potratz reduces the figure represented on these objects to his "lunar goddess", whereby he considers the designated beard to be water, and not a sexual determination of the depicted character.[130]

The mentioned three poses of the hands - both of them on the breasts (C25: 2, 3; C26: 1 – 4; C27; C28), both on the abdomen (C26: 5, 6) or one on the breast and the other on the abdomen (C26: 7, 8), are immanent to female figures because they denote the basic reproductive functions of a woman - breastfeeding and pregnancy (C29 – C31).[131] The fact that on the "columnar figurines" they also appear among male characters (supplemented by a beard or even a phallus), can be justified in two ways. According to the first one, these would be male figures that originated as a result of the **secondary masculinization** of the older female prototypes. According to the second one, these would be some kind of **hermaphroditic figures**, which as a possibility has been neglected by most previous researchers. As most explicit arguments in support of the second interpretation, one can take two standards. In the first, already mentioned specimen, a beard and phallus are combined with breasts and hands placed on the abdomen (C26: 5),[132] while in the second - a beard combined with hands placed on the breasts and vulva i.e. pubis with a vertical incision (C25: 3).[133] As another example, we can take the following standard which gravitates more towards the type "standards - statuettes", shaped like a figure with female features (arms on the abdomen, clearly denoted breasts, and what looks like a vulva between the legs), once again combined with a beard (C23: 4).[134] As we will see later, the androgynous character of the "columnar figurines" would also be supported by the presence of a pair of avian protomes on their shoulders, as well as the human face depicted in the area of the abdomen or knees (C25: 3; C27: 4; see pp. 403, 405, 437). A human face could have been present on another standard of this type, inserted as a supplement (perhaps of precious metal or ivory?) into the almond-shaped socket carved on the figure's thighs (C25: 2 compare with 3).

We have seen that, unlike the "columnar figurines", in the main character of the "idols with protomes", the sexual features are usually not designated. However, in some specimens, there are such indications. On one such standard, depicted at the junction of the large arched protomes is a protruding rib in the shape of the Latin letter "V", inside of which is a circular motif with an additional engraved circle (C25: 1). At the bottom, there is another "V"-shaped motif, this time engraved, whereby formed in its upper part is a protruding and pointed segment, for which E. de Waele assumes that it could have denoted a phallus.[135] Based precisely on this interpretation, we think that the first one could have indicated the pubis ("V" motif) with the vaginal opening (circular motif). Given the absence in this specimen of other anthropomorphic faces - bearers of entity, we believe that these features indicate the hermaphroditism of the depicted character whose personality is reflected through the only anthropomorphic face depicted in this case.

Figures with features of both sexes are also present in other Luristan objects. Depicted on one tripod is a slender and tall figure of a woman with raised arms, accompanied by goats, on whose face one can recognize a beard (C25: 4). Another similar figure (with raised arms, breasts and beard) is formed on the inside of an openwork ring (C25: 5). H. Potratz, following his interpretations of other objects, identifies these representations as figures of the lunar goddess. We have seen that the beard of the figures from Luristan objects is not treated by this author as a feature of sexual identification, in this case of their hermaphroditism,

[129] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 160-162.

[130] H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 32; H. Potratz, *Die Luristanbronzen*, 214.

[131] On these postures: Н. Чаусидис, *Мимскиме*, 83-94; on the posture with hands on the abdomen and genitals: C. Sütterlin, *Universals*.

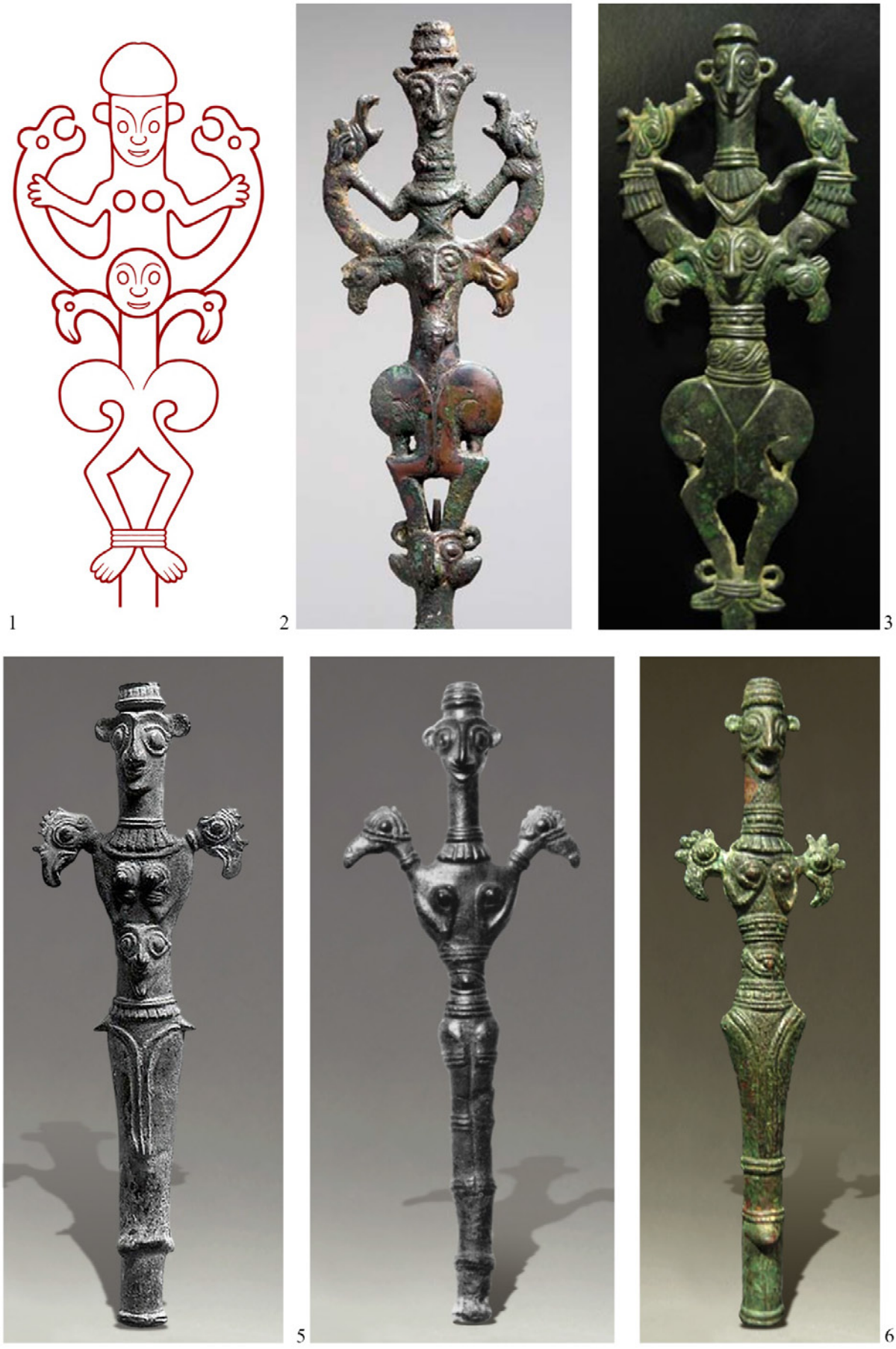
[132] From “Collection Godard”: E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 104, 105 – Fig. 85: 123.

[133] From Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München: G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 116 – Kat. 241.

[134] Previous researchers have not noted the bisexuality of this figure (M. Rostovtzeff, *Some Remarks*, 47, Taf. 5: 8. H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 30; H. Potratz, *Die Luristanbronzen*, 212), with the exception of Ph. Ackerman (Ph. Ackerman, *The Oriental*, 222).

[135] E. de Waele, *Bronzes,* 100 (Fig. 81: 116).

C32



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but as a symbol of the flowing water. According to him, in these specific cases, it signifies the reproductive functions of the depicted female character.[136]

- Human whose shoulders are complemented by zoomorphic protomes

We have mentioned earlier that this composition is rounded off from the already presented iconographic elements as a variant that can not always be differentiated in regards to some of the previously elaborated mythical images ("human with arms in the form of animal protomes", "ambivalent triune zooanthropomorphic character") (C3 – C5), as well as from the image of the "macrocosmic giant that holds or spreads the sky with its hands" which will be discussed later (E10; see p. 336). In fact, it can be interpreted in two different ways. According to the first one, it would be a human figure with one head (anthropomorphic) and an additional animal protome growing on each shoulder (C32). According to the second interpretation, it would be a hybrid mythical character with three heads, of which the middle one is anthropomorphic, while the lateral ones are zoomorphic. Our analyzes have shown that this arrangement, within the frames of Luristan bronzes, actually forms at least three distinct mythical images with specific meanings, which can be distinguished from each other on the basis of three parameters: the type of objects they appear on, the place they occupy within the specific object, and the presence of some additional iconographic elements.

- On some "columnar figurines" of the second subtype, the mentioned elements are present in a quite explicit form, usually occupying the whole object as a feature of a figure with a female character, mainly denoted through the breasts, the hands reaching towards them and the female body contours (examples C27; C28). As we have seen, there are also examples that point to its androgynous character (C25: 3; perhaps also C28: 7). In one of the following chapters we will try to prove that this figure also bears the features of a macrocosmic giant (see pp. 332, 357).

- On the "idols with protomes" the same elements appear in a less explicit form, not within the frames of the whole object, but as a feature of the figure formed in its lower half (C32: 1 – 3). Multiple arguments go in favor of the chthonic meaning of this character, due to which its elaboration is moved to the chapters dedicated to the chthonic mythical characters (D37; see pp. 307, 406).

- There is another mythical image with this feature, though not on the standards but on some other types of Luristan bronzes (F5 – F7). We believe that it depicts the myth of the primordial god Zurvān who gives birth to his two sons, due to which it will be presented in the chapter dedicated to this scene (see p. 379). In a slightly different variant, with human busts instead of animal protomes, it also appears on some standards (F26; see p. 430).

The first of the three mentioned variants should be discussed here - in the sub-chapter dedicated to the "columnar figurines". However, due to the complexity i.e. ambiguity of this iconographic arrangement and the difficulties in its differentiation from the other above-mentioned depictions (as a result of their mutual intertwining), we decided to conduct their analysis in a separate sub-chapter in one of the following chapters of this publication (see p. 437).

The human figure with protomes on its shoulders also appears on some Luristan bronzes that hitherto have not been strictly classified, because, on one hand, they contain features of the "columnar figurines" and of some other types of standards, but on the other, they abandon the basic specifics of these objects, falling into the category of bronze figurines (C33: 2 – 5). We decided to differentiate them as a separate type, named "standards - statuettes", which will be briefly presented in the subsequent sub-chapter.

c) General features of the "standards - statuettes"

These are standards that up until now have not been systematically studied as a separate group (C23: 11; C33). Multiple features point to the conclusion that it is one of the younger categories (if not the

[136] H. Potratz, *Das "Kampfmotiv"*, 24, 34, T. XVIII: 66. XIX: 69; H. Potratz, *Die Luristanbronzen*, 214.

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youngest), which shows genetic links with most other remaining types, but also with certain other Luristan objects outside the category of standards (see p. 14 and Fig. 2; 2a on pp. 9, 10). Among some such examples, in their lower part one can clearly identify the rear end of the animal pair (with their hind legs and curved tips of the tails), characteristic of the "zoomorphic standards", the "zoomorphic standards with a human head" (C23: 11; C33: 6 – 9 compare with C1 – C5) and the "idols with protomes" (C13 – C19). Because of this, it is not easy to answer which of these types served as a template in the conceptualizing of the specific objects.

Despite the presence of the indicated rear part of the animals, in most specimens the tendency for its abandonment is evident. The reason for this is the aspiration to move these objects away from the remnants of the older standards (and perhaps even in general from the standards), with a tendency to complete their anthropomorphism and specifically - to form human legs in the lower part of the figure (C23: 11; C33: 1, 5, 6), and in some cases also a skirt that covers their upper part (C33: 2 – 4, 7).

In regards to the upper part of these objects, noticeable is the frequency of variants with protomes oriented outwards, which points to their genesis from the "zoomorphic standards with a human head" where this feature is most common (C33: 2 – 5 compare with C4). In these specimens, one can also detect the hybrid figure with protomes on the shoulders or the figure with arms in the form of animal protomes, depending on whether its arms would be identified with the front legs or the protomes of these animals (C33: 2 – 5).

The figures of the "standards - statuettes" are depicted with multiple arm positions: extended towards the face (C33: 9), towards the chest (C33: 5), and, especially, lowered to the area of the abdomen or genitals (C23: 11; C33: 1, 6 – 8). The first pose can be understood as a consequence of the influence of the "zoomorphic standards with a human head" (C1: 2; C3: 5), while the latter two - of the "columnar figurines", where these poses are often present (C26 – C28).

We are familiar with specimens of such standards accompanied by a bottle-shaped support which, in spite of the divergence of these objects from other standards, shows that they nevertheless retained the basic character of this group, and probably the same purpose (C23: 11; C33: 6 compare with C16: 4 – 6).

Chapter VI

MALE AND FEMALE PRINCIPLE



VI. MALE AND FEMALE PRINCIPLE*

In the multi-layered iconography of Luristan standards, mythical images connected with the sexual spheres occupy an important place. They are present through the pictorial depictions of the male and female sex organ and through anthropomorphic figures and scenes in which, denoted in a certain way is their sex and sexual functions.

1. Sex organs

So far, we are not familiar with any specimens of the Luristan standards, nor of the Luristan bronzes, on which there would be explicit representations of a phallus or vulva depicted in a completely realistic form and separate from the human body. But, in most types of standards, one can identify their implicit depictions present at the level of the global composition of these objects, assimilated in other levels of their iconography. That is the reason why these elements have not been noticed by previous researchers, despite their fairly clear visibility at the level of the contour i.e. basic shape of the standards. From previous identifications of this motif, we are familiar only with the interpretation of W. Culican, who in the top of the head of the central character from the standards recognizes a phallus which, according to him, should have evoked the character's fertility.[1] On the other hand, Ph. Ackerman, looking for arguments regarding the sex of the central figure from an atypical specimen of the "idols with protomes" (G10: 1), gives the same element a female character: “he wears cap rather like a polos, and the polos was Hecate's most frequent head-gear.” It seems that she takes this view as an argument in favor of the female sex of this figure.[2]

a) Separate erect phallus

We think that the depiction of a phallus (in the state of erection), in its purest form, without too many additional elements, can be identified on the standards of the type "idols", whereby their cylindrical corpus represents the shaft of this organ, while the rounded tip - the glans penis (D1: 1 – 3, 5, 6; G1 – G3).[3] This

* We decided to use the terms "male and female principle" instead of the more commonly found "masculine and feminine principle" because, in this context, they generally refer to biological sex, and not to cultural gender categories.

[1] У. Куликан, *Персы*, 23; W. Culican, *Bronzes*, 3.
[2] Ph. Ackerman, *The Oriental*, 222.
[3] For the basic morphological features of this type of standards see p. 13, Fig. 2; 2a on pp. 9, 10; p. 449.

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interpretation is supported by the channel that extends along the corpus of these objects, which was certainly well known to the users, regardless of the fact that it is not visible from the outside. It interferes with the urethra, while the opening in the upper part - with the opening at the tip of the phallus (meatus). In all hitherto known "idols", the corpus, in the upper part, is supplemented with an anthropomorphic head i.e. anthropomorphic face, duplicated on the front and back sides, and sometimes also multiplicated three or even more times (G2: 5 – 7; G3: 1 – 4; G5: 1 – 3). Only in a small number of such standards, the position of this head can be equated with the glans penis itself (D1: 1). In most cases the face is placed below it, so that the glans penis interferes more with the cap of the depicted character (D1: 2, 3, 5, 6). These equations are most transparent in the variants where the rounded tip is smooth i.e. it is not divided by ribbings which, otherwise, rather hinder the indicated associations (G2: 6; G3: 2, 3).

The presented composition can also be found at the basis of some other types of standards, also formed within the frames of their vertical corpus. These include most "idols with protomes" (for example D1: 7, 8) as well as some series of "zoomorphic standards with a human head" (D3: 6, 7), "columnar figurines" (D1: 4) and "standards - statuettes" (C33: 1, 4). We think that it is actually one of the indicators of the role of the "idols" in the formation of these types (C15: 9 compare with 4 – 7). It is most often and most noticeably present in some series of "zoomorphic standards with a human head" (D3: 6, 7) and in almost all "idols with protomes" (D2: 1 – 5; D3: 1 – 3; six-pointed variants D3: 4, 5), which could in fact also be defined as "idols" whose vertical phallic corpus is supplemented by a pair of arched protomes and some other elements (G7). In the "idols with protomes" one can also recognize the testicles of the phallus which, as we have seen are not depicted in the "idols" at all (D2: 1, 3 – 5). They are incorporated into the semicircular contour of the rumps of the two animals from the "zoomorphic standards", which to a varying degree also survive in the other mentioned types (D5: 1, 2). In some of their series, they are protruded to such an extent that they absolutely lose their original character (D3: 6, 7 compare with 1 – 3). We think that this transformation should not be treated only as a consequence of the loss of original meaning,[4] but also as a tendency directed towards their conversion into circles, in order to more successfully suggest the shape of testicles. This image is most clearly manifested in several series of "idols with protomes" (especially in the compact variant) where the central character is depicted without arms. Through specific examples, one can trace their genesis from the "zoomorphic standards with a human head", followed by the transformation of the central anthropomorphic head into a phallus with a depicted human face (D3: 7 compare with 6). Also represented through several "six-pointed standards" is the duplicated variant of this mythical image, formed of two symmetrical phalluses that have common testicles, whereby one is oriented upwards and the other downwards (D3: 4, 5).

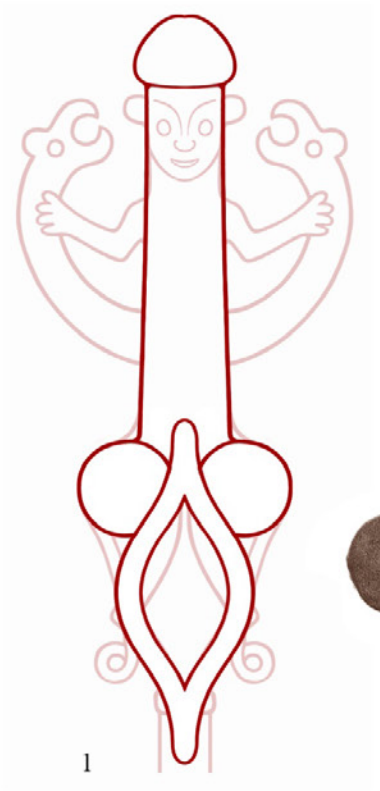
An important part in the argumentation of the indicated interpretations is the question why, in these representations, the phallus is not depicted in a clear i.e. realistic form, but is supplemented, and even in some way hidden, by other elements. Should these supplements be considered as a counter-argument that puts in doubt the proposed interpretation?

- Supplementation of the phallus with a human face: personalization and deification of the phallus

From the presented examples one can see that the anthropomorphic face in the upper part of the phallus is a regular feature in all of the mentioned types of standards. We know only one specimen where this element is not present, but at the same time even the form of the phallus is not sufficiently expressed (C17: 4). The indicated motif occurs in different cultures and various periods, whereby on this occasion we will mention only a few most transparent examples whose frequency is strongest on the territory of Eastern and Northern Europe and India.

[4] As thought by J. A. H. Potratz (J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 54).

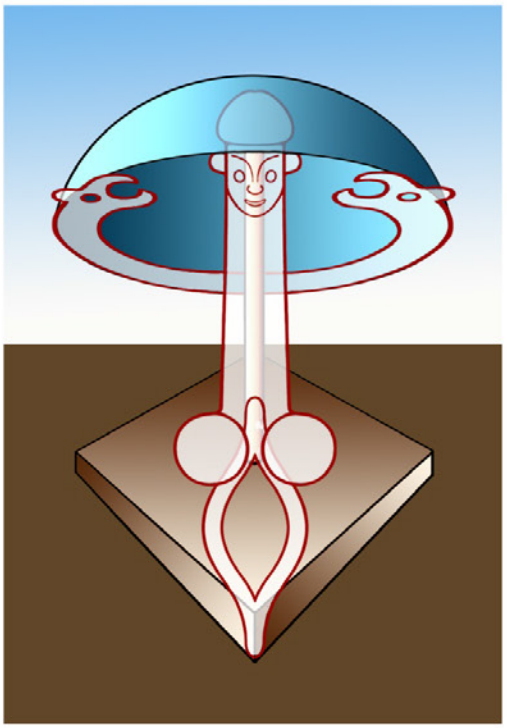
D2



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The first group consists of **monumental stone objects** dating between the 7th and 3rd century BCE, which are associated with the Scythians and other populations from the territory of the Northern Black Sea region, to Dobrudja in the west and the North Caucasus in the east (D4: 7 – 9, 11 – 13). Several specimens have been found in situ, at the tops of burial mounds, on the basis of which the prevailing opinion is that these were tombstones placed above the graves of prominent people from the mentioned societies.[5] So far, more than 150 such finds are known, in which, despite the variations in terms of style of execution and various additional elements, the phallic contour is persistent. The torso of the depicted character is equated with the body of the phallus, the head with the glans penis where the anthropomorphic face is located only from the front, while below it, at the neck, regularly depicted is some kind of partitioning element (torc) that interferes with the praeputium of the phallus. Older prototypes of these monuments can be traced back to the Bronze Age and in significantly wider territories, including the Balkans (D4: 10).[6] D. S. Raevsky points to their cosmological symbolism i.e. identification with the Cosmic Pillar, the giant phallus, and with some macrocosmic anthropomorphic character whose figure, divided by the torc and belt into three parts, interferes with the three levels of the universe. He connects the erection of these objects with the death of the rulers as an act of re-establishing the cosmic order disturbed by their death. On this occasion, it is important to note the identification of these pillars with the deceased king or prince, equated with the mythical progenitor (specifically the Scythian Targitaus) represented as a Cosmic Pillar and a giant (macrocosmic) phallus.[7]

The second group consists of **small wooden objects** discovered in the medieval settlements of northeastern Europe (Opole, Wolin, Novgorod and others) which are mainly attributed to the Slavs (D4: 2 – 6). As in the Luristan objects, they have the shape of a phallus, whereby the anthropomorphic face (this time also only one) is located under the glans penis so that, in this case too, it can be associated with the cap of the depicted character. According to some opinions, they were part of the furnishings of ordinary houses for living i.e. they were small domestic idols used within cultic-magic procedures performed in the circle of the family. Some of the presented finds are also connected to the ancillary rooms ("contianae") of Slavic pagan temples and sanctuaries. The purpose of these items may also be indicated by a medieval source which says that the Slavs, during wedding ceremonies, put wooden phalluses in vessels containing some kind of drink (probably beer) and then all of them drank from there. Similar miniature forms of personalization of the phallus can be traced back to the Neolithic (D4: 1 a ceramic specimen from RN Macedonia).[8]

In the mentioned regions one can also find objects with the same composition in which the phallic corpus is supplemented by three or four faces. This variant, too, is represented by monumental idols (such as the stone idol from Zbruch D4: 17 compare with 16 – retouch of the contour) and by miniature variants made mainly of wood and deer antler (D4: 14, 15; G42: 1, 2). In this context, special mention should be made of the numerous such Hindu examples represented through monumental four-headed idols made of stone (G37: 3, 5, 8). Although in their case, due to the high degree of stylization, the phallus is not represented explicitly enough, such a character is compensated by the non-anthropomorphic variants (lingam D6: 7 – 9) and the names of these objects (Shivalingam, caturmukhalinga) that are rooted in the word *lingam* with the meaning of phallus (see further for more details on this variant).

Among the mentioned medieval wooden phalluses one can also find another form of their personalization where the anthropomorphic head is depicted at the rear part of the sex organ (D5: 4). Similar solutions, executed in ceramics, can be traced back to the Iron Age (D5: 7).[9] Taking these specimens as a

[5] Overview and basic information: В. С. Ольховский, Г. Л. Евдокимов, *Скифские*.

[6] On the older specimens: Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 871-874 (with presented bibliography).

[7] Д. С. Раевский, *Скифские*; Д. С. Раевский, *Модель*, 134-146.

[8] Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Славян*, 36, 39, 41; Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Руси*, 497-500; W. Filipowiak, *Słowiańskie*, 25, 29; Т. Д. Панова, *О назначении*; Л. С. Клейн, *Воскрешение*, 372, 373; Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 344-350.

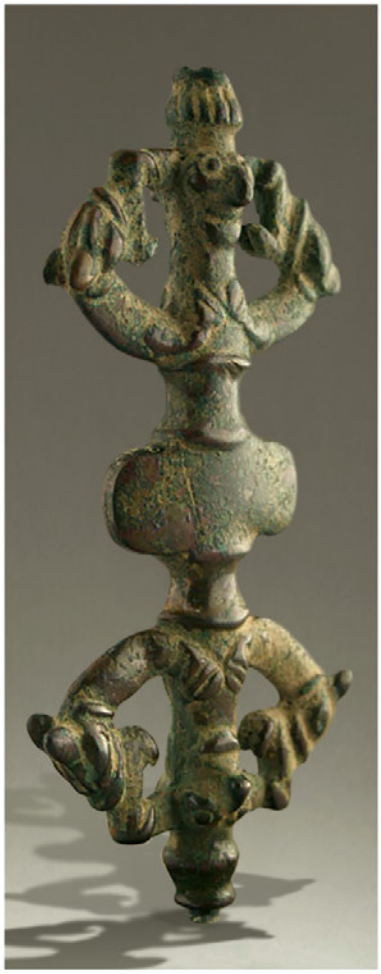
[9] For the medieval examples: W. Hensel, *Early*, Fig. 12; Л. С. Клейн, *Воскрешение*, 372, 373; for the Iron Age ones: J. Korošec, *Ljudske*.

D3


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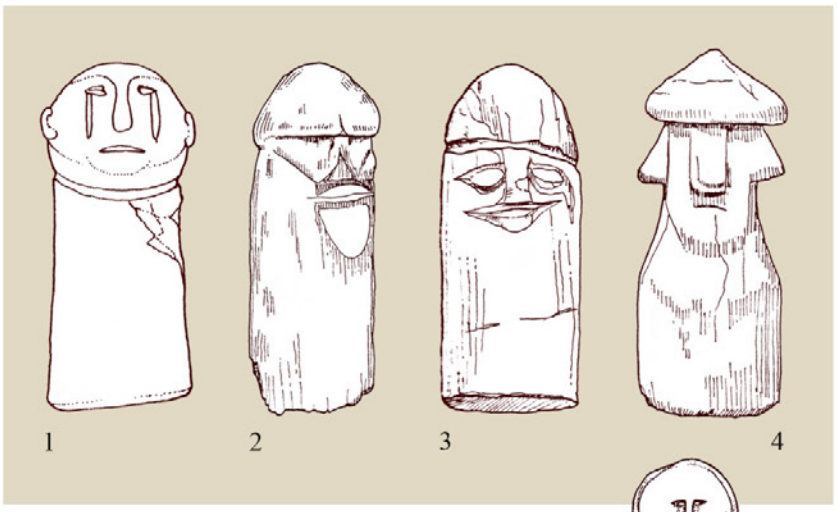

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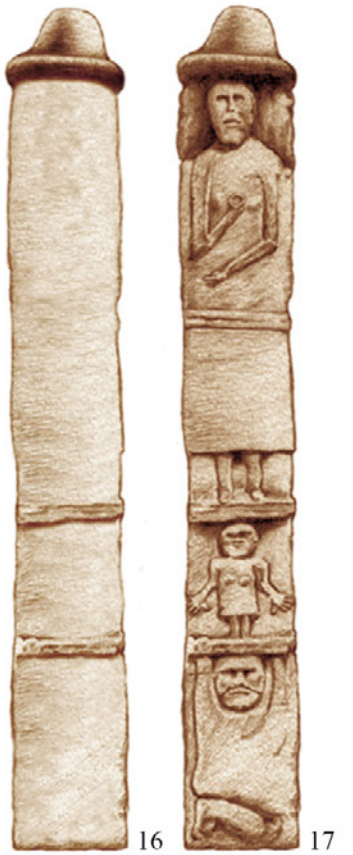
D4











paradigm, the manifestations of this concept can also be sensed in some variants of the Luristan "idols" (D5: 5), perhaps followed by the transformation of the glans penis into a zoomorphic head (D5: 6; we will discuss these relations further in Chapter IX – p. 547).

The mythical image presented here reflects the process of personalization of the male sex organ which, ultimately, should be treated as an indicator of the sacralization of its biological functions and of its deification. Based on the real functions of the phallus, it is quite probable that behind these images was a deity with the following characteristics: progenitor, embodiment of the male principle, father, husband of some goddess with the function of birth-giver and nurturer, creator (of man, of other elements or of the whole universe), bearer of fertility and abundance. It represents a concept universal to all mankind, which can be found in various cultures that did not have to engage in any mutual communication.[10]

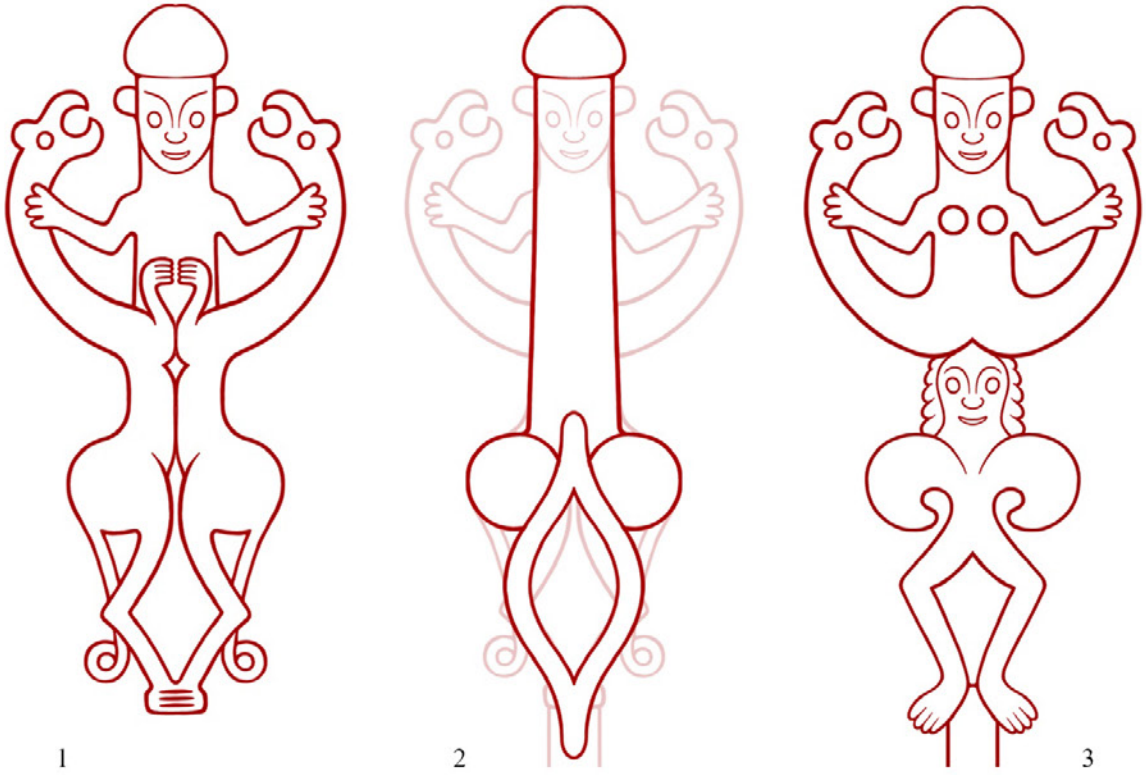
The reasons for the mandatory **duplication of the character of the personalized phallus** horizontally, on the front and back side of the standards (for example D1: 5, 6; D9: 8, 9) and the duplication of the entire phallus vertically (in the mentioned "six-pointed standards" D3: 4, 5) can be sought in the spheres of symbolism, but also outside of it. On a symbolic level, the duplication of the phallus (in the latter case, even perhaps its quadruplication, if we take into account the two front sides of the standards) could mean the emphasization of the religious significance of this deified organ, while on a magical level - the strengthening of its functions (fertility, vitality, progress in general, apotropaic power), thus accentuating the sacredness of the cult object on which it is depicted. The orientation of the phalluses and the depicted faces towards different sides may also suggest the **dispersion** of the mentioned categories through space (up and down, forwards and backwards i.e. on all four sides) or through time (from the past to the future). Although less probable, one should also not exclude the pure "aesthetic" and "communicological" motivation of these multiplications, in order to create a symmetrical composition that would be more impressive from a visual aspect, and at the same time would also be visible from the front and back.

- Supplementation with a pair of protomes (cosmization of the phallus)

We have seen that in the previously elaborated iconographic layers of the standards, their central vertical corpus represents the **Cosmic Axis**, while the ring formed by the two arched protomes - the **horizontal projection of the circular sky** that rests on it (manifested as the Cosmic Pillar) and rotates around it (manifested as a wheel axle or as a threshing floor pole) (D2: 2 compare with the rest). Taking into account these observations, the reason behind the transformation of the vertical corpus of the standards into a phallus could be the aspiration to treat the **male sex organ** (and the male principle standing behind it) **as the center of the universe** and a factor that conditions its creation and existence. The personalization of the corpus-phallus, in turn, should be understood as an intention to place at the center of the standards (and the universe they represent) the god – bearer of all the mentioned functions. The combining of this gigantic i.e. macrocosmic **God-Phallus** with the protomes that symbolize the sky give it another specific role – the function of Atlas who supports the sky (see Chapter VII; D2: 1, 2). On a verbal level, as the best parallel to these proposed meanings one can take the myth of Shiva's phallus, recorded in "Shiva Purana" and "Linga Purana". It begins with the supreme gods Vishnu and Brahma arguing over which one of them is of more importance. As the argument progressed, a flaming pillar appeared in front of them, extending upwards and downwards endlessly. The gods then transformed themselves into animals and headed out to find the beginning and the end of this object. Vishnu turned himself into a boar and went down towards the underworld, while Brahma - into a swan that flied up towards the heavens. When, after the long journey, they failed to reach the edges of the pillar and

[10] Examples of analogously conceptualized idols in the form of an atropomorphized phallus, from Nigeria: P. A. Allison, *Stone*.

D5



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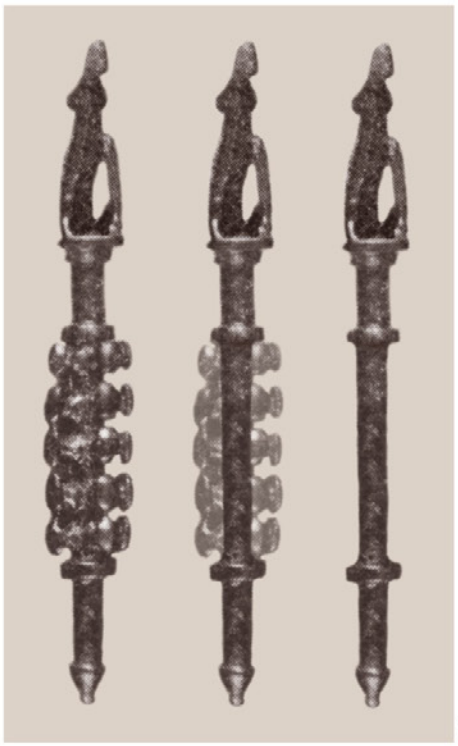


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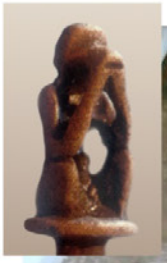
D6


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returned back, Shiva appeared from it, showing them that it was actually his phallus. With that he received the status of the most important god in the universe (pictorial manifestations of the myth: D6: 1, 2, 4; D16: 1).[11]

As the most appropriate pictorial parallel for the cosmological aspects of the personalized phallus, one can take the medieval pagan Slavic **stone idol from Zbruch**, which is also based on the macrocosmic phallus (D4: 16, 17; G40: 4). Depicted on its four sides are figures of the gods – in the upper zone the celestial ones, while in the lower – the chthonic three-headed god who, kneeling, holds the earth's plate, standing on which are small human figures.[12] A similar macrocosmic meaning is also given to the phallus within the Iron Age **cluster pendants** from the group of "Macedonian bronzes", synchronous to the "Luristan bronzes", with the difference that in that case the phallus is oriented in reverse – upside down (D6: 3, 6). This time, too, it is equated with the Cosmic Pillar and the Cosmic Tree, whereby, depicted at the top of the objects is a mythical character (in some cases with an erect phallus), sitting in a fetal position (D6: 5 compare with 3, 6).[13] Describing a sanctuary in Western Asia, Lucian of Samosata speaks of giant phalluses (tens of meters high) that were placed there, which apparently bore the character of a link between earth and sky. Twice a year, a man climbed on one of them and from there entered into direct communication with the gods.[14]

We believe that, given the geographical and cultural connection of the Luristan standards with Iran and the ancient Iranian cultures, in interpreting the mentioned iconographic elements, preference should be given to the mythical-religious traditions that belong to this region and the cultures that existed in that territory synchronously with these objects.

Within the frames of ancient Iranian culture, specifically in **Zoroastrianism** and especially in **Zurvanism**, the male principle is involved in the creation of the universe through Time personalized in the character of the god **Zurvān**. The beginning of this process starts from the Infinite Time which is the source of *tohmāk* – the "seed" that will cause the creation. The first body that will be created in this act is Spihr – the body of Zurvān (**Zurvān of the long Dominion**), which carries the meaning of the Finite Time and the material Cosmos defined and limited in a temporal and spatial sense. This act of creation is symbolically equated with the act of conception of the embryo and the birth of a newborn from the womb. **Spihr** is often represented as a child (infant Spihr), and in the same way, the creation of the cosmos is represented as the birth of a child. In some cases, Spihr is also represented as a "seed" that enters the cosmos and causes the emergence of all things. Ultimately, Zurvān is not only the father, the mother and the seed, but also the embryo conceived by him.[15] The first man would also be created according to the same concept, whereby Spihr – the body of Zurvān, would once again be taken as a paradigm.[16] In some sources this category is defined even more specifically, as *arshnōtachin* – the seminal flow or "in a moist state like semen".[17] In praising Ormazd's act of creation one would say: “After this moist state came mixture like [that of] semen and blood; after mixture came conception, like a foetus; after conception came diffusion, such as hands and feet ...”.[18] Two of Zurvān's hypostases are associated with these functions. The first one is **Ar(š)ōqar**, whose name contains the following two meanings – "the male-making" or "author of the male principle", both of which define him as the father of the Cosmos. The second one is **Frašōqar**, which, according to some sources and interpretations, leads to the very birth of the Cosmos.[19]

[11] V. Ions, *Indijska*, 41; У. Норман Браун, *Индийская*, 312-313.
[12] Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Руси*, 236-251; Н. Чаусидис, Митските, 472-477.
[13] Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 196-207 ff.
[14] (Lucianus Samosatensis, *De Dea Syria*. 28).
[15] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 112, 128, 234, 266, 267; R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 219, 249, 250. In the context of these relations, the closeness between *spihr* and the Greek word *sperma* is indicative.
[16] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 128.
[17] R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 219, 249, 250.
[18] R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 250.
[19] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 222, 223.

There are indications within the frames of ancient Iranian traditions on the identification of sperm with some cosmic elements. The Avesta says that the seed of the first man and of the first bull was created from "celestial light and freshness."[20] This is indicated by the action in which the seed of **Gayomard**, after his death, was taken to the sun and purified in its light, and only then a third of it was returned to the ground where it lied buried for 40 years, from which thereafter the rhubarb plant had grown.[21]

On this occasion, it is important for us that these symbolic relations indirectly actualize the male genitalia of Zurvān and his specific hypostases as organs through which the "cosmic seed" had to emerge and act, although in the sources referring to the indicated Iranian religions there is no mention of them. But it seems that on the Luristan standards we can clearly identify them in the central phallic corpus of these objects, whereby their supplementation with a human head, face and hands should be understood as an act of personalization i.e. deification of this organ. There are numerous arguments in favor of the concrete connection of these phalluses with the god Zurvān, which will be presented in the following chapters.

b) Separate open vulva

Present in the lower part of the "idols with protomes" (D1: 7, 8; D2: 3 – 6; D3: 1 – 3) and in some "zoomorphic standards with a human head" (D3: 6, 7) is a **rhombic frame** formed of two bars bent at an angle. In some specimens, a vertical bar extends through its middle that in fact represents the tubular body of the standard, inserted into which was the shaft intended for its support (D3: 1 – 3, 6, 7; D7: 4 – 8). We have seen that this motif appeared as a product of the transformation of the hind legs of both animals from the "zoomorphic standards" and the "zoomorphic standards with a human head" (D5: 1, 2; D7: 1 – 3). Thereby, the paws of their feet also survive, and in some cases also the bent tips of the tails, most often transformed into small loops (D7: 5 – 8). Previous researchers have interpreted this process as the transformation i.e. disintegration of the animal pair, caused by the forgetting of their original meaning or the shifting of the focus towards the central anthropomorphic figure. Generally agreeing with these views, we think that the mentioned process was further stimulated by a mental image that these standards had induced in the consciousness and subconscious of their creators and users. Back in Chapter III we pointed out that this was the image of the open vulva, geometricized in the shape of a rhombus and equated with the earth, which otherwise in archaic cultures was often represented as a quadrangle (D2: 2; A1 – A5). Although less commonly, one can also find examples among the standards where this motif is rounded i.e has a leaf-like form, bringing it even closer to the real appearance of the open vulva (D7: 4; D37: 2).

As the closest parallels (from a geographical i.e. cultural aspect) to the vulva depicted on the standards in the form of a rhombus, we can present analogous motifs from Mesopotamian seals and older prehistoric examples that were already introduced in the analysis of the geometric level (A14). These parallels indicate that this motif in the standards, in addition to the above, also had a macrocosmic meaning, denoting the earth that extends at the foot of the Cosmic Axis, as opposed to the sky located in its upper zones (D2). Thereby, the equation of the earth with the vulva was certainly aimed at apostrophizing its generative functions equal to those of the woman (growing of plants = giving birth to a child; yielding food and water = breastfeeding; see p. 76).[22]

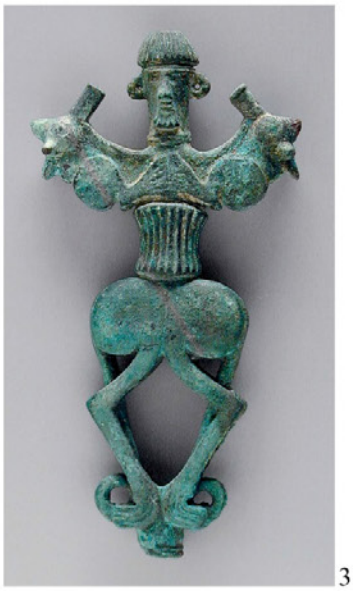
It is thought that in the mythology of the Kassites, one of the peoples that are associated with the Luristan bronzes, the rhombus functioned as a symbol of the female principle.[23]

[20] "From the light and freshness of the sky the seed of the Man and the Bull was fashioned" (R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 136).
[21] R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 267.
[22] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки,* 93-100; N. Chausidis, *Myth. Representations*, 5-9.
[23] И. М. Дьяконов, И. И. Соколова, *Касситская*, 627.

D7


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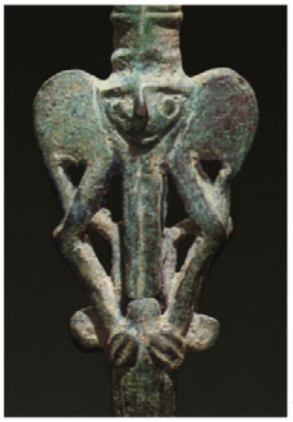

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- Personalization of the vulva

In some "idols with protomes", depicted in the upper corner of the mentioned rhombic frame is a separate anthropomorphic face i.e. head (D2: 6; D7: 6, 7).[24] If we agree that the frame represents the open vulva, then this head can be interpreted in at least two ways. According to the first one, it would be a character that is being born from the female sexual organ, while according to the second, it would represent the concept of personalization of the vulva executed analogously as with the phallus - through its supplementation with a human head i.e. face. As an argument in support of the second interpretation one can take the ancient Mediterranean depictions of the mythical character **Baubo**, who is also considered to be a personalized vulva. In the pictorial medium she was represented in a similar way - by adding a head to the female genitalia, with the difference that in this case, they were depicted together with the surrounding parts of the female body - the hip, abdomen and legs (D7: 10, 11).[25] As a personalized vulva one can also understand the presented wooden bowl with contours of an open vulva from Papua New Guinea, which, besides the reduced limbs, in the upper part is also supplemented by an anthropomorphic head (D7: 12 compare with 6, 7). In this context, we could also justify the survival of the paws of the former animals in the lower part of the standards, as being the legs of the personalized vulva (D7: 6, 7).

On the Luristan bronzes one can also identify another similar form of personalization of the female sex organ, as part of the depictions of the figure of a birth-giving woman with legs in the form of animal protomes, by its equation with the mouth (D17: 1 – 6; see pp. 291, 305).

c) Joint depiction of a phallus and vulva (hierogamy)

The depiction of the male and female sex organs on one and the same standard should be treated as a single rounded off mythical image (D2). It can be associated with cosmogonic myths in which the universe is created by the fusion of the male and female principle identified with the cosmic elements (vulva = earth, phallus = sky or Cosmic axis). The identification of the sex organs with the cosmic elements points to their gigantic i.e. macrocosmic dimensions - the enormous extension of the vulva horizontally and of the phallus vertically. Although in the Luristan standards the two sex organs are only placed one above the other, such joint depiction certainly points also to their implicit mutual **copulation** which on a mythical level refers to **hierogamy** (see below).[26]

As the most appropriate visual parallels for this composition one can take the well-known Hindu altars formed as a fusion of **lingam** and **yoni** – symbols of the male and female principle (D6: 7 – 9).[27] Other examples can also be presented in this context, such as the various types of **amulets** in which the two organs are depicted at the moment of copulation or are simply placed one on top of the other or one next to the other. They are especially popular in some parts of Asia to this day (D8: 4 – 7, 10), and there are also known examples from the Mediterranean and Europe (in the form of objects, but also **petroglyphs**) that can be traced back to the Middle Ages, antiquity and all the way to prehistoric times (D8: 1 – 3, 8, 9, 11).

Apart from the phallus of **Shiva**, the vulva (yoni) of the Indian goddess **Parvati** is also depicted as a separate entity.[28] On some of the pillar-phalluses of Shiva, this god is depicted in an elliptical opening (D6: 1; D16: 1). Perceived in relation to some of the presented amulets (D8: 5, 6), this opening acquires the meaning of a vulva, through which the female principle (yoni) also becomes included in the mentioned myth, despite its original absence from it.

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[24] E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 102 (cat. 118, 119) which the author names it as „masque humain“.

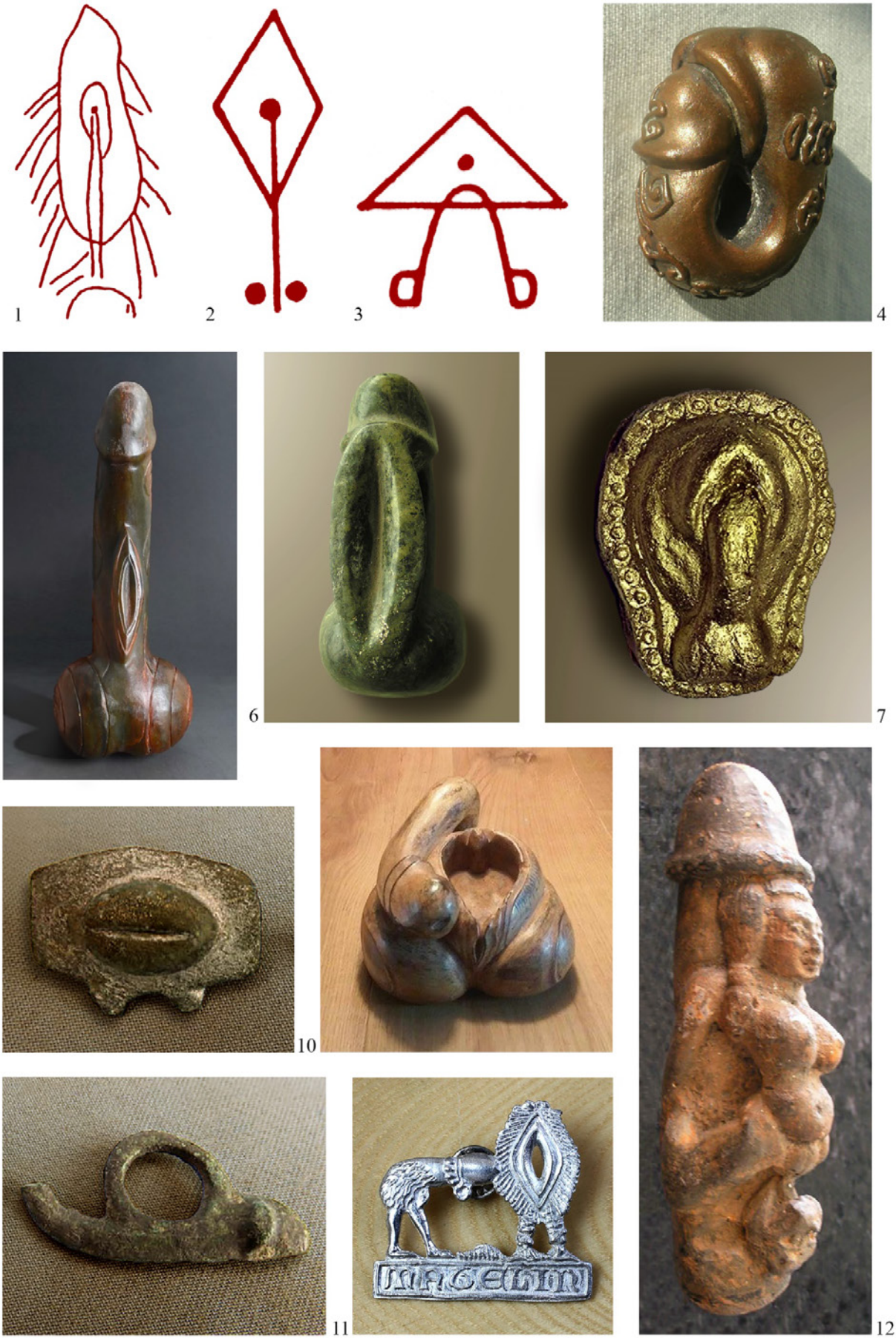
[25] M. Olender, *Aspects*; G. Devereux, *Bauba*; Н. Чаусидис, *Устата*.

[26] Our previous observations on this type of mythical images in general and specifically in the Luristan standards: Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 62; Н. Чаусидис, *Хиерогамија*, 67-71.

[27] S. Sarasvati, *The Inner Significance*; R. K. K. Rajarajan, *The Liṅga*; basic information: *Лингам* 2018; *Lingam* 2018.

[28] *Parvati* 2018.

D8



The partial genitals are represented in myths as integral beings that have their own consciousness, move independently, grow, eat, and in some examples the vulva is even represented as the mother of the phallus.[29] In the mythology of the Buryats (Siberia) there is a legend according to which, before the beginning of the world, there was only the primordial ocean, floating in which was the male and female sexual organ. Then, they joined in sexual intercourse, which stimulated the cosmogenesis.[30] In Ancient Greece, during the holiday of Tesmophoria, dedicated to Demeter and Persephone, cookies were made in the form of male and female genitals that had an important place in the rituals performed during the festivities.[31]

2. Human figures with accentuated sexual features

On the Luristan standards one could identify anthropomorphic or zooanthropomorphic figures whose sex is designated through various forms of apostrophizing of their reproductive functions. One of these ways is the designation of the genitals or the depiction of these organs, or of the whole figure, in states or positions characteristic of coitus or childbirth.

a) Male figure

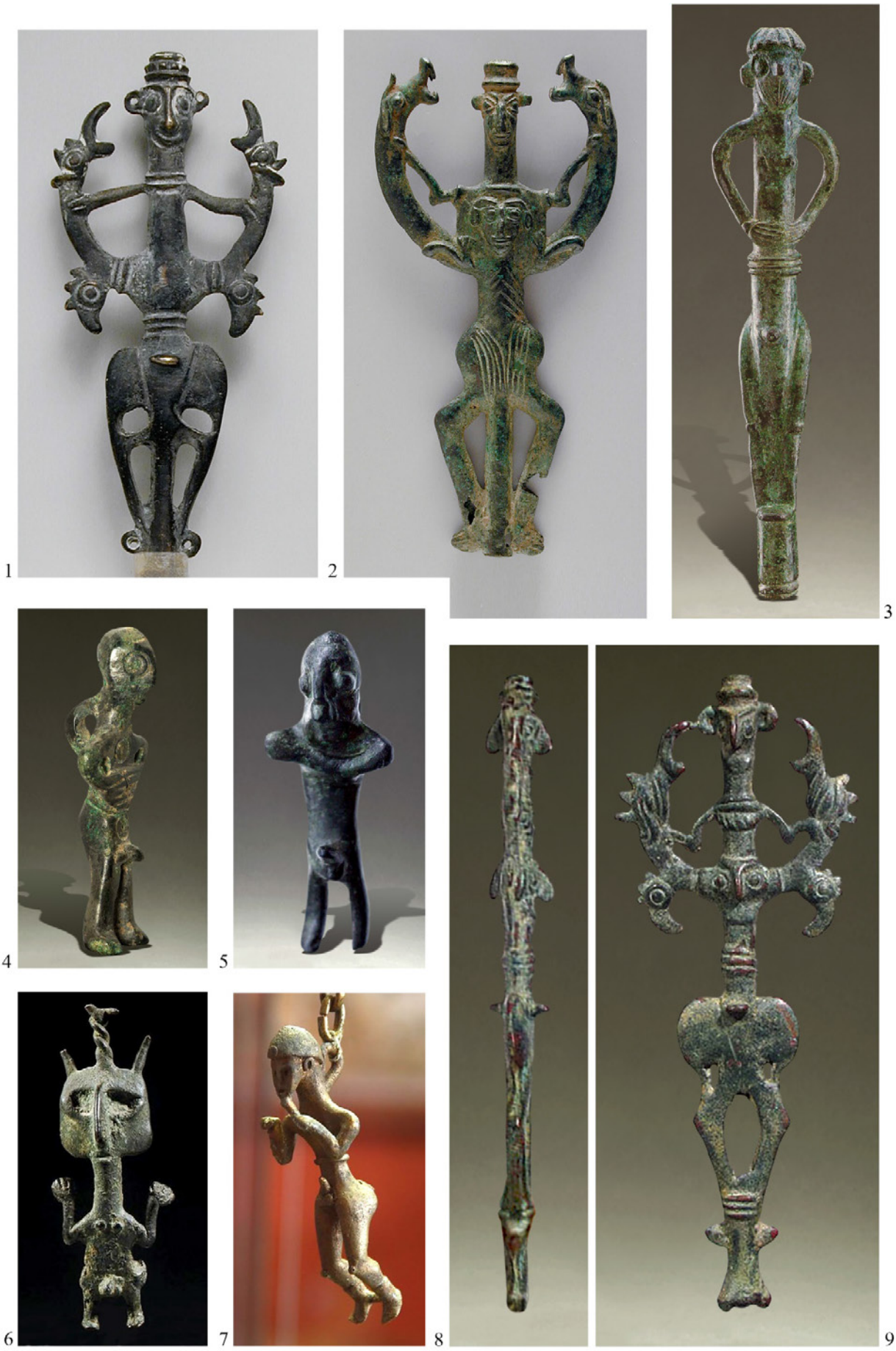
- Figure with a denoted or accentuated phallus

In previous chapters we have already pointed out that in these figures the male sex is represented through the small protruding supplement which, according to its shape and position, corresponds to the phallus. This element appears in some standards of the type "idols with protomes" (D9: 1, 8, 9) and in the "columnar figurines" of the subtype without bird protomes on the shoulders (D9: 3).[32] On this occasion we can point to another specific example of the group "idols with protomes" where the meaning of phallus, this time oversized, is acquired by the vertical segment that extends between the legs of the anthropomorphic character that covers the whole standard, for which we saw that it was originally used for the insertion of the shaft by which the standard was fastened to the bottle-shaped support (D9: 2).

Although with a certain amount of reservation, the ithyphallic figure can also be identified on some Luristan openwork pins. In one case, it is a pair of pins with a square head, depicted on which is a human character with spread thighs, bent knees and arms raised in an orans posture. Depicted below the pubic area is a segment that, among other things, could also be identified as a phallus (D10: 1, 2). Another pair of Luristan openwork pins depicts a similar figure, but in a more moderate pose, with wings under the arms and a longer and thinner segment between the legs which, in addition to the function of a strengthening bar, could also carry the meaning of a phallus (D10: 9, 10).[33] In support of the ithyphallic character of these figures, one can present numerous parallels with a designated or hypertrophied phallus and pose of the legs that is identical or similar to that from the pins. The figures of this type have recently been the subject of our detailed analysis, due to which, in this case, we will only reference this study, followed by some of the most relevant examples (D10: 3 – 5, 7, 8, 11).[34] At the end, it must be noted that standing behind the mentioned Luristan figures,

[29] У. Норман Браун, *Индийская*, 312, 313; Ю. Е. Березкин, *Тематическая*, on the phallus: F11, F15, F18B, F28A, on the vulva: F9A; Д. Овчаров, *Прабългарската*, 263, 267, 268.
[30] С. Ю. Неклюдов, *Мифология*, 199, 200.
[31] On the mentioned ritual and on the symbolic and cultic meaning of the sex organs in ancient Mediterranean cultures: И. Маразов, *Маската*, 19, 20, 25-27; T. Moore, *The Soul*, 36-60.
[32] E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 100 (No. 116), 104 (No. 123 A), 114; O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 148 (No. 231).
[33] G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 72 (Cat. 146, 147). In the first case, the author identifies the figure as ithyphallic, noting that this pose is also characteristic of female figures. The ithyphallicity in the second example is not apostrophized.
[34] Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, chapter 2 and more specifically: 208-235.

D9



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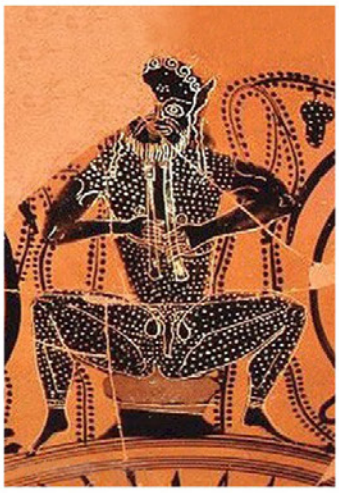
D10


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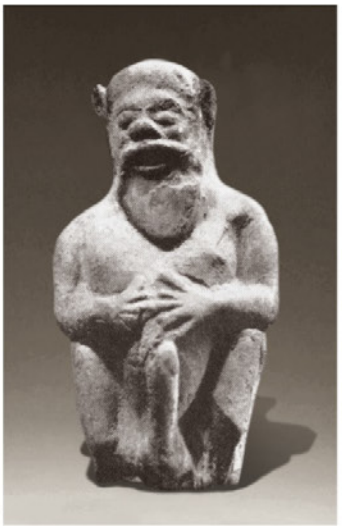

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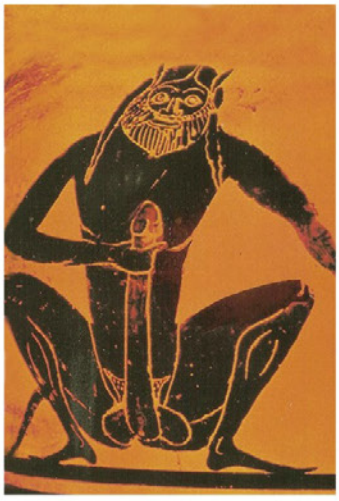

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especially in the first pair, may also be a female character depicted in a pose of coitus or childbirth (D15; D17; D18; see p. 266).

In support of these interpretations, we can also mention several Luristan bronze figurines (D9: 4, 5, 6). Unlike the previous ones, they are depicted in a standing position, with their arms raised to the area of the chest or in an orans posture. In both Luristan examples, formed on the back is a loop for attachment, indicating their predisposition for hanging. In that sense, as an analogy, one could also present a type of almost synchronous ithyphallic bronze figurines from the territory of the Caucasus (6th - 5th century BCE) also intended for hanging, in this case on chains (D9: 7).[35] We think that it would not be particularly useful on this occasion to reference analogies of similar ithyphallic figures from other cultures, if we take into account that this is a phenomenon with a universal human character that occurs in different regions of the world and throughout all historical periods.[36]

b) Female figure

- Figure with a denoted or accentuated pubis or vulva

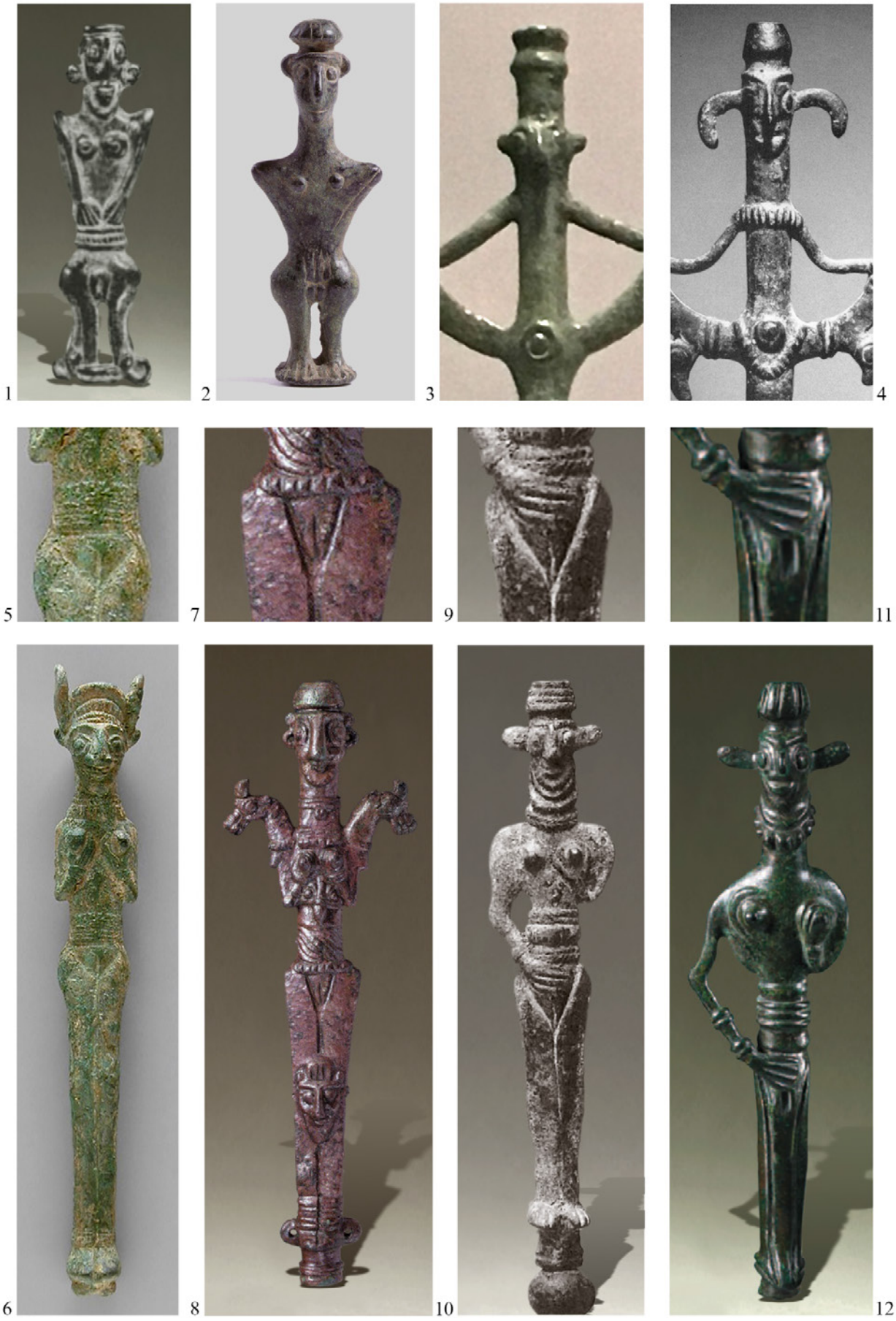
We have seen that the female genitalia are sometimes denoted in the anthropomorphic figures of the standards, most often in the form of a triangular field accompanied by some additional elements. In some "columnar figurines" it is the vertical incision (D11: 5 – 12), while in some "standards - statuettes", between the spread legs of the figure there is also a motif that more directly depicts the Labia Majora (D11: 1, 2). On the corpus of some "idols with protomes", present between the large protomes are various imprinted circular motifs, in some cases accompanied by a pubis, which could have denoted the vaginal opening (D11: 3, 4).

In archaic cultures, it is not uncommon to have images of human figures accompanied by stylized genitals, depicted separately, under the groin, usually between the legs. This was done in order to denote or emphasize their sex, especially if, due to the high degree of stylization, it could not be depicted clearly enough on the figure itself (D12: 4 – 8, 13).[37] On the Luristan standards, the possible existence of such a composition can be assumed, if from the numerous iconographic layers, one would isolate the figure of the birth-giving woman with legs in the form of zoomorphic protomes (about it see p. 275) and the vulva i.e. rhombus located below it, discussed in previous chapters (D12: scheme 2 compare with 1, 3). It can be assumed that, in some cases, the same meaning was obtained so that the image of the rhombus i.e. vulva coincided with the contours of the legs of the lower figure, spread at the knees and joined at the feet (D13: 1 – 4; D5: 3).[38]

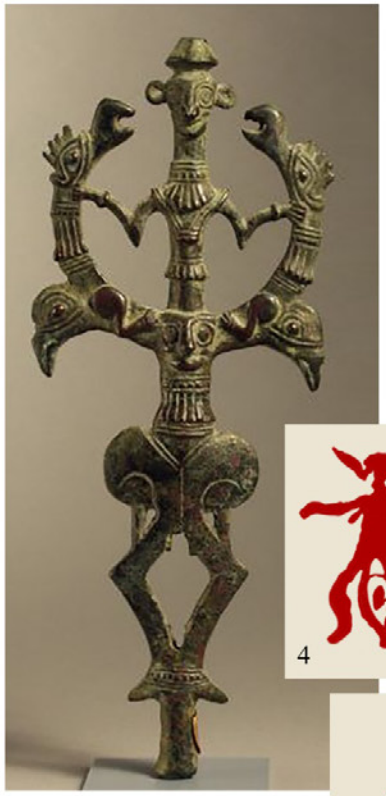
Two more Luristan examples can be presented that come close to the first of the concepts. One motif is found on a bronze whetstone handle shaped in the form of a pair of ibex protomes, supplemented by another pair of animal protomes (D15: 5, 6).[39] It is formed in the lower part of the object and depicts a schematic human figure with a large and grotesque head, attached to which are outstretched arms and legs. Between the legs one could recognize a leafy element with a vertical line in the middle which, according to its shape and position, can be defined as a schematic vulva (D15: 5). The second example is a standard of the type "columnar figurines", where, depicted in the area of the torso of the figure holding its breasts with its hands, is a motif in the shape of an ellipse with pointed opposite ends that could have borne the same meaning (D16:

[35] E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 179, 180 – Fig. 149 (No. 293, 295): for the Caucasian examples: О. А. Брилёва, *Древняя*, 290 (кат. 188), 306 (кат. 295, 296), 307 (кат. 297-300).
[36] Numerous examples with presented bibliography: Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*; 358-365; Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 208-235.
[37] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 97-99, 139.
[38] Our first observations on this motif in the standards: Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 66.
[39] Catalogical information: P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 42 (No. 67).

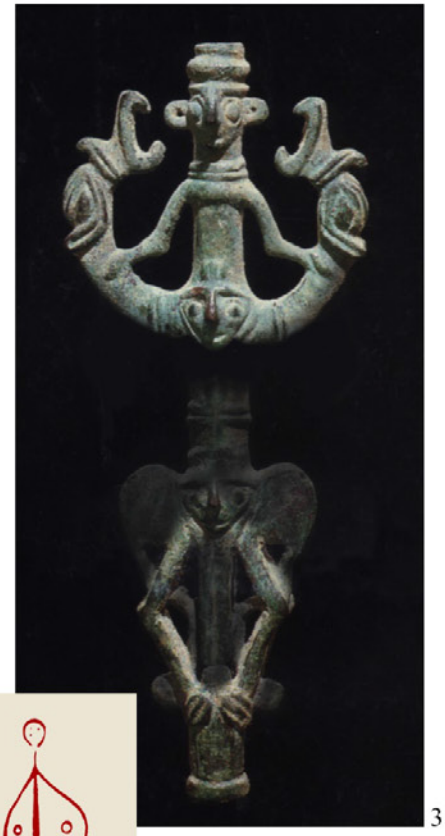
D11



D12

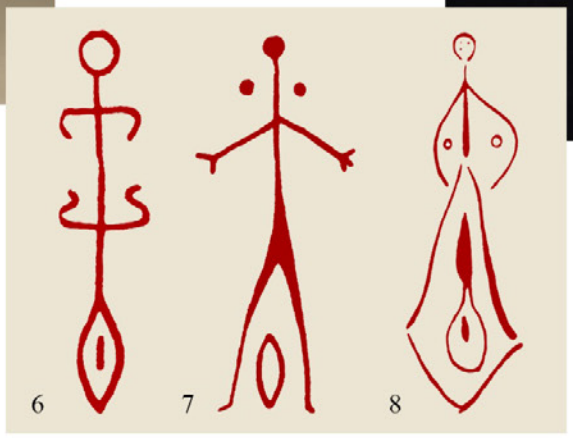

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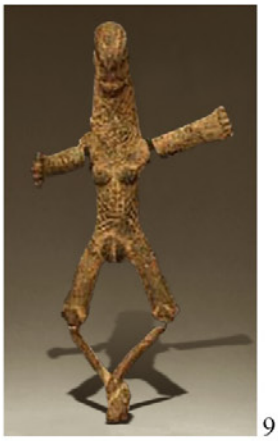

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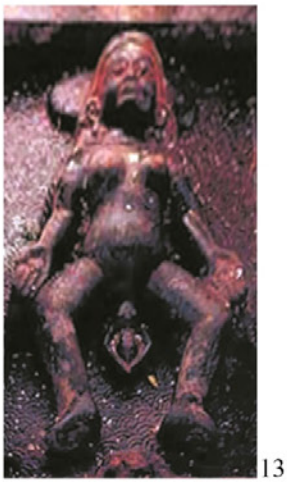

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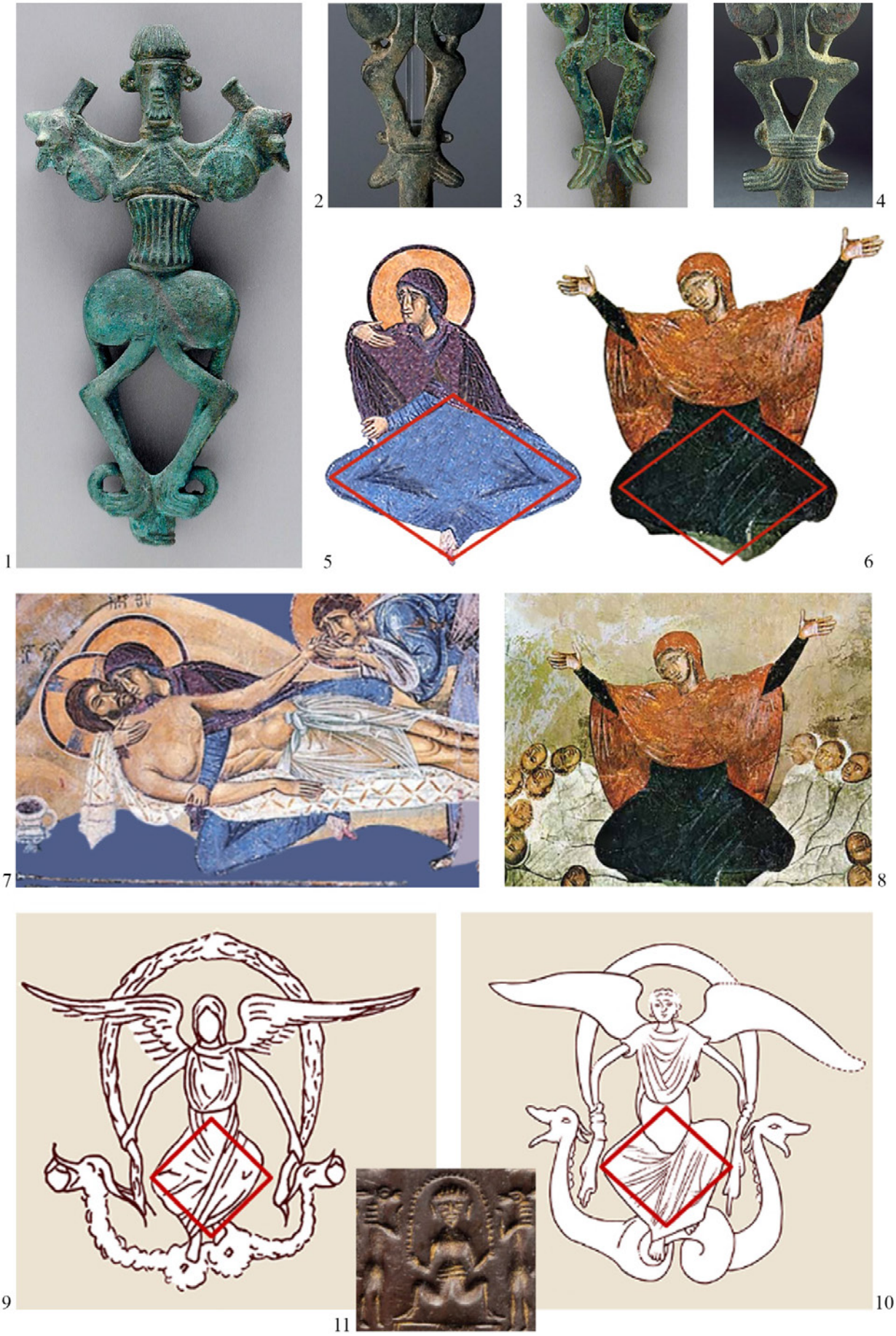

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D13



7).[40] In that context, the zoomorphic head with a large beak depicted inside it could have evoked a mythical action about the birth of that creature from the womb of the main character.

In regards to the first example, one could reference numerous iconographic analogies, starting from the traditional cultures of Africa, all the way to those from Christian church frescoes executed within the Byzantine cultural circle. The most impressive of the African examples are the reliquary wooden figures (19th - 20th century) of the Kota people from eastern Gabon and western Congo (D12: 10 – 12). The dominant presence of the rhombus in these figures, in association with the open vulva or the spread legs, can be justified through their purpose to be raised above the relics of the ancestors of this people.[41] In Byzantine iconography, this solution found its application given the taboos regarding the depiction of the sexual features of Christian characters. As the most transparent examples, we take the characters of the Virgin Mary from "The Lamentation of Christ" in Nerezi (D13: 5, 7), Rachel from the "Massacre of the Innocents" in Marko's Monastery (D13: 6, 8) - both near Skopje, as well as numerous personifications of the Earth, from the scenes of the "Last Judgment" (D13: 9, 10, compare with 11 – a possible Mesopotamian paradigm, but with fully spread legs).[42] The spread knees and joined feet of these figures, although covered with a long skirt, form a rhombus that we think in the first two cases was meant to allude to the reproductive power of these characters aimed towards the resurrection of the mourned characters, while in the third case - the global generative (and resurrective?) functions of the Earth.[43]

A similar tendency for tilting of the lower legs, especially in the depictions of women in a birth-giving pose, and even more broadly in female figures (e.g. dancers), is quite typical of India (D14: 13, 14; E19: 6, 7 compare with D14: 1, 2, 11, 12). Within yoga-traditions there are **asanas** with this position of the legs in a lying pose (Supta Baddha Konasana) and a headstand pose (Baddha Kona Sirsasana) (D14: 4, 5). We think that in this culture it was motivated by the aspiration to equalize the legs with the rhombus, in support of which one can take a depiction of childbirth, from the same culture, in which even the child coming out of the mother's womb forms a rhombus with its hands (D14: 13). This pose in Asia can be traced back to the beginnings of the second millennium BCE, through a bronze votive figurine in which the vulva is also pretty accentuated (D12: 9). At the end, mention should also be made of the **plié pose** within classical European ballet, the genesis of which deserves much more attention given that it perfectly coincides with the images discussed here (D14: 10).

Regarding the second Luristan example (D16: 7), too, one could present analogies from various epochs and cultures that would also support the proposed interpretation according to which the field in the shape of an ellipse with pointed poles, depicted on the torso of the figure, indirectly denotes the genital opening from which the stylized character depicted within it is being born. Many examples from different epochs and regions can be taken as confirmation of this interpretation.[44]

Firstly we will mention the already referenced representations that depict Shiva at the moment of his appearance from the flaming pillar-phallus which actually represents one of his epiphanies. The identification of the elliptical opening from which he appears with the opening of the vulva can be justified by the fact that it is an act of corporal introduction of Shiva in front of the other gods, which can be treated as a kind of transformation and even rebirth (D16: 1; D6:1, 2, 4 compare with D8: 5, 6).[45]

[40] For the object, without the indicated interpretation: P. R. S. Moorey, *Ancient*, 31 (Pl.XII: A).

[41] "These extraordinary sculptures once rose above the sacred ancestral reliquaries of the peoples generally referred to today as the Kota" (*Shapes* 2018).

[42] In more detail see: Н. Чаусидис, *Жена и ромб*; regarding the last examples see: O. Zorova, *Medieval*, 326, 329; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 198; for the Mesopotamian analogy: *Bodo* 2019.

[43] On some other forms of actualization of the female sex organ within Christian iconography: L. D. Graham, *Gender*.

[44] In more detail about the examples and interpretations that follow: Н. Чаусидис, *Жена и ромб*.

[45] For the mythical paradigms of this image see p. 246.

D14


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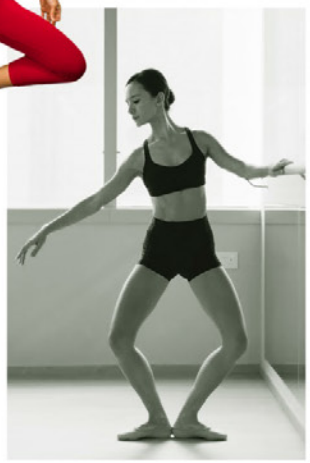

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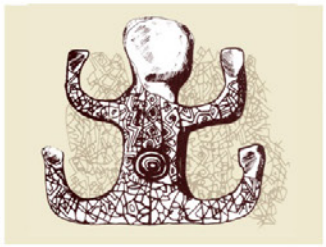

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D15


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Similar arrangements also appear in Christianity, where the angular ellipse (vesica piscis) functions as a mandorla in which Christ is most often depicted, but also the Virgin Mary and even other saints (D16: 2, 3). Within the frames of Eastern Christianity, it, in combination with the figure of Christ, appears in the scene of the "Transfiguration" (D16: 3), and less frequently also on the torso of the Virgin Mary. In the second case, Christ is depicted as a child and in an ordinary elliptical or, more often, in a circular mandorla (D16: 6). Although the latter type of representations, evoking the conception of the Logos in the womb of Mary, in and of themselves refer to the female aspects of the mandorla, nevertheless, in these cases, as in the representations of the "Transfiguration", they are, according to canonical interpretations, associated with the Tabor Light which surrounds Christ signifying his divine nature.[46] Despite this, we think that the mentioned image also implies birth, whereby the choice of this very shape of the aura was made in order to suggest some kind of act of his transformation, reincarnation and rebirth from the realms of the earthly and the human to the realms of the heavenly and the divine (D16: 3). The ellipse with pointed opposite ends, in Christian theology and symbology, is also associated with the almond seed, which is reflected in the very name *mandorla*, as a symbol i.e. metaphor of Christ's teachings as an invisible, visually imperceptible and hard-to-reach essence, hidden in a solid shell.[47] But, at the basis of this meaning is still the seed of a living being which, according to its appearance, architectonics and especially according to its essential reproductive function, coincides with the roles and meanings of the female genitalia.

The oldest iconographic parallels for the images presented here can be found in the Eneolithic culture "Trypillia - Cucuteni". On the one hand, these are the ceramic female figurines with an ellipse motif with pointed poles carved on the abdomen, which coincide quite directly with the Luristan example, but also with the real appearance of the open vulva (D16: 4, 5 compare with 7).[48] On the other hand, these are the representations painted on ceramic vessels depicting the birth of an anthropomorphic mythical character from some kind of giant macrocosmic vulva (example D16: 9).[49] The identification of the ellipse with pointed opposite ends with the open vulva is also confirmed by numerous examples from later epochs, concluding with modern ethnographic examples. Here we have in mind the zoomorphic cult objects with the character of amulets and votive gifts intended to stimulate and protect pregnancy, in which this motif is engraved on the body of a frog or fish - two animals that are the most common zoomorphic symbols of the vulva (examples D16: 8, 10).[50]

The female aspects of the ellipse with pointed poles are indirectly encoded through its equation with the wound inflicted on Christ during the Crucifixion. In the Middle Ages it was equated with the womb from which the Christian Church would be born, which, in turn, was identified with the birth of Eve from Adam's rib, located on the same part of the body as Christ's wound.[51] This leads us to the assumption that, in the mentioned Luristan standard, it could have been an allusion to birth not through the vulva, but through some kind of opening artificially pierced in the body. In accordance with the hermaphroditic character of the figure from the standards to which the mentioned type belongs (D16: 7 compare with C25: 3), this scene could be linked to the myth of Ahriman's coming into the world by rupturing the womb of his father Zurvān (see p. 441).

[46] В. В. Постников, *Русская икона*; Т. Буркхардт, *Сакральное*, 81.
[47] J. Chevalier, A. Gheerbrant, *Rječnik*, 30, 31, 386, 387.
[48] The mentioned meaning is also indicated by the fact that the ellipse in these objects is more often alternated with a rhombus (usually crossed and with four dots), one of the most common and universal symbols of the female genitalia and their reproductive functions (Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 129, 130, 139-141).
[49] Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Славян*, 188, 198, 205, 206; M. Gimbutas, *The Language*, 166, 241, 242; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 97-99.
[50] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 77, 144-146, 165-167, B23: 4, 8, 15.
[51] L. D. Graham, *Gender*, 16-24; Н. Чаусидис, *Жена и ромб*.

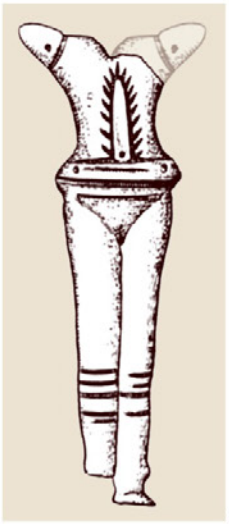
D16


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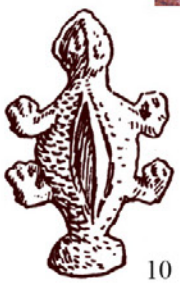

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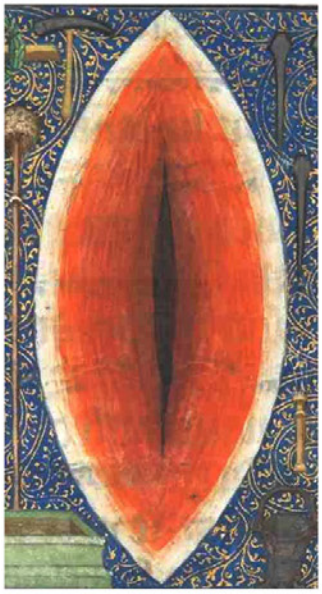

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- Figure with spread legs

The human figure depicted with legs spread in various poses is another of the archetypal images with a transhistorical and transcultural character. It is mainly characteristic of female figures in which the reproductive functions are meant to be denoted and accentuated by encoding the two processes that are directly related to them - the act of coitus (as the conception of a new life) and the act of childbirth (as its arrival into this world) (D14: 3, 6 – 9; D15: 1, 4, 10, 11; D18: 3). Present on the Luristan bronzes are the two main variants of these poses: the one with **spread thighs and bent knees** (D15: 2, 3; D17: 8; D18: 4 – 8) and the one in the form of a **"split"** in which both the thighs and lower legs are streached out in one line (D15: 1, 10, 11; D20).[52]

The first pose, in a pure i.e. realistic form, can be found on the pins with a discoid or openwork head, whereby, in some cases, the female sex of the figure is denoted through the pubis (D17: 7) and other elements such as the breasts and the arms directed towards them, as well as the head of the fetus which emerges between the spread legs (D18: 4). In other examples it can not be proven conclusively given the absence of female elements, which is why (as we have seen) the possible male or even hermaphroditic nature of the depicted character comes into play (D15: 2, 3; D18: 5 – 7). In the round openwork pins, the figure (in some cases with horns) is found in the center of the annular head formed by two arched animal protomes. Its arms, raised in an orans posture, reach towards the animals' heads, forming the "Master/Mistress of Animals" scene, typical of Luristan bronzes (D18: 5, 6, 8). Although these figures do not bear clearly denoted female features, in some cases, one can recognize breasts on them. Sometimes depicted between the spread legs is some kind of circular or rosette-like element (D15: 3; D17: 8; D18: 6) or an elongated vertical bar (D18: 8). Based on these examples, it can be perceived that the figures from the already presented pins with a square head shown in the same pose, despite the ithyphallic character, could have also depicted a woman, which is mostly indicated by the hairstyle with lateral arched locks (D15: 2, 3 compare with D18: 8). In that case, the segment between the legs, previously defined as a phallus, would acquire the meaning of the fetus that is being born from the womb of the birth-giving woman. Depicted on an already mentioned Luristan bronze belt are five such stylized figures, the central one of which is flanked by a pair of symmetrical ibexes (B31: 7).[53]

In some objects, the figure in this pose can be implicitly identified within the ambivalent elements typical of Luristan compositions. Depicted on a pin with an openwork quadrangular head is a central female figure with clearly denoted horns and breasts, flanked by two upright animals (D15: 7). The figure's legs are not depicted, but such a meaning can be acquired by the hind legs of the animals, forming a pose specific to the act of childbirth (with spread thighs and lower legs and bent knees) (compare D15: 7 with 4). A similar implicit figure can be recognized on some of the standards of the type "idols with protomes", if the pair of limbs depicted on the two large protomes (D17: 1 – 6) is added to the central figure formed in the upper half of the pillar. The same arrangement is present on the head of a Luristan openwork pin (D17: 7). It consists of a central figure with spread legs, this time with clearly denoted female features - breasts and pubis, which is encompased from below by an arch composed of two symmetrical animal protomes. Present on it is another element common to the "idols with protomes" - two animal heads on the underside of the protomes, though this time not of birds, but of some herbivorous animal (D17: 7 compare with 1 – 6). This last image has been detected by R. Ghirshman, whereby he connects the central figure with the goddess Ashi, who in the Avesta (Yasht 17) is represented as the sister of the god Sraosha and as patroness of fertility ("fecundity").[54] On Luristan openwork pins, the female figure is much more often depicted in a standing position with spread arms and legs slightly apart, whereby, in some cases, the pubis is also denoted (D10: 6).

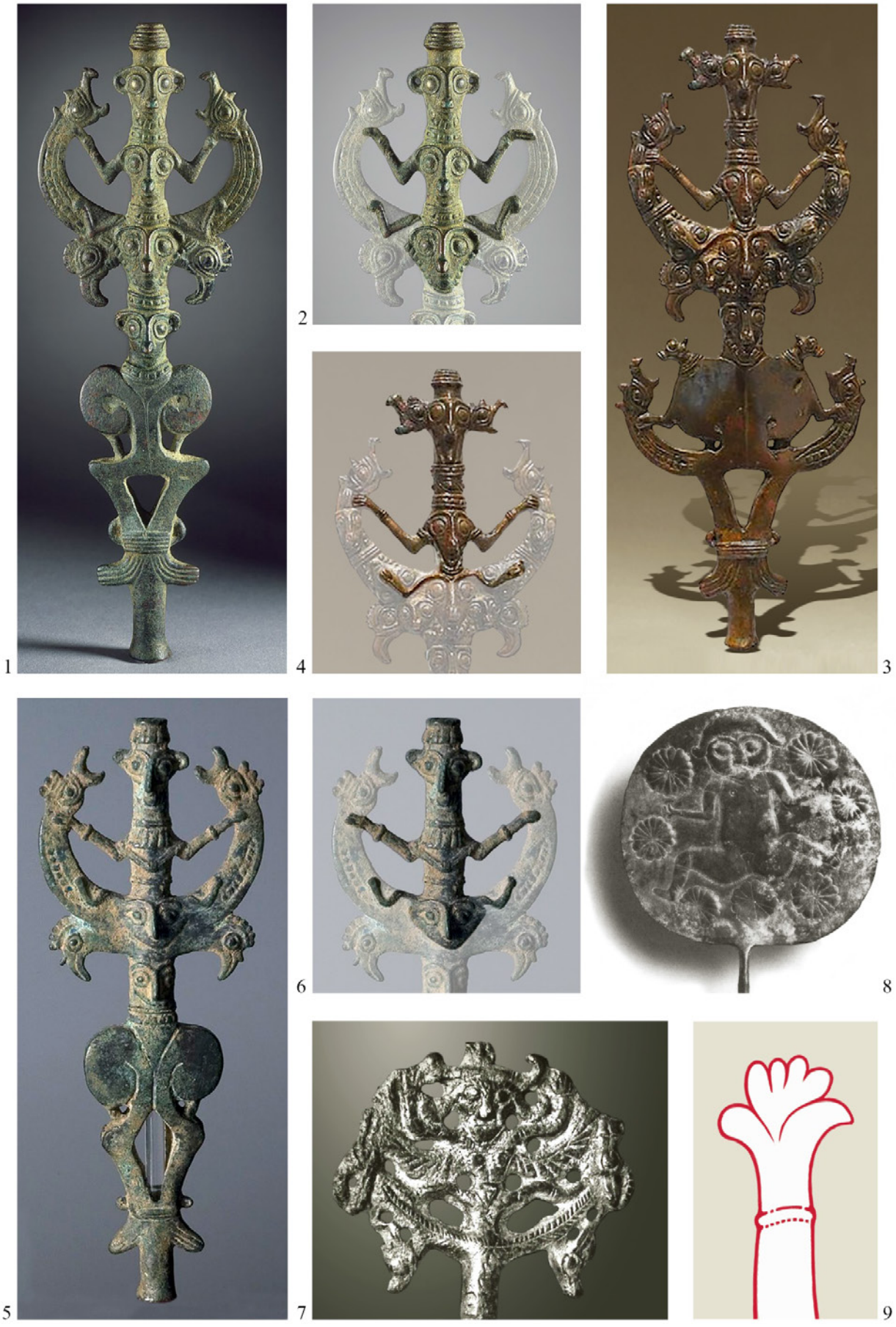
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[52] In more detail about these poses, with numerous examples: Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*; 158-176; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 135-137; Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 794-799, 801-804, 822-827.

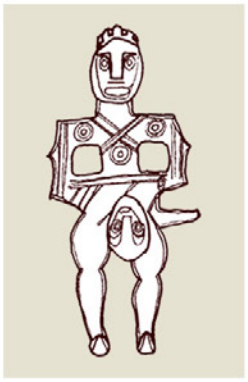
[53] P. R. S. Moorey, *Adam Collection*, Fig. 118 (according to: М. Н. Погребова, *Закавказье*, 106, 107 – Таб. IX: 5).

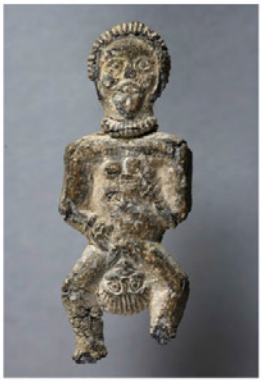
[54] R. Ghirshman, *The Art*, 46 (Fig. 54).

D17



D18


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A similar composition is present on one of the already mentioned Luristan pins with a discoid head, but with all the details that enable a clear determination of the indicated female and maternal elements (D18: 4): the figure grasps the breasts with its hands from below; depicted at the junction of the spread legs is a vulva in the form of a triangle with a vertical incision; beneath it, between the legs, is a human head turned upside down, exactly as it comes out during childbirth. Also present are the two symmetrical zoomorphic elements, this time shown not in the form of protomes but of complete animal figures (ibexes or antelopes).[55] Similarly conceptualized figurines (this time in a standing position), also with a head turned upside down between the spread legs, are present in the Iron Age cultures of the Caucasus (D18: 1),[56] but also among the metal plaques from Velestino (Thessaly) that are associated with the early medieval Slavic cultures from this region (D18: 2).[57] Depicted below the mouth of the second figure is a segment that may indicate a protruding tongue (similar to the Greek Medusa or the Indian Kali) or a beard, whereby the latter would suggest its androgyny. This could also be indicated by the lateral "growth" in the previous figure, with the meaning of a phallus or a scabbard (D18: 1). The mentioned scene, in an implicit form, can be identified on another Luristan pin, this time with an openwork quadrangular head (D15: 9). As part of the ambivalent elements that form its "chaotic" iconography, among other figures and scenes, one can recognize a central zooanthropomorphic character with a horned animal head, arms lowered along the swollen abdomen (= pregnancy) and a human head that emerges between the small legs with animal paws (= act of birth) (D15: 8 compare with 9).

The figure of a woman in a birth-giving pose flanked by two symmetrically placed animals is another example of the archetypal mythical images, universal to all mankind (examples – D15: 4; D18: 3). In our previous studies we have pointed out that, regardless of the character of the birth-giving woman (goddess, another mythical character, woman), this mythical image encodes the act of childbirth that occurs by harmonizing the dual principles of the universe (the principles of creation and destruction) represented here by the two symmetrical animals. This act of their balancing is denoted through the woman in a birth-giving pose that holds them with her hands as a gesture of control over them. Hence, in many cultures, the birth-giving goddesses are mistresses of both life (with the vulva as the place from which it comes into this world), but also of death (with the toothed mouth - *vagina dentata*, through which it is also taken back).[58]

As we have noted, the figure with spread legs can also be identified in the lower part of the "idols with protomes", in place of the hind legs of the former pair of animals (D5: 3 compare with 1; D19: 1 – 3, 8 – 10). Due to the tendency of introducing new solutions in the existing contours of the standards, the spread legs (as an indispensable feature of this character) had to be fitted into the shape of the animals, due to which they were depicted in a position that is different from the usual - with slightly spread knees but with inwardly slanted lower legs and joined feet. We have seen that the second reason for this was the identification of the legs with the rhombus as another element of the multilayered iconography and symbolism of the standards (D13; D14). As justification i.e. additional conceptualization of this unusual pose, another motif emerges. Namely, depicted at the feet of the figure, almost mandatory, are several horizontal ribs or engraved dashes that suggest the ropes by which their ankles are bound together (D19: 2, 3, 8, 9).[59]

[55] Previous interpretations of the scene: G. M. D'Erme, *The Cappella*, 412, 413; catalogical information: N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 163 (cat. 152), 164, 165; analogies and interpretations: P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 76, 77, 81 (No. 189).
[56] О. А. Брилёва, *Древняя*, 365 (кат. 571).
[57] *Woman in Childbirth* 2021; N. Chausidis, *Does the hoard*, 370, 383 (T.III: 2).
[58] Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 181-184; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 146, 147; Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 717-721; N. Chausidis, *Myth. Representations*, 16; similar interpretations of the discoid pin from the Louvre (D18: 4): P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 76, 77.
[59] Our first identifications and interpretations of this figure: Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 66, 67.

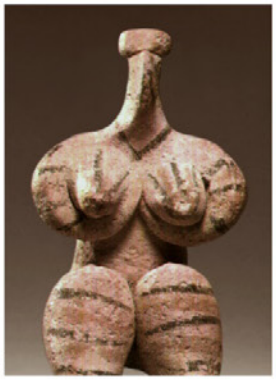
D19


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In order be brought even closer to the appearance of a woman's spread legs, the former hind limbs of the animals from the standards, i.e. the rhombus in which they were transformed, had to be modified a bit more. Thus, the upper bars of the rhombic frame were shortened, arched and brought closer to a horizontal line in order to become more similar to the shape of spread thighs (D14: 11, 12; D19: 2, 8). The lateral vertices of the rhombus are rounded to resemble knees (D19: 3, 9, 10), while the zoomorphic paws at the lower vertex are transformed into human feet or into fins (for the latter motif see D14: 11, 12; D19: 2, 3, 9; p. 275).

In the direction of completion of the indicated transformations, the other elements from the lower part of the standards had also undergone change. In most specimens the rumps of the former animals i.e. the testicles of the phallus, were transformed into two symmetrical spirals, apparently to be transfigured into arms or, according to some researchers, into the wings of the newly formed figure (D5: 1 – 3; D14: 11, 12; D19: 1 – 3, 8 – 10).[60] The first option, which resembles the pose with arms semicircularly bent under the breasts, seems more probable to us (compare with D19: 4 – 7), among other things also due to its presence on the paradigmatic Luristan pin (D18: 4) and especially because it is the most common pose of the "columnar figurines" (C26 – C28; analogies C29; C30).

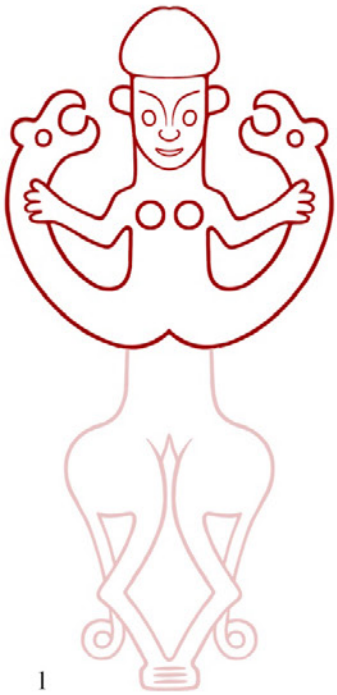
In support of this interpretation we can mention a type of early medieval bronze pendants from the territory of Ukraine and Moldova, which depict a human figure with the same features - spread legs and spirally curved arms (D33: 11 – 13 compare with 1, 2, 4). In some of the specimens there are clearly denoted breasts and female genitalia (D33: 11), but there are also those where one could also identify a male sexual organ (D33: 12) or some kind of indeterminate elongated segment (D33: 13 compare with D10: 9, 10).[61] Here, as in the Luristan standards, the relation of the curved arms with the breasts is lost so that they acquire a new meaning, i.e. the meaning of some kind of spiral tendrils i.e. shoots that transform the whole figure into some kind of phytoanthropomorphic character whose vegetal component, in some specimens, is even more pronounced (D33: 13). The indicated tendrils, observed together with the accentuated genitals, suggest the possibility that behind these figures, as well as behind the analogous figures from the Luristan standards, there stood some mythical characters associated with the growth of vegetation. This motif in a more or less stylized form also appears on the stećci (medieval tombstones) from Bosnia and Herzegovina, where it probably symbolized the resurrection of the deceased (D33: 14 compare with 11 – 13).[62]

The figure with spread legs obviously could not fit into the accentuated vertical structure of the "columnar figurines". Therefore, as we have seen, in that case, its maternal i.e. generative functions were encoded in a different way - through the depiction of a standing figure with joined legs and hands that reach towards the relevant organs (breasts, abdomen and genitals), as a gesture of their presentation, covering or offering (D11: 5 – 12). Adopted among the "standards - statuettes" was also a slightly more open variant of this pose in which the arms, lowered to the abdomen, are combined with moderately separated legs and a vulva shown not indirectly - through the pubis, but directly - through the Labia Majora (D11: 1, 2; C33: 1, 5, 8).

On the Luristan bronzes so far we have not been able to identify in a pure form the second of the mentioned maternal poses, in the form of a "split" (D15: 1, 10, 11) - only its zoomorphized variant in which the legs stretched out to the side are arched and transformed into fish fins or into animal protomes (D20). In the next few sub-chapters we will dedicate more attention to it, given its frequent presence both on the standards and on other Luristan bronzes.

[60] H. Potratz notes these transformations (according to him into wings of the anthropomorphic figure): H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 30.
[61] Illustrations: А. Н. Спасёных, *Первые*, 89.
[62] M. Wenzel, *Ukrasni*, 179, 180, T.XXX: 3.

D20



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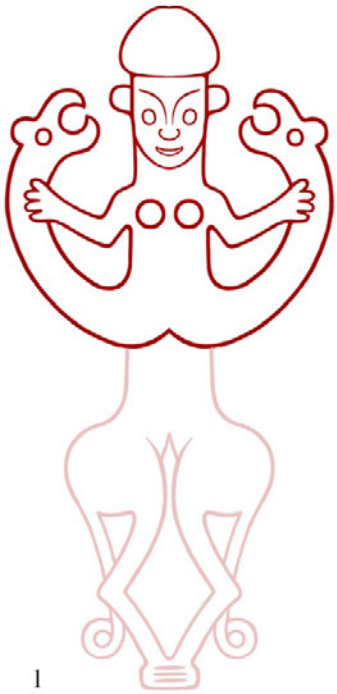


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D21



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D22



- Figure with spread legs that end in the form of zoomorphic protomes or fish fins

The pillar of the "idols with protomes", perceived together with the head at the top and the pair of large zoomorphic protomes, in one of the several iconographic layers, forms a zooanthropomorphic figure with legs spread and arched upwards, which, instead of feet, end in animal heads (D20: 1 compare with 2 – 4). In this context, it can be concluded that the arms of the figure, shaped like thin and poorly profiled strands, are actually extended towards its zoomorphized legs. Often depicted between the protomes-legs or below them is an anthropomorphic head (examples D20: 3; D21: 5 – 7). As we have already mentioned, this character from the "idols with protomes" usually has no sexual features, except for the rare examples where one could differentiate a beard, barely recognizable breasts (D20: 2; D29: 7, 8), and schematically depicted genitals (male or female). Depicted on one specimen, in the area of the chest, are four protruding segments that can be interpreted as long locks of the beard, but also as multiplicated breasts (D20: 3).

A similar arrangement also occurs in the openwork Luristan pins, consisting of a central anthropomorphic character and a pair of animal protomes that form its spread and arched legs (D20: 5 – 7). Also present are the arms outstretched towards the protomes, and often a separate head is depicted between or below them. Additionally, there are variants on similar pins where the arched legs do not end in the form of animal heads, but with some kind of triple tassels (D20: 8; D23: 1 – 3; see p. 278).

Based on extensive comparative material, in our previous studies we have tried to show that behind the described hybrid zooanthropomorphic figure actually stands a female mythical character i.e. goddess, depicted in the position of childbirth or coitus. The placement of the hands of this character on the protomes, which within this iconographic level represent her zoomorphized legs, can be interpreted with the tendency to depict how she spreads i.e. maintains them in an spread position, thus enabling childbirth or coitus. In support of the first interpretation, among other things, one could also refer to the anthropomorphic head which in numerous standards and pins is depicted in the crotch area of the figure (D29; see p. 287). If we take into account that the pair of protomes, within the previously represented iconographic levels, represent the dual forces i.e. tendencies of the universe (the force of creation and the force of destruction, the force of life and the force of death), then this pose, too, analogous to its separated variant, with individually depicted animals (D15; D18), would encode the act of birth i.e. creation which is realized after the goddess, by means of her will, carried out through the hands, keeps these forces under control i.e. puts them in balance.[63]

There are indications that the zoomorphized birth-giving woman depicts the mythical representative of the lower zones of the universe (earth, underworld, water), perhaps specifically Mother Earth or the goddess of water.[64] There is a possibility, in one of the stages of its transformation and reinterpretation, that it also acquired a hermaphroditic meaning, for which corresponding verbally fixed myths can be taken as parallels (see p. 307).

In support of the first identification, one could reference almost synchronous mythical characters with an analogous appearance, confirmed in other regions through archaeological finds and written accounts (Balkan and Apennine Peninsula, North Black Sea region). Based on its numerousness and archaicity, the Scythian "Serpent-Legged Goddess" particularly stands out from this group, in ancient sources described as the ancestress of this people (D21: 9 – 12). Persistent on the Balkans and wider in the Mediterranean is a similar mythical figure with the head of the Gorgon Medusa (D21: 2, 3; D23: 12). Quite interesting are also the appliques from Olynthus, due to the ambivalent character of the protomes (specific also to the Luristan standards) which on the one hand are legs i.e. are located where the legs of the winged figure should be, but on the other - also function as separate creatures that the main character (this time with male facial features)

[63] In detail about these and the following of our observations regarding this mythical character, with presented material and bibliography: Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 168-205; Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 184-190; N. Chausidis, *Myth. Representations*, 13, 16.

[64] N. Chausidis, *Myth. Representations*, 13, 16; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 164-205.

D23


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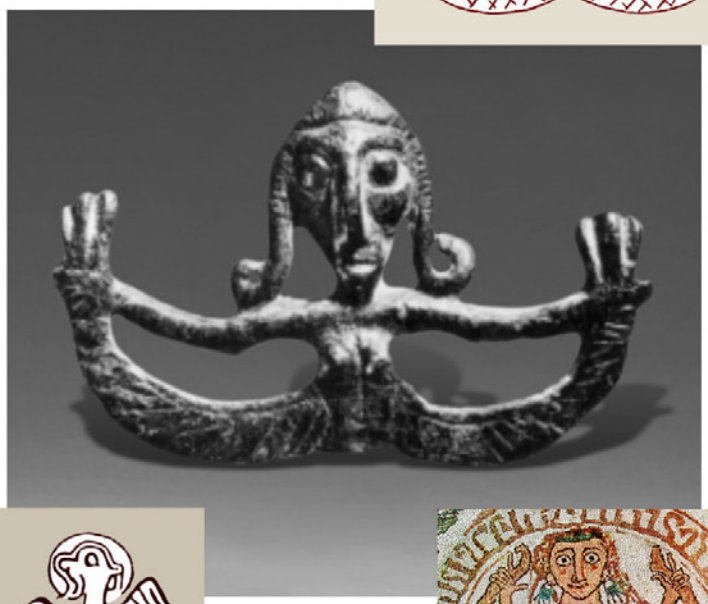

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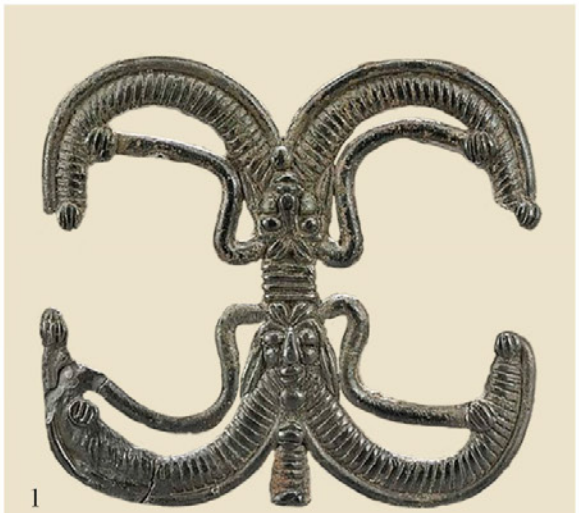

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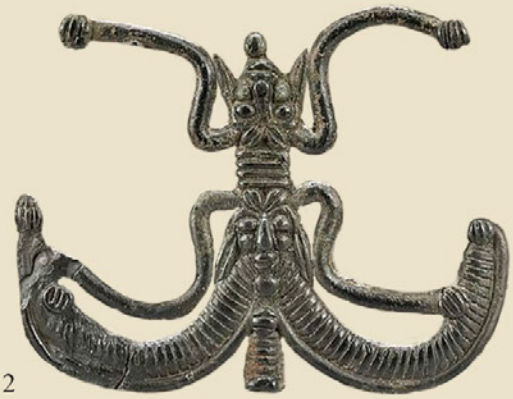

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D24


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holds them with his hands, manifesting the function of "Master of Animals" (D21: 4 compare with B23).[65] We do not rule out the possibility that this picture was formed on the basis of Eastern (perhaps even more specifically Luristan) influences which, as we shall see, in the Aegean have been confirmed by concrete finds (see p. 618).

Observing the similarities between the representations of the Scythian "Serpent-Legged Goddess" and the corresponding Luristan examples, M. N. Pogrebova is of the opinion that they are, nevertheless, more directly expressed in relation to the corresponding Greek examples. She seeks the justification for the indicated relations in the possibility that these Luristan influences affected the Scythians indirectly - through Greece, where analogous representations of the mythical birth-giving woman with spread zoomorphized legs are also known.[66]

The female mythical character with legs in the form of animal protomes, through exceptionally archaic examples, can also be found on the medieval jewelry from Eastern, Central Europe and the Balkans, with a very probable Slavic i.e. Antic origin. We are talking about several types of medieval two-plated bow fibulae where this figure, always consistently, is depicted on the elongated plate which, within the frames of the cosmological iconography of this jewelry, represents the lower zones of the universe (D22: 1 – 3, 6, 7). The high degree of similarity, as well as the area in which this jewelry originated, point to obvious genetic relations of the mentioned pictorial depictions with the older examples from the North Black Sea region (compare with D21: 9 – 12). Although unexpectedly, the same character can also be traced to the later jewelry from medieval Russia, occurring long after Christianization (D22: 9). Through sporadic, but from an iconographic aspect, quite consistently derived examples, we also find it in the circle of the Finno-Ugric populations (D22: 4), and in an ornamentalized form among the German populations (D22: 5, 10), as well as in Slavic and Balkan folk ornamentation from the 19th and early 20th century (D22: 12).[67]

A specific variant of the birth-giving woman with zoomorphic legs was depicted on a type of Luristan bronzes. In both cases they probably represent bronze pin heads that were cast separately and then added to a vertical shaft, possibly made of iron (D23: 1 – 3). We have already noted that, in the mentioned examples, the legs of this figure, instead of zoomorphic protomes, end with some kind of triple tassels. B. Goldman has hypothesized that in one of the objects, they represent fish fins, which is also indicated by the netlike hatching on the surface of the legs, to suggest the scales by which they are covered (D23: 2, 3). In both cases, the female sex of the depicted character is clearly denoted through the breasts and the hairstyle. In one of the objects, there is a not particularly clear segment that extends downwards from the genital zone, on which one could recognize an anthropomorphic head with denoted eyes, nose and pointed beard (D23: 1).[68]

In regards to the first specimen, interpretations have been expressed according to which it would represent a depiction of the Luristan goddess of water (D23: 2, 3). Presented in support of this interpretation are examples of hybrid zooanthropomorphic figures (a human with his lower part in the form of a fish), among others also medieval ones, which are depicted in the same pose, with spread legs-fins. Listed among them is also an older example from Mesopotamia, depicted on the stele of the king of Elam, Untash-Napirisha (13th century BCE) (D23: 7).[69] Depicted in the third zone of this stele is a female mythical figure that, according to existing interpretations, has legs in the form of fish tails, and bore the character of patroness of the waters.[70] We think that the first interpretation is without justification because the legs have neither contours, nor scales, nor fins of a fish. We believe that in this case they are shaped in the form of water streams that flow from under the skirt of the figure, and end in the form of vessels. Then, continuing upwards

[65] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 173-180; Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 121-125.
[66] М. Н. Погребова, *Закавказье*, 195.
[67] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 181-184, 192-205; Н. Чаусидис, *Древние*, 207-212.
[68] B. Goldman, *A Luristan*; J. Michelet, *Luristan*.
[69] B. Goldman, *A Luristan*, 55-57; on this type of zoomorphization of the legs, with numerous examples: Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 170-190; J. Leclercq-Marx, *La sirène*; L. D. Graham, *Mother Earth*.
[70] Basic information: *Stele of Untash-Napirisha* 2018.

from them are twisted strands (again with the meaning of some kind of water currents) that merge in the palms of the figure together with the analogous motifs that come here from the upper part of the composition. Based on these elements and the location of the figure in the lower zones of the stele (probably accompanied by another analogous figure), it can be concluded that it represents a mythical character that has the cosmic waters emanating from its lower part of the body, which it then distributes throughout the universe.[71]

Although on a visual level (proportions, composition) this example does not show greater closeness to the mentioned Luristan figures, from a chronological and cultural-historical aspect it could still point to their possible Elamite prototypes. This would primarily apply to the last examples with fins (D23: 1 – 3), and much less to the figures whose legs end in animal protomes (D20: 2 – 4). From a geographical aspect, as the closest parallels to the latter ones, we can take the Middle Eastern male variants of this iconographic type, usually depicted with legs metamorphosed into snake protomes. They are found from the Akkadian (D22: 8), all the way to the Late Antique period (the latter are associated with the Gnostic Abrasax) (D22: 11).[72]

Figures of this type can be identified on a variant of Luristan pins with an openwork square head (D24: 8, 9, 11). Depicted on one of them, apart from the pair of symmetrical animals, is a set of ambivalent elements in which one could recognize several parallel images - two symmetrical pairs of ibex horns, but also some kind of hybrid figures shown without the upper part of the torso, with spread and arched legs, arms placed at their ends, and a head depicted in the area of the abdomen (D24: 1 – 6). As parallels for the last element, one can present the already mentioned figures of Baubo and numerous other examples that we have identified as a reduced variant of the mythical birth-giving woman where the zoomorphized legs are not accompanied by the upper body, except in some cases by the presence of the head (D24: 7 compare with 4, 6).[73] The whole arrangement can be observed as a single figure (also present on the "idols with protomes"), consisting of arched legs, two pairs of arms, one head in the upper part, supplemented by a pair of large horns, and another one in the area of the abdomen (D24: 3, 5 compare with 12, and with D29: 1 – 5, 7, 8; D17: 1 – 6). We are also familiar with other pins of the same type where the indicated figure appears in an explicit i.e. clearer format, with clearly depicted arms, head, and even breasts (D24: 8), but also with such where the same composition is reduced and compressed even more (D24: 11).

3. Duplication of the figure with zoomorphized legs ("six-pointed standards")

In some Luristan standards there is symmetrical duplication of the figure with spread legs in the form of animal protomes, whereby one of them is oriented with its head upwards, while the other one - downwards (D25: 1, 2).[74] Before we move on to the analysis of this iconographic arrangement, at this point we must briefly present this type of standards which we have called "six-pointed standards" (see pp. 14, 15 and Fig. 2; 2a on pp. 9, 10).

These variants with their basic structure are quite different from the rest of the standards (D25: 1 – 5; D3: 4, 5; B15: 2 – 4). They represent objects that are ruled by the principle of total symmetry, and not only in the relation left = right and forward = backward, present in most other types, but also in the relation up = down, which is not applied in other standards. These objects were in fact conceptualized by extracting and mirroring the upper part of the basic prototypes to which they belonged. Most of the hitherto known "six-

[71] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 188; M. Eliade, *Patterns*, Ch, VIII/104.

[72] Examples with Abrasax: G. Bohak, *Art and power*; J. Campbell, *The mythic*, 294; L. D. Graham, *Mother Earth*, 3 (Fig. 2); Н. Чаусидис, *Требеништите*, 166, 168; И. Ефтимовски, *АВРАСАΞ*.

[73] On this reduced variant: Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 189, 190; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 185-187.

[74] H. Potratz, categorizes one of these standards as "Form M" within "II Gruppe" (J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 58, Taf. XXXVIII: 237).

D25



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pointed standards" can be treated as derivatives of the type "idols with protomes", of both its variants – the one in which the central figure between the large protomes is depicted with arms (D25: 1, 2 compare with D31; D32), as well as the other without arms (D25: 3 – 5; D3: 4, 5 compare with 1 – 3, 6, 7). We are also familiar with one specimen based on the "zoomorphic standards", the upper and lower halves of which, however, are not completely symmetrical (B15: 2 compare with B13). In fact, it is a derivative of the later variants of "zoomorphic standards", to the lower part of which was added another pair of protomes analogous to the upper one. Simultaneously, the rear end of the animals was preserved in this part, so that the protomes acquired the meaning of their tails by tips supplemented with zoomorphic heads.

This means that the mentioned objects, unlike other standards, may have not been conceptualized solely for placement on a support or some other surface with a clearly defined vertical orientation. It seems likely that they could have also been laid horizontally, hung on a rope, swung, rotated, or perhaps held in hand. The symmetricity of these objects per vertical could indicate their rotation by 180 degrees due to certain symbolic i.e. ritual reasons.

The question of the reasons that initiated the transformation of these standards remains open. As a paradigm in discovering its motives and the character of these objects, help may be sought in the six-pointed objects and pictorial motifs of similar form present in the Middle East and the Mediterranean (in the latter case known under the term **κεραυνόσ**), as well as the analogous **vajra** within Hindu culture (D25: 6, 7 compare with 1 – 5). Common to all three categories of objects is that they depict the weapons of thunder gods, equated with thunder and lightning, with which they fight the chthonic forces. The relations with the Mediterranean examples and with the vajra should not surprise us if we take into account numerous other motifs that are common to the Luristan bronzes and to these cultures (I10 – I12).

If one takes into account both faces of these standards, it follows that, in this case, depicted on their surface are four figures of the above-mentioned mythical birth-giving woman (D25: 1, 2). Such examples also occur within the frames of the subtype without arms, where this figure is less pronounced (D25: 3 – 5). Analogous to the standards with duplicated phalluses (D3: 4, 5), the reason for such organization could be sought on a purely visual, and on a semiotic level. Apart from the likable symmetricity, it would also be due to the aspiration to point out, or in a magical way to cause, the duplication of the power i.e. influence of the depicted goddess or, in the specific case, her birth-giving i.e. creative power to be directed towards certain parts of space (up and down or to all sides). The second form of dispersion could relate to the level of time (between the past and the future), whereby one of the figures of birth-giving women would bear the role of a mother that gives birth to the other (her daughter), as an act of transfer of her birth-giving power into the future, thus ensuring the infinite duration of the creative principle. The complete symmetricity of the birth-giving female figures could also be understood as an infinite line of fertility in which they mutually and alternately give birth to each other (D38: 5 – 11).[75] There are indications of the presence of this mythical image on the "idols with protomes" in another format (D39; see pp. 297, 299). The two figures could also potentially form the image of hierogamy, which we discuss in the following sub-chapter.

4. Hierogamy

Hierogamy, too, was depicted within archaic cultures through a combination of two symmetrical figures, such as the one presented in the previous sub-chapter, whereby one of the figures bore male, while the other - female features (D26 compare with D25: 1 – 5).[76] The fact that in the "six-pointed standards" the two

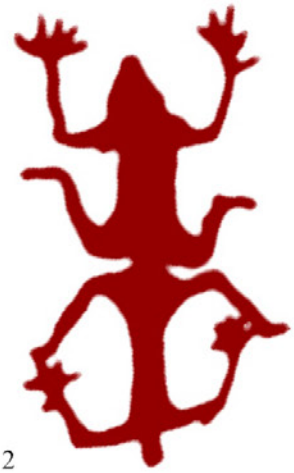
[75] On these concepts of dispersion through space and time: Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 123, 124; Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 717-719.

[76] For our observations on this mythical image, with presented bibliography: Н. Чаусидис, *Хиерогамија*, 59-65; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 374-383; Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 806-810.

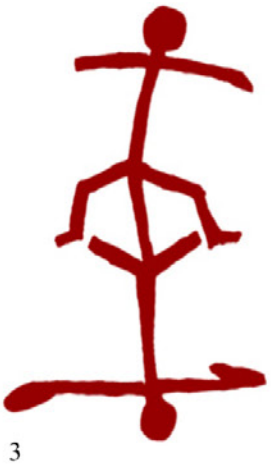
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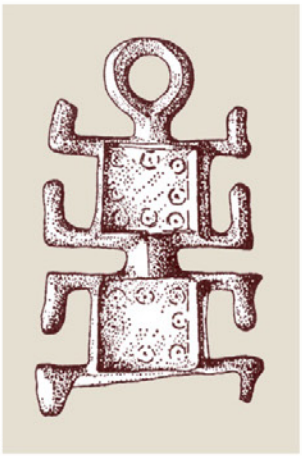
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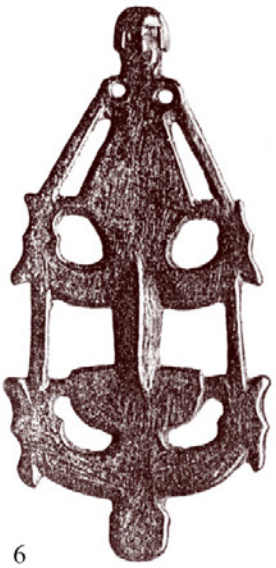
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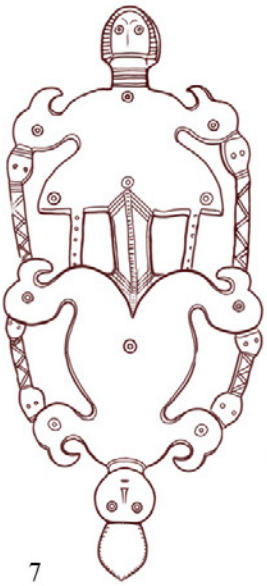
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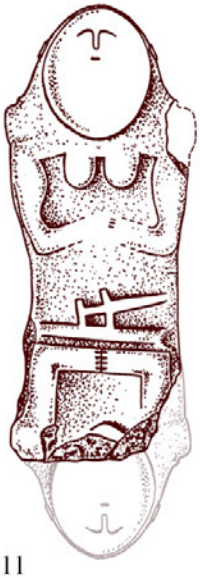
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figures are identical (regardless whether we would treat them as male or female) could be justified by the posibility that it is an older paradigm, which in the specific objects had lost its original meaning. We have indications for a similar duplication on an Iron Age pendant from Mati (Albania), also in an iconographic sense not consistently executed to completion (D26: 5).[77] If we take into account that on the "idols with protomes" from which these standards derive there was another composition with the same meaning, represented through the male and female sex organ (D2), then this one can be understood as maintaining the same meaning in a new completely anthropomorphized format.

On the "idols with protomes", one can also assume the existence of a third iconographic variant of hierogamy that would be a combination of the two previous ones. Namely, if the figure with spread zoomorphized legs is perceived as a whole together with the phallus covering the corpus, one gets a scene of coitus in which the male component is not represented personally - with the whole figure of the man, but partially - only through the male sex organ (D27: 1, 3 – 5). In support of such a potential interpretation, we reference corresponding parallels from different periods and cultures which, due to their unrealistic character, go in favor exactly of the sacral and mythical symbolism of this scene - as a pictorial representation of hierogamy i.e. the marriage between the God-Father and the Goddess-Mother (D27: 2, 6 – 8).[78]

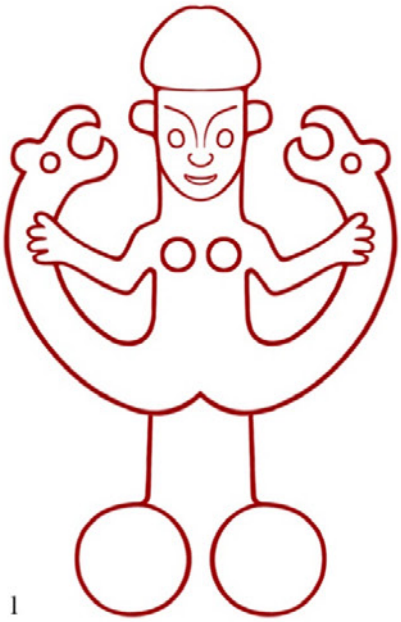
Although in the examples from the Indo-European circle it is more probable that the male participant in the hierogamy is a representative of the sky, while the female - of the lower zones of the universe, one should also not exclude the opposite variants (analogous to the Egyptian divine pair Nut and Geb – E7: 10), especially due to the positioning of the female character in the upper zone of the standards and the orientation of the phallus from the bottom up (D27: 3 – 5).[79]

Within the circle of Luristan bronzes, so far we know of only one explicit pictorial depiction of coitus that could bear the character of hierogamy. It is a depiction from a flat-headed pin from the LACMA collection, executed in the hammering technique (D28: 3). Here the two figures are in a standing position, whereby the female is slightly leaning, with arms extended forwards, while the male penetrates into her from behind holding the phallus with one hand, the other placed on her back.[80] The mythical character of the composition is given to it by the following three elements. The first one is the third figure, preserved partially behind the male one (apparently with zoomorphic features on the head), the second element is the scene taking place under a tree, and the third - the pair of symmetrical animals depicted left and right of it. The second element can be understood in two ways that do not contradict each other - as a **symbol of the sacred space** in which the action takes place (cosmic center, holy ground, analogous to the Garden of Eden) or as a **Tree of Life** that denotes and/or stimulates the generative forces of the participants in the depicted sexual act. Besides the "original sin" in the Garden of Eden, as an analogy for this composition one can also present an implicit scene of coitus (accompanied by a tree) depicted on a circular stone slab that covered an urn from the Bronze Age discovered in Denmark (D28: 1).[81] Depictions of coitus with a similar composition of the figures, but without the tree, appear on terracotta relief plaques from Mesopotamia (Kish, second half of the 2nd millennium BCE) (D28: 10).[82]

Numerous depictions of an explicit or implicit sexual act are found as part of the miniature bronze plastics from the "Amlash" culture (D28: 4 – 9). Given the chronological, cultural and geographical proximity of these objects to the Luristan bronzes, we can take them as an indirect argument in support of the presented interpretations. The simplicity and the realistic character of these depictions raise the question for the modern viewer whether in this case they represent **mythical images of hierogamy** or **ordinary scenes from**

[77] Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 804-810.
[78] On this type of pictorial representations: Н. Чаусидис, *Хиерогамија*, 71, 72.
[79] For these examples: Н. Чаусидис, *Хиерогамија*, 61; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 375 (Д32: 2).
[80] *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020, M.76.97.163.
[81] *Men and women* 2020; Н. Чаусидис, *Хиерогамија*, 73, 76 (Т.III: 8).
[82] P. R. S. Moorey, *The Terracotta*, 91, 92, Pl. XXV.

D27



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everyday life. This dichotomy is characteristic of the modern profane view of sexual activity that is not typical of archaic cultures. In cultures with such a character, the sexual act, like many other everyday activities, was sacralized to the degree that it was seen as an earthly epiphany of the primeval sacred marriage between the primordial God-Father and the primordial Goddess-Mother. The sexual act has preserved such a status to this day within the frames of Tantrism and some other religious teachings in India.[83]

The myth of hierogamy is known in all parts of the planet and in all periods, therefore, on this occasion, we will not engage in comparative studies of its verbal forms that would correspond to the presented images. We will reference only a few sources that indicate their presence in ancient Iranian culture which could be put in a more direct relation with them. First off, these are some ancient Iranian traditions that can serve as verbal paradigms of the mythical images presented here.

The Roman author **Hippolytus** notes a belief by Zoroaster according to which the entire universe originated from the **primordial father and mother**, the former being **light**, while the latter - **darkness**. An analogous mythical notion is also present in the **Pahlavi texts** where **fire and water** are spoken of as man and woman, brother and sister, husband and wife, and that from their union arose "all becoming, ripening, and order". The same is contained in the Zurvanite tractate **Ulamā-yi Islām** according to which Zurvān did not create Ohrmazd and Ahriman directly, but first created fire and water and "when he had brought them together, Ohrmazd came into existence".[84]

Elements of hierogamy are also present in the Mazdean myth of the creation of the first married couple **Māšyē** and **Māšyānē**, which were born from the rhubarb plant sprouted from the seed of **Gayōmart** that fell to the ground after his death. The marital aspect of this action comes to the fore if we take into account that in it, the earth is represented as **Spandarmat** - a mythical character who in other places is referred to as the **"mother of creation"**.[85] In some sources the same concept of creation is presented in regards to the creation of **Gayōmart** himself: "From the clay from which Gayōmart was made (he made) man, emitting him in the form of seed into Spandarmat (the Earth): and Gayōmart was fashioned from Spandarmat and was born." This passage is considered a result of confusion, whereby it is suggested that the creation of this character was caused after the seed of **Spihr** had fallen to the ground ("The meaning of the passage must then be that the seed of Spihr fell into earth which in due course gave birth to Gayōmart").[86] There are indications that within Zurvanite traditions, the first human married couple was conceived by **Gayōmart** (Righteous Man) and **Jēh** (Whore), whereby the good components of man originated from the former, while the bad ones - from the latter.[87] As a common paradigm for these actions, one can take the **marriage between the First Man and the Earth Goddess**.[88] Behind the presented images of the sacred marriage may also be the action of **coitus of the first humans** created by Ohrmazd, although in Zoroastrianism it is generally given a negative character (they will eat the twins that were born from their relationship).[89]

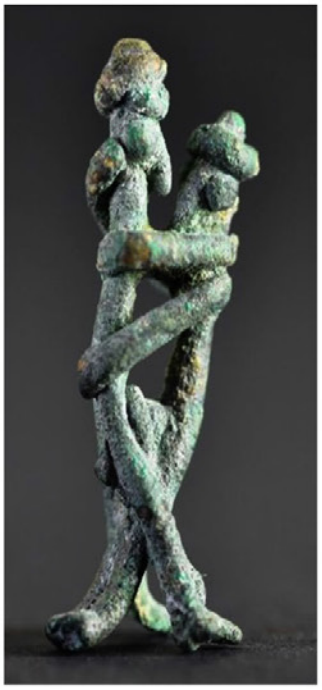
This secondary and negative status of the female principle, and hence of the woman, is reflected in the **Greater Bundahishn** where Ohrmazd justifies the creation of the woman with the following words: "... thou art a helper to me, for from thee is man born, but thou dost grieve me who am Ohrmazd. But had I found another vessel from which to make man, never would I have created thee, whose adversary is the whore species. But I sought in the waters and in the earth, in plants and cattle, in the highest mountains and deep valleys, but I did not find a vessel from which righteous man might proceed except woman whose adversary is

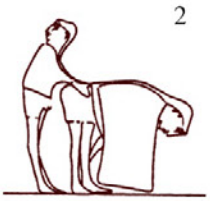
[83] On this issue: Н. Чаусидис, *Хиерогамија*, 51, 52.
[84] (Hippolytus 1. 2. 12-13); R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 447, 448; R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 215, 231, 232.
[85] (Greater Bundahishn 100. 14; 101. 2-5); R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 136, 137, 184, 191, 192; R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 266, 267.
[86] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 136, 137.
[87] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 191, 192, 238.
[88] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 192.
[89] R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 268.

D28

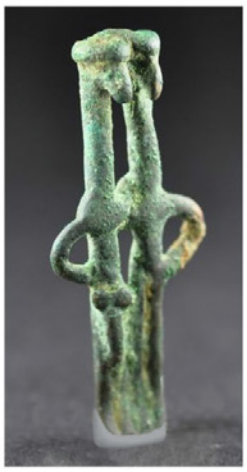

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the whore." Such an aspect of the woman is also reflected in the demon **Jēh**, whose name, according to some interpretations, bears the meaning of *prostitute*, which, among other things, also gave origin to menstruation, after she was **kissed by Ahriman**.[90] In this context, important to us is the aspect of hierogamy contained in the mentioned paragraph, which consists in the sexual intercourse (probably indirect) between the supreme god Ohrmazd and the woman (as a paradigm of women in general) in order to create the human race.

The first of the presented myths seems the most interesting to us, because it contains a floral component (the rhubarb plant from which Māšyē and Māšyānē were born) that interferes with the tree from the mentioned pin (D28: 3). In relation to the other myths, one could propose the identification of the third character with a zoomorphic head (depicted in the same scene) as being Ahriman, due to the fact that zoomorphic components are often present in his appearance and because he is the main initiator and driving force of the indicated actions. Contrary to Ohrmazd, Ahriman is represented in the sources as dark and smelly, which may indicate his animalistic appearance, especially given the indications that he had a leonine head.[91]

5. Human head between the zoomorphized legs of the birth-giving figure

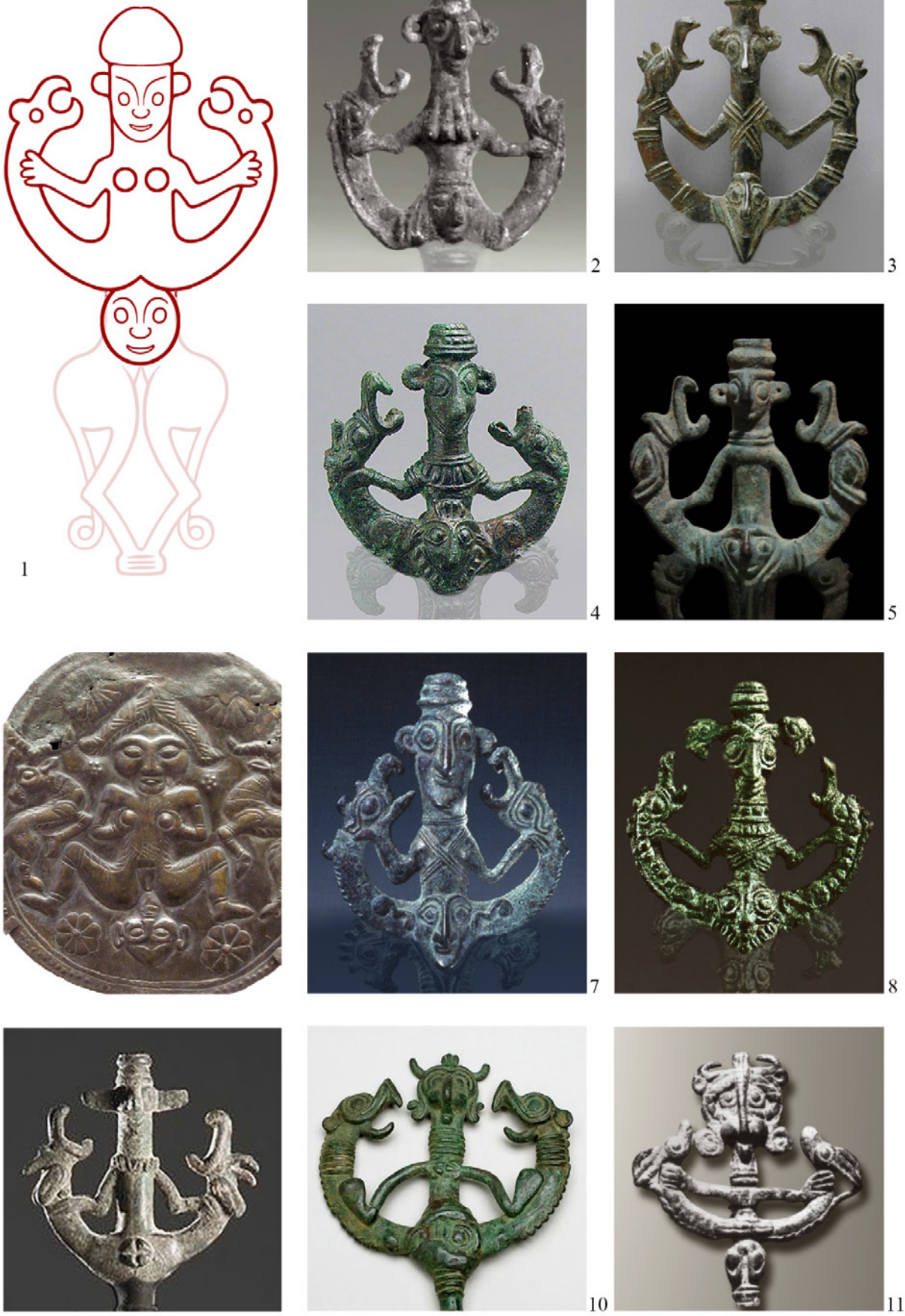
In a large number of "idols with protomes", a human head is depicted in the groin area of the figure with spread zoomorphized legs. In some cases it is part of a more complex figure (D31: 3; see p. 291), but sometimes it is also present as a separate element (D29: 1; D20: 3). If we perceive it by itself, and in combination with the spread legs of the figure, characteristic of the birth-giving pose, we get an arrangement composed of a zooanthropomorphic female character from whose crotch emerges a human head (D29: 1 compare with 2 – 5, 7, 8). An analogous composition can also be identified on the Luristan openwork pins, even in a purer form, due to the fact that in this case, no other elements are added to the head that would round it off as a complete figure (D29: 10, 11).[92]

This representation can be interpreted as a **sequence of the act of childbirth** during which the newborn's head comes out of the birth-giving figure's genitals, while its body is still in her womb. Such a meaning can be sensed in the interpretation by W. Culican, according to which the heads placed on the torso of the main character depicted on the "idols with protomes" may, among other things, symbolize its maternal character and the human or divine life that emerges from its womb.[93] In support of this interpretation one can reference several arguments. First off, it is the already presented Luristan pin, on the discoid head of which there is an analogous, but much more realistically executed, scene (D29: 6; D18: 4). The difference is that the spread legs of the birth-giving figure in this case are depicted realistically, without the zoomorphic protomes, while the head coming out of her womb is turned upside down - just as the head of the newborn is oriented during delivery. As a second argument, one can take several "idols with protomes" where the head, located at the junction of the two protomes (= legs), is surrounded by ribs that may suggest the pubis and lips of the dilated vulva through which the newborn character emerges (D29: 3, 5).

As parallels to this interpretation, one can present several Celtic analogies (D30: 6, 7) as well as later early medieval examples from the Germanic and Slavic cultural circles. As being closer, we consider those examples where the birth-giving woman is also depicted with spread zoomorphized legs. The first of the Slavic examples is one of the metal plaques from Velestino (Thessaly) where the birth-giving figure is reduced to its legs and a zoomorphic head, whereby the head emerging between the protomes is also turned upside down (D30: 2). The second one is a subgroup of two-plated bow fibulae whose elongated plate is

[90] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 74, 75, on Jēh: 183-192, citation 188; R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 234; И. Л. Крупник, *Зурванизм*, Глава III.3, (107-109).
[91] И. Л. Крупник, *Зурванизм*, 53, 55; J. Duchesne-Guillemin, *Ahriman*, 192.
[92] Our previous observations on this scene from the standards: Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 216-218.
[93] У. Куликан, *Персы*, 23, 24.

D29



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occupied by the birth-giving figure, while the semicircular one - by the head (D30: 9 – 11). Of the Germanic examples, it is once again a two-plated bow fibula on which both key elements are present (D30: 1; see pp. 291, 375, 377).[94]

a) Birth of the anthropomorphized sun

Several facts could point to the interpretation that the above-described scene actually depicted the birth of the sun, represented as a personalized solar disk or as a completely anthropomorphized figure. Firstly, it is the presence of more realistic parallels for the same scene (mainly Scythian and Etruscan) where, between the legs of the goddess (also spread and zoomorphized), the sun emerges in the form of a discoid segment surrounded by rays (D30: 3 – 5).[95] As a second argument, one can take an "idol with protomes" in which, depicted in the same place, instead of a head, is a protruding circle with an engraved cross (D29: 9). Both elements, especially if mutually combined, are considered to be the most common solar symbols, whether or not they would be treated as a circle i.e. ring with an inscribed cross or as a wheel with four spokes.[96]

We have already said that in archaic cultures there is an aspiration to **animate, personalize and deify the sun**, due to which the solar disk is often supplemented with a human face i.e. is depicted as a detached human head. Taking this into account, in the specific case it could exactly be such a scene in which the radiant rosette from the previous variant is alternated with an anthropomorphized solar disk, in order to emphasize the birth of the solar god.[97] Linking this composition with the verbal myths about the birth of the sun, we point to the possibilities according to which the mother of the sun, in this case, could have been the **Mother-Earth**, from which the sun really rises ("is born") in the morning, but also the **Goddess-Dawn** (usually personified as a female mythical figure) in whose redness (= blood) the morning sun is born.[98]

The solar character of the newborn head is also indicated by the presented analogies: in one of the Celtic examples it is represented through the three segments under the head (D30: 6), while in the Slavic fibulae - the five rounded "growths" that surround the semicircular plate of the fibulae on which the head is depicted (D30: 9 – 11). In both cases, these elements could indicate the rays that are spreading from the solar disk.

The cosmological or more specifically the solar character of this composition from the standards is also indicated by the interpretations of G. M. D'erme which refer to the mentioned birth-giving scene from the silver discoid pin (D29: 6). According to him, the palmettes depicted in the upper part symbolize the solar, male i.e. celestial principle, while the rosettes signify the lunar, female and terrestrial principle.[99] Although in global terms we agree with such a cosmological and solar approach, the inverse meanings of the mentioned symbols seem more plausible to us: the male, solar, and celestial character of the rosettes (based on their visual resemblance to the radiant solar disk) and the female, terrestrial and lunar character of the palmettes (based on the belonging of the palmette to the plant world that is in relation to earth and water).

As a textual paradigm of the mentioned iconographic arrangements from the Luristan bronzes, one can take the following mythical action, which relates to the ancient Iranian traditions that in terms of territory should correspond most to these objects. Namely, in the writings of **Eznik of Kolb** (5th century CE) it is said that, during the creation of the world, Ohrmazd did not know how to create light. His brother Ahriman advised him to engage in sexual intercourse with his mother, by way of which the sun would be born (**Mihr** i.e. **Mitra**), but also with his sister, as a product of which the moon would be born. The variant with the sun is

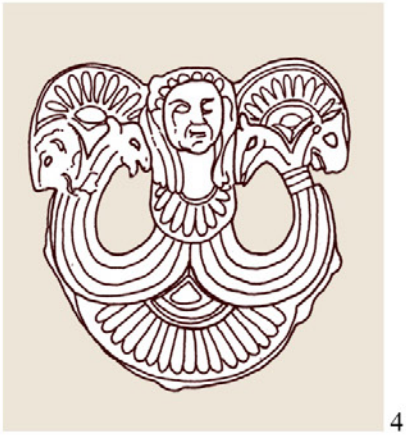
[94] Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 216-218, T.LII; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 194, B35.
[95] Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 216-218, T.LI, T.LII; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 194, 195, B35.
[96] Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 457-461.
[97] Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 260-275; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 337-339.
[98] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 194, 195; Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 343-347.
[99] G. M. D'Erme, *The Cappella*, 412, 413.

D30

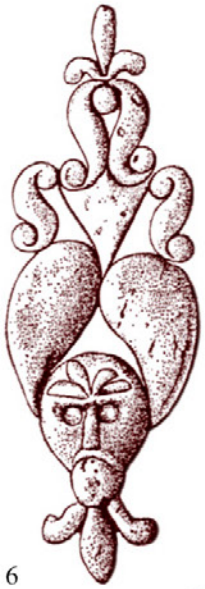

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also noted in one Manichaean fragment, as well as in several Syrian texts. It is considered that the fabula of this myth belongs to Zurvanism.[100] Although in the specific myth the mother of the sun is a nameless goddess, in the shadow of the supreme Ohrmazd, behind this action there must have been some more archaic paradigm in which she bore a much higher status - of the Goddess-Mother, while the incestuous act had the character of hierogamy.

b) Personalized genitalia

The depiction of the anthropomorphic head i.e. face in the crotch area of the figure with legs in the form of animal protomes can also symbolize the female genitalia, again as a form of their personalization and deification (D29). This concept is based on the symbolic equation of the elements of the upper and lower halves of the human body. In this context, the mouth of the depicted head would symbolize the vulva, while the nose and tongue would be equivalent to the phallus.[101] Thereby, both elements together, especially if they are emphasized to a degree of grotesqueness (elongated nose, open mouth with protruding tongue), could also refer to coitus. The male features of this head (mustache and beard), also present on the Luristan standards (D29: 4, 8), in this context would encode the pubic hairs that surround the genitals. We do not exclude the possibility that behind the grotesqueness of this character (wide eyes, smiling or open mouth) is the aspiration to encode the **vagina dentata**. This procedure lies at the basis of the terrifying mouths of the Hellenic Gorgon Medusa (D18: 3; D21: 2, 3; D23: 12) and the Hindu Kali-Durga, which function as symbols of the negative aspects of the vulva, behind which is the destructive side of the birth-giving goddess who is responsible not only for birth (= coming into this world through her vulva), but also for death, understood as devourment through her "anti-vulva" (toothed vulva).[102] We present an example which, although signified as "Typhon", perfectly illustrates this concept. It represnts a drawing from the book "Arcana arcanissima", apparently based on an older template (D30: 8). It shows a naked woman with spread legs, supplemented by the head of some animal (seemingly a wolf) depicted in the area of her abdomen and genitals, probably as a symbol of the destructive aspects of her vulva. Thereby, the torch in one of her hands symbolizes the life that she gives, while the bloody axe in the other - its taking away.[103] Particularly interesting within these interpretations is the motif from the mentioned early medieval fibula (from Fridajthorpe) attributed to the Germanic peoples (D30: 1). Depicted on its elongated plate is a zoo-anthropomorphic figure between whose spread legs, represented as animal protomes, is a grotesque human head, with a pointed nose, extending from whose mouth downwards is an elongated segment that apparently denotes the protruding tongue equated with the phallus. A similar motif, moved slightly above, also appears on the related fibula from Tabingen (F4: 3 compare with 2).[104]

6. Figure depicted in the lower half of the "idols with protomes"

We have already mentioned that in most "idols with protomes", in their lower half, under the spread zoomorphized legs of the birth-giving figure, one can identify an entire human figure, accompanied by various additional iconographic elements (D31: 3). Its head is represented by the anthropomorphic face depicted between the two large zoomorphic protomes or below them, while the body is formed i.e. built upon the

[100] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 63, 64, 101, 147, 435, 436; R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 213; И. Л. Крупник, *Зурванизм*, 23, 81-83.
[101] In detail about this concept: И. Маразов, *Маскáта*, 19, 20; Н. Чаусидис, *Устата*; Н. Чаусидис, *Нос*от.
[102] J. Marler, *An archaeomythological*; И. Маразов, *Маскáта*; G. Devereux, *Bauba*, 44, 98, 99, 135, 186, 195-197; E. Neumann, *The Great Mother*, 168-170; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 138, 139, 191.
[103] M. Maierus, *Arcana*, (cover page), without the indicated interpretation.
[104] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 395, Д33: 4; Д33: 3; for the objects: H. Kühn, *Die germanischen*, Taf. 103: 40, 4; Taf. 103: 40, 7.

elements of the previously elaborated iconographic layers (D31: 1 – 3). Thus, the rumps of the animal pair from the zoomorphic iconographic level or the testicles of the phallus are identified with the stylized arched arms or wings of this figure, while the hind legs of the animals become its legs. In some cases, between its arms and thighs, even the tails survive in the form of thin threads with curved tips, transformed into small loops formed laterally from the feet (D31: 1 compare with 4 – 6).[105] In many "idols with protomes", this character has an extremely elongated neck that is often divided with various horizontal ornaments (D33: 4; D39). Some details could point to the nature and functions of this character as well as to certain mythical actions related to it.

We should mention once again that, in some standards, the rhombus formed by the hind legs of the animal pair is modified into the legs of this anthropomorphic figure, whereby the upper part raised and rounded in order to suggest as much as possible to half-spread thighs and knees (D31: 3 – 6). Such an adjustment is not undertaken in all standards, perhaps with the intention that the rhombic contours of the legs continue to point to the generative functions of the figure and/or its female sex, given the relations of this geometric image with the open vulva as a symbol of fertility and the female principle (D13). There are also numerous examples where the legs of this figure completely abandon the contours of a rhombus, acquiring a shape closer to the real appearance of this part of the human body (D32). In some "idols with protomes", there is a vertical bar extending between the spread legs of this figure, which overlaps with the pillar of the standards. As we have mentioned, in these cases it could suggest the hypertrophied phallus of the depicted character, although in the specimens that we are familiar with, it is never finalized into a more realistic representation (D32: 6).

We have already pointed out that the feet of this character from the "idols with protomes" are shaped specifically, in the form of rounded segments notched with parallel grooves, which could indicate the tendency to metamorphose them into **fish fins** or **frog feet** (D33: 1, 2, 4). The first of the mentioned interpretations is also noted by H. Potratz, referring to F. Hančar who identifies similar fins at the ends of the legs of a large animal from some Caucasian belt buckles that he puts in relation to certain myths associated with water (examples of such buckles, but without the indicated element B12). H. Potratz leaves open the question of whether this is an indicator of similar traditions also in Luristan, given the modest knowledge of the myths of the ancient inhabitants of this region. But, it nevertheless points to the possible relations of this element with the lunar goddess (whom he considers the main character of the standards) in context of the line **moon – water – fertility**.[106] In another place, he also supports this identification with the already mentioned motif from the stele of Untash-Napirisha (D23: 7).[107] We consider that the second comparison is justified only in the most general sense because the spread legs of the figure depicted there do not have ends in the form of fins, but are entirely grooved out, so that they look more like some kind of water streams that end in the form of vessels.

The existence of this character on the standards is supported by the already discussed Luristan pins where an analogous figure is depicted, this time with archlike spread legs, the ends of which are also shaped in the form of fish fins (D23: 1 – 3). Given these similarities, the already mentioned pictorial representations of ancient and medieval European mermaids can be taken as parallels in this case too (D23: 4 – 6, 8 – 11; D33: 6 – 9). As we will see further, despite the dominant female nature of these Luristan figures, it is not excluded that behind them also stood a male character, analogous to the numerous variations of ancient Mediterranean chthonic mythical characters such as Typhon and Triton, with legs in the form of fish fins (D34: 6, 7).

[105] This figure with the mentioned elements seems to be also noticed by H. Potratz (H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 30, 31).
[106] F. Hančar, *Zur Deutung*, 63-75 (cited according to H. Potratz, *Die Luristanbronzen*, 211); H. Potratz, *Die Luristanbronzen*, 211; H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 28, 29, 32.
[107] J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 53, 61, Taf. XXXIII: 212-214.

In some examples, above the feet of the indicated character, one can notice a few horizontal notches, ribs or a short strip with a bordure of circles, that would indicate their binding with ropes or a belt, to each other or to some kind of pole, which in this case would be represented by the pillar of standards (D34: 1 – 5; see p. 269).[108]

We think that the mentioned details may indicate the chthonic nature of the depicted character, whereby the spread legs and their rhombic contour would encode its generative functions, the fins - its relations with water and the lower zones of the universe, while the binding would function as a mythical theme, typical for chthonic characters, related to the principle of staticity and stagnation as forms of control i.e. blocking their negative effect (see p. 307).

The small zoomorphic figures depicted in the lower part of the "zoomorphic standards" (at the hind legs of the former pair of animals) also survive in the "idols with protomes", but mainly as protomes, primarily of birds i.e. roosters. In those specimens in which an anthropomorphic figure appears in this part, they acquire the meaning of the pair of symmetrical protomes placed in the area of the figure's arched arms or wings (D35: 2, 3 compare with B9 – B11).[109]

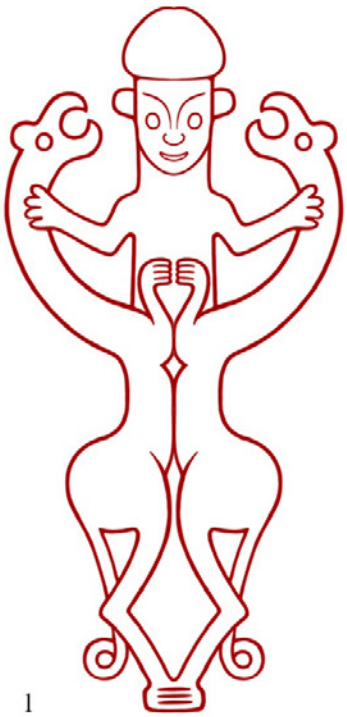
a) Male mythical character

Judging by the features of the head (mustache and beard) it can be concluded that the figure from the lower part of the "idols with protomes" often depicts some male mythical character that is born from the womb of the zoomorphized birth-giving goddess (D34: 1 – 4). This could have been the aforementioned solar god, especially in the beardless variants that would be most appropriate in regards to the young age of the newborn (D33: 1, 2, 4). The same meaning could have been borne by the bearded examples whose properly arranged locks (slightly resembling a lion's mane) suggest the sun's rays (D34: 2). In one case, the head is supplemented by large animal ears indicating the zoomorphic nature of this figure (D34: 5; D35: 6).

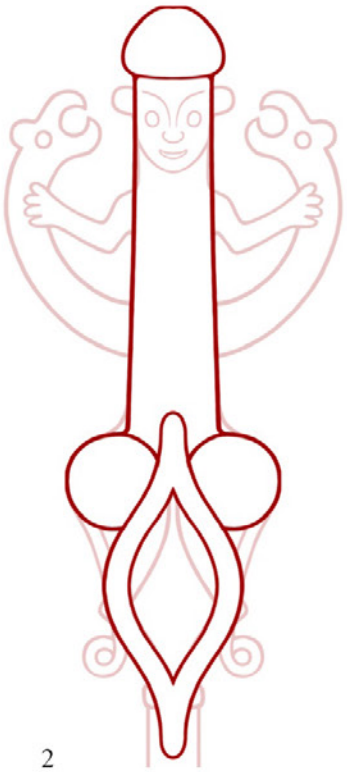
The noted elements do not provide great opportunities for more specific determination of any of the following potential functions of the depicted character: **solar god, impregnator of the birth-giving goddess** or **chthonic god**. There are examples, in various mythologies, where all these functions are unified in one character. He is the son, husband and lover, and even the father of the goddess that he impregnates before his death, in order to be resurrected through her (for example, Attis in relation to Cybele and Osiris in relation to Isis). The identification of the nature of this character can be aided by a Scythian applique intended for covering a horse's forehead, depicted on which is a similar iconographic arrangement (D35: 4). In this case, formed between the curved motifs depicted under the multiplicated legs of the female mythical character that end in the form of animal protomes, is a half-hidden male face with accentuated chthonic features: hypnotic eyes, sharp nose, mustache and open mouth from which floral motifs and snakes emerge (on the chthonic features of this character see p. 295).

If the character with zoomorphic legs depicted above these figures is treated as a hermaphrodite (for which there are serious indications), then it can be identified with the Iranian god Zurvān, whereby the male figure below him would represent one of the two sons that are born from his womb. If one takes into account the solar features of this character, than it could be Ohrmazd, while the chthonic ones would point to Ahriman (see p. 443).

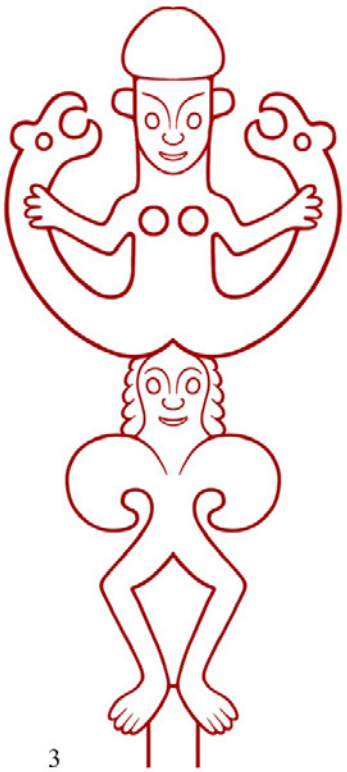
[108] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки,* 289, 290.
[109] Examples: O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze,* 149, 15 (No. 235-237).



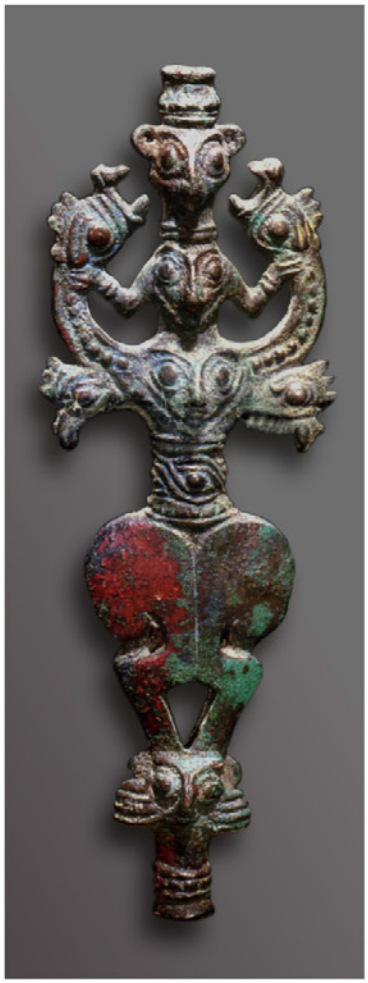
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b) Character with a mustache and beard

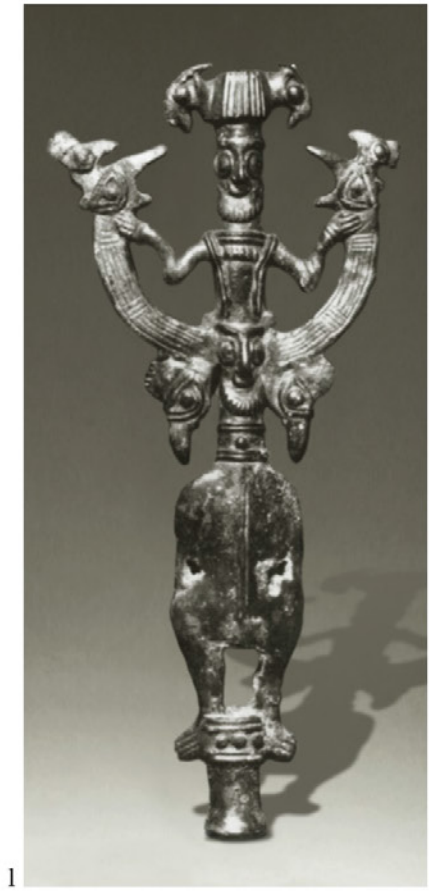
On a standard of the type "idols with protomes", the lower figure features a specific characteristic - an **enormously long mustache** extending obliquely upwards along the pair of arched protomes (D35: 2 compare with 1; drawing D36: 1). In another specimen it is evident that this element had lost the indicated meaning, transforming itself into an undefined bordure (D35: 5). In a third standard, the mustache is shorter and extends only to the small bird heads (D35: 3). The presence of mustaches in the "idols with protomes" is also noted by H. Potratz, although not in the here-indicated part of the objects, alluding to their symbolism related to humidity and fertility.[110]

In our previous studies, we have associated the mustache and beard with the iconography of chthonic male characters, specifically with the action in which the chthonic god, due to lack of ability to give birth, symbolizes the emergence of plants from the soil through the emergence of hair from his body. Thereby, particular importance is given to those that grow around his mouth (**mustache and beard**), and even the **eyelashes and eyebrows**, further enhanced by the identification of the corresponding body orifices with the female genitalia as bearers of fertility (D36). In this context, they are placed in relation to pubic hair, which, by the way, in various magical procedures, functions as a generative factor, due to the proximity of the sexual organs and the allusions to plants growing from the womb of the earth. As pictorial manifestations of this character and the corresponding actions, one can present mythical images especially common to the early medieval jewelry from Europe (Slavic two-plated bow fibulae, Gothic belt buckles) (D36: 2 – 5), but also to illustrations from Christian medieval manuscripts and stone plastics (D36: 6, 7, 9). They depict an anthropomorphic or zoomorphic character surrounded by a variety of plant motifs that actually grow from his head (forehead, open mouth) or are an extension of his mustache, beard, hair, eyebrows and eyelashes. These characters are in fact an anthropomorphic or anthropomorphized variant of the **chthonic dragon** whose productive function is fulfilled in a similar way - by **disgorging various elements from the mouth** or from other parts of the body (plants, water, sun, food, people), which is often preceded by his killing i.e. sacrifice (D36: 8, 11 compare with 6, 7, 9, Tibetan example – 10).[111]

In Slavic folklore, there is a mythical character with accentuated chthonic characteristics whose main feature is exactly the enormous mustache. In East Slavic tales, it is the giant **Usynya** (Усыня - translated as "mustache man") who bears the characteristics of a mythical patron of the cosmic waters. He is depicted as an anthropomorphic character (with negative symbolism) who stands on the shore or in the bed of a river, stops its flow with his mouth, catches fish with his mustache, roasts them on his tongue and then eats them. His gigantic dimensions, including the mustache, are attested by the action in which people use them as a bridge to cross the river (on foot, on horseback, and on chariots). V. Propp thinks that behind this character stands the former lord of rivers and fish, a deity who is credited for the abundance of fish and successful fishing. His zoomorphic variant has also been recorded - a dragon with 12 heads that bears the same name – Usynya.[112]

[110] H. Potratz, *Die Luristanbronzen*, 214.
[111] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 226-240; Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 370-388, 394; M. Eliade, *Patterns*, Ch, VIII/104.
[112] В. Я. Пропп, *Исторические*, 153, 154; В. В. Иванов, В. Н. Топоров, *Горыня*, 159, 160; on the dragon of the same name: Б. А. Успенский, *Филологические*, 145; on the relation *hairs/wool – water/fertility*: В. В. Иванов, В. Н. Топоров, *Исследования*, 31-34 ff.; Б. А. Успенский, *Филологические*, 145, 166-175.

D32


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His South Slavic equivalent is **Brko** (Брко – again translated as "mustache man"), also a giant character with an accentuated mustache in which 360 swallows had made their nests.[113]

The features of this character correspond well to the lower (chthonic) location of the here-discussed character from the standards, including the variant with an accentuated mustache. This also applies to the relations with water manifested through his feet metamorphosed into fins and their binding, which we have seen is particularly typical of chthonic characters with negative symbolism (see p. 307).

c) Character with three heads

On the hitherto known "idols with protomes", this character is not manifested quite explicitly, due to which its presence can still be discussed only conditionally, based on analogies. A key element that indicates this are the two smaller animal heads (mainly of birds and most commonly of roosters), symmetrically placed on the lower edge of the two large arched zoomorphic protomes. Viewed together with the above presented anthropomorphic figure from the lower part of these standards, they could form a hybrid three-headed character with one central anthropomorphic head, depicted *en face*, and two lateral zoomorphic ones, depicted in profile (D37). Based on numerous analogies, it can also be interpreted in another way - as a scene from a mythical action in which the central anthropomorphic character (with one head) has two animal protomes growing from its neck or shoulders. In a more explicit form, this composition is present on the "columnar figurines", as part of the there-depicted female or hermaphroditic figure with a long neck, arms placed on the chest and two rooster heads or two rooster protomes which, in this case, are always placed on its shoulders and not on the neck or head (C27; C28).

Several components point us to the chthonic symbolism of this character as well: its location in the lower zones of the standards; the chthonic symbolism of the other figures that occupy the same location and even have the same contour; the chthonic symbolism of other such three-headed analogies. We have already mentioned that the elaboration of all the questions asked here in regards to this character will be realized in a separate sub-chapter, in one of our next chapters (p. 406).

d) Female mythical character

Widespread in various parts of the world is a mythical image in which a character with the function of mother gives birth to another female character with the same or similar features, depicted under her spread legs (D38: 5 – 11). This image corresponds to the already mentioned pair of goddesses with the function of **mother and daughter** that reflect the processes of continuity, which mythical consciousness explains according to the **matrilinear concept projected in nature** (duration of vegetative and astronomical cycles, cyclic growth of plants, menstrual cycle, lunar and solar cycle), **in society** (continuance of family lineage through the female line) and **in the life cycle of man**, with projections for his posthumous rebirth i.e. reincarnation. The most well-known such couple is of course Demeter and Persephone, the latter as a daughter or a young hypostasis of the former (D38: 8).[114]

In the case of Luristan standards, this scene can only be identified implicitly because the supposed newborn female figure here is mainly re-adapted into one of the male characters presented above (D39).[115] Her former female character is indicated by several elements. Firstly, it is the **pose of the legs** which, even in the male figures, is with **half-spread thighs** and **separated knees**, indicating the female sex of the prototype

[113] П. Ж. Петровић, *Брко*, 66; N. Nodilo, *Stara*, 227, 403, 404. We think that the coincidence of this motif with the idol of the god Rugiewit, venerated by the Baltic Slavs from the island of Rügen, under whose lips was a swallow's nest, is not accidental (А. Гейщор, *Митология*, 119, 120; H. Lovmjanski, *Religija*, 144).

[114] On these concepts with more examples and corresponding bibliography: Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 234-256; Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 91, 717, 719, 726, 803, 805.

[115] Our first observations on this scene: Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 65, 66.


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of this figure with allusions to the poses specific to coitus and childbirth, but also to the **rhombus** that they form as a symbol of the vulva, the earth, and fertility (D13; D14). The second element is the **arched arms** which are more typical of female figures because they reflect the posture of supporting the breasts (D19; C29; C30). The third element would be the **feet resembling fish fins**, which point to a character from the category of **mermaids** i.e. **"fish-women"**, for which we have seen that in a pure form is also present on other types of Luristan bronzes (D23: 1 – 3 compare with the rest and with D33). The same feature may also allude to **frog feet**, which would again point to the female nature of this character given the eminent female and maternal symbolism of the frog.[116] Thereby, it is important to note that **bronze objects** (pendants, pins) **in the form of a frog** are also present among the Luristan bronzes (D33: 5; D38: 2 – 4).[117]

In this sense, used most appropriately as parallels would be the Slavic plaques from Velestino (Thessaly) that depict a realistic figure of a woman with accentuated maternal aspects (spread legs, denoted vulva, child in her lap and a necklace around the neck as a symbol of her marital status). In this case, it is important to us that her feet are depicted widened like fish fins or frog feet (D33: 3 compare with 1, 2, 4).[118]

The female sex of the elaborated figure from the standards is also indicated by the shape and position of the arms that were originally arched under her breasts, and in the specific cases completely lost such a meaning (D19: 1 – 3, 8 – 10 compare with 4 – 7). The female sex is also indicated by a seemingly peripheral element present at the large pair of protomes. Namely, on some "idols with protomes", present left and right of the centrally placed head of the figure described here are two symmetrical wavy relief motifs. They represent the front legs of the former pair of zoomorphic figures which in some "idols with protomes" have lost this meaning, suggesting some other elements within the frames of the newly formed compositions (D39: 2 – 6; D17: 1 – 6). Perceived together with the head depicted between the two large protomes and the body that complements it, they can be identified as **curled locks or braids** of the central character's hairstyle that would be more indicative of its female than its male sex.

7. The meaning of the birth-giving woman and of her male counterpart on the Luristan standards

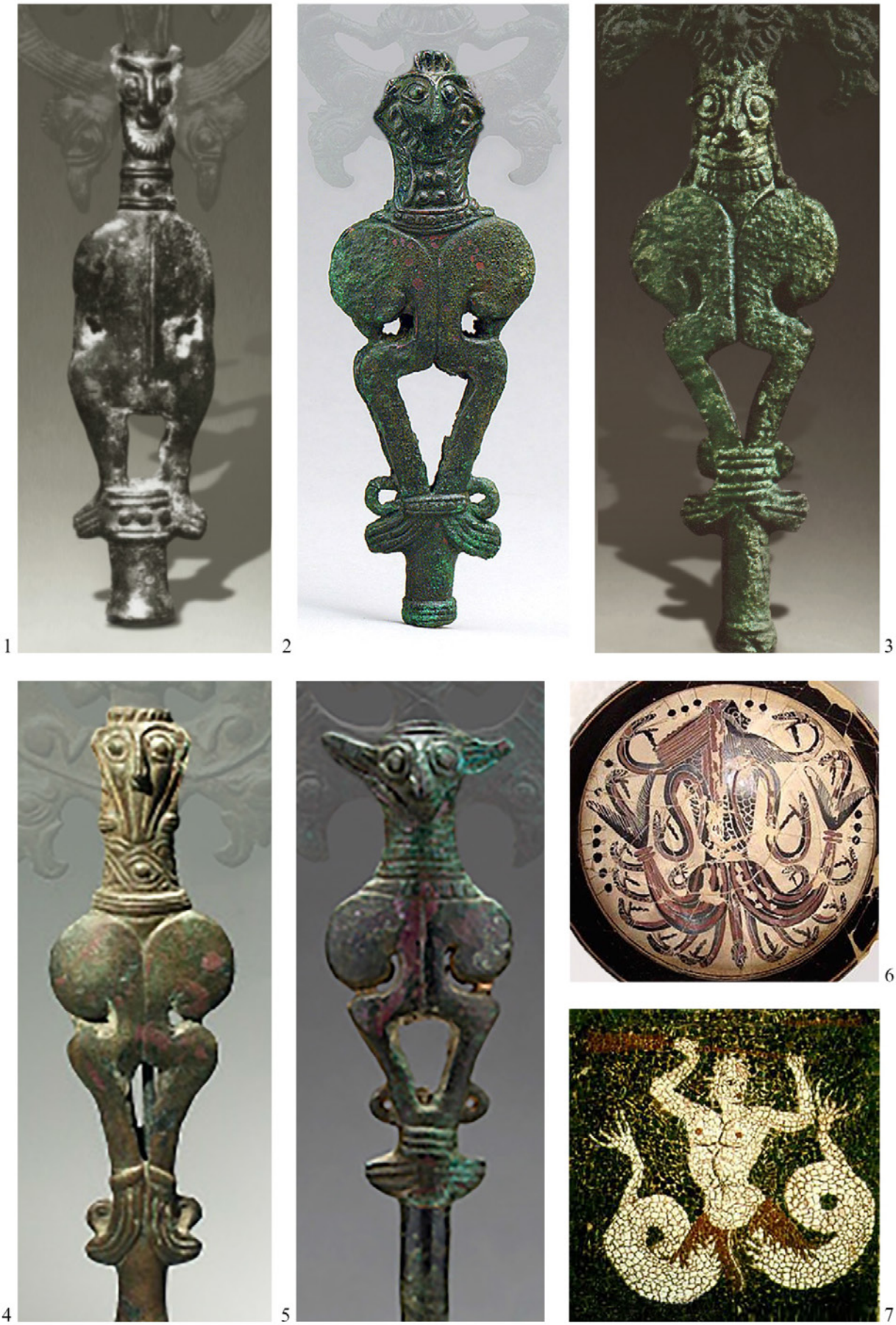
In this chapter we will analyze certain features of the lower figure from the "idols with protomes", on the basis of written sources (that mainly relate to the ancient Iranian traditions) and comparisons with corresponding components present in other cultures.

a) Birth-giving woman (or tree) flanked by a pair of symmetrical animals

The presented Luristan whetstone handle could have an important role in revealing the character and meaning of the female figures with accentuated genitals or depicted in a pose of childbirth or coitus (D15: 5, 6; a similar specimen – B27: 6). The figure is depicted on the lower part of the stylized torso of an ibex, in the area of its chest and abdomen, framed by its four legs. The fact that the animal is depicted here with two protomes and on its back supplemented by another pair of different protomes (probably of animals from the family of felines), gives us the right to associate it with the two ibexes from the "zoomorphic standards" (B2;

[116] On these aspects of the frog with examples and bibliography: Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 176-181; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 123, 164-167; Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 841-845.
[117] Examples of such pins and pendants: O. W. Muscarella, *Surkh Dum*, 328, 329, 333, 340 (No. 11); E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 170 (No. 260, Fig.140); G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 78, 79 (Kat. 163); P. Amiet, Les Antiquités, 73, 79 (No. 173).
[118] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 167; on this one and the other plaques from the same hoard: N. Čausidis, *Poganska*; N. Chausidis, *Does the hoard*, 371, T. III: 1, 3.

D34



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B5 – B10) and more specifically, with the examples supplemented by two more protomes on their backs (B13; pins with the same iconography B50). Due to the belonging of the two main protomes to one shared torso, the relations with the double animal, mainly present on the Luristan cheekpieces, which has heads on both ends of the body, also become possible (B23: 4, 11). The connection with the latter examples becomes even more direct if we take into account that in that case, too, the double animal is accompanied by a central human figure, most often with female features. Based on this comparison, it can be concluded that the same three elements are also present on the whetstone handle, with the difference that, due to its specific shape (and other reasons) the composition was structured differently. In fact, if the scene covering the surface of the cylindrical object "is unfolded", one would get a symmetrical composition with the figure of the birth-giving woman in the middle, flanked by two symmetrically placed ibexes standing on their hind legs (compare D15: 5, 6 with 7 – motif from an openwork pin). Her outstretched arms in that context can be understood as reaching towards the pair of animals with the intention of holding i.e. controlling them. In this case, of special importance is the accentuation of the reproductive functions of this central character (see p. 257), which is not present on the "zoomorphic standards" nor on the cheekpieces, but is present on some Luristan pins (D15: 7-9; D18: 4-6, 8).

The observations from this analysis further argue the opinion that the same triple arrangement was also present in the "zoomorphic standards", with the difference that there the central anthropomorphic character with pronounced female and maternal features was alternated with another iconographic element of analogous meaning. This was the vertical pillar of the standards, understood as the **Cosmic Tree** or **Tree of Life**, which contains the same life-giving function as the birth-giving goddess (B17: 1; B40). These meanings gain additional confirmation if we agree with the assumptions that pins were inserted into the central openings of the "zoomorphic standards", in this case especially those with a top in the form of a stylized tree (B30: 5, 6; B47: 7, 8) or the head of a woman (B45:11; B46: 3, 4, 6 – 13), which in the latter case would denote the central pillar as an **epiphany of the Birth-Giving Goddess** (see p. 144). The equivalent meaning of the figures of the birth-giving woman and the tree i.e. the meaning of the former as the Tree of Life and the source of fertility, is confirmed by a seemingly small and peripheral detail present on a discoid pin presented in this chapter. These are the arms of the birth-giving figure depicted there, which, instead of hands, end in the form of a plant motif i.e. palmette (D17: 8, 9, in the available photo the left hand is not so clearly visible).

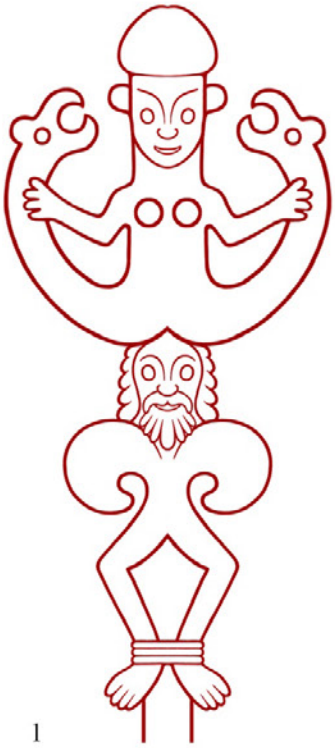
b) The birth-giving woman as a water goddess

It must be noted that the placement of the figure with spread zoomorphized legs in the upper zones of the "idols with protomes" does not go much in favor of its chthonic, but rather of its celestial character, perhaps as a depiction of the goddess representing the sky, the celestial waters or the dawn (D20: 1 – 4). However, this skepticism does not have to be justified if, on the one hand, one takes into account that the principle of consistent spatial determination and specialization of mythical characters does not always apply to archaic mythical-religious systems.

Taking into account the region in which the Luristan bronzes existed, several possibilities impose themselves in regards to the identification of the mentioned figures. The first is the Iranian goddess **Aredvi Sura Anahita**, who, in addition to her other functions (patroness of fertility, the hearth, goddess-warrior), is primarily known as the **goddess of waters**.[119] Her high status is reflected in the myths of the "Avesta" (Aban Yasht) where the supreme god Ahura Mazda addresses her with a prayer, which indicates certain situations in which he was even subordinate to her. The justification for this situation can be sought in the frequent change of the status of this cult within Iranian history: prohibitions and persecutions, repeated flourishing, merging

[119] M. Boyce, M. L. Chaumont, C. Bier, *Anāhīd*; *Anahita 2012*; M. Rici, *The cult*; Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 126, 127.

D35



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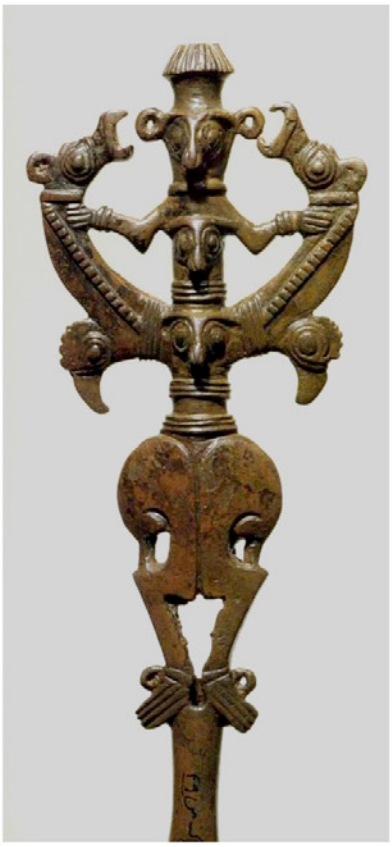
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with the cults of Cybele, transforming into a symbol of legitimate power, syncretism with the Virgin Mary.[120] If one allows the possibility that the bearers of the Luristan bronzes were some communities of Indo-Aryan or Proto-Iranian origin, then we can consider as probable the identification of the figure with zoomorphic legs with the goddess **Sarasvatī** i.e. **Harahvaitī**, also the patroness of cosmic waters, and within those frames - **"river goddess"** and **"mother of streams"**.[121] According to the third possibility, it would be **Ohrmazd's mother** who is mentioned in several written sources, mainly indirectly - as **"mother's womb"**.

c) The birth-giving woman as a personalized vulva and uterus

In the works of Theodore Abū Qurra (and Yohanân bar Penkayê) it is explicitly stated that before Zurvān created the earth, he offered sacrifices for a thousand years, asking for the birth of a son, and as a result, **his wife** conceived a son by the name of Ohrmazd. Zurvān's suspicions about whether it was really his son that was conceived in his wife's womb, caused the conception inside of her of another child - Satan (i.e. Ahriman).[122] The name of Zurvān's consort is mentioned only once, in a Syrian text, whereby it is interpreted in various ways - as the **"little beauty"** ("la petite belle") or **"whose fortune is fair"**. Comparable to her is the **"Mother of Life"** from Manichaean hymns. Considering the primordiality, comprehensiveness and androgyny of Zurvān, it is not excluded that the mentioned character actually represents the **female component** of this god.[123]

As a corresponding paradigm one can also take **Jēh**, the **"Primal Whore"** and **companion** and **supporter** of Ahriman, whom R.C. Zaehner considers the remnant of some chthonic goddess - representative of the earth, water and "the female principle of the universe", who was then reduced i.e. degraded to the status of a demon.[124] Therefore, this character, too, could have stood behind the female figures from the Luristan bronzes, depicted in a birth-giving pose. This would especially apply to those with legs whose form comes close to that of **fish fins** or **frog feet**, which more directly encode the aspect of water. In this context, the frog feet would have a special meaning due to the pronounced negative aspect of this animal within Iranian religions, which would correspond to the analogous status of Jēh.

d) Negative i.e. destructive aspects of the birth-giving woman

The frog, along with the water and the woman, belongs to the complex of destructive cosmic elements that are under the jurisdiction of Ahriman. It is associated with the female principle, but above all in its negative aspect - like the **"Destructive Spirit"** that appears with a body in the form of a frog. Even Ahriman, in some texts, is represented as a frog, which is contradictory because he himself is its creator. Therefore, it is believed that behind this frog face is actually **Āz** (a sexually indeterminate demonic character). Ahriman creates the frog to swallow the cosmic waters, preventing the animals of Ohrmazd to drink from them. Āz is compared to this animal to show that its lust, destroying and polluting its own environment, will eventually lead to the destruction of itself.[125]

If we agree that the **fin-like feet** of the lower character from the "idols with protomes" were shaped to resemble **frog feet** (D33), then this element would correspond to all the characters mentioned, starting with the "Destructive Spirit", Āz, Jēh (although she is not directly mentioned in the texts), and in the end - even Ahriman himself.

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[120] И. Л. Крупник, *Зурванизм*, 38.
[121] D. Kinsley, *Hindu Goddesses*, 10-13, 55-64; V. Ions, *Indijska*, 22, 83, 84; Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 126.
[122] According to: R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 60, 63, 64; also see: И. Л. Крупник, *Зурванизм*, 52, 53.
[123] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 64-66; И. Л. Крупник, *Зурванизм*, 52, 53.
[124] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 74, 75, 78.
[125] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 74,132, 184, 351, 359, 360, 437; R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 223, 233, 262; И. Л. Крупник, *Зурванизм*, 110, 111.

D36



We have seen that in the contours of the lower figure from the "idols with protomes", depicted with slightly spread legs that form a rhombus, there is an **alternation of female and male mythical characters** (D35; D39). According to our analyzes, it was shown that the female character, in addition to the spread knees, was originally also defined by the **arms placed under the breasts** and **the human feet replaced by fish fins or frog feet** (D33). As a feature of the male characters, besides the latter two, one can also take the **three-headedness** i.e. the additional pair of zoomorphic protomes that grow from their neck or shoulders (D37), as well as the facial hair (mustache, beard) as a symbolic equivalent of plants growing from the soil (D35; D36). We think that the alternation of the characters from the mentioned two categories can also be traced in the historical sources that relate to the ancient Iranian religions.

Within the frames of Mazdaism and especially of Zurvanism, there is intertwinement of the categories **female, darkness, death, evil, wet and cold**, which will condition the definition in these religions of **evil** in the **female gender**. All these categories are in some way included in the demonic mythical character **Āz** - the personification of concupiscence, which will cause this character in Manichaeism, created on the basis of these traditions, to be called "mother of all demons". Āz is the real opponent of Zurvān, the personification of his doubts and passions and in fact the **predecessor of Ahriman**.[126] This connection is confirmed by the aforementioned Jēh, Ahriman's companion and supporter, whose name contains the meaning *"whore"*, *"one who bears children"*, or simply *"woman"*. In the myths she is represented as one of the links in the chain of negative characters and events that begins with the **Destuctive Spirit**, through Ahriman is transferred to Jēh, through her to all women, and through them to all men i.e. all of humanity. The transfer of these negative elements occured after Ahriman, following his waking up, kissed Jēh on the head, whereby this act of pollution was manifested in her by the onset of menstruation, which was then transferred to all women of the human race.[127]

e) Identification of the vulva with the mouth (vagina dentata)

The basic function of Āz is the destruction of the cosmos i.e. everything that is created by Ohrmazd. In principle, this was outlined since the creation of this character, in order to destroy the Cosmos, and thus all aspects of evil that are part of it, including Ahriman himself. The mechanism through which this function is realized is **eating** i.e. **devouring** - one of the most archaic **metaphors of death** and all forms of **destruction**, typical of the primary forms of mythical thought. In this specific case, they are initiated and led by the **principle of concupiscence**, which we have seen is also contained in the name of this character. In this context, its female sex would be quite appropriate because it creates a basis for identifying the **intake of food** with the **reception of the phallus** in a woman's womb, guided by the same **principle of passionate concupiscence for the reception of something inside of oneself**. The identification of these two openings and the passion for reception through them of appropriate things is contained in the following sentence addressed by Ormazd to the woman he created: “I created thee, o thou whose adversary is the whore species, and thou wast created with a mouth close to the buttocks, and coition seems to thee even as the taste of the sweetest food to the mouth;”.[128]

"Mouth close to the buttocks" and "coition seems to thee even as the taste of the sweetest food to the mouth" give us the right to use this citation and the mentioned symbolic identification in the argumentation of one of the indicated interpretations regarding the birth-giving woman from the standards. It is the birth-giving figure with spread and zoomorphized legs, in whose crotch area there is a depicted **grotesque human head** which, among other things, in relation to the ancient Mediterranean mythical character Baubo, we interpreted

[126] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 168-172, 192, 237; R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 226-232, 235.
[127] R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 232, 233.
[128] (Greater Bundahišn 107.15); R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 234; R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 176, 177, 182, 193.

D37



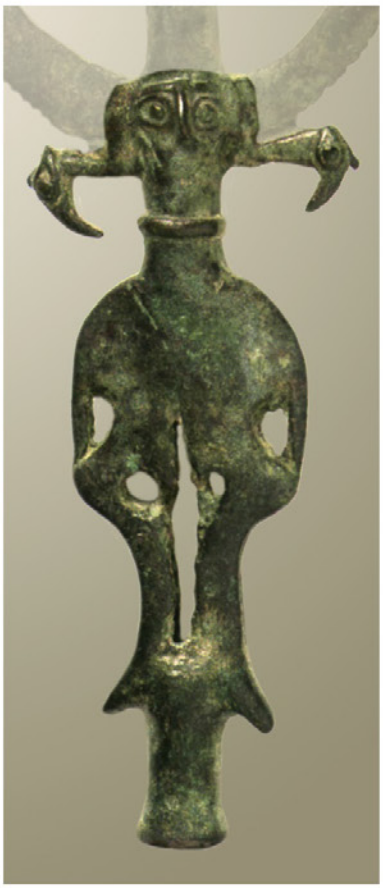
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as a personalization of the vulva. Thereby, the **beard and mustache** by which it is often accompanied would indicate the **pubic hairs**, the **open mouth** itself - the **vagina dentata** that devours what she had previously birthed, while the **protruding tongue** - an allusion to the **penetration of the phallus** inside of her (D29).

f) The birth-giving figure as an epiphany of the primordial and all-encompassing hermaphroditic god

In one of the previous chapters we saw that several written sources referring to the myth of the birth by **Zurvān** of his sons, also mention **his wife** (sometimes even named with a special theonym), which represents a contradiction, given that he is a primordial god with an androgynous character from which only afterwards will all other things originate. It is considered to be a personalization of his female aspect (essentially inseparable from him), to which the indefinite variant "in their mother`s womb" corresponds more, which in most sources is mentioned as the place of their conception. We have seen that researchers resolve this contradiction by treating both elements as manifestations of the female aspect of the androgynous Zurvān.[129] All this, in relation to the concepts presented in this chapter, leads to the assumption that some of the anthropomorphic or zooanthropomorphic characters depicted in the area of the genitals of the figure with zoomorphic legs should be treated as a pictorial manifestation of the same concept i.e. as **personalization of the vulva i.e. the uterus of the hermaphroditic Zurvān** (D29). In this context, both interpretations of the name of **Zurvān's wife** - as **"la petite belle"** or **"whose fortune is fair"**, become much more appropriate, especially if they are addressed to the vulva.

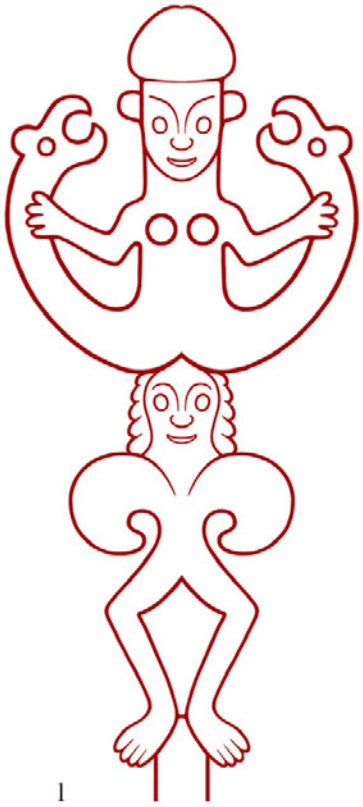
There are indications for one more name that would refer to the female aspect of Zurvān. Given the complexity of the question regarding this name, we cite the entire paragraph in which R. C. Zaehner summarizes his position on this topic: “Zurvän himself was originally bisexual; and his full name may well have been Zurvān i Khwashkhwarrik, ‘Zurvān whose Khwarenah or fortune is fair; for a person of the name of Khwashkhwarrik is once said to be the mother of Ohrmazd and Ahriman. This, however, denotes no absolute differentiation of sex, for even those sources which speak of a mother’s womb in which the twins are contained later speak of Zurvän as father and mother: as Zurvän he is father, as Khwashkhwarrik he is mother.”.[130]

g) Mythical character with bound legs

We have seen that the ankles of the lower figure from the "idols with protomes" are bound together or to the remnants of the vertical pillar of the standards (D33 – D35; D37; D39). Viewed in general terms, this motif is inherent to various mythical characters with a chthonic and often negative character (transgressors), equally to those of male or female sex. It most often refers to the **wolf** and the **chthonic dragon** as paradigmatic zoomorphic epiphanies of these characters or to anthropomorphic characters whose appearance or name contains some of their components. Some of the most illustrative such examples are Harpalyce and Lycurgus (whose names contain the meaning of wolf), the first of which (female) was caught and bound in nets, while the second was bound by grapevine shoots. In myths and rituals, the wolf (or dog) is usually bound to a tree or pole that symbolizes the Cosmic Axis, which in our case would correspond to the pillar of the standards (in Old Norse mythical traditions, the gallows is called *vargtré - "wolf-tree"*). According to Hittite texts, the wolf (in this case also equated with the transgressor) is bound to the top of the Cosmic Tree by Pirwa - the storm god.

[129] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 64-66; И. Л. Крупник, *Зурванизм*, 52, 53.
[130] R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 215.

D38

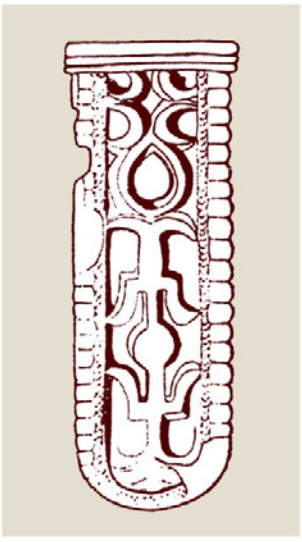

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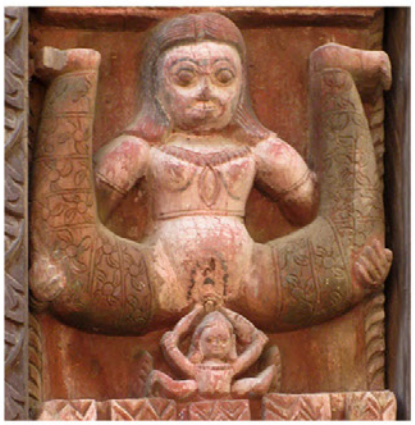

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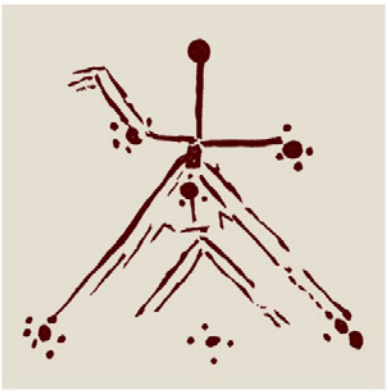

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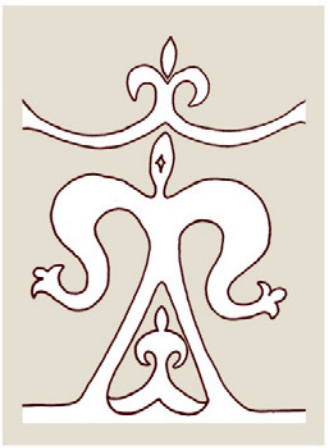

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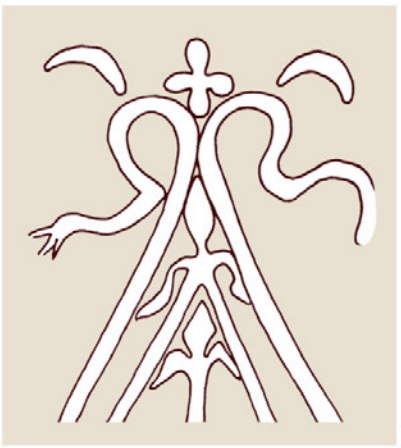

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Some of the characters involved in these actions fit the **function of binders** (Bendis, Yama, Varuna, Indra) or of **bound** (Vritra), while some of them of both - such as the Vedic Vritra, the Iranian demon of death Astōvihāt and Yima (the first dead man).[131] Syrdon (Сырдон), a mythical character from Ossetian epics ("The Nart cycle"), was hung on a tree by his mustache (compare with the character with the enormously long mustache from D35: 2, 3, 5; D36: 1).[132] The head of the chthonic dragon from the elongated plate of the Slavic two-plated bow fibulae (A9: 2, 3, 5), which represents the lower zones of the universe, is often supplemented by ribbings and grooves that suggest the binding of its neck and snout.[133]

These images could be identified with the Iranian god **Vāy** or **Vayu** who is in principle associated with the middle cosmic zones i.e. the space between heaven and earth, most often defined as *air*, *wind* or *fiery wind*. He is also placed in relation to the "life-giving power" which on a microcosmic level is identified with the breath i.e. the soul in the human body ("breath-soul", "fiery wind"). In the Avesta he is represented as a chthonic god with two aspects that are in some cases completely separated as two different gods: **Vāy i vēh** (The Good Vāy), as the guardian and stimulator of life, and **Vāy i vattar** (The Evil Vāy) as the demon of death that pulls the soul out of the human body. He is also represented as a psychopomp, whereby the evil Vāy carries the soul of the unrighteous to hell, while the good one consoles the soul of the righteous after its separation from the body and guards it from his evil counterpart.[134] In Yašt he is given the function of **"carrying off those who are bound"**,[135] which in context of the other mentioned elements and presented analogies refers to the dead who in other cultures, too, are represented as "bound", understood as a symbolic i.e. metaphorical representation of their immobility. The Indian god of death Yama, too, is **armed with a rope** or a **noose** by way of which he catches people, whereby these objects in fact represent death itself. He is a hunter who binds and then takes away the dead. An analogous function as **binder of the dead** is also given to the demon of death **Astōvihāt**, **Varuna** (who binds people with diseases, accidents or with death), but also to **Ahriman**, in whose case the rope is alternated with a net.[136]

Besides with the Evil Vāy, the figure with bound legs from the "idols with protomes" could also be identified with the mentioned Astōvihāt who, according to the Dēnkart, takes, with the help of the terrible **Āz**, all of the dead away. He is a paradigmatic **demon of death**, represented as "he who dissolves the bones". He represents death itself but also the factor that causes it.[137] In the Avesta, the same role of binder and guide of the human soul is played by the demon **Vizaroša**. There are indications that **Zurvān**, too, originally had the same function as god of death and guide of the dead, which is quite logical considering that he is the god of time - the factor that mercilessly kills everything that is alive.[138] Within the context of these comparisons, also interesting are the ancient depictions of the **Leontocephalus**, whose legs are actually bound by the snake that

[131] A detailed analysis of the mythologem of chthonic characters that are bound, with numerous examples: И. Маразов, *Мит*, 85-99; L. Parmly Brown, *The Cosmic Feet*, 355-357; Р. Онианс, *На коленях*, 343-565; pictorial manifestations (wolf on top of the Cosmic Tree): Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 293-297; on hanging and crucifixion as forms of symbolic binding: Н. Чаусидис, *Љуљашка*, 48-51 (on hanging); N. Čausidis, *The Axis*, 330 (on crucifixion).

[132] *Сказания 2013*, (*„Урхаг и его сыновья“, „Поход нартов“*).

[133] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 289, 290.

[134] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 82-91, as the god of warriors: 125-127 .

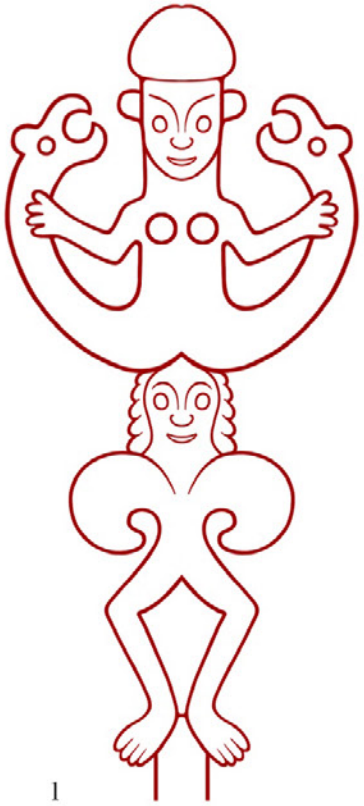
[135] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 84.

[136] Р. Онианс, *На коленях*, 348, 349, 351.

[137] "This conception of Āz is uncommon, but in another passage of the Denkart it is explicit. Mortal men are all carried off by Astövihät by means of Āz, the fearful, who is manifest afar: they cannot escape. Astōvihāt is the demon of death par excellence, 'he who dissolves the bones'. He is death itself, Āz the agent who brings it about." (R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 172).

[138] "The demon ... Vizaroša ... after binding it, carries off the soul of ... men whose life is short." (R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 240). On Zurvān as the god of death: R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 226, 239-242; R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 239.

D39



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is wrapped around his body (F13: 3, 5; F17: 4).[139] This character may point to certain relations with Ahriman, given the indications that he also had a leonine head.[140]

The coinciding of the mentioned functions with the bound legs of the lower figure from the "idols with protomes" (D33 – D35; D37; D39) may mean that the figure represents a god of death who, at the same time, is also equated with the dead themselves i.e. is depicted as their paradigm i.e. as the "first deceased" (see pp. 557, 558).

In ancient Greek culture, the role of binders was borne by female demonic characters such as **Circe** and **Sphinx**, whereby the rope and noose are often replaced by chaining and shackles.[141] The depicted image from the "idols with protomes" coincides with the Roman custom of binding Saturn (meaning a statue of this god) with woolen bandages that on a certain day of the year were then untied.[142] The ancient Greeks also had an analogous custom of binding i.e. chaining the pictorial depictions of their gods, according to some accounts, due to control of their functions i.e. due to the permanent fixation of the graces that they symbolized to the given space.[143] In Sparta, for example, the legs of the wooden idol of **Aphrodite** were bound by a chain.[144]

[139] L. Parmly Brown, *The Cosmic Feet*, 356, 357.
[140] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, VIII, IX; R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 129, 130, Fig. 25, 26; И. Л. Крупник, *Зурванизм*, 53, 55; J. Duchesne-Guillemin, *Ahriman*, 192.
[141] Р. Онианс, *На коленях*, 352, 353, 356.
[142] (Macrobius I. 8. 5); Р. Онианс, *На коленях*, 364 – footnote 18.
[143] (Pausanius III. 15. 7, 11); Р. Онианс, *На коленях*, 364 – footnote 18.
[144] И. Маразов, *Хубавата*, 34.

Chapter VII

MACROCOSMIC GIANT



VII. MACROCOSMIC GIANT

1. The macrocosmic giant on Luristan standards

In previous chapters we have seen that in the fusion of the iconographic elements of some "idols with protomes", one can identify the figure of a human whose torso is equted with the vertical corpus of these objects. Viewed from a cosmological aspect, it coincides with the Cosmic Axis, the Cosmic Tree and the Cosmic Pillar, or with the body of the macrocosmic phallus. Thereby, the head i.e. hat of this character overlaps with the glans penis, while the hip and legs - with the testicles and vulva depicted below the phallus (E1: 2, 4 – 6 compare with 1, 3). Taking into account the cosmological nature of the indicated elements, such a nature is also acquired by this character. We have mentioned that in those "idols with protomes" where the hands of this figure are not depicted, such meaning is taken over by the large arched protomes, alluding to arms raised and spread in an orans posture, which, instead of palms, end in the form of animal heads (E1: 5, 6; E16: 5 – 9). We assumed that with their shape, they represent the sky conceptualized as a circle formed by the two complementary forces that realize its dynamics (D2: 2). In this chapter we will try to elaborate these interpretations in more detail and to support them with appropriate analyzes and arguments.

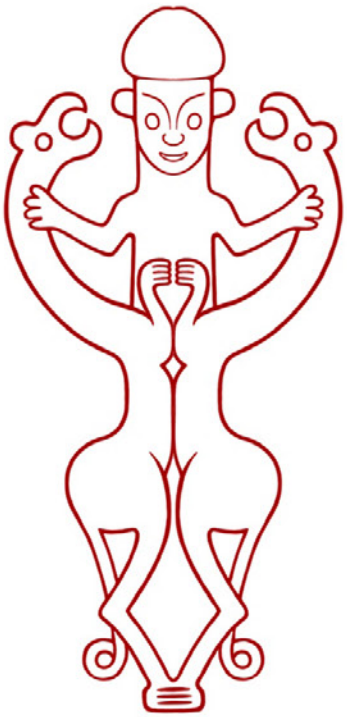
a) Comparative analysis

One of the ways to argue the assumption about the macrocosmic nature of the central character from the indicated standards is the comparison of these pictorial representations with analogous images from other cultures where such a nature can be evidenced with more argumentation.

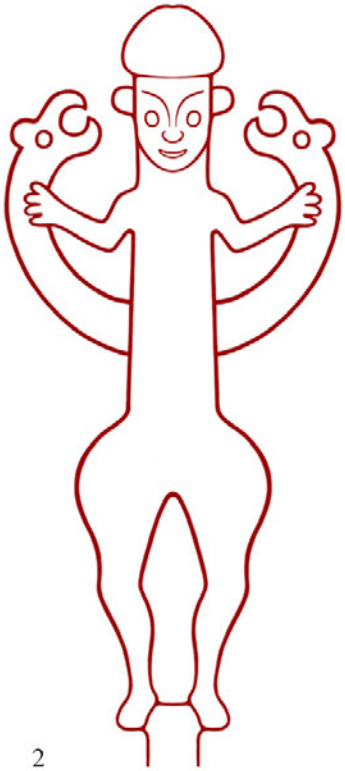
- Mythical characters with an emphasized height

Our insight shows that the archaic "artist" encoded the enormous dimensions of such characters mainly by emphasizing their **extreme height**, while neglecting width or size in general terms. We think that the reason for this is the basic point of such mythical creatures for which it is not relevant that they are big, but

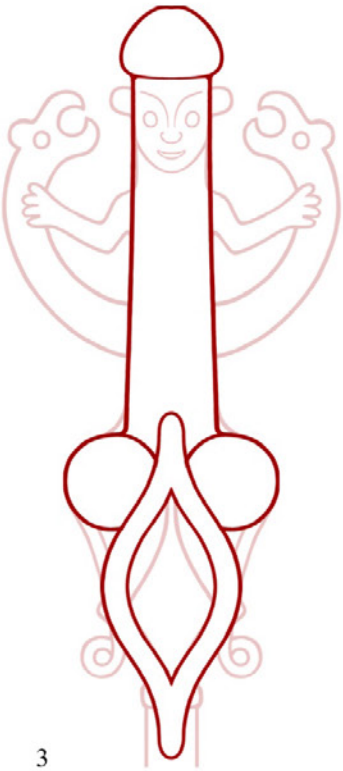
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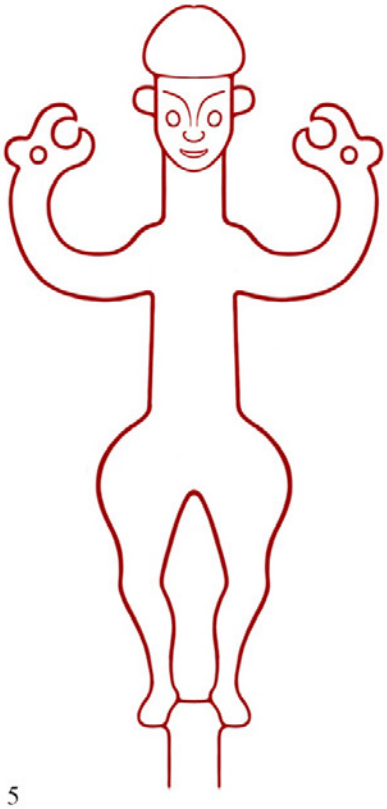
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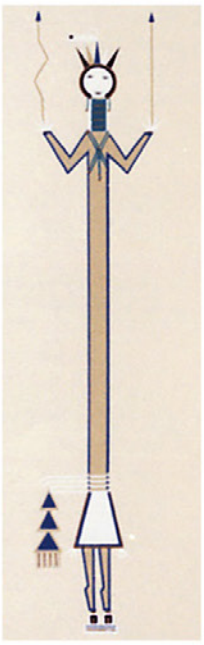
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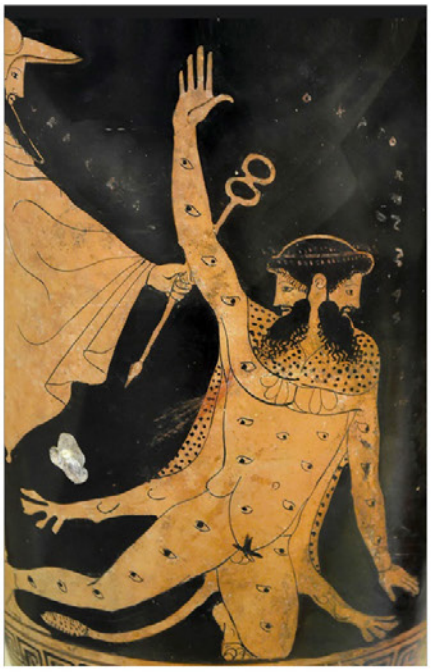
E2


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that they are tall i.e. that standing on the ground they reach the sky i.e. extend **through all zones of the universe**, at the same time denoting the huge distance between heaven and earth. As a result, they acquired schematized anthropomorphic figures whose torso is literally transformed into a long vertical pole i.e. pillar, with head and arms at the upper and legs at the bottom end.[1] Characters with these features are also present in the verbal forms of myth, such as the Chinese cosmogonic myth of **Pangu** (meaning *"Progenitor"*). The encyclopedia "Taiping Yulan" (10th century CE) speaks of the initial fusion of heaven and earth in the form of an egg. "After 18,000 years, heaven and earth were separated from each other. The light and clear became sky, and the dark and murky became earth. In the middle was Pangu, who transformed nine times a day. (...) And every day the sky was getting one zhàng higher. And every day the earth was getting one zhàng thicker. Pangu every day was getting taller by one zhàng. And so this had been going on for 18,000 years. The sky became very high and the earth very thick. Pangu, in turn, grew huge. That is why the sky is 90,000 lǐ away from the earth".[2] Interesting in this context is also the Hellenic **Typhon**, who is represented as the tallest of all the children of Gaia, taller than all the mountains, who touches the stars with his head. One of his outstretched arms complemented by hundreds of snake heads, reaches the far east, while the other - the far west.[3] As a visual manifestation of these mythical representations one could take the unidentified character from an Etruscan mirror who, emerging from the sea, with one hand extended towards the east raises the sun above the horizon, while with the other extended towards the west - he again lowers the celestial body underneath it (E5: 11).[4] Certainly the most appropriate in context of the macrocosmic phallus is the aforementioned myth of **Shiva**'s phallus, which extends endlessly through space - upwards through the sky and downwards through the underworld (D6: 1, 2, 4; see p. 246).

From the visual examples, particularly interesting in this sense are the images of such figures among the **Navajo** people (North America), executed in sand (E2: 3, 4). On the one hand, it is due to their extreme elongation, and on the other due to the authentic verbal interpretations according to which they represent various mythical characters who, among other things, bear the character of personalized cosmic elements (Sun, its giant son, Rainbow). It is obvious that in the art of this people the concept of extreme elongation of mythical figures had grown into a stylistic feature that was also applied to human figures in order to denote some of their sublime qualities (power, status after initiation).[5] Figures with similar proportions were also present among other autochthonous populations of North America and with a much more obvious cosmological meaning, as evidenced by the numerous such motifs on petroglyphs from this part of the world (E2: 1, 2; E3: 3, 4).[6] Similar anthropomorphic figures with elongated columnar bodies and large round heads are also present in Africa, as is the case with the scenes painted on rocks in Swaga Swaga (Dodoma Region, Tanzania). The heads this time are not divided into concentric circles, and according to some interpretations they depict buffalo heads in a stylized form.[7]

We also find similar images in prehistoric Europe and Asia, of course this time without the corresponding verbal interpretations. Particularly paradigmatic is an example executed on rock from **Mont Bego**, Alpes Maritimes (France) (E2: 6). It is conceptualized similarly to the previous ones, in the form of a stylized depiction of a human with an emphasized height, whose columnar torso in this case rises from a quadrangular field that is hatched in a reticulate pattern. Its head is enlarged and round, encircled by a line in

[1] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 365, 366.

[2] (1 zhàng = about 3.2 m.; 1 lǐ = about 0,5 km); citation and units of measurement according to: М. Кюнстлер, *Митология*, 36, 37.

[3] (Appllodori. *Bibliotheca* 1.6.3)

[4] We cannot agree with I. Krauskopf's opinion that it represents Helios (I. Krauskopf, *Ex Oriente Sol*, 1277, 1278 – Fig. 11).

[5] L. C. Wyman, *Sandpaintings*; J. Campbell, *The Way*, 230, 231, 244-249.

[6] A. P. Garfinkel et al, *Myth*; A. P. Garfinkel, *Paradigm*; A. P. Garfinkel, *The Whirlwind*.

[7] M. Grzelczyk, *Amak'hee 4*, the age of the paintings is estimated at several hundred years.

E3



the form of a halo, on which only the eyes are denoted. Descending downwards from it are the arms, in the form of zigzag lines, ending in palms (M. Gimbutas interprets them as "snake arms").[8] In support of the cosmological character of this figure, one can reference a similar motif painted on a rock from the **Magourata Cave** in Bulgaria (11th - 7th century BCE), although in its case there is no emphasis on elongation (E2: 7). The reticulate base in this example is represented in the form of a chessboard, while the accentuated round head is surrounded by a radiant halo.[9] In our previous research, we have used these examples as analogies in the identification of the Earth Goddess, not excluding the possibility that it could also be a macrocosmic figure in which the whole universe is embodied. In this context, the columnar torso of these figures acquires the meaning of the Cosmic Pillar i.e. the Cosmic Axis that extends between the upper and lower zones of the universe, whereby the accentuated circular head, surrounded by a halo or rays, denotes the sky (filled with light) or the sun, while the reticulate field or chessboard - the earth.[10]

In support of the indicated interpretations, one can also reference other examples, this time from Asia, geographically much closer to Luristan. These are Bronze Age petroglyphs (second half of the 2nd millennium BCE), mainly present at the site of **Тамгалы** (Tamgaly, Zhetysu, Kazakhstan) (E3: 9 – 12, 14, 15). Here, the gigantic character of the figures, in addition to their elongation, is further accentuated by the depiction next to them of much smaller zoomorphic and anthropomorphic figures (E3: 9, 11, 15). In this case, the macrocosmic character is also encoded through their unusual head, circular, oversized, usually without facial elements, divided in the form of concentric rings, which has so far been mainly given a solar meaning.[11] In our previous studies we have interpreted these figures as macrocosmic giants, whereby we equated their unusual heads with the multi-layered sky (depicted in horizontal projection A3: 4), for which we have provided many arguments and analogies.[12] This interpretation can be supported by examples from neighboring regions (**Karakyr, Akkaynar**) where the head of these figures is surrounded by a semicircular motif which, in this case, could represent the vertical projection of the sky as a vault (E3: 1, 13).[13]

It is especially important that in these petroglyphs the head, depicted in the form of concentric rings, corresponds to the analogous motif on the **bronze objects from Armenia** and wider (**Caucasus, Balkans**) presented in the first chapter where, according to our interpretations, the sky is denoted in a similar manner. No less important is that along the vertical axis of this motif, one can recognize a similar stylized human figure, also elongated (E3: 9 – 12 compared with 2 and A4; A5). The head depicted in this way also shows certain relations with the geometric iconographic level of the Luristan standards (arched protomes), and in a more explicit form it is also present on some pins and pendants from Luristan and its surrounding regions (E3: 6 – 8; A5; A6: 1 – 5; see p. 64). In some of the referred petroglyphs this character stands on the back of a bull with large horns which, as a combination, can also be interpreted in a cosmological context (E3: 14). In that case, the bull would represent the earthly level of the universe, resting on which is the Cosmic Pillar (torso of the figure) that supports the sky (head of the figure). In later times, too, analogous iconographic arrangements

[8] M. Gimbutas, *The Language*, 127 – Fig. 204: 5; for other interpretations of the character - as a solar deity: R. Baumeister, *Glaubenssachen*, 42.

[9] E. Anati, *Magourata*, 96-100.

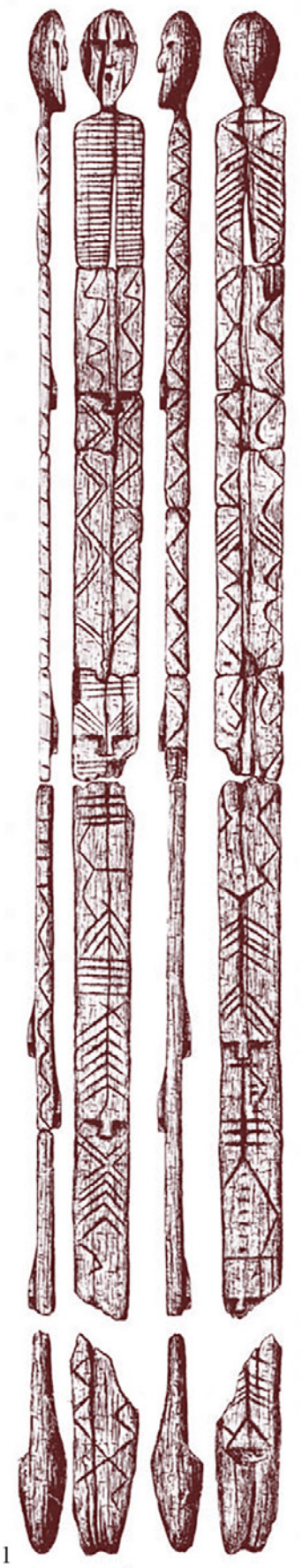
[10] Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 792, 794; on the chessboard in the meaning of earth: Л. И. Акимова, *К проблеме*; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 104, 105.

[11] On the meaning of the figures: А. Е. Рогожинский, *Наскальные*; on the other aspects of the petroglyphs and site: А. Е. Рогожинский, *Петроглифы*; U. Sansoni, *Reflection*, 6 Tav. 2: 2; other examples: О. С. Советова, *Сюжет*.

[12] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 311, 312; Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 577-583, 601-607. We do not rule out the possibility that the heads of some of these figures (especially those surrounded by rays, usually slightly younger than the previous ones), in some cases also denoted the solar disk, thus giving the whole figure the nature of a solar mythical character (E3: 10, 14).

[13] For these depictions: А. Е. Рогожинский, *Наскальные*, 57 (Рис. III, 2, 3), 60, 61.

E4



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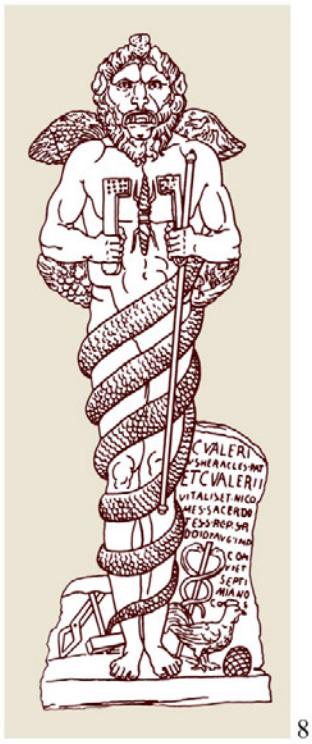
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appear in the Middle East where various gods, mainly thunderers or supporters of the sky, were depicted standing or sitting on the back of a bull or some other animal (examples E13: 2, 4).[14]

It is quite interesting that a character with an identical head formed by concentric circles, and even with small circles inside, is depicted on a stone relief from **Tübingen** (Germany), preserved of which is the upper part of the body, with the head and arms in an orans posture, which speaks about the presence of this motif in Europe as well (E3: 5).[15] A similar way of representing the head is also found on the rock paintings among the **peoples of North America** (E3: 3, 4).[16]

In the case of the figure from **Оглахты** (Oglakhty, Minusinsk Hollow, Khakassia), the macrocosmic character is also indicated by some other elements (E2: 9). First off, it is the oval field surrounded by a double frame, which, in this case, could represent the sky or the whole universe (perhaps equated with the **cosmic egg**), whereby the small animals at the bottom would encode its lower zones i.e. the surface of the earth. The fact that the figure covers this whole field indicates its extension through the whole universe, and its equation with the **Cosmic Tree**, which would be supported by the oblique growths on the torso with the meaning of branches. Two elements bring this figure closer to the central character from the Luristan standards. They are its horned head and the pair of ibexes that it holds by the horns, which at the same time lean with their hind legs on its hips. We think that these features allow the inclusion of this petroglyph in the category of potential paradigms of the scene of the "Master of Animals" type that is present on Luristan standards.[17]

Depicted next to the legs of one of the giants from Tamgaly are two small animals, probably a male and a female ibex, which interferes with the different sexes of the pair of animals in some "zoomorphic standards" (in the specific case anthropomorphized – E3: 11; E9: 5 compare with 6). The author from whom we take this motif uses the depicted character (who, by the way, he defines as a solar deity) as comparative material in the study of the art and mythology of the Sakā people, whereby he often presents comparisons with the Luristan bronzes and specifically with the Luristan standards.[18]

In some of the mentioned petroglyphs, the large head of the figures formed by concentric circles, inside or around it, is accompanied by a bordure of small circles that could bear two interwoven meanings (E3: 9, 10, 14, 15). At the bodily level, they could represent the **multiplicated eyes** of the depicted character, which, in turn, given the equation of his head with the sky, on a cosmic level would interfere with the stars, and perhaps also with the phases of the cyclical movement of the sun across the sky. Based on this feature, the depicted figures can be related to several specific mythical characters conceptualized with a larger number of eyes, such as the Hindu **Purusha**,[19] **Indra**[20] and **Varuna**[21] (all with 1000 eyes each), as well as the Avestan **Mithra** (with 10,000 eyes), whereby, in some verses, his emphasized height is also referenced (see pp. 377, 378, 399, 405).[22]

In this sense, the ancient Greek **Argos** is particularly interesting, due to his belonging to the category of "giants", the epithet *panoptes* (the one who sees everything), his placement in relation to the night sky (specifically of the eyes to the stars) and the relations with cattle (cattle herder, guardian of cows). It is important for us that he, except with multiplicated eyes (in various sources their number ranges from three to several thousand, **scattered all over the body**), was also depicted with **two faces**, which interferes with the two faces of the central figure from the "idols with protomes" (this second feature will be analyzed in detail in

[14] Other examples: Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 697 (Ѓ20: 5, 8, 9), 700 (Ѓ21: 10), 744 (Ѓ41: 7, 8).
[15] J. Lechler, *Vom Hakenkreuz*, Abb. 29: 21.
[16] A. P. Garfinkel et al, *Myth*, Fig. 3, Fig. 6, Fig. 7, Fig. 8, Fig 12; A. P. Garfinkel, *The Whirlwind*, 141 (Fig. 2).
[17] This example has already been included in comparisons with the Luristan bronzes by N. L. Chlenova (Я. А. Шер, *Петроглифы*, 161 – Рис. 87) and G. N. Kurochkin (Г. Н. Курочкин, *Скифское*, 119 – Рис 10).
[18] А. К. Акишев, *Искусство*, 24, 25 (T.V: 1, 9), 37, 52 (T.VII).
[19] (Laws of Manu I, 5 et seq; Rigveda X, 90, 1); P. Lajoye, *Puruṣa*, 39; M. Ježić, *R'gvedski*, 250, 251.
[20] (*The Buddha-karita of Ashvaghosha* I, 27); E. B. Cowell, F. A. Davis, *Buddhist*.
[21] (AVŚ 4.16.4); A. Nikolaev, *Ten Thousand Eyes*, 826.
[22] (Yašt 10; Yašt 6.5; Yasna 1.3); A. Nikolaev, *Ten Thousand Eyes*, 825-829.

one of the following chapters, see pp. 471, 558). This character was painted on Hellenic vases, whereby it is thought that exactly the double-faced variants are older (6th century BCE), those with eyes scattered on the body are slightly younger (5th century BCE), while also occurring is the combination of both variants (E2: 5, 8). Assumptions have been made that the double-faced version is authentically Hellenic, while the one with a larger number of eyes is the result of the influence of Persian traditions associated with the god Mithra.[23]

Characterized by emphasized height, which often crosses into columnarity, are also the depictions of the **Leontocephalus** (E4: 8). They were created within the frames of the ancient Mediterranean cultures and their artistic styles, and are associated with the Mithraic cult, whereby there are various opinions regarding the character they represent: Mithras, Aion, Zurvān or Ahriman. Regardless of specific identification, it is important that all of these cases reflect the cosmological aspects of this character, related to the existence of the universe in its spatial and temporal aspect.[24] The Iranian basis of the Mithraic cult, and of some of the mentioned mythical characters, gives these representations the status of parallels that from a geographical aspect would be closest to the Luristan bronzes (compare F13; p. 403).

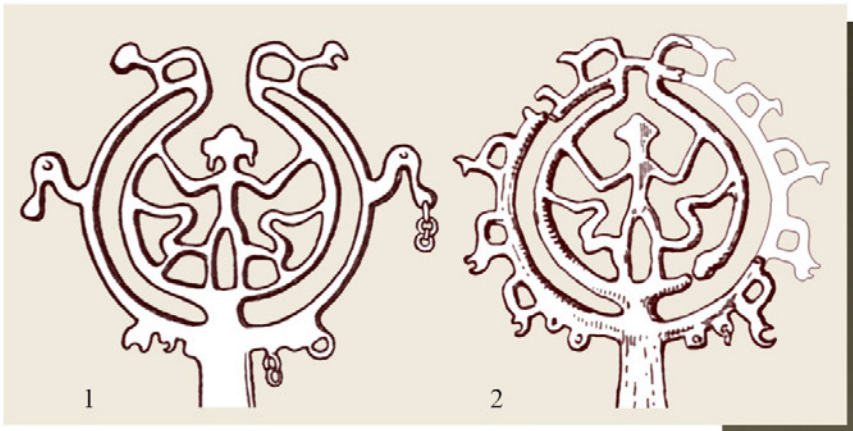
Also deserving of attention in this overview are the **bronze statuettes from northern Etruria** (Chiusi, Volterra) and **Latium** (Nemi), which are characterized by extremely tall proportions (E4: 2 – 5). Although the character and meaning of these objects are still under discussion, there are no dilemmas regarding their religious purpose. Some of the specimens are associated with certain gods (for example, Diana or Aphrodite, discovered in the sanctuary of this goddess in Nemi – E4: 5), while others - with priests (haruspices), which is indicated by the specific hat on their head and the vessel in hand that suggests the sacrificial act they perform (E4: 2, 4).[25] Three elements bring these statuettes closer to the standards, especially those of the type "columnar figurines". They are the columnar torso, the knees denoted in the form of warts and the specific hat, which we will discuss in more detail in one of the following sub-chapters (E4: 2 – 5 compare with 6, 7; see p. 357).

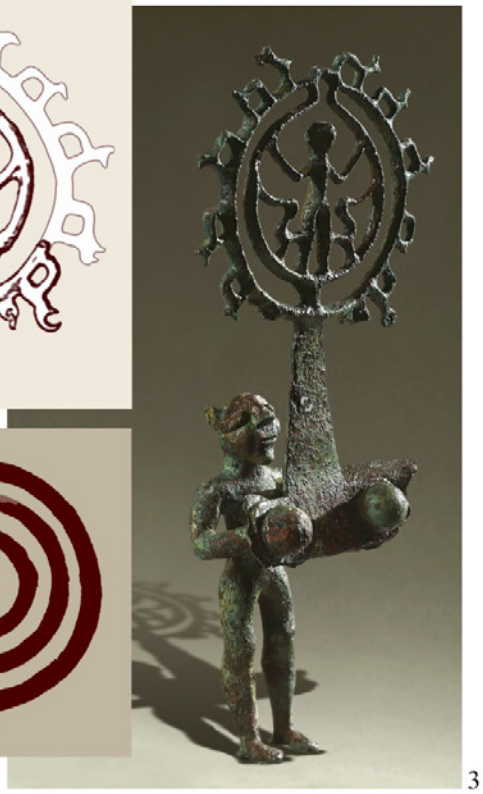
Extremely elongated columnar figures are also present within **Slavic traditions**. In the Middle Ages they appear as reliefs on stone funerary monuments ("stećci") (E5: 9), as motifs engraved on rings (E5: 8, 10) and in the form of graffiti carved on frescoes in churches (E5: 7). Within the frames of folklore, the columnar figures from East Slavic folk embroidery (E5: 5) and the motifs on ornamented Easter eggs (E5: 6) particularly stand out. The macrocosmic character of these figures is reflected through their equation with the tree, height significantly greater than the surrounding figures, the radiant halo and their surrounding with various celestial bodies (moons, stars, suns).[26]

As part of this overview, we should also dedicate attention to the large **Shigir idol**, discovered near present-day Kirovgrad (middle course of the Ural River) (E4: 1). According to the C-14 method, it is dated to the Mesolithic period (8th millennium BCE), which gives it the status of the oldest wooden sculpture that has so far been discovered on the planet. It is formed in the shape of a plank about 5.3 m long and 0.25 m wide, with a human head at the top, placed on stylized shoulders. Apart from its extreme elongation, the reasons for the inclusion of this find in our overview are two more features close to the Luristan standards. Firstly, it is the presence of an additional **six human faces** on its corpus, three on both its front and back sides. It is thought that they, together with the geometric ornaments depicted below them, actually rounded off **six separate stylized anthropomorphic figures** arranged one above the other. This component interferes with the

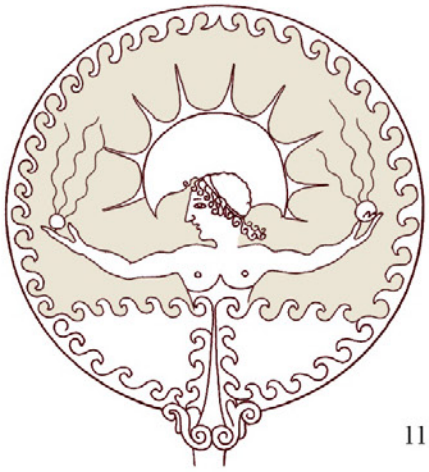
[23] In detail regarding the sources, the pictorial depictions and the indicated influences: A. Nikolaev, *Ten Thousand Eyes*; also see: *Argos* 2019; about the pictorial depictions: A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 379 (Fig. 286), 380 (Fig. 287).
[24] L. A. Campbell, *Mithraic*, 348-363; according to R. C. Zaehner, the Mithraic god with a leonine head represents Ahriman, and not Zurvān as it is thought by F. Cumont (R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, VIII, IX; R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 129, 130, Fig. 25, 26); И. Л. Крупник, *Зурванизм*, 53, 55; J. Duchesne-Guillemin, *Ahriman*, 192.
[25] O. J. Brendel, *Etruscan*, 330, 331 (with presented bibliography); *Statuette of Aphrodite* 2020.
[26] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 365, 366, Д29.

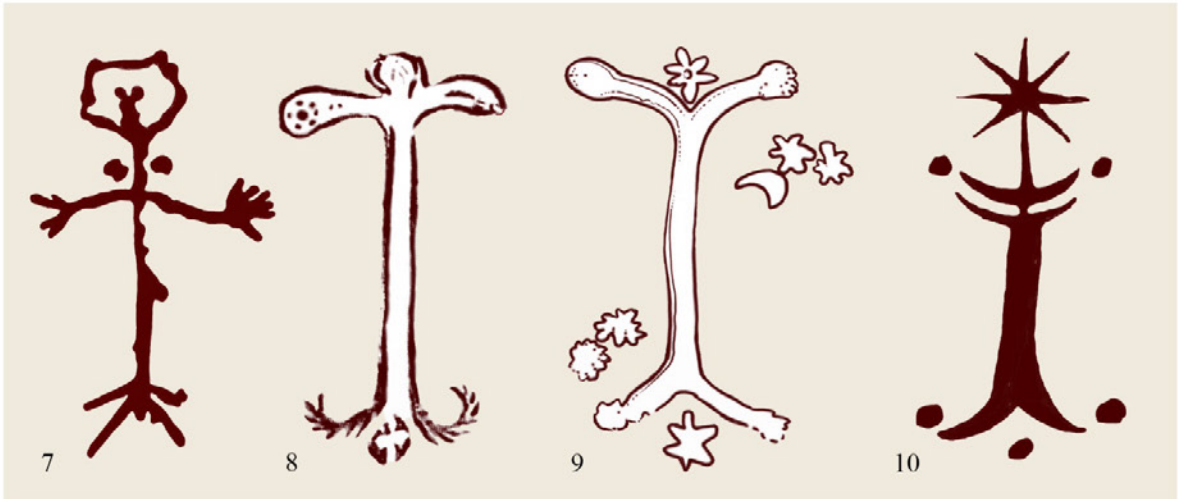
E5











presence of multiple heads i.e. faces on the standards (especially in the "idols with protomes" where their number reaches up to six) and their arrangement on both sides (E4: 1 compare with E7: 1, 3, 6, 11). In this case, too, as in the Shigir idol, these heads are often complemented by individual figures that participate in building the all-encompassing anthropomorphic character that spans the whole object. The difference is that this idol has one main face (the top one), formed only on the front of the head, while in the "idols with protomes" there is one main face on both sides. Multiple researchers have suggested the macrocosmic character of this idol as an **image of the tripartite cosmos** (underworld, above-ground and sky). They ague this interpretation with the vertical division of the idol in three separate figures (on both its sides), the presence of certain geometric and floral ornaments, and the corresponding parallels preserved in the folklore of the autocthonous population of the region where it was discovered.[27]

Within this analysis, one should also mention the multi-headed Hindu mythical character **Vishvarupa**, primarily because of his pictorial representations. They are organized analogously to the other examples presented here - in the form of an extremely elongated composition consisting of his standing figure, built upon which is a "pillar" consisting of several heads stacked on top of each other (E7: 2 compare with 1, 3, 6, 11). Although in the Rigvedic hymns this character is three-headed, in the indicated depiction the three-headedness is multiplicated several times vertically, perhaps in the direction of his authority relating to the various levels of the universe (the "three realms").[28] In support of the archetypal character of this iconographic composition, we also reference an example from the culture of the Maya peoples from the territory of Mexico (E9: 7).

Finally, it is also worth mentioning the category of cult objects of the type **khatvanga** (a tantric staff), which belong to Tibetan Buddhism. The reasons for this are two of their components that are also common to the mentioned standards (E7: 12 compare with 1, 3, 6). Firstly, these are the multiplicated human heads arranged on a shaft one above the other (the highest one in the form of a human skull), at the top crowned with a trident. The second component is the character of these objects i.e. their use as sacred scepters, which in principle corresponds to the purpose of the Luristan standards.[29]

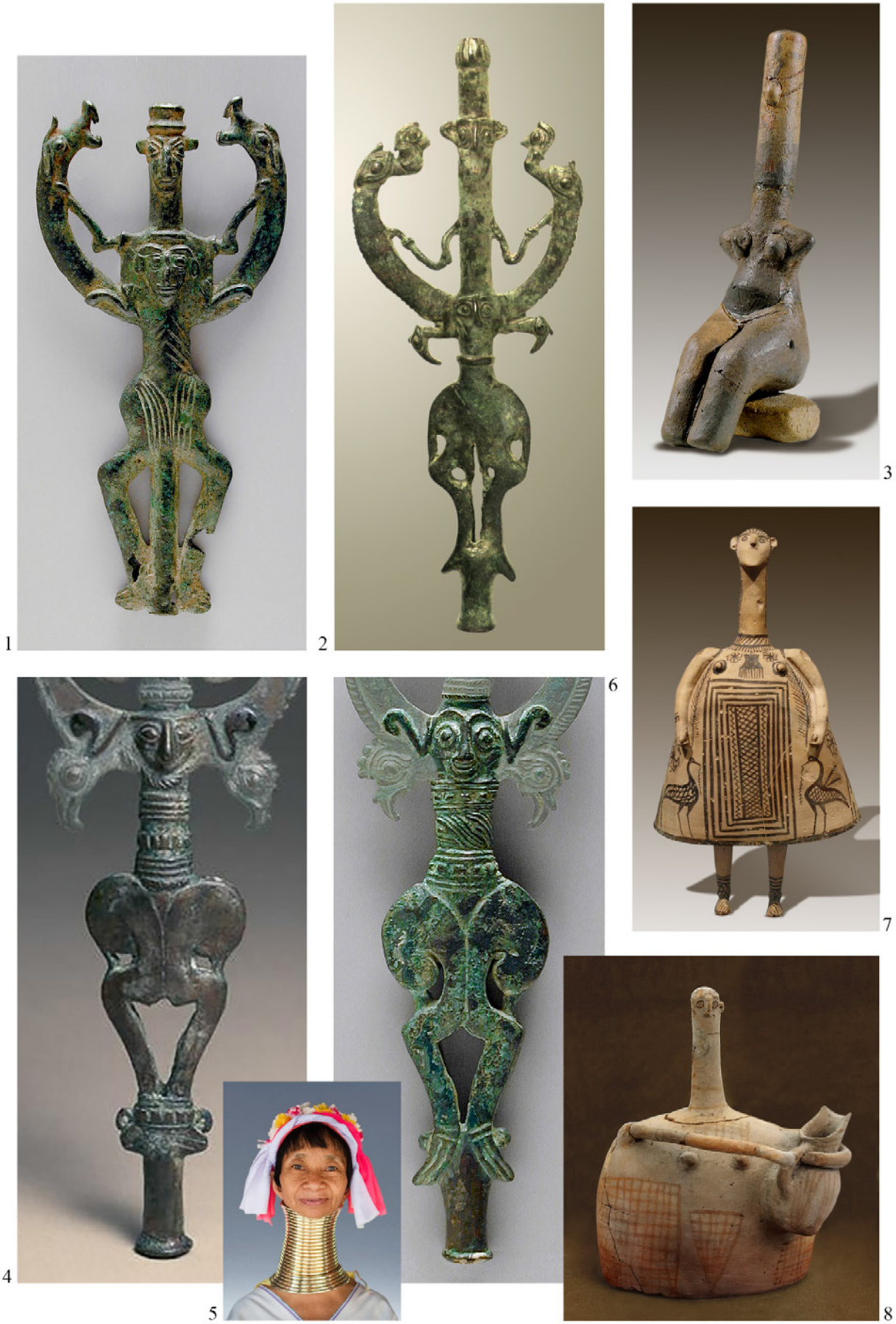
The latter examples raise the question: *whether in global frames, too, standing behind the elongated columnar figurines present in various cultures of the planet, were in principle giant mythical figures of macrocosmic proportions?*

In numerous "idols with protomes", one can notice a tendency for **elongation of the neck** of the anthropomorphic or hybrid characters depicted there. It can be the neck of the central figure formed at the top of the pillar of the standards (E6: 1, 2), but also of the lower figure between whose torso and head (depicted between the pair of large protomes) extends a cylindrical part, often times richly ornamented, which apparently represented its elongated neck (E6: 4, 6). The concept of extreme elongation of the neck in human figures is not so rare within archaic cultures. It is especially common in the Balkans among female figurines and anthropomorphic vessels from the Neolithic and Bronze Age (E6: 3, 8), but also later in the circle of the Iron Age "Macedonian bronzes" (E18: 10, 11) and the cult figurines from Boeotia (Greece) (E6: 7).[30] Through such extreme emphasizing of the neck, it, within the frames of the cosmological concept, acquires the meaning of the **Cosmic Axis**, based on its equation with the **human spine** and the treatment of the neck as the only visible part of it.

The mentioned depictions on the standards, on a visual level, interfere with the custom, preserved to this day among the **Kayan people** (Thailand), which consists in the gradual elongation of the necks of women

[27] On the iconography of the idol: Н. М. Чаиркина, *Большой*; Н. М. Чаиркина, *Деревянная*; С. Н. Савченко (и др.), *Большой*; С. Н. Савченко, М. Г. Жилин, *О выявленных*.
[28] (Rigveda III, 56, 3); commentary: Т. Я. Елизаренкова, *Ригведа I – IV*, 717; D. M. Srinivasan, *Many Heads*, 179, 180.
[29] R. Beer, *The Encyclopedia*, 252-258, Pl. 115, Pl. 116.
[30] Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 95-99.

E6



with the help of metal bracelets.[31] These similarities, probably based on the archetypal character of the indicated symbolic structures, raise the question of the existence of similar customs also within Luristan culture (E6: 5 compare with 4, 6 and D39).

- Duplicated giant

An article by C. Lancaster includes an "idol with protomes", on the central vertical axis of which, instead of the usual one pair of arms, are depicted **two pairs** that reach towards the animal protomes accompanied by additional anthropomorphic heads (E7: 1).[32] Analogous multiplication of the arms (and heads) is also present on the specimen from LACMA (E7: 3),[33] as well as on a particularly unusual standard from the Rietberg Museum in Zurich (E7: 7).[34] The same element can also be found in some other standards where the extra pair of hands can be recognized in the symmetrical relief motifs present on the protomes themselves, apparently created through the reconceptualization of the front legs of the former pair of animals from the "zoomorphic standards" (E7: 6). There are also known specimens where not only the arms and heads are duplicated, but also the pair of protomes that they hold (E7: 11). These forms of multiplication can refer to the appearance of the central figure from the standards, as the multiplication of the whole upper part of its body.[35]

As a visual parallel for this concept of duplication of the hands, we can present a much older find. It is an anthropomorphic figure painted on an Eneolithic vase from Petreni (Drochia, Moldova, "Cucuteni-Trypillia" culture) (E8: 1, 2, 6). It is duplicated in a similar way as the previous examples - with one lower part of the body (hip and legs) above which, on top of each other, are two torsos, with two shoulders and two pairs of arms, but with only one face i.e. head, unlike the standards where there is a face on both the front and back side. But, on the other hand, on the mentioned vessel, the same figure is depicted twice (E8: 2; E7: 8 compare with 1, 3, 6, 11).[36] A similar concept of multiplication can be found within the painted pottery of the prehistoric cultures of Western Asia (Tepe Sialk, Tepe Giyan, Tepe Moussian, end of 4th millennium BCE, E7: 4, 5, 9 compare with 8).[37] According to the cosmological interpretations of **B. A. Rybakov**, the motif from Petreni represents a macrocosmic giant whose body extends through the whole universe: his legs are buried in the earth, while the torso and head extend through the middle and upper zones of the universe, where the celestial streams and the sun are depicted in the form of wheel (E8: 2, 6). The mentioned author connects this motif with the verses from the Rigveda that refer to Purusha.[38] According to them: "So mighty is his greatness; yea, greater than this is Purusha; All creatures are one-fourth of him, three-fourths eternal life in heaven; With three-fourths of Purusha went up: one-fourth of him again was here; Thence he strode out to every side over what eats not and what eats ...".[39]

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[31] S. Campagnola, *Thailand*.

[32] C. Lancaster, *Luristan*, 96, 97 (Fig. 2).

[33] *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020, (M.76.97.4).

[34] N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 196 (No. 199).

[35] Here we want to remind of a different meaning of this extra pair of limbs from the "idols with protomes" - the meaning of spread legs, presented in the previous chapter (D17: 1 – 6; see pp. 266, 269). This would be another example of the ambiguity that is especially inherent to the iconography of the Luristan bronzes.

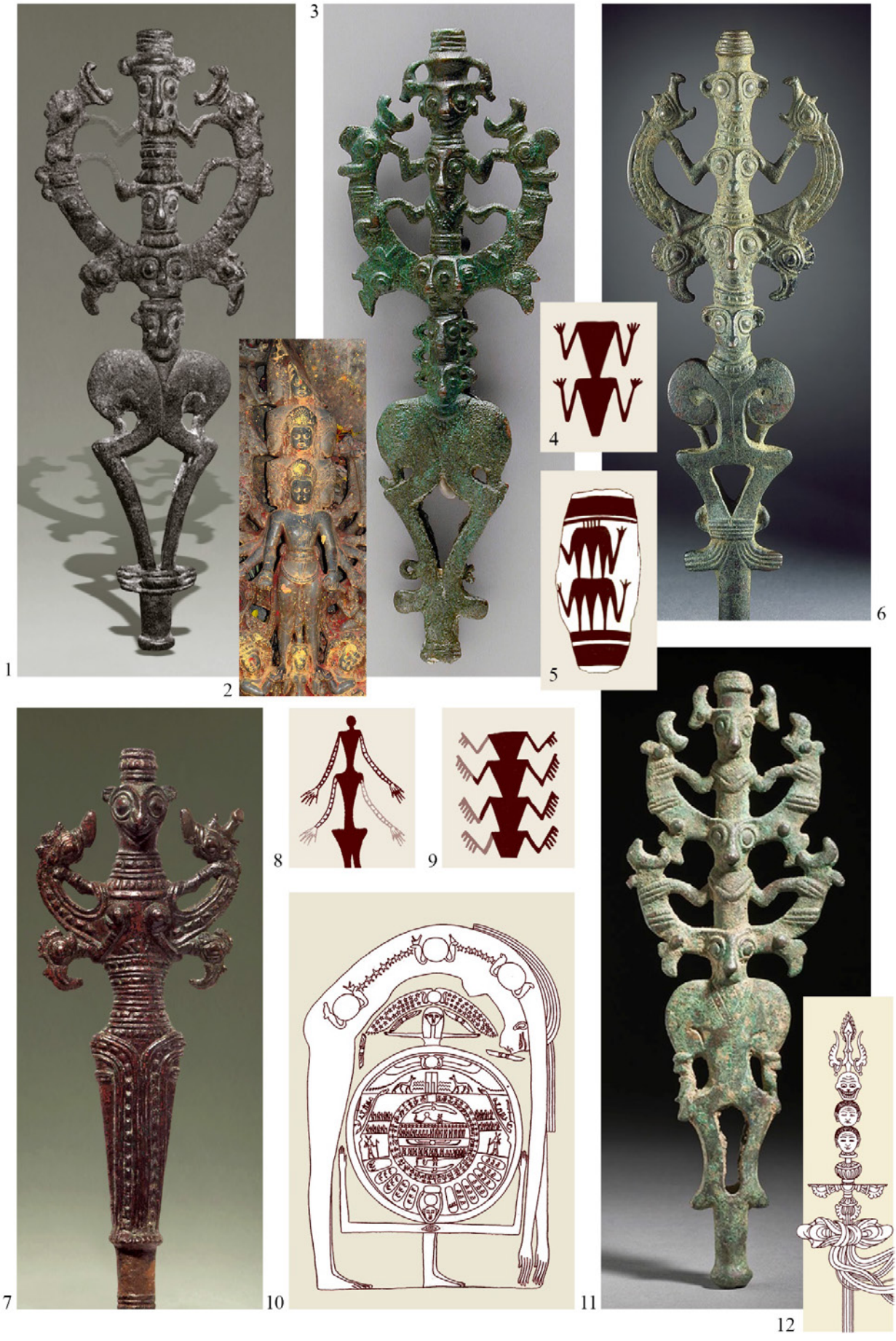
[36] Drawing: V. Sorochin, *Aşezarea*, 258 (Fig. 2:1, 3); older interpretations: О. П. Годенко-Наконечна, *Трипіл. Орнаментика*, 109-110.

[37] L. Vanden Berghe, *Les ateliers*, 7 (Fig. 9); A. Parrot, *Assur*, 239 (Fig. 294).

[38] Б. А. Рыбаков, *Космогония II*, 22, 23; Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Славян*, 204-205; other interpretations of the figure (as androgynous): М. А. Григорьева, С. Г. Леонова, *Сосуд*.

[39] *„Таково его величие, / И еще мощнее этого (сам) Пуруша. / Четверть его – все существа. / Три четверти его - бессмертие на небе. / На три четверти взошел Пуруша вверх. / Четверть его возникла снова здесь. / Оттуда он выступил повсюду, / (Распространяясь) над тем, что ест (пищу) и что не ест.“* (Rigveda X.90.3,4); Т. Я. Елизаренкова, *Ригведа IX – X*, 235 (translation), 492 (interpretations); A. Malinar, *Hindu*, 64-66; В. Н. Топоров, *О двух*, 216; the presented English translation is according to: R. T. H. Griffith, *The Hymns*.

E7



The duplication of the torso of the depicted figure can be understood in several ways. Perceived from a cosmological perspective, it is related to the three zones of the universe (legs = earth, lower torso = above ground, upper torso = sky). At the bodily level it can be understood as a manifestation of the concept of amplification of a certain function or feature (in this case height) through multiplication of the appropriate body part. From a linguistic aspect, it can be perceived as a literal visual transposition of the phrase "twice as high" or "as high as two" i.e. as a form of accentuation of the height of the depicted character. One should not completely rule out the possibility that, in the "idols with protomes", it was originally a compressed ("flattened" in two dimensions) representation of a mythical character with one pair of legs complemented by two torsos, each with a separate head.

Fourfoldness is a quite common attribute of Hindu gods that may reflect their pronounced power or various aspects of their meaning and action. In this case, **Shiva** seems to us as the most interesting one due to his pronounced macrocosmic and cosmogonic character (E8: 7), whereby especially important to us is the presence of analogous four-armed deities in the early medieval cultures of Central Asia (Khwarezm, Sogdia, 6th - 8th century CE) (E8: 3 – 5). Although the latter representations are considered a product of Hindu culture (especially the depictions of Shiva), their great popularity and specific variants (female and male characters, mounted on a lion or a dragon, with sun and moon in their hands) raise the question of the possible existence of some autochthonous Central Asian mythical character with this feature, upon which the Hindu traditions were later layered. There are indications that in Iran, some of the depictions of Shiva were identified with **Ahura Mazda**.[40] The two pairs of arms also appear as an epithet for the ancient god **Apollo** (Apollo Tetracheir = *Apollo the Four-armed*) who, according to sources, was venerated in the area of Laconia.[41] They are also present in some ancient statues that are associated with **Mediterranean Mithraism** (F13: 8, 9). A character with these features can be implicitly identified on the relief from the sarcophagus of Wereshnefer from Saqqara (Ptolemaic period), if the figures of Shu (air, depicted as the bearer of the sky) and Geb (the earth, depicted as the bearer of the whole world) are treated as a single figure with duplicated arms and heads (E7: 10). The figure of Geb himself is accompanied by another pair of raised miniature hands, depicted next to his little head. In support of this perception would be the fact that in this particular scene, the first character is depicted without legs, while the second one without a torso.[42]

In this context, of particular importance to us is the question whether the giant macrocosmic figure presented here was also depicted on the Luristan standards of the **"columnar figurines"** type, taking into account the tall proportions and the accentuated columnar body of the anthropomorphic character that makes up the iconographic basis of these objects (E4: 6, 7; C26 – C28). Although, in regards to this question, the sexual undeterminedness or ambivalence of this character, manifested through its male, female or bisexual features, is at first glance confusing, it actually goes in favor of its macrocosmic nature because, in the verbally presented myths, sexual ambivalence is exactly one of the specifics of primordial characters of macrocosmic proportions.

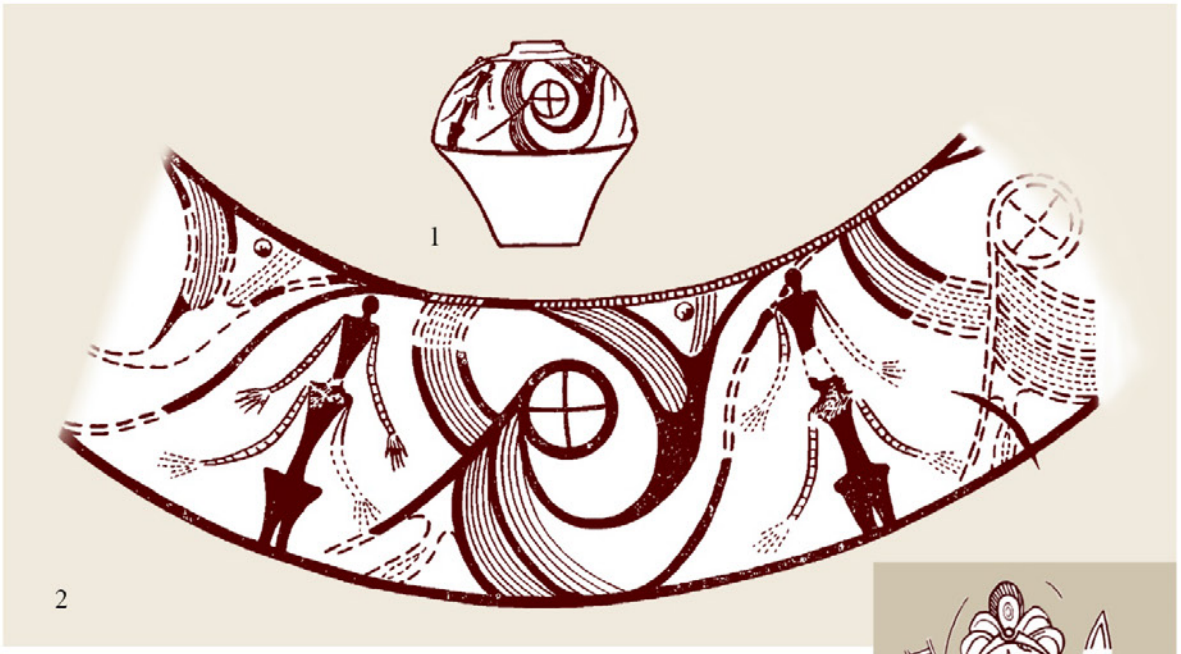
We have already noted that the mentioned **standard from the Rietberg Museum** in Zurich is in fact a combination of the "idols with protomes" and the "columnar figurines", because in the upper part of the torso of its central character are two clearly depicted pairs of arms, the upper ones of which grasp the animal protomes by the neck, while with the lower ones supports its own plastically executed breasts (E9: 2 compare with 1 and 3). One gets the impression that, within the frames of this image, the protomes (especially the lower ones) come out of the armpits of this character. Such an impression would have an appropriate symbolic justification if one takes into account the **identification of the armpits with the genital area**, based on their

[40] On these representations: Н. В. Дьяконова, *Материалы*; Н. В. Дьяконова, О. И. Смирнова, *К вопросу*; M. Minardi, *A Four-Armed*; А. М. Беленицкий, Б. И. Маршак, *Черты*; Л. И. Рempель, *Цепь*, 85-88.

[41] (Hsch. κ 3853, *cf.*κ 4558; Sosib. *FGrHist* 595F27; Lib. *Or*. 11.204; *IG* V.1.259) according to: J. Marcadé, *Hermès*, 614; T. Bilić, *The swan*, 448.

[42] About the relief (without the interpretation of the double character): J. P. Allen, *The Egyptian*, 28, 29.

E8



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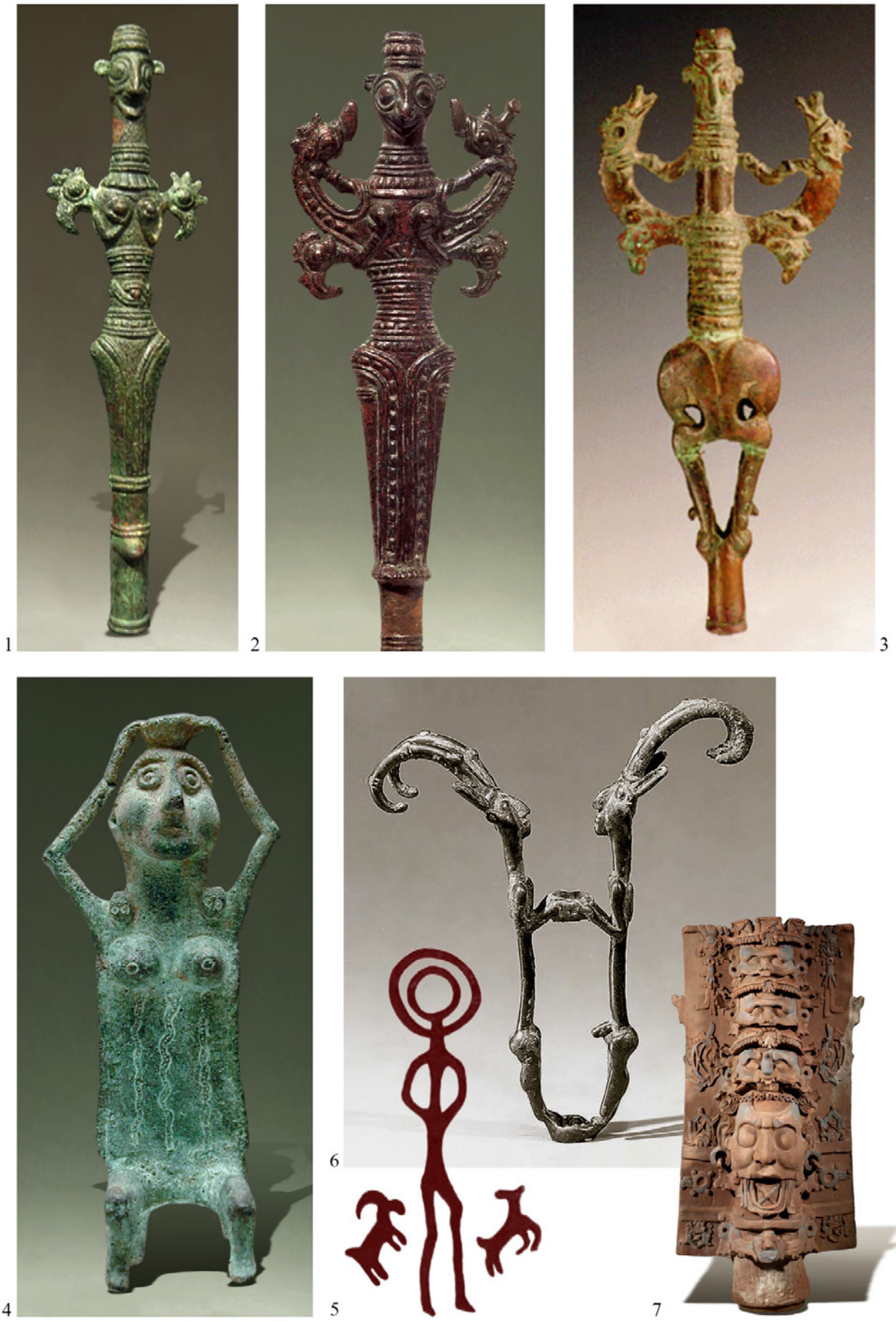


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E9



1 2 3 4 5 6 7

visual and other similarities (hidden part of the body, sensitive to touch, overgrown with hairs and interwoven with body secretions and smell).[43] In this context, the emergence of the protomes from under the armpits actually acquires the meaning of their birth from there. As a more explicit visual manifestation of this mythologem, we can take a figurine of a woman from Western Iran, synchronous with the Luristan bronzes, in which two small human heads are depicted in the area of the armpits and shoulders. In fact, they represent the anthropomorphic heads of two snakes whose bodies extend along the back of the figure (E9: 4 compare with 2).[44] These elements can be put in relation to the myth of the Nordic primordial macrocosmic giant **Ymir**, from whose sweat secreted under the left arm, man and woman were created.[45] Given the late (medieval) origin of this myth, it is possible that in the original version, the man was created from one (right), while the woman from the other (left) armpit.

If the above-presented interpretations are accepted as plausible, the central anthropomorphic or hybrid figure from the Luristan standards (specifically the "idols with protomes" and the "columnar figurines") takes on the meaning of a macrocosmic mythical character, analogous to the Vedic Purusha, the Nordic Ymir and to other above-mentioned characters, whose body is equated with the universe.

2. Creation of the universe from the body parts of the macrocosmic giant i.e. the macrocosmic phallus

If we take into account the identification of the cosmic elements from the previous iconographic levels of the standards (geometric, zoomorphic, phytomorphic and sexual-reproductive) with the body parts of the anthropomorphic figure from this iconographic layer, it becomes possible to connect it with the myths of the universe's creation from the body of the macrocosmic giant or the macrocosmic phallus.[46] In this specific case it would mean: the creation of the **sky** from his **head** (or **glans penis**) or from his **hands**, often zoomorphized in the form of animal protomes; of the **earth** from his **legs** (or from the **testicles** of the phallus); of the **Cosmic Axis** from his **spine** (or the **corpus of the phallus**) (E1: 1 – 3, 5).

As the most appropriate representatives of this action, one could take the already mentioned myths about the creation of the world from the body parts of the first human who has macrocosmic proportions.[47] In the Rigvedic hymns it is said that the sky was created from the head of Purusha, while the earth from his legs.[48] In Norse mythology, too, the sky was created from the head i.e. the skull of Ymir,[49] while in Iranian mythology - from the head of Vayu or Gayomard.[50] Hinted in an Orphic hymn dedicated to Zeus is a similar equation of the sky with the head and face of this god.[51] Similar concepts of identification of the cosmos with the human body are also present in Kabbalah, in Gnostic and in alchemical texts where the brain (of the

[43] In Russian folklore there is a recorded legend in which God releases the sun out of his armpit (А. Афанасьев, *Поэтические I*, 37) which would be equivalent to its birth.
[44] P. R. S. Moorey (et al), *Ancient Bronzes*, 101 (No. 578).
[45] (Elder Edda, Lay of Vafthrudnir. 33); P. Lajoye, *Puruṣa*, 25; В. Петрухин, *Мифы др. Скандинавии*, 72.
[46] Our first observations on this scene: Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 64.
[47] An overview of these mythical characters and cosmogonic myths: P. Lajoye, *Puruṣa*; L. Parmly Brown, *The Cosmic Man*; from the aspect of analytical psychology: M. L. von Franz, *The process*, 199-204.
[48] "Forth from his navel came mid-air the sky was fashioned from his head / Earth from his feet, and from his car the regions. Thus they formed the worlds." (Rigveda X.90.14; translation according to: R. T. H. Griffith, *The Hymns*).
[49] (Elder Edda, Lay of Vafthrudnir. 21); P. Lajoye, *Puruṣa*, 25, 26; В. Н. Топоров, *О структуре*; M. Piantelli, *L'interpretazione*, 47, 48 (in these relations he also includes the Germanic Tuisto mentioned by Tacitus).
[50] (Denkart; Great Bundahišn) according to: P. Lajoye, *Puruṣa*, 36; (Rivāyat Pahlavi) according to: M. Piantelli, *L'interpretazione*, 48, 49.
[51] (Eusebius of Cesarea, *Praeparatio evangelica*, III, 9-2, Kern, fragment 168); P. Lajoye, *Puruṣa*, 33-35, 38, 39 (the Orphic Zeus in this case is shown to be closer to Gayomard); M. Piantelli, *L'interpretazione*, 49.

primordial Adam Kadmon or other similar characters) is associated with Edem, the brain membrane with the heavens, the head with paradise, and so on.[52]

This cosmogonic action is also contained in a Pahlavi text. It tells how the cosmos is created from some kind of element, resembling a fiery flame and pure light, fashioned from the Infinite Light, which was placed within a body. After it grew and improved inside, for a period of 3000 years, it then started creating, one by one, from its body, all other things. First the sky was created from its head (...) and the earth was created from its feet (...). Based on some translations i.e. interpretations it represents an act in which **Ohrmazd** creates the universe from himself, while according to others - from some other double-sexed deity.[53] According to some interpretations, this mythical action, besides Ohrmazd, could also involve **Zurvān**. It is clear in the sources that after Ohrmazd was born from the body of his father Zurvān, the latter suggested that he performs some kind of sacrifice, whereby it is not clear who or what would be sacrificed. R. C. Zaehner, referring to the fact that Zurvān is the embodiment of the universe (Spihr), proposes a hypothesis according to which **Ohrmazd created the world so that, in the name of it, he actually sacrificed his father.**[54] There are also other parallels that support this, in addition to the above mentioned ones, especially the Hindu **Brahma** who in some Sogdian texts with a Buddhist character is equated with Zurvān because of his status as a supreme character who sacrifices himself in the name of the creation of the universe.[55]

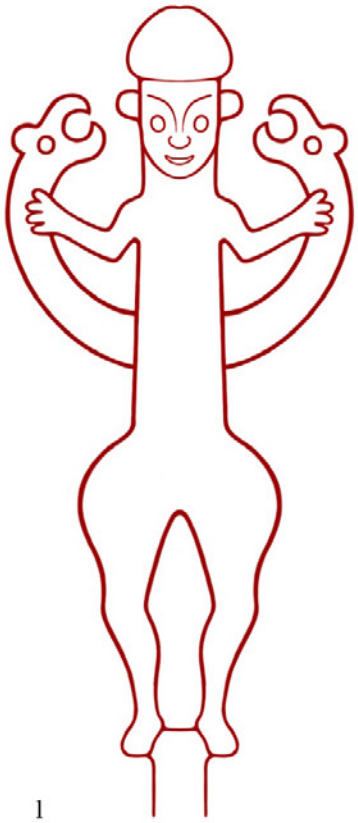
In the historical sources there are numerous arguments in favor of the relation Zurvān / Ohrmazd - Macrocosmos - Microcosmos (Man). **The Finite Zurvān** i.e. **Zurvān of the long Dominion** is the macrocosm itself, while Man is the microcosm i.e. a scaled-down copy of it. In the end, the same fate awaits them both: “Man – who is the microcosm – will be swallowed up in the Infinite just as Zurvān of the long Dominion – the macrocosm – will return to the Infinite Zurvān, where motion finds eternal rest in an Infinite which neither understands nor is capable of being understood”. Certain texts indicate the concrete equation of the elements of the human body with the elements of the universe (implicitly the body of Zurvān). Zurvān as the embodiment of the universe is the locus of good and evil just as the body of Man is the locus of sin and virtue.[56] In the Greater Bundahishn it is said that the soul of Man (microcosm) corresponds to Ohrmazd in the macrocosm.[57]

In the myth of the creation of Gayomard it is stated that he was "shining like the Sun".[58] This detail can be put in relation to the giants from the petroglyphs, which we have seen were often depicted with a large round head, sometimes surrounded by rays or a halo, for which we have suggested to be associated with the celestial circle or the sun (E2: 6, 7; E3).

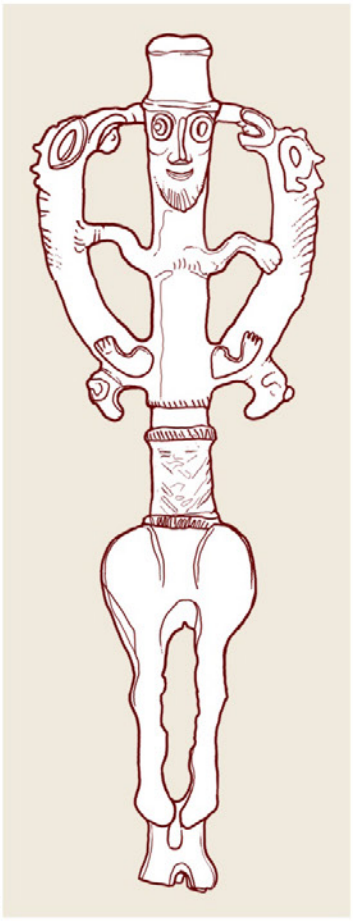
P. Lajoye thinks that the myths mentioned here (but also others similar to them) mainly have an Indo-European genesis, while **F. Ruzsa** gives preference to their universal human character, based on the general concepts of human thought.[59] **R. C. Zaehner** references arguments in support of the influence of Hindu traditions (related to Purusha) on the Iranian ones, which mainly refer to Gayomard. He thinks that the Zoroastrians took the myth of Purusha from India and adapted it to the Mazdean cosmogony.[60] **V. N. Toporov** proposes that the similarities between the Iranian and Scandinavian traditions (Ymir) be sought not only at the

[52] According to: В. Н. Топоров, *Пространство*, 143, 144; Ж. Дорес, *Тайните*, 42, 43; similar content: L. Parmly Brown, *The Cosmic Man*, 16, 28-30; K. G. Jung, *Myst. coniunctoris II*, 126-195.
[53] (Pahlavi Rivāyat. 46); R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 136; P. Lajoye, *Puruṣa*, 36-38; Ю. А. Рапопорт, *Космогонический*, 66.
[54] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 134-140; Ю. А. Рапопорт, *Космогонический*, 67, 68.
[55] Ю. А. Рапопорт, *Космогонический*, 67, 68; R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 139, 140.
[56] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 238, 272, citation 246; R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 225, 237-239, 250, 258.
[57] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 212.
[58] (Greater Bundahishn. 73. 1); R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 136; R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 262, 263.
[59] P. Lajoye, *Puruṣa*, 42-55; F. Ruzsa, *Is the Cosmic Giant*; arguments in favor of the Indo-European origin: M. Piantelli, *L'interpretazione*, 33, 50, 51-53.
[60] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 137-143; R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 259.

E10



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general Indo-European level, but also in the coexistence between the Iranian (Sarmatian and Alanian) and Germanic (Ostrogothic) ethnic groups that took place in the steppes of the North Black Sea region in the last centuries before the Common Era.[61]

3. The mythical hero creates the world from the body of the gigantic primordial monster

The scene in which the central character from the Luristan standards holds the two protomes with his hands could also be interpreted as **his struggle with some kind of hybrid creature**, represented through these protomes and the other above-presented zoomorphic and anthropomorphic elements (E10). Hiding behind this monstrous figure could be the secondarily demonized birth-giving goddess, whose impressive figure with spread zoomorphic legs we have analyzed in previous chapters (D20; D21). As paradigms of this action, one can present two myths that correspond to this iconographic arrangement. The first one is the Akkadian myth in which **Marduk kills Tiamat** and from her body builds the cosmos with its main elements (possible older Mesopotamian iconographic paradigms of this element from the standards: C16: 2; E15). In the sources, Tiamat is described as a monstrous zoo-anthropomorphic creature with an emphasized female sex, regardless of the fact that she also possesses certain androgynous features. Although she mainly symbolizes the sea i.e. the earthly waters and primordial creative forces, judging by the mythical actions, she once also represented the whole cosmos in its initial i.e. undifferentiated form.[62] The second one is the Hellenic myth of **Theseus's duel with the Gorgon Medusa**, which, despite the absence of cosmogonic qualities, can be related to the previous one based on the bodily features of Medusa (D21: 2, 3; D23: 12). In place of the two monsters, one can also find a mythical creature from the category of **dragons, with dominant male features**, for which we could reference numerous examples from various parts of the world.[63] In both cases, the hero - killer of the monster in these myths bears the function of a demiurge that with this act creates i.e. organizes the universe.

In context of the mentioned myths, the concrete representation from the standards, in which the central character holds the zoomorphic protomes with his hands, can be interpreted in two ways: as the **struggle** of the god-hero with the monstrous character i.e. the zoomorphized parts of his body, or as a scene in which, after victory, he **dismembers its body and from those parts builds the cosmos** (E10).[64]

4. Creation of the first man and the first woman from the body parts of the macrocosmic giant

The incentive to analyze this meaning is given to us by the "zoomorphic standard" from the Metropolitan Museum, where one of the two anthropozoomorphic figures is depicted with a phallus, while the other one - with a vulva (E9: 6).[65] It is quite probable that such a sexual differentiation, in some cases, was passed on to the corresponding pair of zoomorphic elements from the "idols with protomes", if it is taken into account that they were created as a modification of the older "zoomorphic standards" (C1: 4 – 6, 9). In support of this, we can take the mentioned petroglyph from **Tamgaly** where the central gigantic character is accompanied by ibexes of both sexes (a male with horns and a female without horns) (E9: 5). If we allow the

[61] В. Н. Топоров, *О структуре*, 10.
[62] (Enûma Eliš); M. Elijade, *Istorija I*, 64-67; L. Parmly Brown. *The Cosmic Man*, 21; M. Piantelli points out the theories according to which the Indo-European origin of this myth should not be excluded (M. Piantelli, *L'interpretazione*, 50).
[63] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 244-246.
[64] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 64, 187-191.
[65] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 143 (No. 218).

possibility that the pair of symmetrical animals i.e. protomes from the standards, placed besides the central anthropomorphic character (in our opinion with gigantic dimensions), in at least some cases were imagined with a different sex, then their presence besides him could be associated with the mythical action of the creation of the first man and first woman.

Several mythical texts can be referenced in support of this interpretation. As we have seen, in Iranian mythology the first pair of humans (male and female) were created by Ohrmazd from the **rhubarb plant** that grew from the ground after the fall of the **seed of Gayomard** - the first human made of clay (probably with giant proportions such as Purusha and Ymir). In another variant, created from his right arm was a bull (perhaps from the left one a cow?), which was then killed, and created from the animal's seed were various useful animals (a male and female of each species).[66] The last example is in relation to the above-mentioned mythologems on the creation of creatures from the macrocosmic character's sweat, whereby the identification of sweat droplets with sperm droplets is obvious, as well as of the armpits with the groin as parts of the body in which these fluids are created.

The **"Cosmic man"** is a primordial precursor to the differentiation of the sexes. On the one hand, his existence before the creation of the first man and the first woman means that he himself was neither a man nor a woman. But, on the other hand, the direct involvement of his body in this act implies that, in a way, both sexes were contained within him. It is precisely these features (and the implicit androgynous character) that are manifested in the myth of the Chinese primordial character **Pangu**, credited with creating the two principles of **yin and yang**, understood as both heaven and earth and the male and female essences.[67]

5. The macrocosmic giant that holds or spreads out the sky with his hands

The elements of the above-presented iconographic constellation from the Luristan standards have been noted and elaborated by most previous researchers, but under the title **"Master/Mistress of Animals"** - in fact the most dominant of the so far proposed iconographic paradigms of these objects (E10; see p. 211). The specificity of our approach is that we think that the central anthropomorphic figure holding the two animals is not the **master or ruler of the animals themselves, but of what they symbolize**. We will begin the argumentation of this interpretation with the question: *why in these compositions from the standards the animals are depicted not with their whole figures, but only with their protomes?*

We have seen that the pair of arched protomes in the upper part of the "idols with protomes" and on some other standards could have represented the zoomorphic image of the sky (D2: 2). If we accept this and the other above-elaborated assumptions concerning this motif as probable, then the fact that in most such objects the central anthropomorphic character (equated with the pillar) holds them in its hands, could be interpreted as **an image of the macrocosmic giant of the Atlas type, depicted in the function as bearer of the sky** (E10: 1).[68] The fact that the sky is in the hands of this character, could refer to three aspects of the indicated function. The first belongs to the mechanical level of the action that could mean the **supporting of the sky, its spreading** (creation of the celestial space) and the **separation of the sky from the earth** i.e. the creation of "this world" i.e. the middle cosmic zone in which living beings exist. The second aspect includes

[66] (Bundahišn 6F.9; 14.1; 14.38; Pahlavi Rivāyat. 46); M. Shaki, *Gayōmart*; C. Cereti, *Gayōmard*; R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 137, 138; P. Lajoye, *Puruṣa*, 36-38.

[67] (Yiwen leju. 1, p. 2-3; Taiping yulan. 2, p. 137); P. Lajoye, *Puruṣa*, 49, 50; Д. Бодде, Мифы, 379-282; М. Кюнстлер, *Митология*, 35-41.

[68] The gesture of these figures from the standards has reminded A. Parrot exactly of the "gesture of Atlas": “A angle droit et de travers, deux personnages à plus petite échelle et de même type, mais sans les cornes, refont le geste de l’atlante” (A. Parrot, Assur, 131).

the **dynamic functions** such as **keeping in balance** the two complementary forces that make up the sky and realize the progressive and regressive phases of the celestial cycles. Holding the zoomorphic sky in his hands, this character also realizes the third - **conceptual level** of his function, representing the factor that **manages i.e. controls the dynamics of the celestial cycles**. With his mind and sense of order and harmony, implemented through his hands, he activates and deactivates the force behind their progressive phases (morning, spring, rising of the sun), and the one responsible for the regressive ones (evening, autumn, setting of the sun).[69]

This mythical image encompasses the most impressive part, and in some cases even the whole standard (type "idols with protomes"). That is why it is most pronounced in those specimens whose global composition is not burdened with details, especially not with additional zoomorphic protomes and anthropomorphic faces arranged on the central pillar. It is even more clearly manifested in objects in which the lower figure with a head at the junction of the large protomes and with arched arms is completely absent or maximally marginalized, in place of which, at the rhombic frame, is only a formed pair of human legs. Thereby, depicted mandatory in the upper part of the standard are the arms of the central character, reaching towards the two large protomes (E10: 2 – 6). Although this iconographic paradigm can be recognized in most "idols with protomes", so far we do not know of an example that would ideally represent it. We think that the four presented specimens are closest to it, whereby in the first one, although with the best shaped legs, such an impression is hindered by the presence of the large head at the junction of the protomes (E10: 6), in the second one - the insufficiently clearly shaped legs (E10: 2, 3), in the third one - the high degree of geometrization (of the arms and especially of the legs) (E10: 5), while in the fourth one - the still strong presence of the contours of the phallus with testicles and the vulva (E10: 4).

a) Indirect pictorial parallels (dually-zoomorphized celestial vault)

As parallels to the mythical image presented in the previous chapter, one can reference numerous pictorial representations where the sky is depicted in the form of an arch composed of two joint zoomorphic protomes, which is held in the hands of an anthropomorphic figure. From a chronological and stylistic aspect, the closest to it would be the examples from Italy, created within the "**Villanova" culture**, synchronous with the Luristan bronzes (E11: 6, 7; E12: 6).[70] It also appears in Hindu culture as an arched serpent that the god **Shiva**, with two of his multiplicated hands, holds over his head (E11: 9). The more passive variants of this scene, with a human character placed under the dually-zoomorphic sky (not always with the function of supporting) can also be found later, in medieval jewelry and some other objects attributed to the **Finno-Ugric** (E11: 8) and **Germanic populations** (E11: 10, 11), as well as to the **Slavic** ones, but in the latter case without the figure under the vault (E11: 3). Such examples, without the anthropomorphic figure, are also present in the **Iron Age cultures of the northwestern Balkans** (E11: 4).[71] In a not so explicit form, this scene can also be sensed on the petroglyphs from the territory of **Kazakhstan** (E11: 5).

The celestial character of this motif can be best argued in a type of metal stirrups produced in the 19th and early 20th centuries, within the traditional craftsmanship of the peoples of **Southern Siberia and Mongolia** (E12: 1 – 4).[72] Despite their insignificant age, in the decoration of these objects one can detect a very archaic concept of representing the universe through geometric, zoomorphic and anthropomorphic

[69] Our first observations on this scene from the Luristan standards: Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 64, for the indicated meanings – 325, 326, 363-371, 384, 385.
[70] O. J. Brendel, *Etruscan*, 90, 91 (Fig. 61); E. H. Richardson, *The Recurrent*, Fig. 72.
[71] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 357-362, 365, 369, 370.
[72] On the objects, without the interpretations presented below: В. А. Кореняко, *Искусство*, 88-123. The author thinks that the decoration of these objects follows the ancient traditions of the Scytho-Siberian zoomorphic style.

E11



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symbols. Depicted on their upper arched part is the motif of our interest, whereby the pair of curved protomes symbolizes the celestial arch. Among other things, such a meaning is also suggested by the spherical motifs in their mouths which, in this case, would denote the rising and setting of the sun represented as its devouring and disgorging by the two complementary forces in the sky (E12: 1, 2 compare with E13: 5). These meanings are confirmed by the other iconographic elements depicted in the lower part of the objects, which symbolize the earth or more broadly - the lower zones of the universe. In some specimens it is the rhombus inscribed in a circle, depicted on the base of the stirrup (E12: 4), while in others - the multiplicated rhombic ornament engraved in the widened part of the two side bars (E12: 3). In some stirrups, this last motif is alternated with a stylized human figure with spread arms and legs that usually represents the birth-giving goddess, most commonly equated with Mother Earth (E12: 4 compare with D14; D15; D17; D18).

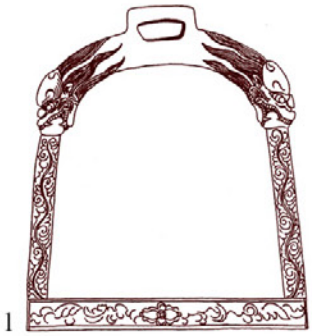
In our overview we can also include a few examples that point to the celestial character of the arch, although its ends are not shaped in the form of animal protomes. The first is a **medallion of Commodus**, on which the emperor is depicted in the form of Janus, with one bearded and one beardless face. He holds in his hand an arch through which the personifications of the four seasons pass, while on the opposite side stands a boy who symbolizes the new year (E12: 5; G53: 1, variant with Jupiter, with one head – 2; see pp. 563, 574).[73]

The other two examples are from **Mesopotamia**. The first is a seal motif depicting a human figure that in its hands holds an arch by which it is covered (E12: 8).[74] Judging by the spread legs, it is a female figure that probably represents a mythical character with a birth-giving function. If this composition is put in relation to the much later representations of Gaia within Byzantine church frescoes (E13: 6; D13: 9 – 11), an assumption can be made that in this case, too, it is a similar representation (perhaps an ancient paradigm of the Byzantine ones) with a depiction of the **Goddess-Earth as the supporter of the sky**. The second object is a beautifully made bronze from the Old Babylonian period on which three figures (the central one of which is female, while the lateral ones are male) hold an arched object, at the ends of which lie two animals from the family of felines that with their muzzles clutch onto and support another similar, but smaller object (E12: 7).[75] In context of the other examples from this chapter, we are inclined to believe that this is a symbolic representation of the **celestial arch**, whereby the depicted human and animal figures appear in the role of its supporters. Given the human appearance of the three figures, it seems to us that it probably represents a depiction of a ritual in which the indicated action was staged, perhaps as a cosmogonic act that consisted of raising the celestial arch as an action of its re-separation from the earth. In this image, one can seek for the paradigm of a similar but not very clear ritual called **Tigillum Sororium**, performed in Rome, which included some kind of beam that in itself was the object of veneration and worship. It was associated with **Iupiter Tigillus**, who "like a Beam, kept the world together and supported it".[76]

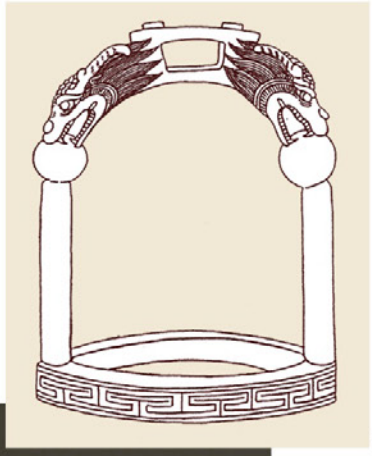
The mythical image that we presented in this chapter has a transcultural and transhistoric character, as evidenced by its presence in the cultures of the Far East and Pre-Columbian America. In the **Chinese example** (E13: 9), judging by the presence of the hammer and chisel in the hands of the character under the zoomorphic arch, it should represent an image of the Progenitor (**Pangu**), who with the help of these tools (or with an axe) separates sky and earth. As we have seen, the same character, in the myths realizes this act by placing himself as a pillar between earth and sky. The semicircular motif with animal heads at the ends is quite common in the traditional cultures of America, for example, among the **Mochica** and **Chimú** peoples, where it is most often associated with the **"celestial serpent"** and the **rainbow** (example E13: 10).[77]

[73] A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 371-373.
[74] *Bodo* 2019.
[75] *Plaque* 2019.
[76] A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 363-365.
[77] For the images presented here and other similar ones: F. Eber-Stevens, *Stara*, T. XXI: 603-612; on Pangu and the division of the cosmos with a hammer and chisel: M. Кюнстлер, *Митология*, 36-38; another image with the same tools, but without the arch: В. Е Ларичев, *Скульптура*, 41, 42.

E12



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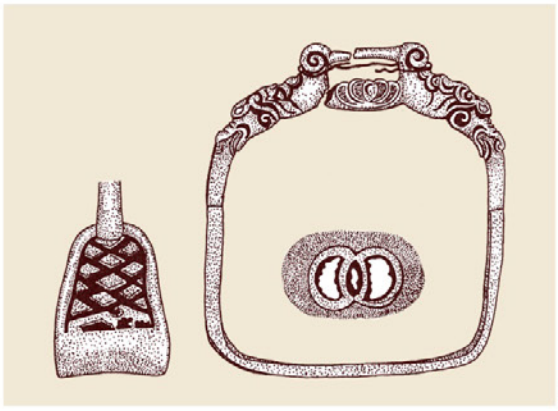
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The variant with the zoomorphic vault is absent from the Luristan standards, but can be identified on another Luristan object (E11: 1).[78] It is composed of an arched segment whose ends are shaped in the form of animal heads, for which we think that in this case, too, denote the two tendencies of the sky manifested through **sunrise and sunset**. Another such head is located at the top of the arch, probably as a symbol of the principle of balance embodied in the position of the **midday sun at the zenith** (E11: 1 compare with E13: 5).[79] The division of the arch into spherical segments could represent the individual phases of the sun's movement along the celestial vault, while the circular motif on the abdomen of the centrally placed anthropomorphic figure - the sun's periodical conception and birth from the figure's womb. The radiant halo (or lion's mane?) that surrounds the head of this figure also has solar characteristics.

The same composition is also present on some **Luristan discoid pins**, but in their case the figure (with accentuated female features) holds in its hands other arched elements that could also symbolize the celestial vault. In the first example it is an arched, spread out fabric (E13: 8), while in the second one - two arched palm branches (E13: 1).[80] In both depictions, the figures have an almost identical appearance, which indicates that the arch they hold had the same meaning. Another example of a figure (winged and with a beard) holding an arched fabric or palm branch in its hands, is found on another Luristan pin as a detail of a more complex composition (E13: 7).[81] The mythical action that includes the supporting of the sky has been identified on Luristan pins by R. Dussaud and R. du Mesnil du Buisson, whereby its performers are anthropomorphic characters (of male and female sex) also accompanied by a pair of animals. Thereby, such female characters are placed in relation to the pillar and the Greek caryatids.[82]

The mythical images in which the **sky** is depicted as a **spread out fabric** are based on its identification with the **canopy** that covers the tent (dwelling = cosmos; roof = sky).[83] Quite common, especially in the East, are the variants, analogous to the Luristan ones, where such a fabric, stretched out in the form of an arch, is held by a human figure. It is not always possible to prove the cosmological character of such depictions. In the examples we presented here, it is indicated by the chthonic symbols (mostly zoomorphic ones) that denote the earth which the sky covers. In the case of the already mentioned scene with **Gaia from the Byzantine frescoes**, apart from the theonym, it is the double snake under her feet (E13: 6; D13: 9, 10), while in the motif from **Nagy Szent Miklos** (Romania) - the hybrid zooanthropomophic creature that is mounted by the bearer of the sky (E13: 2). In some medieval depictions, this role is assigned to **Europa** riding a bull - an arrangement analogous to the presented petroglyphs (E13: 4 compare with E3: 14). In the applique from **Olympia**, the universe is represented by a character of the Medusa type, covered with some kind of semicircular veil (E13: 3). Denoted on her hybrid figure are the three cosmic zones, encoded through body elements of corresponding animals: the chthonic regions through the fishtail, the above ground through the front legs of a lion, wolf or some other terrestrial animal, while the sky - through the wings of a bird.[84]

In the first of the Luristan depictions, the cosmological meaning can be identified in the several rosettes that would denote the phases of the sun's movement along the celestial vault (E13: 8). In the second one, it would be the rosette and the small figure in the fetal position depicted besides the main character's belt, whereby the first element would denote the setting of the sun, while the second - its rising understood as rebirth (E13: 1).[85]

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[78] *Luristan Br. Figure* 2018.

[79] On these elements: Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 357-362.

[80] Previous interpretations: V. E. Larichev (et al), *Zurvanite*, 85 (Fig. 2); a scene similar to the second one: R. Dussaud, *Anciens*, 198 (Fig. 1); D. de Clercq-Fobe, *Epingles*, 31, 32.

[81] R. Dussaud, *Anciens*, 205 (Fig. 7), some interpretations of the scene: 204-210.

[82] R. du Mesnil du Buisson, *Nouvelles*, 208 (Fig. 103), 210, 219 (Fig. 110), 220, 222, 223; R. Dussaud, *Haches*, 257 (Fig. 16).

[83] In Chinese mythology, the sky is specifically connected with the canopy of a carriage (Д. Бодде, *Мифы*, 383, 384).

[84] On the referenced examples and the sky as a fabric: Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 368, 369.

[85] About the figures in this pose and their meaning: Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 208-235; depicted on the Luristan bronzes, with corresponding parallels: А. В. Мельченко, *Редкие*, 623-625.

E13



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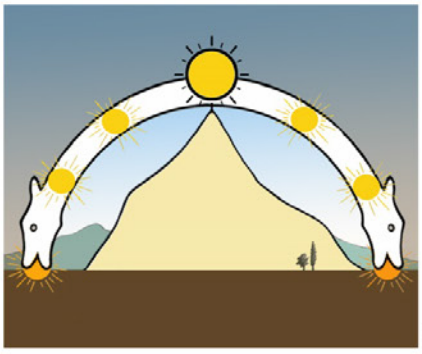
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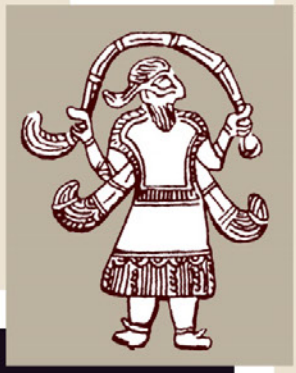
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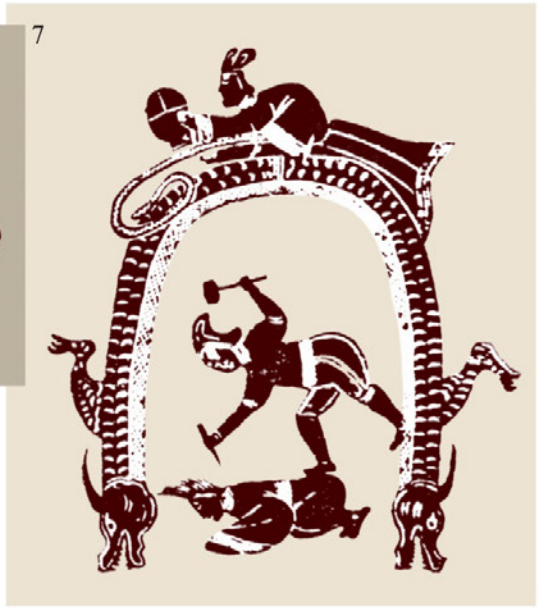
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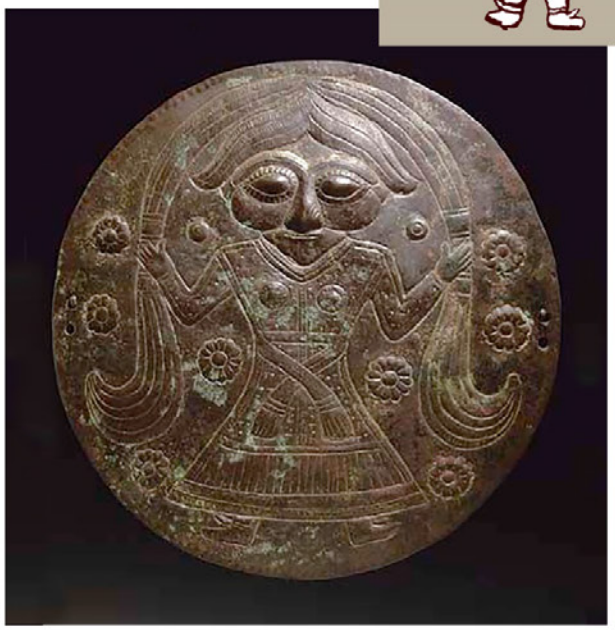
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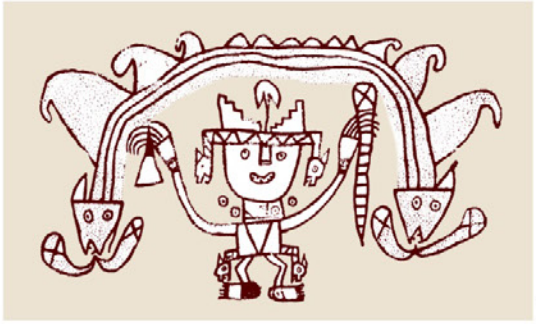
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b) Verbal parallels: a mythical character that supports the sky

The following excerpts from the **Avesta** can be taken as textual paradigms of the presented image: "Through their (of the Fravashis) brightness and glory, O Zarathushtra! I maintain that sky, there above, shining and seen afar, and encompassing this earth all around. It looks like a palace, that stands built of a heavenly substance, firmly established...".[86] Similar contents are also related to the separation of the sky from the earth as the example where Zarathushtra asks: "This I ask Thee, tell me truly, Ahura. Who upholds the earth beneath and the firmament from falling? Who the waters and the plants? Who yoked swiftness to winds and clouds?". The answer is that sky and earth are separated by the power of Ahura Mazda.[87] In an indirect way, this image is illustrated by a late Pahlavi version of the work **Sīh Rōčak**, in which Ohrmazd is praised for establishing the sky without any support visible to terrestrial beings.[88]

We have seen that in ancient Egyptian culture the function of supporter of the sky was performed by **Shu** (Air) who was depicted as a standing anthropomorphic figure holding the sky with its raised arms, usually represented over the arched figure of the goddess Nut. But, we think that in the mentioned sarcophagus of Wereshnefer from Saqqara (Ptolemaic period), the celestial vault could also be indicated by the winged sun that Shu holds (or stretches out) in his spread arms, mainly due to its arched wings, filled with stars (E7: 10). On the same relief, this function, in a way, is also borne by **Geb** because above his arms placed in an orans pose is a depicted circle, divided into concentric zones, represented in which is the whole world, including the earth and the sky. A supporter of the sky is also the god **Ra** whose hands are represented as a separate god **Secheni** or **Skheni** - a personification of the *brace/prop*, which from a visual point of view is quite appropriately denoted by the hieroglyph "Y" (two-armed pillar or man with raised arms). Their Mediterranean equivalent is the Phoenician-Greek **Atlas**.[89]

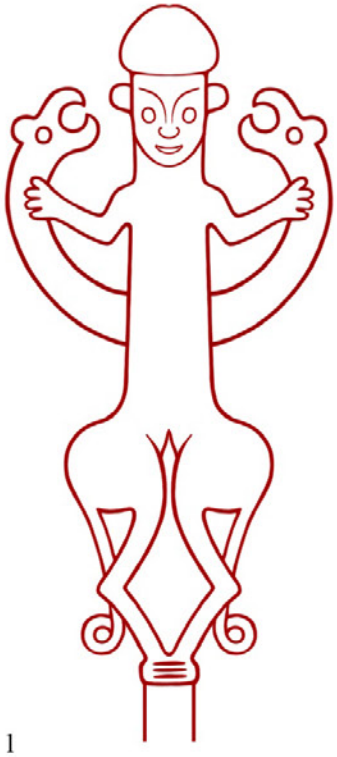
Within the Rigvedic hymns, this function is realized by **Savitar**, who also fastens the sky without support.[90] According to L. Parmly Brown, in these hymns the same function is also performed by **Shamba** "who with a prop (*shamba*) held the two (upper and lower) worlds apart".[91]

In the ancient texts there is another category of mythical characters with their hands directed towards the sky, whose main function is not to support the sky, but to **manage the movement of the celestial bodies** that takes place in it. This function is encoded in a different way, by placing the celestial bodies in their two hands. In some cases thay are suns, while in others - a sun and a moon (E5: 11; E8: 3, 4).

Presented in the **Orphic "Hymn of the Sun"** is one such character with the nature of a deity who is addressed with the words: "With thy right hand the source of morning light, // And with thy left, the father of the night."[92] In the **"History of Abdal Motallab"**, it is presented how Noukhail - the Angel of Day and Night says: "The day and night are trusted to my care. I hold the day in my right hand and the night in my left; and I maintain a just equilibrium between them". Compared to the previous ones, in this case the one hand is no longer responsible just for the sunrise but for the whole day, while the other is not only for the sunset but the whole night. These representations correlate with the general meaning of the right and left hand in Eastern

[86] (Farvardīn Yašt 13. I. 2, 3) *Frawardin Yasht* 2018; *Фравардин-яшт* 2018; *Авеста* 2018; Ю. А. Рапопорт, *Космогонический*, 60, 61.
[87] (Yasna 44.4) *Yasna* 2018; Ю. А. Рапопорт, *Космогонический*, 64, 65.
[88] " … in that thou didst establish the sky without a support – for no setting of a support is visible to earthly creatures;" (R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 198, 199).
[89] On the iconography of this relief: J. P. Allen, *The Egyptian*; on Shu, Ra and Atlas as supports: L. Parmly Brown, *The Cosmic Hands*, 9, 10.
[90] (Rigveda X. 149.1).
[91] (Rigveda, X, 72, 2); according to: L. Parmly Brown, *The Cosmic Hands*, 9.
[92] L. Parmly Brown, *The Cosmic Hands*, 10 / Hymn VIII.

E14



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cultures, whereby the former is a symbol of success, righteousness and life, while the latter - a symbol of misfortune, malice and death. Hence the right hand of God grants life, while the left one - death.[93]

A similar mythical plotline, this time with a more dominant metaphorical character, has survived in an **Armenian folk belief** that tells the story of **Žuk** or **Žamanak** - a white-haired old man who sits on a mountain holding in his hands a white and black ball of thread that represent day and night. He rolls them alternately down the slopes, whereby while he lowers one down - the other he pulls up. R. C. Zaehner thinks that this character represents Zurvān, whereby his complementary activities symbolize the **two sides of the celestial vault** ("two arms of the lofty firmament through which we rejoice and through which we are grieved"). They are a reflection of the two hypostases of this god: the good and the evil spirit ("the two Spirits, the good and the evil") or the Good and the Evil Spihr, of which the manifestation of the former is Ohrmazd, light, day and good, and of the latter - Ahriman, darkness, night and evil.[94] In the Bundahishn it is said that the **sky is equally good and evil** - a view inherent to Zurvanism, which, unlike Mazdaism, is not characterized by ethical dualism. This position consequently stems from the belief that the sky is an epiphany of Zurvān, who in turn is indifferent in relation to good and evil.[95]

The complementary nature of the indicated type of mythical characters is often encoded through the relationship of one of their hands with the sun as a symbol of the day and other positive categories, and the other with the moon as a symbol of the night and the negative categories (compare with E8: 3, 4). This leads to **differentiation of the hands** of these characters, whereby one hand in relation to the yellow glow of the sun becomes **golden**, while the other in relation to the moon - **silver**. The **pair of scales** was also recognized in these representations as a symbol of the **balance of the two complementary principles**. These ancient mythical structures were also incorporated within Christianity, most often in the two **outstretched arms of Christ**, especially as part of the Crucifixion, as well as in the side beams of the **Cross of Golgotha**, obviously equated with the Tree of Life and the Cosmic Tree.[96]

c) Direct pictorial parallels: a human character holding a pair of upward-oriented protomes

As more direct visual analogies of the indicated composition from the "idols with protomes", one can present three examples from the Aegean region, given that in their case, the protomes extend analogously as in the standards i.e. they start from the torso of the figure and curved in the form of an arch continue upwards (E14: 1 – 3 compare with 4 – 9). The first example is a golden applique from **Aegina** (Greece, 17th century BCE) in which, from the sides of the central realistically depicted male figure, extend two pairs of serpentine protomes, arched upwards (E14: 8). The second example from the circle of the Minoan and Mycenaean cultures is also characterized by a similar structure (E14: 4). In fact, it is a specific iconographic type of the Great Goddess, represented through several specimens, above whose head is a formed motif similar to the previous one. It consists of two pairs of elongated segments (called **"snake frames"**) and a vertical pillar between them that is supplemented by a double axe. The meaning of this scene is still unclear.[97] The third example is an already mentioned **Etruscan applique** that depicts a female figure with spread legs, metamorphosed into bird protomes, from whose loins emerges another pair of arched protomes, this time of lions (E14: 6). The last example is from **Macedonia** (Roman period) and depicts a young male character holding a pair of snakes fused with his loins (E14: 9). Although we have interpreted this last depiction as a case of demythicization i.e. masculinization of the birth-giving woman with zoomorphized legs (compare with

[93] L. Parmly Brown, *The Cosmic Hands*, 10.
[94] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 245.
[95] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 161.
[96] L. Parmly Brown, *The Cosmic Hands*, 13, 14, 19-25.
[97] Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 689, 770, 771, Ѓ34: 10, 11.

D20 – D22), one should not rule out the possibility that this process was also influenced by the mythical image that is the subject of this sub-chapter. The famous mythical scene (downgraded from the cosmological to the heroic-narrative level) in which the child Heracles strangled the two snakes that the jealous Hera sent to kill him could have also played a part in its reshaping.

Our attention was drawn to another bronze example from Roman times, from **Szőny** (ancient Brigetio, Hungary) which in a sense is perhaps even more interesting than the previous ones because it had a similar function as the standards. Namely, it is a bronze signum that was fastened onto a vertical pole (E14: 7).[98] It caught our attention because of the similar composition consisting of a central anthropomorphic mythical character (a bust of Minerva, without arms) flanked by a pair of serpentine protomes. The resemblance may not be coincidental, but based on some ethno-cultural component common to both Luristan and Pannonia, perhaps some kind of remnants of the Eastern European Indo-Iranian core, represented in Pannonia through the Sarmatians.

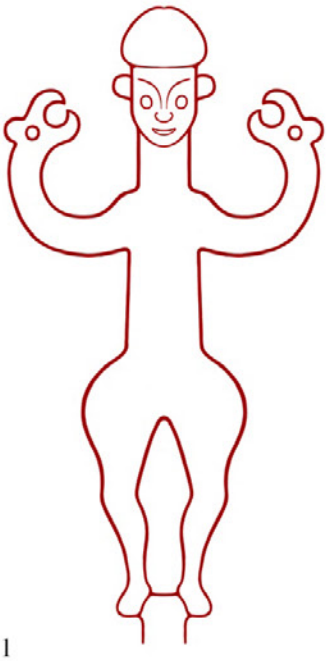
The paradigm for this iconographic arrangement is sought by A. Parrot among the motifs of the **Mesopotamian cylindrical seals**. We think that he rightly emphasizes the visual similarity of one there-present motif with the Luristan standards, although he offers no explanation in support of it (E14: 5; E15: 3, 5).[99] In another of his works, he dedicates more attention to one such example, but in our opinion, once again without a more articulate interpretation of the scene (E15: 6). They represent two not very clear motifs depicted on Sumerian seals from the middle of the 3rd millennium BCE, the first from the Louvre Museum, while the second - from the Oriental Institute in Chicago. Both show a figure (the second of which with a grotesque face), flanked by two arched protomes, which it holds in its hands.[100] It is not entirely clear whether the protomes emerge from its torso, represent the spread and zoomorphized legs of the figure, or are fused together to form some kind of zoomorphic ring in which it is placed. The situation is further complicated by the bodies of two symmetrical animals that supplement the lower part of this zoomorphic ring (two more similar motifs C11: 5, 6; see pp. 199, 201; and possibly C16: 2).

On a visual level, this image can be put in relation to the motif of **"the Nude Goddess"**, which also appears on Mesopotamian seals (E15: 2, 7 – 9). In these cases it is a completely different motif depicting a goddess who (analogous to the Hellenic Baubo) exposes the lower part of her body by lifting both ends of her skirt with her hands.[101] But, despite that, these elements seem to have begun to take on a new meaning - of a pair of snakes, or elongated protomes of some other kind of animal, which the goddess holds in her hands. These representations indicate that as early as the 3rd millennium BCE, in Mesopotamia there was an iconographic paradigm similar to that of the upper part of the Luristan "idols with protomes". In the first centuries of the 1st millennium BCE, it could have influenced the new reading and reshaping of the older types of standards ("zoomorphic standards" and "zoomorphic standards with a human head") from which they evolved (E1: 1, 2; C15: 1 – 7).

We find this iconographic motif on some of the already mentioned Iron Age objects from Italy, which in form and iconography are very close to the Luristan standards (E5: 1 – 3; A12: 1 – 7, 10, 12, 13; see p. 68). In their case the zoomorphic circle is larger and duplicated in the form of two concentric rings (compare with the plaques from Sevan – E5: 4; E3: 2), so that the whole human figure is placed within it. In this example,

[98] F. Jenő, *Religions*, 85 (No. 114), 97, objects with a similarly conceptualized lower part: (No. 166, 167).
[99] A. Parrot, *Assur*, 131 (Fig. 153, Fig. 154).
[100] "Figuration symbolique, mais aussi audacieuse schématisation, quand le graveur, après avoir silhouetté, et avec quel raccourci, un visage humain et un torse de face, y soude sans hésiter deux lions, tête en bas. Nul doute qu'on n 'ait voulu, à l'origine, rappeler comment un homme avait dompté ces deux fauves. De ces trois éléments a surgi cette composition insensée mais prodigieuse: un buste humain greffé sur deux corps de lions! Association insolite, qu'il est étonnant de retrouver dans l'art roman.": A. Parrot, *Sumer*, XXXIII-A, 140 (Fig. 169-c), 141, 360.
[101] W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 296-302; E. Neumann, *The Great Mother*, 140, 141, Pl. 54 (with presented bibliography); Middle Eastern relations: I. Cornelius, *The Many Faces*, 56 (Fig. 41).

E16



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too, the figure with its arms holds the two protomes that make up the circle, whereby animal elements are also depicted besides its legs. The celestial character of the circle is also indicated by the animals arranged on its outer edge, which, according to our previous analyzes, could represent the phases of the movement of the sun or some other dynamic processes in the sky. Some kind of global relations with the Luristan standards are also indicated by the lower figure preserved on one such specimen, which interferes with the lower figure from the "idols with protomes" (E5: 3; A12: 4 compare with D34; D35). Given the pose in which it is depicted, it could be connected to the mythical character who with his hands holds the sky, the Cosmic Pillar, or the entire universe.[102]

6. Human with arms in the form of animal protomes

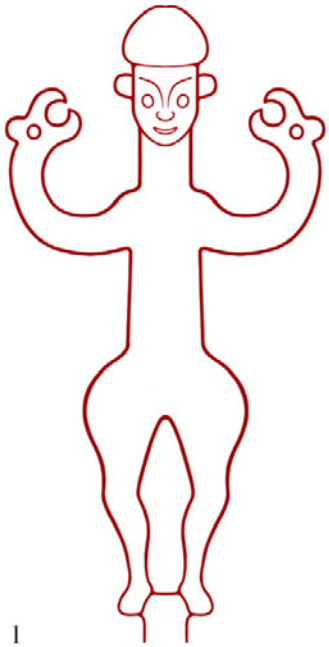
As we have already mentioned, this image in the **"idols with protomes"** can be sensed within the frames of the previous one, but also in some other iconographic arrangements composed of a central anthropomorphic figure and two symmetrical animal protomes placed laterally to it (E1: 2, 4 – 6). It is most clearly expressed in the subtypes where the central figure is depicted without arms, whereby their meaning is taken over by the protomes of the symmetrical animals (E16: 2, 5, 6). It can also be identified in some **"zoomorphic standards with a human head"**, as one of two potential images emerging from their triune composition formed by the pair of symmetrical animals and the human head located between their protomes (E16: 8, 9). It can also be sensed in some "standards - statuettes" with protomes facing outwards (E16: 7). Previous researchers of the Luristan bronzes have not noticed it, except for H. Potratz who senses it in one of his works.[103]

The human figure with arms in the form of animal protomes, in a purer form, can be recognized in several smaller series of standards whose shape is so specific that it gives reason for their classification even as separate types. One such series is characterized by a simple form, without much details, reduced almost to contours (E16: 2, 3).[104] In their case, at the level of the whole object, one can recognize a single human figure with an elongated neck, a clearly shaped hat of the "cylinder" type on the head, legs spread at the knees and joined in the area of the feet, and raised and arched arms which, instead of palms, end in the form of animal protomes (E16: 2). Added to one such specimen are two flat thin strands that resemble the usual arms with which the central character holds the protomes (E16: 3). With this detail, the previous image is immediately lost i.e. gains the meaning of the composition analyzed in the previous sub-chapter.

This figure is even more clearly pronounced in another series of standards with a similarly simple composition, consisting of the same basic elements, but executed in a finer, more elegant and strongly stylized manner (E17: 2 – 4, 6, 7). In this case, the arms-protomes enclose an ideal circle around the neck and head of the central figure, which this time again, as mandatory, wears a hat (in some cases resembling a "cylinder"). Especially noticeable in the eyes of the beholder is the disproportionality of the elongated neck and the very short torso, girded with a belt. Immediately below the low set shoulders, it transforms into hips and then into long legs which, this time do not form a rhombus, as common for the "idols with protomes", but are flat. Extending along their outer edges, from the hips to the feet, are twisted strands whose lower end is arched. In this detail one could recognize the tails of the former pair of animals from the "zoomorphic standards" or, more likely, from the "zoomorphic standards with a human head", which is supported by one such borderline specimen (E17: 3). Two elements suggest that the genesis of this series did not develop from the same line as the "idols with protomes", but directly from the zoomorphic standards. Based on the contour of the legs and the triangular opening in the neck and chest area, prototypes of these standards can be determined in which the

[102] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 63, 64, 339-342, 350-352, 370, 413.
[103] H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 31.
[104] P. Watson, *Luristan*, 7, 8 (Fig. 3: 11); *Master of Anim. Standard* 2020.

E17


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front legs of the pair of animals were directed obliquely towards the head, while the hind legs were not bent but flat (E17: 5 compare with the rest; a similar possible prototype C3: 5). In some specimens of this series, one could notice an extreme degree of geometrization, which leads to the transformation of the figurative composition into some kind of abstract structure in which the already pointed out basic geometric elements - the circle and the rhombus, emerge again (E17: 4 compare with A1; A2). One specimen of this series was found in a completely unusual combination that raises many questions about the meaning and purpose of Luristan standards. It was applied on a miniature bronze chariot, fastened onto which, in front of and behind the standard, were two bronze vessels with a long and narrow neck (H5: 9; see pp. 596, 604).

The figure with hands in the form of animal protomes can also be detected on some **openwork Luristan pins**, if we accept that the human head and the pair of fused animal protomes are not present in them as separate i.e. mutually unrelated elements (E16: 10; E19: 4).[105] In that case, the pair of protomes could represent the zoomorphized arms of the depicted character raised and curved in a circle around his head, whereby the contours of the pin's shaft would suggest his torso and legs. In a more explicit form, the same hybrid character can be identified with the central figure on a cheekpiece from the Tehran Museum, depicted with horns and breasts, flanked by two pairs of animals (E16: 4).[106] Extending left and right from the figure's shoulders are two protomes of animals that take on the meaning of the zoomorphized arms of this character, especially given the absence of real arms in its case. The division of the necks of these protomes does not exclude the possibility that they could have also been perceived as wings (compare with D21: 8, 11).

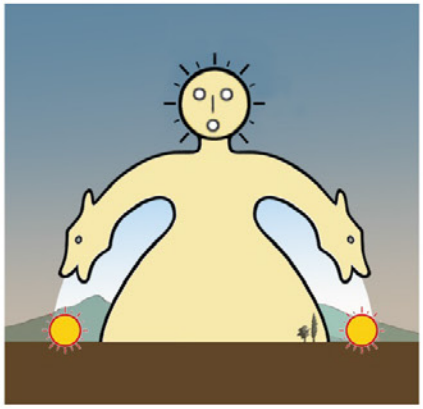
a) Iconographic comparisons and meaning

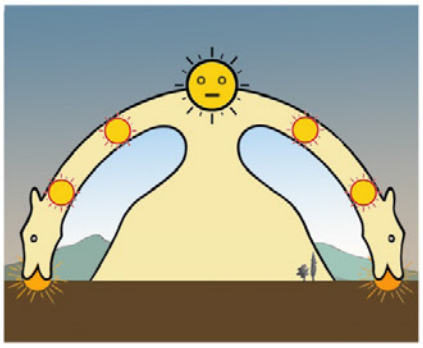
Despite the unusualness and so far insufficient apostrophization of this hybrid mythical character within academia, we have found numerous of its pictorial depictions, starting from the Iron Age cultures of the Balkan and Apennine Peninsulas (E18: 7, 10, 11), ancient examples from Greece (E19: 3), and up to the medieval jewelry of the Slavic (E18: 4, 5; E19: 2) and Finno-Ugric populations (E18: 6; E19: 5). The same feature can also be traced in the mystical illustrations of the Russian Old Believer manuscripts from the 19th century (E18: 8). There are also the traditional Hindu dances, documented on medieval reliefs, during whose performance the dancers' palms, placed in specific positions and followed by appropriate movements (called "mudras" and "hastas"), are metamorphosed into protomes of various animals according to which these sacred gestures are named (E19: 6, 7; I10: 6). We have referred to this type of figures in detail in several of our previous works, which is why on this occasion, referring to them, we will only draw some main conclusions.[107]

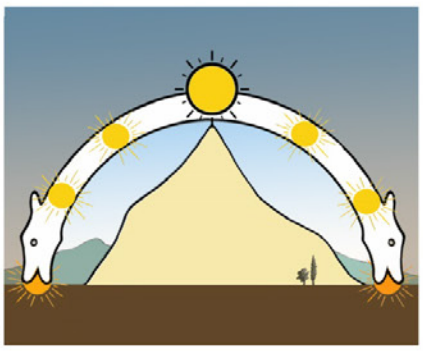
The symbolic meanings of the human hand are connected to its basic real functions which in a global context refer to the **actioning** i.e. **realization of the intentions** of their owner and his mind. They create and destroy, attack and defend, give and take. Their such oppositionally structured functions, together with the analogous symmetrical arrangement of the left and right sides of the human body, on opposite sides in relation to the head, spine and torso, has also conditioned their complementary symbolism - one arm (most often the right) as a symbol of the **male principle**, of **creativity** and the spheres of **rationality**, while the other (more often the left) as a symbol of the **female principle**, **destructiveness** and the **irrational spheres** (E19: 1). Human inconsistency i.e. the incoordination and conflict between the intentions of the mind and the works of its hands created notions of the autonomy of the hands i.e. their treatment as separate entities. We believe that their zoomorphization in the form of animal protomes is due precisely to this, whereby the presence of animal heads actually appears as a bearer and symbol of their separate entity. This triple structure (one mind i.e. one entity with two hands - two active principles), was projected by mythic consciousness at the basis of the whole

[105] Basic information: A. Godard, *Bronzes*, PL.XXXV: 150; G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 70, 71 (cat. 143).
[106] *Lur. Br. Horse* 2019.
[107] Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 100-121; Н. Чаусидис, *Зооантропоморфный*; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 405-412.

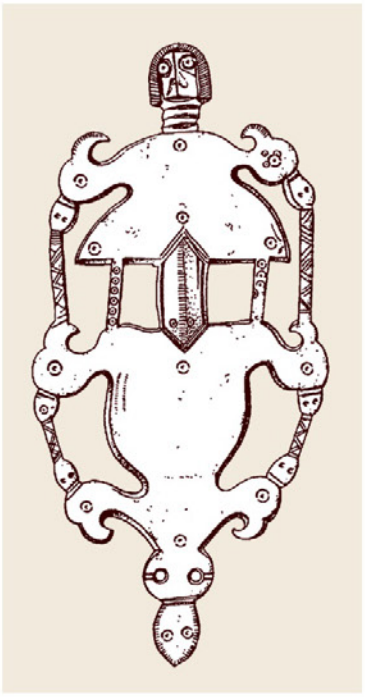
E18


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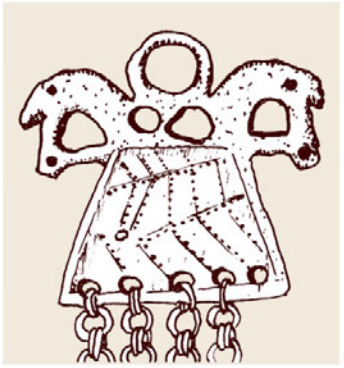

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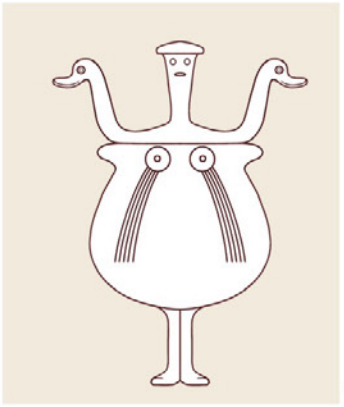

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universe as one god whose action is manifested through the same two complementary principles (creative and destructive, progressive and regressive). Thereby, the hands in the form of zoomorphic protomes, due to the belonging of animals to the spheres of the natural, wild, uncultured and uncontrollable, became representatives of the mutually **complementary natural forces** as well as of the **principles** that stand at the basis of all existence (life - death, progress - regress, light - darkness, etc.).

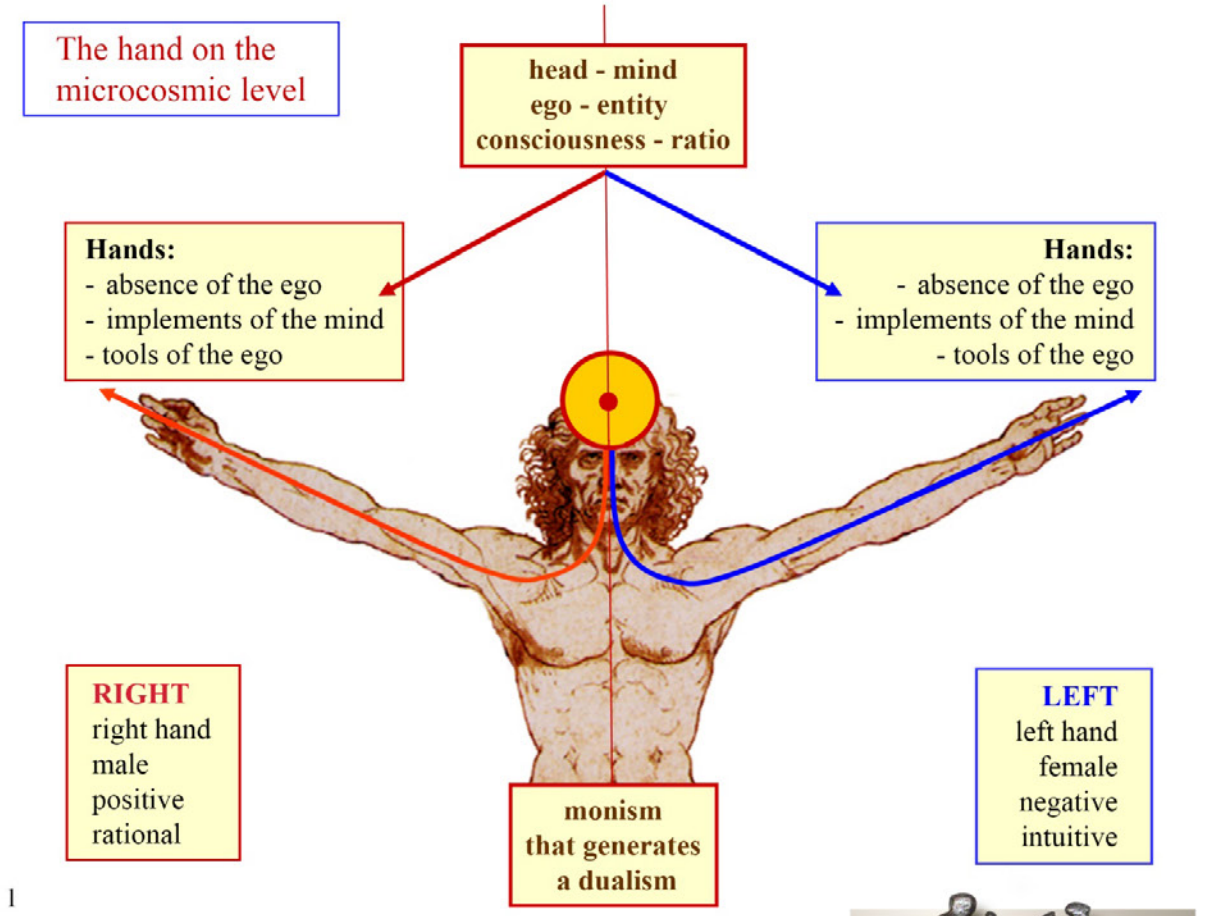
On the early medieval Slavic fibulae, this figure appeared on the semicircular plate which, within the cosmological iconography of this jewelry, represents the celestial vault (E11: 3; E18: 1 – 5). Its alternation with the sky depicted as a dually-zoomorphized vault is an indication that this hybrid figure also represents the sky, but this time depicted as a single and comprehensive anthropomorphic mythical figure. If we agree with the presented interpretations that the pair of large arched protomes of the Luristan standards symbolized the sky, with its two complementary tendencies (E18: 3 compare with D2: 2), then it would be logical that the zoomorphic arms of this macrocosmic figure also form that part of the universe, but at the same time with their force manage its dynamics - one with the progressive phases of the cycles, while the other with the regressive ones (E18: 1). The difference in regards to the dually-zoomorphized sky is that, in this case, the dynamics are not realized by the "wild forces of nature" represented through the pair of animals, but by the two arms of the macrocosmic Human-God, guided by his single mind. It must be acknowledged that this mythical representation breathes with more confidence than the previous zoomorphic one, because in this case the basis of the dynamics of the universe is not the fragile balance of opposites (E18: 3) but the single mind of the macro-human who manages it with his two arms (E18: 1; for these concepts also see p. 217).

In support of these interpretations, we present mythical images where the sky is made up of the figure's hands themselves, which, this time, are not transformed into protomes but have a realistic appearance. In the first variant they are **raised in an orans posture** (E20: 6, 11, 13) while in the second they form a **ring (open or closed) around its head** (E20: 1 – 5, 7 – 10, 12). An ideal example of this mythical image is a Luristan pin with an openwork head composed of a ring, placed inside of which is the head of a horned female character, probably a deity (E20: 15 compare with the rest). But, viewed in context of the presented examples, this ring can at the same time be also treated as a fusion of the arched arms of the figure. Viewed in context of this sub-chapter, the presented images, among other things, can be defined as a representation of a mythical character of macrocosmic proportions, in whose case the sky (this time depicted in its horizontal projection - as a circle) is not equated only with his head (E3), but also with the whole upper part of his body (head, shoulders and arms). In support of this, one could present multiple arguments. First it is the upward direction of the arms that actualizes the sky on a cosmic level, and then the fact that in many religions this gesture represents invocation, prayer or glorification of the there-located gods - usually the supreme or only god with a pronounced celestial character.[108]

Especially interesting in this sense is the ancient Egyptian **Ka** - one of the essential categories of man (one of his "souls", "life forces", "second self"), which is born together with him and follows him inseparably throughout his life, but also after death, as the determinant of his destiny. It was depicted through an ideogram in the form of two arms, spread and raised upwards, or through a human figure on whose head are placed arms in this pose (E20: 6, 11). We are not familiar with an explicit identification between this symbol and the sky, but starting deductively, from the premisses presented here, such a character could be found in some other categories that Ka had symbolized. In this sense, it is interesting that the hieroglyph with the phonetic value of "Ka" or "Ko" was associated with the celestial double of man. The arms raised towards the sky were also integrated into the Christian ritual system and iconography, receiving appropriate theological support. The most interesting in this sense is the Virgin Mary who, especially within Byzantine iconography, was depicted with such a gesture. It is the **Virgin Orans** (or "Shirshaya Nebes"), located as a rule in the semi-calotte of the

[108] L. Parmly Brown, *The Cosmic Hands*.

E19


The hand on the microcosmic level
head - mind
ego - entity
consciousness - ratio
Hands:
- absence of the ego
- implements of the mind
- tools of the ego
Hands:
- absence of the ego
- implements of the mind
- tools of the ego
RIGHT
right hand
male
positive
rational
LEFT
left hand
female
negative
intuitive
monism
that generates
a dualism

1



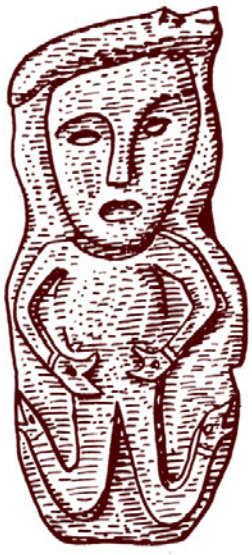
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altar apse, usually in context of the representation of the "Ascension of Christ", depicted in the vault above her (E20: 13).[109]

One should not overlook the fact that the zoomorphic arms of the central character from the presented Luristan standards enclose a circle around its head which, in this context, acquires the meaning not only of the **circular sky**, but also of the **circular time** that manifests itself through the time cycles take place in it (E16: 2; E17: 2 – 4, 6, 7, compare with B28). For the indicated aspect of the iconography of these objects one could once again present numerous analogies, at the basis of which is an archetypal pose, universal for all mankind, which, of course, in certain cultures had an appropriate symbolic and religious meaning. In some examples the cosmological dimension of the figures depicted in this pose and the celestial aspects of their hands are more explicitly expressed, for example through swastikas, in the meaning of celestial and solar symbols, or through bundles of wavy and zigzag lines that could denote the celestial waters and streams of rain that flow from there towards the earth (E20: 3, 5, 9).[110]

b) Verbal parallels

The here-presented macrocosmic character, whose hands are equated with the sky, can also be sensed among the mythical characters described in the verbal medium. One of them is the already mentioned **Pangu** from Chinese mythology, after whose birth from the cosmic egg the two principles were created: yin - the earth and yang - the sky, whereby he retained the middle position. Specifically, the identification of the sky with the outstretched arms of this character is indicated by the relations between the creation of the sky and the fathom. In this case, behind the mentioned term, except as a unit of length, there may be some mythical identification of the **width of the sky** with **the span of the outstretched arms of the macrocosmic human**. This is indicated by another part of the myth in which Pangu holds the sun and the moon in his hands, regulating their proper movement across the sky, from which it follows that his hands are located there where these celestial bodies move - in the sky, and even that they actually represent the two halves of the sky itself - day and night.[111]

Two mythical characters can be taken as Balkan and Mediterranean representatives of these mythologems. The first is the aforementioned **Typhon**, the tallest of all the children of Gea, who is taller than all the mountains, so that he touches the stars with his head. When he would spread out his arms, from which sprang a hundred snake heads, one would extend to the far east and the other to the far west (compare with E5:11).[112] In the representation of this mythical character, painted on a Hellenic black-figured cup, there is an element that gives us a reason to connect the indicated myth with our topic of interest. These are the two pairs of large snakes that, emerging from Typhon's shoulders, take on the meaning of his hands (E18: 9), even duplicated, as in the above-mentioned variants of the four-armed giant (E18: 9 compare with E7; E8). The second character is the Orphic **Adrasteia/Ananke** whose arms also extend across the entire cosmos, reaching its very limits. The connection of this second character with time (and in our opinion with the sky as its visible manifestation) is represented through the interweaving, and even equation, of Adrasteia with **Chronos** (Time) and the character of cosmic deities (macroanthropus) that they both have.[113]

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[109] In detail about both poses: Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 312, 389, 405-407, Д3; Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 327-356.

[110] On the indicated and other meanings of this pose: Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 352-355, В12, В13; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 405-407.

[111] Б. Л. Рифтин, *Пань-гу*, 282; on the mythical character, regulator of the movement of celestial bodies, depicted with suns or with a sun and moon in his hands: N. Chausidis, *Juggling*; L. Parmly Brown, *The Cosmic Hands*.

[112] (Appllodori. *Bibliotheca* 1.6.3)

[113] I. Paladino, *Cosmic*.

E20



In support of the identification of the arms with the sky, also interesting is the metaphor about the **"three immortal limbs of Purusha"**, sung in the Rigvedic hymns, which, according to some researchers, could represent the **three "heavens"**.[114] This interpretation gains in its persuasiveness given the explicit macrocosmic character of this mythical character and the action of creating various specific cosmic elements from the parts of his body. We have seen that in the presented prehistoric examples the celestial layers were depicted in the form of rings inscribed within each other, equated with the head of the macrocosmic giant (E3). Judging by the material presented in this sub-chapter, they could have also been his hands, in one, two or more pairs, curved in an arc or in a circle, real or transformed into animal protomes (E20: scheme 14, compare with the rest).

7. The hat of the macrocosmic giant as a celestial dome

The central figure on the standards is depicted almost regularly with a hat, in some specimens with a hemispherical shape (in relation to the glans penis – D1), and in others in the form of a hat with a wide surrounding wreath, and even as a perfectly shaped cylinder (E10: 2, 3, 5; E16: 2, 3; E17: 2, 6, 7). We are familiar with three standards of the type "columnar figurines" where the depicted character wears on his head a very unusual hat with a wide wreath that gradually in steps converts into a raised central part (E21: 5 – 7). E. de Waele considers it a sign of the figure's belonging to the category of deities.[115] R. Ghirshman, on the other hand, in regards to this element presents the following sentence: "Sometimes, however, they are shown wearing a curious conical hat, and we cannot help feeling that this concession to a picturesque realism detracts from their hieratic dignity".[116]

This last type of hats, with its unusual shape, shows significant similarities with the **Bronze Age gold hats from Central Europe** (E21: 2 – 4), especially the one from Schifferstadt in Germany (E21: 2 compare with 5 – 7). This relation becomes very important for understanding the iconography of the mentioned standards and the meaning of the there-depicted character, if we take into account the cosmological interpretations of the referenced gold objects which show that the numerous elements depicted on them (disks, birds, solar barques, eyes) denote the celestial bodies, whereby their numerical representation coincides with the solar and lunar cycles.[117] Part of the researchers stop at the solar meaning of the motifs executed on these objects, not realizing the ultimate instance that arises from it - that the **hats symbolize the sky in the form of a dazzling dome**, whereby the indicated symbols would denote the **movement of celestial bodies across it**. In this context, the extremely elevated **pointed tip** of these hats interferes with the **cosmic axis** upon which the sky rests, whereby the numerous horizontal zones into which it is divided could denote the individual vertically and concentrically structured layers into which the sky is partitioned (A3: 3, 4). Such a meaning gives the wearer of these hats, whether he is a ruler, a priest or a god, macrocosmic symbolism as a **personalized cosmos** or a character with the function of a **cosmic pillar that carries the sky on his head**.

The celestial character of the hat, especially the one with a pronounced symbolic character, is pointed out by A. B. Cook, referencing R. Eisler. Such a meaning of the hat is especially widespread in the Levant, as examples of which one could point to the tiara of **Zeus Oromasdes**, as well as the starry helmet of **Mēn**, **Attis** or **Mithras**.[118] Based on these parallels, he concludes that the **petasos** of **Hermes**, **Argos** and **Janus** had an analogous meaning. A similar hat (of the "petasos" type) supplements some of the ancient mythical characters

[114] (Rigveda X.90. 3, 4); M. Ježić, *R'gvedski*, 250, 251.
[115] E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 268.
[116] R. Ghirshman, *The Art*, 47.
[117] A. Fuls, *Astronomisch-statistische*; a summarized overview with additional bibliography: C. Krumm, *Kalender*; C. Krumm, *Kegel*.
[118] A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 385, 386; R. Eisler, *Weltenmantel*, 64-67; I. Krauskopf, *Culsans*, 156.

E21



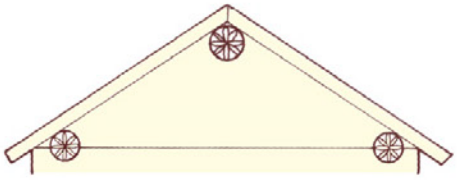
E22



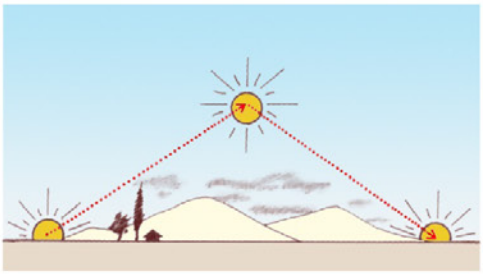
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with two faces (E21: 1),[119] which coincides with the two-facedness of the main figure from the standards (examples C13: 4 – 6; D9: 8, 9; G2; G3; G5; see p. 558), but not with the three specimens referenced here that have only one face (E21: 5 – 7).

Given the similarity of the golden hats from Central Europe with those from the Luristan "columnar figurines", the indicated cosmological functions can also be attributed to the character who wears this hat, in one case depicted with female features (pubis, breasts and hands placed on them – E21: 5), while in the other two - with male features, namely a phallus and hands that pass over the chest ending at the neck (E21: 6, 7).

If one accepts the connection of these standards with the older dating of the European golden hats, it could indicate the possible direction of these relations - from Europe towards Luristan.[120] The presence of similar hats, observed later within the cultures of Sardinia, dating to the 11th - 10th century BCE[121] (E21: 10 – 11) and later in Etruscan culture (E21: 8, 9; E4: 2, 4), could be an indirect product of these old European traditions, but also of some kind of cultural links between the Apennine Peninsula and Luristan, given the numerous other relations of this region with the Middle East.[122] These last analogies gain in importance if we take into account that they represent figures with an accentuated height, which as a feature is also present on the three Luristan standards (E21: 5 – 7), and is a specificity of the "columnar figurines" type as a whole (C26 – C28).

Another example of headgear points to some kind of more direct relations between Luristan and Central Europe. We are talking about an angularly bent bronze plaque discovered in a female grave (No. 110) from the Early Bronze Age in Franzhausen (Austria) which, judging by its position *in situ*, is considered to be part of some kind of head cover (reconstruction E22: 1).[123] This element corresponds to the similar motif that follows the representations of female figures from Luristan discoid pins. Here we primarily have in mind the example with the birth-giving figure (E22: 2), whereby it seems that in the rest of cases, this motif, perhaps due to the forgetting of its original meaning, began to be reconceptualized into a hairstyle (E22: 5 – 7; E13: 1, 8). In the unusual shape of the mentioned object, one could also recognize the image of the sky, this time equated with the two-sloped roof of the house, whereby one side would denote the upward trajectory of the solar cycle, the other - the downward trajectory, while the top would encode the midday position of the sun, the zenith or the summer solstice (E22: 1, 2 compare with 3, 4 and with E13: 5).[124] If we take into account that these objects are female veils for covering the head and that they had the shape of a house roof, then in these comparisons one may include the lexeme *tegidion* which in ancient Greece also denoted a female veil, except this time not only for covering the head but also the whole face, with a pierced pair of openings for the eyes. In this context, especially interesting is its etymology, which literally comes down to the meaning of "little roof".[125] Therefore, the above mentioned examples can be treated as an ideal visual paradigm of this etymology which in ancient Hellenic culture was not appropriately manifested through the shape of these veils.

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[119] A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 382-386 (Fig. 291), on the presented coin the top of the hat is probably shortened according to the available space on it.

[120] Some researchers suggest the exact opposite direction - from the East towards Central Europe (C. Krumm, *Kegel*, 107, 108).

[121] C. Krumm, *Kegel*, 107 (Fig. 145, 146).

[122] Certain arguments in support of these relations, specifically on the Italic hats with an elongated top with the hats of the Cimmerians and the Saka (Sakā tigraxaudā): Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 912-914 (Ж21; Ж21).

[123] About the object, its purpose and the indicated reconstruction: K. Grömer, The Art, 367 (Fig. 199), 368 (Fig. 200).

[124] On the roof of the house as the sky: Н. Чаусидис, Куќата, 72, 73 (Сл. 8). In the works of A. V. Melchenko, too, the indicated element evokes some associations with the two-sloped roof: „«двускатный» заштрихованный головной убор“ (А. В. Мельченко, *Луристанская*, 190); possible interpretations of the figure from E22: 6 as a priestess, dancer or the goddess Aredvi Sura - Anahita: D. de Clercq-Fobe, *Epingles*, 31-33.

[125] L. Llewellyn-Jones, *House and veil*, (with an emphasis on the sociological aspects of these veils).

Chapter VIII

THE ANDROGYNOUS PRIMORDIAL GOD GIVES BIRTH TO HIS TWO SONS – HEIRS



VIII. THE ANDROGYNOUS PRIMORDIAL GOD GIVES BIRTH TO HIS TWO SONS - HEIRS

The analyzes of some of the previous researchers have shown that on certain objects from the category of Luristan bronzes, and within those frames also on some types of standards, there is a depiction of the Iranian or Indo-Aryan myth of how the primordial god gives birth to his two sons who will succeed him in his rule over the universe. We have also come to such observations in our older studies and especially during the most recent ones, which are presented in this chapter.

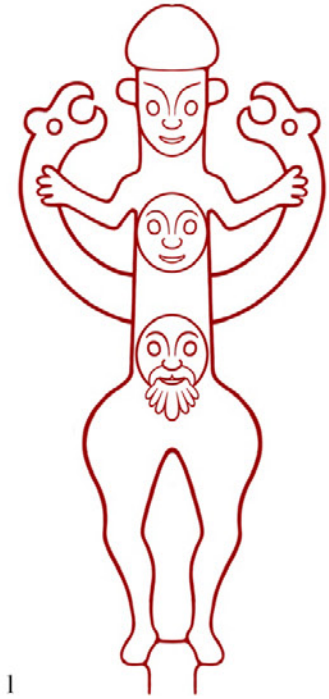
1. Multiplicated anthropomorphic faces i.e. heads on the pillar of the Luristan standards

In the previous chapters we have already mentioned several times that multiple anthropomorphic faces i.e. heads are arranged vertically along the pillar of some Luristan standards (mainly "idols with protomes"). Except at the top, another face is often depicted at the junction of the two large protomes, and in a not so small number of specimens a third one is also present, located between the previous two (F1). There are examples where another smaller and more stylized face also appears at the very bottom of the standard - at the junction of the lower figure's feet (F30: 1; G11). Much rarer are the specimens where the number of these faces is greater than three. On one such standard, in addition to the faces at the indicated four positions, two or three faces are depicted at the junction of the large protomes (F1: 5; F30: 2). In another specimen, extending laterally from the two lower faces are arched protomes that in this specific case allude to their horns (F1: 6).

The presence of these elements in the standards has attracted the attention of several previous researchers. Most call them "masks", probably driven by their multiplicity and location in places that have nothing in common with the real position of the face i.e. head.[1] H. Potratz treats them as some kind of appliques hung on the central pillar that have nothing to do with any real body paradigm, which is why they do not provide opportunities for their more convincing interpretation.[2] The motif of multiplicated human

[1] H. Potratz, *Die Luristanbronzen*, 58, 61-63; E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 103; O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 150.
[2] J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 62, 63.

F1



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heads arranged in a vertical sequence can also be found on other Luristan objects such as, for example, the handle of a dagger.[3]

If we agree with the interpretations proposed in the previous chapters that the pillar of the standards depicts some kind of macrocosmic character whose gigantic body extends across the entire universe, then the top face acquires the meaning of his primary face located where its real place should be - on the head, the position of the second face is in the area of his chest, the third - at the abdomen or genitals, while the fourth one is at the feet (F1: 1 compare with 3 – 7). The first two faces retain the same meaning within the frames of the variant with the figure that has spread zoomorphized legs, the difference being that in this case the position of the third face is located between its legs i.e. the area of the genitals or below them (F1: 2). In both cases, this third face, due to its location, acquires some connotation related to birth, whereby in the first case it is implicit, given the placement in the area of the abdomen (alluding to pregnancy), while in the second it is explicit, due to the position between the pair of spread legs, indicating the very act of birth-giving (F1: 2, 3). We have seen that one can find several paradigms on the essence and meaning of the third face, which could be supported by appropriate comparative material (see: D17; D29; D30). The second face placed in the middle of the torso, in the chest area, has shown to be much more enigmatic. So far we know only of H. Potratz's interpretation of this arrangement, according to which it could represent a pectoral or breastplate (Pektorale oder Brustschild) in the form of a human face.[4] This meaning seems acceptable to us, but not as the only possible one.

In our previous studies, we have interpreted this second face placed on the chest or torso of the main figure from the "idols with protomes" in relation to the **myth of the god Zurvān and the birth of his two sons**. Key to this interpretation was the relief of the Luristan silver plaque from the Art Museum in Cincinnati, due to its higher degree of realism (F2: 4, 5). The central anthropomorphic figure in this relief, in addition to its real face (authoritative, with a mustache and beard), depicted on the head, has another one (beardless, in a medallion) placed on the chest (F2: 2).[5] In addition, from the shoulders of this figure protrude two symmetrical anthropomorphic busts, with their own faces, depicted in profile (F2: 3), for whose counterpart from the standards one could take the two animal protomes which, in some cases (primarily in the "columnar figurines"), are also located above the shoulders of the central figure (F19; F29: 1, 2, 4, 10).

Several interpretations have been proposed regarding the meaning of this unusual figure and the wider scene that surrounds it, of which we have found the most acceptable to be that of **R. Ghirshman**. According to him, the Cincinnati plaque depicts the myth of the god Zurvān and his two sons - Ohrmazd and Ahriman, and the same scene can also be identified on some Luristan pins with a discoid head.[6]

Our previous research has shown that this iconographic paradigm is also dominant in several types of Luristan standards in terms of quantity i.e. the number of specimens on which it is represented, but also as the last iconographic layer that imposed itself over most of the other scenes discussed in the previous chapters.[7] Therefore, we decided to dedicate a special chapter to it within our monograph, in which we will argue in more detail the indicated interpretations. This is a complex process that we will conduct in the following order. Firstly, we will present the myth of Zurvān and the birth of his sons, and then the observations regarding the pictorial manifestations of this myth expressed by previous researchers, mainly based on the plaque from the museum in Cincinnati (F2). This will be followed by an examination of the pictorial representations of this scene from other Luristan bronzes (but without the standards) and their parallels outside the Luristan complex. Finally, based on these analyzes, we will identify the elements and variations of this scene on the Luristan standards as well.

[3] W. Culican, *Bronzes*, 5, 7 (Pl. 6: No. 9).
[4] J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 62.
[5] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 65, 205, 391-395; Н. Чаусидис, *Словенските*, 77-80; Н. Чаусидис, *Дажбог*, 29-34.
[6] R. Ghirshman, *Notes VIII*.
[7] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 65.

2. The myth of Zurvān and the birth of his two sons

In Iranian mythology, Zurvān is a primordial androgynous god, representing time, which is why he was imagined as **beginningless** and **endless** i.e. that he has **always existed and will exist forever**. In the key myth associated with him it is told how he decided to give birth to a son (**Ohrmazd**) who would be his successor in ruling the world. In the name of fulfilling this wish, he began to offer sacrifices over the next thousand years, but, in doing so, a doubt arose in him regarding the usefulness of these actions. As a result of the sacrifices, Ohrmazd was conceived inside of him, but due to the doubts, another son was also begotten - **Ahriman**. The latter of them, thirsting for power and knowing of his father's promise, hurried to be born first by forcibly tearing the father's womb. Although the first conceived Ohrmazd was born right after him, Zurvān had to fulfill his promise, handing over the world in dominion to the firstborn Ahriman.[8]

Although the textual records of this myth, together with the specific theonyms, date from a later time (5th century CE), numerous facts point to its much older age. The ancient authors from the 5th - 4th century BCE such as Herodotus and Eudemus of Rhodes (whose writings, in turn, have been also referenced by Damascius in the 5th - 6th century CE) are considered to be the oldest written sources that indirectly point to the religious ideas of **Zurvanism** (a religion that is based on this god). There is still discussion over the identification of G. Widengren about the **oldest mention of Zurvān** in written sources - *Za-ar-wa-an*, noted on cuneiform tablets from the town of Nuzi (near Arrapha), dating to the 13th - 12th century BCE.[9] According to R. C. Zaehner, in the earliest parts of the Avesta, Zurvān has a different character i.e. he appears mainly as a **controller of the path along which the souls of the dead are supposed to reach the Chinvat Bridge**. There are assumptions that he was originally a **god of death** and it is believed that **Astovihat** - the main demon of death, is actually his later substitute. The connection with death may be due to the fact that Zurvān is a **god of time** "from whose vigilance nothing escapes" and for whom "there is no remedy".[10]

3. The Myth of Zurvān on the plaque from the Cincinnati Art Museum

It represents a silver plaque with a width of about 23.5 cm and a height of about 11 cm. The lateral ends of the object have not been preserved, so its purpose can be judged only on the basis of assumptions, according to which it could have served as a covering on some element worn on the body (pectoral, belt) or as a covering for a quiver.[11] The object is mainly dated between the 8th and 7th century BCE, but other options have also been put forward, as well as suspicions that it is a forgery.[12]

a) Interpretations by R. Ghirshman and our comments

R. Ghirshman thinks that the central character from the Cincinnati plaque, depicted with a mustache, beard and animal ears, represents Zurvān, in support of which he references the following interpretations (F2).

[8] A summarized overview: A. de Jong, *Zurvan*; И. Л. Крупник, *Зурванизм*, Глава II.1; in more detail with presented sources and their analysis: R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*; R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, Part II.

[9] On these issues and broader on the genesis and history of Zurvān and his cult: R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*; A. de Jong, *Zurvan*; A. de Jong, *Zurvanism*; И. Л. Крупник, *Зурванизм*, IV. 2, (154-159); on *Za-ar-wa-an*: R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 20, 88.

[10] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 87, 239-242.

[11] Ph. Ackerman, *The Gemini*, 28, 29 (“a sacer- dotal garment-trimming, whether pectoral or belt-appliqué”); P. R. S. Moorey, *Some Elaborately*, 23, 24 (quiver plaque).

[12] On its dating: R. Ghirshman, *The Art*, 52 (Fig. 64); R. Ghirshman, *Notes VIII*, 42; a completely unjustified older dating (1200-900 BCE): Ph. Ackerman, *The Gemini*, 27; on its authenticity: O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 201, 202 – footnote 4; P. R. S. Moorey, *Some Elaborately*, 23, 24.

His body is depicted in the form of a **bird with long wings and a tail** shaped as a "truncated pyramid", composed of six overlapping rows of feathers (F2: 1 – 3). The author obviously considers these avian features as symbols of the celestial character of the god, whereby he assumes that the six horizontal rows of feathers, together with the double face of the god, represent the **seven heavens** ("sept ceils"). The head depicted on the belly (according to him, female) aims to suggest the **androgyny** of the god. The **two sons** of Zurvān are depicted through the pair of symmetrical human busts emerging from his shoulders, holding in their hands a cult object in the form of a palm branch (barsom) as a symbol of the handover of the priestly function (F2: 3 – 5). R. Ghirshman thinks that the surrounding human figures on the left and right that receive the ceremonial branches from the sons of the god are actually grouped into three age categories - **young boys**, **men in adulthood** and **elders** (F2: 4, 5). These groups actually reflect the three hypostases of Zurvān: *Ašōkar* (the one who makes you virile), *Frašōkar* (who makes you bright) and *Zarōkar* (who makes you old). The author thinks that the central figure of this composition, with the female head and the busts of Zurvān's sons, also appears on the **Luristan pins with a discoid head**, but instead of the surrounding human figures, there it is flanked by symmetrically arranged animals (F6: 4; F7: 1). These interpretations are in the spirit of the general view of the author that the iconography of the Luristan bronzes is a reflection of the culture of the **Median-Cimmerian populations**.[13] In regards to the meaning of these representations, he puts forward the following assumption: "Effigies of Zurvan and his two sons, treated on a smaller scale, figure on a circular pinhead found in the Surkh Dum temple; presumably this pin was a votive offering on behalf of a dead man, for, like Sraosha, Zurvan presided over the path leading to the bridge of Cinvat on which the souls of the dead were judged."[14]

Although the referenced interpretations of R. Ghirshman were the key impetus for our interpretations, we do not agree with all of his proposals. It seems acceptable to us to identify the main figure on the Cincinnati plaque as Zurvān, and its bird-like appearance as a celestial characteristic. However, we think that the connection of the seven heavens with the six rows of feathers from its tail, together with the two faces, is too forced, especially since the sum of these elements would not equal 7, but 8. It seems logical to us that the two busts above the shoulders depict Ohrmazd and Ahriman, but we think that checks and additional argumentation are nevertheless still necessary on that issue. The first reason for this is the fact that both busts, despite the complementarity of the two brothers, have an identical appearance, and the second one (noted by R. Ghirshman himself) is that in this case, Ahriman appears as a giver of the holy palm branch, in spite of his extremely negative status. These doubts could be refuted by the assumption that the plaque was not created within the frames of the **Mazdaean** religious system (where dualism also refers to the ethical level, which is also why Ahriman is a god of evil), but within the **Zurvanist** one, where this is not the case and where he is not a representative of the **negative principle**, but only of the **regressive principle**. Thereby, it is taken into account that he (along with Zurvān) is equivalent in status but complementary to the progressive principle and just as necessary for harmony in the universe as the progressive one represented by Ohrmazd.[15] This at the same time justifies why precisely he (and not Ohrmazd), eventually, would hand over the barsoms to the elders (F2: 4, 5). The answer would be - **because he is the bearer of the principle of regression which, among other things, also conditions aging** (see pp. 569 – 573).

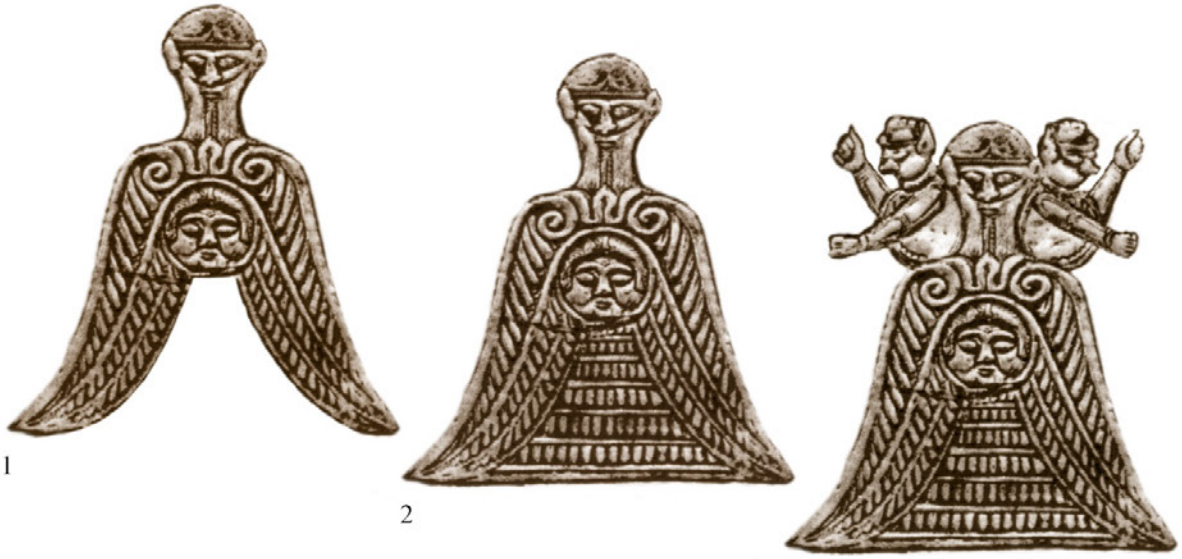
Our main disagreement concerns the human face depicted on the torso of the central figure from the Cincinnati plaque (F2). Despite the absence of male features, we are not convinced that it represents a woman, in support of which one could reference the Luristan pins with a discoid head. As we will see below, the same iconographic arrangement appears on them: a central character complemented by wings; a pair of human busts or animal protomes above the shoulders; a medallion i.e. umbo in the area of the torso where represented most often is a face with much more impressive male (and in some cases also animal) features (F6: 1 – 5). The head

[13] R. Ghirshman, *Notes VIII*.

[14] R. Ghirshman, *The Art*, 52

[15] On the indifference of Zurvān towards good and evil: R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 161.

F2



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depicted on the abdomen of the central figure from the quiver from the Metropolitan Museum also bears male characteristics (F5: 5).

Also, we do not agree that the medallion with a face is depicted on the abdomen of the main figure from the Cincinnati plaque, but that it gravitates more towards its chest (F2: 2, 3). In our previous studies we suggested that it be associated with one of Zurvān's newborn sons.[16] At first glance, this does not correspond to the sources in which, indicted as the place of their conception is the **abdomen** i.e. **womb of their mother** ("mother's womb"), behind which, as we have seen, may have actually stood the female epiphany i.e. the female aspect of Zurvān ("la petite belle") (see p. 307).[17] We think that the location of this character on the chest of the main figure speaks in favor of its belonging to Ahriman who, according to the sources, decided to be born first even though he was conceived after Ohrmazd. Unable to get out through the opening of the womb, where his first-conceived brother was already housed, he forcibly **tore the uterus** in the umbilical region and came out of the created opening.[18] Although other sources do not mention that Ohrmazd was closer to the outlet of the uterus, this is self-evident because Ahriman would not have needed to pierce it if the actual outlet had not been blocked by his older twin brother.[19]

In the French translations of some of the sources, the part of the body that Ahriman pierces i.e. tears up is denoted by the lexeme *ventre* which would correspond to the meaning of *belly*: "And when Satan learned of this, he tore his mother's belly and fell from the navel" ("Et lorsque Satan en eut connaissance, il fendit le ventre de sa mère, et tomba de son nombril": Theodore ban Kônai); "Ahriman, upon hearing this, immediately tore his mother's belly and came out of it" ("Ahrman, quand il entendit cela, déchira aussitôt le ventre de sa mère, en sortit": Yohannân bar Penkayê).[20] But, in the translations of other sources, the lexeme *le sein* is used, whose meaning is broader and denotes breasts, armpits, uterus, womb, bowels and heart, which would be closer to the more general Slavic *недра* (*nedra*) and the English *bosom*, than to the more specific *uterus* i.e. the French *l'utérus*, *la matrix*, *l'entrailles* and the English *womb*: "And when he heard this, Ahriman pierced his bosom, came out, and presented himself before his father" ("Et Arhmn ayant entendu, perça le sein et sortit, sè presenta devant son père": Eznik); "Now, the one who had been conceived by his little faith tore his bosom and came out" ("Or celui qui avait été conçu de par son peu de foi déchira le sein et sortit dehors.": Elišē).[21]

If we nevertheless agree that the medallion with the depicted character is placed on the abdomen of the main figure, then it could have also represented Ohrmazd, conceived in the womb i.e the belly i.e. the uterus of his androgynous father. In a figurative sense, this face could also denote his "functional birth", although in the myths it is not described how this act was realized i.e. whether Ohrmazd was born through the vulva that the hermaphroditic Zurvān must have had. From this interpretation it follows that, if we exclude the two busts above the shoulders, then the Cincinnati plaque and the Luristan discoid pins (which will be discussed in more detail below) depict the birth of only one of Zurvān's sons. We think that in various cases

[16] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 393-395.

[17] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 60, 62, 64, 66, 428-430, 433.

[18] “Ormazd, who, as we have seen, was conceived from the wisdom of his father, divined his thought and somewhat guilelessly divulged it to Ahriman. The latter was not slow to take advantage of his newly acquired knowledge; but unfortunately for him Ohrmazd, the elder twin, lay nearer to the egress of his mother’s womb. Ahriman, rising superior to the physical obstacle, ripped the womb open at the navel, sprang out, and presented his detestable person to his father Zurvān.” (R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 66). “And they were both in one womb, and Hormuz was nearest to the door of egress: but Ahriman schemed so that he rent his mother’s womb, and went out before him and seized the world (the earth).” (Šahristāni, *Kiiahii l-milal wa n-mhal,*1; according to: R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 433).

[19] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 66.

[20] Citations according to: R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 423.

[21] Citations according to: R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 422. In accordance with our competencies, we were compelled to base this analysis on the French translations of the sources, so the conclusions put forward will have to be confirmed in the future on the basis of the original texts.

(depending on the period, cultural environment, type of objects and the interpretation of their makers and users) in this character was recognized either one or the other son of Zurvān, whereby we are convinced that in that sense, also occuring were frequent interferences and inconsistencies.

b) Interpretations of other researchers

Although R. Ghirshman generally disagrees with the views of **Ph. Ackerman** in regards to the Cincinnati plaque (by the way, published before his own articles), some of their interpretations come pretty close and even overlap. This second researcher also thinks that the central figure depicts the Father-god with an avian body, which is why she defines him as an "eagle-man", but with the eyes of a bull and with horns. The pair of busts of young boys depicted on his shoulders is also treated as representations of his twin sons (analogous to the Dioscuri) who are actually born i.e. reborn from there (F2: 3). She thinks that they denote the **constellation "Gemini"**, which R. Ghirshman obviously does not take into account. The authoress also has an analogous view about the age division of the surrounding three groups of figures (F2: 4, 5), but parallelly is of the opinion that they also denote the same constellation i.e the three phases of its presence in the sky (rising, zenith and setting). Ph. Ackerman is convinced that the "discoid face" depicted on the chest of the "eagle-man" represents the **sun** that rises at the same time with the named constellation. In support of this she points to the Luristan pins with a discoid head, where this motif is complemented by rays and combined with rosettes, believing that they represent the starry sky. According to her, the fifth scene of the Luristan quiver from the Metropolitan Museum (F5: 5 compare with F2: 3) has the same meaning, where a human head is depicted on the tunic of the central bearded figure, whereby his sons, instead of through busts, in this case are present as whole standing figures which, surrounded by rosettes (= stars), hold him by his arms. Based on these elements, she concludes that both objects depict a scene of a ritual associated with a **sunrise ceremony** ("ritual dawn-ceremony scene"). Regarding the Cincinnati plaque, she expresses the opinion that it reflects some kind of "ancient West Asian **astro-cosmological and calendrical cult**", which she puts in relation to the Sumerian-Akkadian, Canaanite, and Hittite gods El, Ea and Enki.[22]

The view of **G. M. D'Erme**, in regards to the iconography and meaning of the Cincinnati plaque, is characterized by particular profundity that surpasses the "horizontal" archaeological and historical-artistic approaches of his predecessors. Based on the information about the god Zurvān, known from written sources and the interpretations of contemporary authors (mainly philosophers), he tries to penetrate into the deep esoteric-philosophical layers of the depicted scene. From his observations regarding the basic iconographic elements, it is worth mentioning the emphasis on the **ithyphallicity** of the bearded male head of the main figure and the **uterine symbolism** of the female head located below it, in the center of the bell-shaped torso (F2: 2). Although the interpretation of the latter element obviously leans towards the observations of R. Ghirshman, this author thinks that the topic of the creation of Ahura Mazda and Ahriman by Zurvān is not related at all to the event depicted on this object.[23] However, in the following paragraphs he states that the central figure from this object can still be identified with Zurvān, which would lead to the conclusion that G. M. D'erme's disagreement refers only to the act of creation of Zurvān's sons. It seems that this author prefers the treatment of the central figure not as an **action that tells some kind of mythical event**, but as a **diagram** that reflects the essence of the main mythical character and, more importantly, the essence of the universe that he represents. According to him, the Cincinnati scene tends to show the necessity of the presence of the two complementary principles (represented by the two sons of Zurvān), which is not inherent to traditional Iranian dualism that in this system introduces the ethical principle, which implies the choice of one of the two

[22] Ph. Ackerman, *The Gemini*; Ph. Ackerman, *A Luristan*.

[23] „This interpretation is in my opinion absolutely disconnected from the event depicted on the object.“ (G. M. D'Erme, *The Cappella*, 407); we note that at the same time he does not point out R. Ghirshman as the proponent of this interpretation.

principles as positive i.e. good and the condemnation of the other as negative and evil. This researcher in his analyzes includes analogous figures and scenes depicted on other Luristan objects such as pins with a discoid head (F6: 1, 2; F7: 3, 4) and the quiver from LACMA (F5: 6). Thereby, he also touches upon the alternation of the figure of Zurvān with the **tree** understood as the axis mundi and as a combination of the male and female principles, which, analogous to the symmetrical pair of animals, could denote the stage of chaos in the universe i.e. the state of its primordial undividedness (in doing so he utilizes the following objects B31: 5; B33: 2).[24]

L. A. Campbell, in describing the Cincinnati scene, accentuates the zoomorphic features of all the characters depicted there i.e. their bull-like eyes, ears, and even horns. He thinks that the upper head of the central character, flanked by the two busts of boys, is "the equivalent of the twofold Ahura-Abzar, the Menok and Geteh seed of all genesis" (F2: 3). Campbell places the four figures on the left in relation to "Genesis-in-motion", those below them with raised arms - "Genesis-in-being", while those on the right, with raised fists - "living beings" (F2: 4, 5). Further, he connects the lower bordure of floral ornaments with the "causal force in germination", while the upper one - with the "progression and completion causations". The central figure of the composition is actually interpreted by him as an **"anthropoid mountain"** that suggests a "skirt of a female", whereby the spherical head placed at its top, equipped with wings, is treated as an “equivalent of the swift moving Asman or Ras, which is the head of the Mountain of heaven and earth” (compare F2: 1). He puts this interpretation in context of the concept of the "cosmic man" and the element of the "revolving *spihr*".[25]

I. L. Krupnik thinks that R. Ghirshman's arguments regarding the interpretation of the central figure from the Cincinnati plaque are not convincing. As the most debatable one, he points out the fact that, contrary to the sources, the two brothers (and not only Ohrmazd) receive barsom, whereby both of them are depicted identically. He also points to the differences in relation to the compositions from Luristan pins, where the two alleged twins fight lions, which is difficult to explain in the context of Zurvanite teachings.[26] Regarding the character of the surrounding figures, we can present his view on the triad *Ašōkar - Frašōkar - Zarōkar* that represents the three stages of ontogenesis, which, in relation to Zurvān, define him as "the law of the universe according to which all things in the cosmos, limited in space and time, inevitably go through at least three stages in their development - growth, maturity and death."[27]

A group of authors, led by **V. E. Larichev**, approached a detailed analysis of the scene from the Cincinnati plaque (F2, as well as the one from the Rietberg plaque – E13: 1) in order, through the comparative method, to prove the presence of Zurvān and his sons on a petroglyph from the Saratsky Sunduk sanctuary in Khakassia which, according to them dates from the 18th - 17th century BCE. In support of the identification of the bust above the right shoulder of the central figure as Angra Mainyu (and the other consequently as Ahura Mazda), they reference the presence of the old anthropomorphic figures on that side of the composition, which interferes with the **small crouched figure** (according to them "an image of a dead old man”) depicted on the same side of the scene from Rietberg (F2: 4, 5 compare with E13: 1). Deserving of special attention is their interpretation of the essence i.e. the meaning of the **barsom** and the explanation of the already indicated dilemma why in the two Luristan compositions both of Zurvān's sons are accompanied by this symbol, although, according to the sources, it would suit only Ahura Mazda. The authors of this article find both aspects of this enigma in **fire** i.e. the torch as its concrete objectification, which in the hands of Ahura Mazda would manifest its "creative nature" while in the hands of Angra Mainyu - the "annihilating function". Accepting and further developing the observations of R. Ghirshman, the authors point to some

[24] G. M. D'Erme, *The Cappella*.

[25] L. A. Campbell, *Mithraic*, 126-129; for the interpretation of the bordure of pomegranates as a symbol of fertility see also: E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 256.

[26] И. Л. Крупник, *Зурванизм*, Глава IV.2 (163, 164).

[27] И. Л. Крупник, *Зурванизм*, Глава III.1 (94); in more detail about the three hypostases: R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 219-231.

other cosmological aspects of the Cincinnati composition. One of them is the **tripartite division of the central figure**, for which we think that there are not enough indications within the specific scene, although, in general terms, it seems quite acceptable to us (in regards to the three zones of the universe that Zurvān could certainly represent). We consider as much more acceptable the definition of the character depicted on the clothes of the same figure as a **"solar face"** which, together with the adjacent wings, is interpreted as a **"solar winged deity"** (F2: 1).[28] The same authors, in another article, try to prove the appearance of the pyramidal figure of Zurvān in the shadow thrown during the key points of the solar cycle by the hill on which the mentioned Saratsky sanctuary is located.[29] This last hypothesis interferes with the identification of Zurvān with the **mythical mountain**, proposed by L. A. Campbell, the confirmation of which would go in favor of the macrocosmic aspects of this god, given the such meanings of the mythical mountain (as an equivalent of the sky, the Cosmic Axis and of the primordial hill from which the earth and even the whole universe are created).[30] Such a meaning of Zurvān would correspond to the mentioned Armenian legend about the white-haired old man (Žuk or Žamanak) who, sitting on a mountain, unwinds the white and black balls of thread that represent day and night (see p. 346).

c) Comparative analysis

- Iron Age parallels from Northern Italy

Iconographic parallels to the central figure of the Cincinnati relief plaque can be found among the metal finds of the Iron Age cultures from the Alpine region of Northern Italy (**"Fritzens-Sanzeno" culture**). These are several bronze pendants shaped in the form of a stylized human figure, which, with the central character from the Cincinnati plaque, shows relations in terms of the following elements (F3: 1 – 4 compare with 5, 6). The contours of the figure, extending towards the bottom, gradually widen, which corresponds to the bell-shaped clothing of the Luristan figure. The arms end in animal (probably equine) protomes that correspond to the pair of busts on the Luristan figure and the animal protomes in analogous figures from Luristan discoid pins, bangles, quivers and cheekpieces (F10, see further). The head of these figures is depicted without a face, in the form of a ring that served as a link for hanging pendants, which so far has no parallels among the Luristan representations. It is especially important that in the **chest area** of these figures there is a relief depiction of an **anthropomorphic face** which, according to the position and proportions, completely coincides with the corresponding motif from the Cincinnati plaque (F3: 1 – 4 compare with 5, 6). As we can see, these similarities do not relate only to the content of the depictions (their iconography) but to a certain extent also to the form i.e. the manner (conditionally speaking, "style") of their execution. These objects also show similarities in a chronological sense, taking into account that the "Fritzens-Sanzeno" culture is dated between the 6th - 1st century BCE, which partially coincides with the dating of the Cincinnati plaque.[31] In his comparative studies of these objects and the discovery of their meaning, **M. Egg** comes to the Oriental templates and even the Luristan bronzes, but in doing so takes into account only the anthropomorphic face accompanied by a pair of equine protomes, connecting it with the "mistress of horses" (Herrin der Pferde) or with the "master of animals" (Herr de Tiere). Thereby, he generally reduces these relations to the level of

[28] V. E. Larichev (et al), *Zurvanite*, 83-86, 90, 91; the numerous figures depicted to the left and right of the middle triad are also identified by the authors as deities ("three groups of anthropomorphic deities") whose character corresponds to the nature of the respective son of Zurvān (89, 90).
[29] V. E. Larichev (et al), *The Shadow*.
[30] L. A. Campbell, *Mithraic*, 128, 129; on these aspects of the mythical mountain: N. Čausidis, *Myth. of the Mountain*.
[31] About the finds: M. Egg, *Die Herrin*; F. Marzatico, *Testimonianze*, 319-322; D. Glogović, *Gospodarica*, 263, 264 (Sl. 7 – Sl. 9); S. Kukoč, *Japodi*, 194 (Sl. 287); for our previous observations on these relations: Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 101, 103, 112; Н. Чаусидис, *Зооантропоморфный*, 89-92.

F3



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appropriation of pictorial motifs, although he does not exclude the acceptance of certain **"religious-cultic notions"**.[32]

We think that such a high level of correspondence between the presented finds could not be justified only through mechanical copying of objects or pictorial templates, nor through some kind of general similarities (for example based on the common Indo-European core). We believe that behind the indicated Iron Age cultures of Luristan and Northern Italy there must have been more direct mutual contacts or certain common religious i.e. iconographic paradigms. This is also indicated by other parallels between the Luristan bronzes and the Iron Age bronzes from Northern Italy and the neighboring northwestern regions of the Balkans. Here, primarily, we have in mind the openwork wheels, supplemented by anthropomorphic and zoomorphic motifs, which were obviously present in both regions (B28: 2, 3 compare with 11).[33]

- Medieval Slavic parallels

We found great help in the encouragement and confirmation of our interpretations of the Cincinnati scene on one medieval object. In fact, they represent two almost identical specimens of metal plaques, with a relief on their front side, discovered near the village of **Velestino** in Thessaly, in a hoard with hundreds of other similarly conceived plaques (F3: 8 compare with 5; the second specimen F4: 7).[34] Based on stylistic and comparative analyzes, the hoard is dated with certainty between the 6th - 8th century CE and is associated with the Slavic tribe of the Belegezites, whose presence in this region is confirmed by written sources relating to the mentioned and the next few centuries.[35] The similarities between this plaques and the central figure from the Cincinnati plaque are striking, given their 15-century chronological gap and vast geographical distance. On this occasion we can only casually suggest justification for such closeness through the Iranian or Indo-Aryan component which, according to multiple previous researchers, is strongly expressed in the iconography of the Luristan bronzes, but also in the ethnogenesis of the Slavs, and consequently in the constitution of their pagan religion and mythology (see pp. 400, 524, 525).[36]

The Velestino plaques show direct relations not only with the central figure from the Cincinnati plaque, but also with the features of Zurvān noted in ancient written sources. The body of the depicted character has a semicircular i.e. bell-shaped contour, analogous to that of the Cincinnati figure, reminiscent of some kind of ornamented tunic that covers their entire body (F3: 8 compare with 5; F4: 7 compare with 5). On its edges are formed **four radiant rosettes** which, in relation to the portrayal of Zurvān as God-Sky and God-Time, acquire the meaning of the separate phases of the **movement of the sun along the celestial vault** represented by the torso of the god or perhaps the lavish cloaks he periodically dresses and undresses (= day and night; this and subsequent features will be discussed in more detail below). The **pair of wings** is also incorporated into the torso, similarly as in the figure from the Cincinnati plaque, according to us again in the role of classifiers of its celestial character (wings - bird - sky). On the chest of the figure is a **medallion** in

[32] M. Egg, *Die Herrin*, 73, 74.

[33] Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 852-854,

[34] We made the drawing of the first plaque based on a photograph published by J. Werner (J. Werner, *Slaw. Bronzefiguren*, Taf. 3: 7); the second specimen, along with some of the other plaques from this hoard, is nowadays housed in the Princeton University Art Museum (*Male figure* 2019); F. Curta, B. S. Szmoniewski, *The Velestino*, 50, 51 (Fig. 3.9), 223, 224 (No. 53, 54).

[35] J. Werner, *Slaw. Bronzefiguren*; N. Čausidis, *Poganska*; monographic presentation of the finds from the hoard: F. Curta, B. S. Szmoniewski, *The Velestino*; discussion with the authors regarding the Pagan-Slavic and Christian-Byzantine character of the plaques: N. Chausidis, *Does the hoard*, about the specific plaques – 371, 372.

[36] On these components in the ethnogenesis of the Slavs: В. В. Седов, *Славяне в древности*, 277-279; В. В. Седов, *Славяне в раннем*, 80-84; О. Н. Трубачев, *Этногенез (2003)*, 49-53; А. Лома, *Неки славистички*; Z. Vinski, *Uz problematiku*; Н. Чаусидис, *Дуалистички*, 103-105; in the Slavic pagan religion: В. Н. Топоров, *Об иранском*; Д. М. Дудко, *Иранские*; C. L. Borissoff, *Non-Iranian*; Н. Чаусидис, *Дуалистички*, 141-171.

which, instead of the expected anthropomorphic figure, is a depiction of a rosette, while found below it is a **leaf-like motif** that, in relation to the androgyny of Zurvān, we tend to identify as an **open vulva**. Based on these arguments, we have put forward a hypothesis that this object depicts the **Slavic god Svarog** (confirmed through medieval written sources), whose theonym we assumed could point to certain relations with Zurvān.[37] In the following lines, we present **historical sources** that reference the indicated components, but as features of Zurvān.

Multiple sources point to the **identification of Zurvān with time**, of which the presented objects can be most directly related to a part from the Greater Bundahishn where it is said that "from Time the firmament (Spihr) was fashioned, the body of Zurvān of the long Dominion". In addition to the meaning of a **celestial vault** understood as limited space, the term Spihr also bears the meaning of the embodiment of **finite Time understood as a shape**, but also other more specific meanings related to the circular aspects of time: wheel, sphere (one of the celestial spheres in which the zodiac is located), fate and others.[38]

We have seen that in the sources, during the conception and emergence of the sons of Zurvān from the body of their father, his **womb** is mentioned, even with the epithet **maternal**, which clearly indicates the hermaphroditic character of Zurvān (p. 307). As we will see, on the Luristan bronzes this feature is mainly depicted through the combination of a character with breasts (who touches or supports them with its hands), female genitalia and a beard (example F29: 2).

This same iconographic representation, somewhat differently composed, can also be identified on the **two-plated bow fibulae** (synchronous to the Velestino plaques) which belong to the types that are again linked to the Slavs and the Antes. On one of the presented specimens, as on the Luristan standards, too, one can follow the transformation of the birth-giving woman with zoomorphic legs (D22: 1 – 3, 6, 7) into a figure of the celestial god along whose body the sun moves, whereby a grotesque face is depicted in the area of his abdomen (F4: 1 compare with 5, 7). On other variants of this jewelry, the main character is complemented by the familiar 4 rosettes, whereby the grotesque face is not depicted on the torso (as in the Cincinnati plaque) but below it - on the semicircular plate of the fibula (F3: 7, 9 compare with 5, 8).[39] These examples also show close relations with later medieval written sources regarding the pagan religion of the Western Slavs. Here we mean the descriptions by *Saxo Grammaticus* of the **idol of the Slavic god Porenutius**, located in Charenza on the island of Rügen, which had 4 faces (certainly in the area of the head, probably oriented towards the sides of the world) and **one face on the chest**.[40] A stone object with similar features, probably with a pagan Slavic character, was discovered in Sankt Martin am Silberberg in Austria (F27: 9; see p. 401).[41]

- Medieval Germanic parallels

Traces of the mentioned mythical subject, although in a slightly different pictorial-compositional form, can also be found on the **two-plated bow fibulae** that are linked to the **early medieval Germanic cultures**. We are speaking of the "Langwied" type, on whose elongated plate, in a quite schematized and

[37] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 354, 389-395; N. Čausidis, *Poganska*, 440, 441; Н. Чаусидис, *Дуалистички*, 141-193, 221-231.

[38] (Greater Bundahishn, 3.6); on this and more broadly on the temporal aspects of Zurvān: R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 20, 57-62, 87, 88,91-96, 111-113, 224, 232, 240, 245, 384, 390, 392, 410; R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 149, 150, 181, 182; И. Л. Крупник, *Зурванизм*, II.2 (56-62); II.3 (68, 69); III.2 (99, 106).

[39] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 396-402; Н. Чаусидис, *Дуалистички*, 159.

[40] “Haec statua, quattuor facies repraesentans, quintam pectori insertam habebat, cuius frontem laeva, mentum dextera tangebat.” (Saxo Grammaticus, *Gesta Danorum* 14.39.41); *Saxo Grammaticus 2020*.

[41] On the monument: A. Pleterski, *Gab es bei*, 41, 42; N. Profantová, M. Profant, *Encyklopedie*, 174, 198, 199 (and on the relations with Porenutius).

F4


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ornamentalized form, we find all the key elements of the presented mythical image.[42] Most appropriate, in this regard, is the aforementioned specimen from Fridaythorpe, where the torso of the celestial god is represented through the corpus of the rhombic plate, whereby his legs are equated with the here-depicted pair of zoomorphic protomes (F4: 2).[43] His head is depicted at the top of the plate (with a beard and/or mustache), whereby the two lateral corners are complemented by rosettes (= phases of the solar cycle that takes place along his body). In the inner ornamented field, above the central circular segment, supplemented by a dot (= belly with a denoted navel?), is a depiction of a schematic human figure (= one of the sons who is conceived or is being born from his father's chest). In the lower part of the figure i.e. the area between the two spread and zoomorphized legs (= genital zone), there is another head, depicted with a large nose and a protruding long phallic tongue. Given the grotesqueness of the latter character and the accentuation of his tongue, we think that precisely he is the one who interferes better with Ahriman (compare F4: 2 with F29: 1). Although in a not so consistent and complete form and with the absence of some elements, we also find this scene on other fibulae of this type.[44] One of them is the specimen from Tabingen where the same composition is supplemented by three human heads, located at the corners of the rhombus (= personalized phases of the solar cycle) (F4: 3). Reaching from both sides towards the head at the top is a pair of animals, which we have seen is a common motif on the Luristan standards as well (C1 – C14). In the middle of the corpus (= torso of the hermaphroditic God-Father) is a grotesque monstrous character with a protruding tongue who, in this case, would again represent the equivalent of Ahriman, coming out of his father's belly or chest. The other character is not depicted on this fibula.[45]

- Medieval Finno-Ugric parallels

Pictorial depictions similar to the ones presented can also be found on the medieval jewelry of cultic character that is attributed to the Finno-Ugric populations. Here we have in mind the bronze appliques with a central winged human figure that is accompanied by two other anthropomorphic faces - one engraved on its chest and the other placed above its head. Also present are the two small lateral figures depicted above the wings of the main character and beside his legs (F4: 4 compare with 5 and with F22: 1).[46] These parallels could be understood as the product of the influences exerted upon the Ugro-Finns by their southern neighbors who had evident Iranian or Indo-Aryan ethnocultural features (see further and other examples – F12: 8, 10 – 13).[47]

- Christian parallels

There are indications that Christianity had also not remained indifferent in relation to the compositional structure of the mythical image presented here (and perhaps even some aspects of its semiotics). In this regard, the presented **early medieval relief from Britain** may be particularly interesting (F4: 8). The lavish clothing of the crucified Christ, of course, has no justification in Christian religious texts, but according to the arrangement of the ornaments and the manner of their execution, it shows connections with the presented iconographic type and more specifically - with the medieval examples elaborated above (F4: 8 compare with 2, 3, 5, 7). Thereby, we mean the big inexplicable rosette on the chest (former medallion

[42] Basic information: A. Koch, *Bügelfibeln Teil 2* (Typentafel 3: 11); for our first interpretations of the fibulae presented below and their comparisons with the Luristan standards: Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 394, 395; Н. Чаусидис, *Дуалистички*, 173-175.

[43] Basic information: H. Kühn, *Die germanischen*, Taf. 103: 40, 4.

[44] A. Koch, *Bügelfibeln Teil* 2 (Tafelband), Taf. 103: 40,3; 40,9.

[45] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 395; Н. Чаусидис, *Дуалистички*, 174; for the fibula: H. Kühn, *Die germanischen*, Taf. 103: 40, 7.

[46] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 395.

[47] On these influences at the level of language: Е. А. Хелимский, *Южные*.

with the face?), the symmetrical ornamented segments that extend towards the hands (= wings?), the ornament between the two semicircular motifs in the lower part that is slightly reminiscent of a head (= phallus or birth?), and perhaps also the limbs which, together with the depicted nails, interfere with the arms and legs transformed into animal protomes.[48] In this sense, deserving of attention are also some depictions of the **Christian cherubim** and **seraphim**, which will be discussed later. On this occasion we mention only the example with a human head in the area of the abdomen and with circular motifs arranged around the figure (F14: 3 compare with 1, 2). This specific "angelic" winged character is found in the medieval "Book of Divine Works" (which presents to us the visions of the Christian mystic St. Hildegard of Bingen), where it is even said that it also denotes "almighty God" himself.[49]

Depicted in a 19th-century Russian collection of church texts is the scene of the **"Devil's Tree"** ("Бесовское древо"), at the basis of which is a mythical character (devil) who possesses all the key elements of the mythical image that is the focus of this chapter (F4: 6; F27: 7): a central anthropomorphic figure with a bearded head; a large human face depicted on the torso (very similar as in the Luristan pins with a discoid head – F4: 6 compare with F6 and F7); two other characters that appear at the shoulders of the main figure, with heads in profile (one anthropomorphic, and the other zoomorphic) and with one arm each (compare F4: 6 with 5 with F6 and with F7: 1 – 4); the middle character is identified with the lower part of the tree (the lower branches are equated with his hands) which as a component is also present on the Luristan bronzes (F27: 7 compare with B31: 2).[50] We think that it is not a case of a coincidental overlap but an archaic mythical image that in the Middle Ages was reintegrated and reinterpreted within the frames of Christianity, existing perhaps in the circle of esoteric apocryphal literary works, or in the dualistic heretical teachings that were especially popular in the Slavic world. Probably from there it "spilled over" into the conservative Late Medieval traditions maintained by the Russian "Old Ritualists", in whose church manuscripts images of this type would appear.

We have identified another such explicit syncretistic example in the cathedral **church of St. Sophia in Ohrid** (RN Macedonia) (F4: 9). Found there, under the existing frescoes from the semi-calotte of the altar, was an older fresco (from the 11th century), with quite an unusual appearance, which contains all the noted iconographic and semiotic components of the myth of Zurvān. It shows the usual scene of the Virgin Mary with a mandorla on her chest containing the Christ Child, but in this case depicted with a mustache and beard. Behind this figure may be some kind of hermaphroditic character representing the supreme (celestial or pan-cosmic) god, whereby the figure of the Christ Child acquires the meaning of a son conceived in his womb (as his earthly representative and material hypostasis). The unusual, debatable, perhaps Gnostic-heretical connotations of this depiction are indicated by the fact that, despite the good preservation of the fresco, two centuries after its painting, it was battered with an adze and covered by a new fresco composition with the same theme, executed according to the customary canons.[51]

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Having determined the basic iconographic elements of the mythical image of "Zurvān gives birth to his sons", we can proceed to its identification on the other types of Luristan bronzes as well, towards the revealement of its separate details and the commentary on the interpretations of previous researchers. We will then take the observations from this overview as a basis for discovering and arguing the presence of this myth on Luristan standards, too.

[48] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 395, 396.

[49] (Liber Divinorum Opperum, Part III, Vision 4, 3-6); *Liber Divorum* 2021.

[50] On the image (without the interpretations suggested here): Д. Антонов, М. Майзульс, *Анатомия*, 214-218.

[51] In the presented illustration, we have performed a retouch of the damages on the face of the Virgin Mary in order to bring to the fore her masculine features partially preserved on the damaged plaster. On the original condition of the fresco and in more detail on its possible Gnostic-heretical connotations: Н. Чаусидис, *Дуалистички*, 293-322.

4. The myth of Zurvān on other Luristan bronzes

a) Luristan quiver plaques

The discussions about the presence of the myth of Zurvān on Luristan bronzes have often included the relief scene from the **Metropolitan Museum's quiver**, depicted within the frames of its fifth zone (counted from the top) (F5: 4, 5). The scene consists of three male bearded figures dressed in long gowns, the central one of which is shown frontally, while the lateral ones are facing towards it, holding it by its arms, equipped with swords and a palm branch. The reason for the introduction of this scene in our discussion is the detached human head depicted in the lap area of the central figure, which interferes with the head depicted on the torso of the central character from the Cincinnati plaque (F5: 5 compare with F2: 2, 3).

C. Lancaster thinks that the figure of the central character from this scene has the role of a victim placed at the mercy in front of the two lateral ones, whereby he assumes that the "mask" hanging on the character's lap announces his expected beheading, most likely as some kind of religious act.[52] A similar view is held by **O. W. Muscarella**, who thinks that the same head is attached by a rope to the neck of the central figure depicted at a more mature age.[53]

This same composition is explained by **R. Dussaud** in context of his Indo-Aryan interpretations of Luristan objects. Thereby, the central character, depicted with the head on his lap, is defined as a man who, accompanied by the pair of gods Nasatya, carries upon himself a bronze plate with the face of some deity, probably for his protection and overcoming death i.e. "to enter the other world alive" (d'entrer vivant dans l'autre monde).[54] **G. Dumézil**'s interpretation of this scene moves in the same eschatological direction, this time as an act of rejuvenation of the old man depicted through the central figure, realized by the Vedic healer-gods Nasatya, represented through the pair of lateral characters. Thereby, this author also touches upon the meaning of the head depicted on the skirt of the central figure. He is of the opinion that it, with its smooth scalp (according to him, bald), depicts the previous face of the figure (old and crumbling) now replaced by a new, rejuvenated and manly face overgrown with lush hair and beard.[55] Based on the quote by **R. Ghirshman**, it can be perceived that in one of the mentioned theories there is aspiration for an even more specific definition of the character of this scene as "the rejuvenation of the decrepit ancient, Cyavana", realized by the twins Nasatya. Thereby, he himself makes the following assumption: "It seems quite possible that the figure on the fifth register is the god Zurvan, since it bears a woman’s face on its lower body, a feature observed on other monuments.", probably thinking of the central character from the Cincinnati plaque (F5: 5 compare with F4: 5).[56]

Although, at first glance, the latter interpretation of the detached head seems different from the previous ones, we think that on a more general level it interferes with the solar meaning of the same motif proposed by **Ph. Ackerman**, according to which the head (analogous to the central face on the plaque from Cincinnati and on the discoid pins) represents the sun.[57] In this context, the above-mentioned act of rejuvenation of the old man acquires cosmological dimensions, symbolizing the cyclical rejuvenation of the

[52] C. Lancaster, *Luristan*, 99.
[53] O. W. Muscarella, *Archaeology*, 194, 196 (the author expresses criticism regarding the previous interpretations of the scenes from the quiver).
[54] R. Dussaud, *Anciens*, 216.
[55] G. Dumézil, *Dieux*, 25.
[56] R. Ghirshman, *The Art*, 70, 71.
[57] Ph. Ackerman, *The Gemini*, 29. There are also other Luristan pins depicting a pair of men (equipped with palm branches and a snake) that flank a centrally placed human head, although this time not depicted on the torso of another figure, but standing by itself (C8: 1-3): R. Dussaud, *Anciens*, Fig. 2, Fig. 3, Fig. 4, Pl. IX:1.

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solar god, which, in principle, does not contradict our interpretations, especially if we connect this detached head with the birth of Ohrmazd as a personalized epiphany of light.

The third scene from the Metropolitan Museum's quiver depicts two more figures close to the one from the Cincinnati plaque, although not in regards to the anthropomorphic character placed on the torso, but the pair of zoomorphic protomes on the shoulders, if we treat them as zoomorphic equivalents of the two human busts (compare F5: 3, 4 with F4: 5). Both figures depict bearded men in long skirts, accompanied by crossed belts or bands on the chest and have heads complemented by horns and half-rosettes. One character holds a palm branch in both hands, while the other with his left hand touches a lateral animal standing on its hind legs, and with his right hand - some kind of obscure object with a vertical handle. Depicted in both figures, left and right of the head, is a pair of symmetrical protomes with wide open mouths, protruding tongues, long fangs, and upward pointed locks of their mane (F10: 1).[58]

Similar features are borne by the figure from the quiver of the Nasli M. Heeramaneck Collection, today in LACMA (F5: 6; F10: 4).[59] It is depicted quite realistically, in long – below the waist length clothes, outstretched arms and above them a pair of leonine protomes with wide open toothed muzzles, manes, and one paw extended forward. The anthropomorphic character between the protomes has a long beard, accentuated eyebrows, and animal ears or horns. Extending below his waist are schematized wings. The figure is flanked by a pair of herbivorous animals standing on their hind legs.

b) Luristan bandlike object

A pair of figures with the same features as the ones previously described from the Metropolitan Museum's quiver are also present on a Luristan object in the form of a band bent in a circle (F5: 1; F10: 3).[60] They differ from them in the absence of the crossed belts and in the fact that both of them hold palm branches. In both cases they represent winged characters with beards and accentuated growths above the junction of the eyebrows (horns?). Depicted left and right of the anthropomorphic head of the figures are two more animal ones, which in this case seem to bear the features of herbivores that most closely resemble donkeys or horses. Thereby, the meaning of the spiky segments that descend from their lower jaws remains unclear. If we interpret them as a beard - they should be goats, but such a meaning would be contradicted by the absence of characteristic horns. If, on the other hand, we treat them as fangs, then they would nevertheless represent some kind of carnivorous animals. It is obvious that the creator of these reliefs was not quite sure what animals he intended to depict.

c) Luristan cheekpiece

An openwork quadrangular plaque from the Montreal Museum depicts a human character that, based on his elements, belongs to the group discussed here (F5: 2; F10: 5). He is dressed in a long skirt, extending over which is a pair of arched wings. Protruding from his shoulders are two small arms directed towards the surrounding animals that are symmetrically arranged on the side, including a pair of large and several smaller ones. Rising above the shoulders are three elongated necks, of which the central one has an anthropomorphic head with large animal ears, while the lateral ones are zoomorphic (of the family of felines?) with open muzzles and long fangs.[61] Punctured in the middle of the character's torso is a large circular opening bordered by a ring-like ribbing which, according to its position and size, interferes with the medallion in the middle of the torso of the main character from the Cincinnati plaque (compare F5: 2 with F3: 6) and with the central

[58] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 194-198 (with presented older literature and interpretations).
[59] P. R. S. Moorey, *The Art*, 90, 91 (Cat. 444).
[60] Photo: M. M. Khorasani, *Bronze*, 198, Fig. 10, 11.
[61] Ph. Verdier, *Les bronzes*, 40, 41 (Fig. 18), based on the pair of protomes, the depicted character is placed by the author in relation to the Mesopotamian god Nin-Gizzida.

F6



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umbo of analogous figures from Luristan discoid pins (F6; F7: 1 – 4). According to the indicated opening it can be concluded that this object is in fact one of the pair of side plates of cheekpieces through which their axis was inserted (other specimens with a different iconography – B14: 1, 3, 6, 7, 9; B23: 4, 11; B26: 4, 5, 6; also probably B28: 2 – 4).

d) Luristan pins

We are familiar with multiple Luristan pins with a discoid head on which the myth of the birth of Zurvān's sons can be identified. In some of them this identification has already been partially realized by previous researchers (see further). Common to most specimens is the incorporation of the central hemispherical umbo of the pin (depicted on which is an anthropomorphic or zoo-anthropomorphic head) into the torso of a central human figure which in this case should also represent Zurvān (F6: 1 – 5; F7: 1 – 4). According to its position and iconography, this element corresponds to the medallion placed on the chest of the main figure from the Cincinnati plaque (compare with F6: 6). In the case of the pins, too, this figure is accompanied by a pair of symmetrical animal protomes (F6: 1 – 4) or human busts (F7: 1 – 4) that protrude from its shoulders. In other cases they are whole zoomorphic or zoo-anthropomorphic figures placed laterally from it (F6: 5).

On the specimen from the museum of the University of Pennsylvania, the middle (anthropomorphic) head of the central figure is without a clearly defined beard, with small pointed animal ears (F6: 1, 2; F11: 7). To the left and right of it are two animal protomes of unclear affiliation (probably leonine), with broadly open muzzles, wide eyes and protruding locks on their foreheads. The small arms of the figure are outstretched towards the laterally placed animals, holding some kind of (probably floral) element, while under both of them one could recognize an additional extremity which probably belongs to the animals. The centrally placed umbo of the disc is embossed in the form of a monstrous character with zoo-anthropomorphic features: on the one hand he has a human nose, eyebrows, and probably a mustache, while on the other - an animal muzzle and furrows on the forehead that resemble a lion's mane. Under the umbo one can recognize the lower part of the central figure with a skirt to the ground, as well as the tips of the wings depicted laterally. Protruding from the circular frame of the composition are 4 half-rosettes of different size (= sun in various stages of its cycle?), also combined with stylized floral motifs (F11: 7).[62]

The head on the pin from the **Coiffard Collection** has the same arrangement of iconographic elements, with the difference that, in this case, the central character has a long beard, accentuated eyebrows and a hat or crown on the head (F6: 3, 4). Although due to damage, not all details of the laterally placed zoomorphic protomes can be determined, nevertheless, based on the partially preserved wide open muzzles and front paws, it seems that this time, too, they belong to lions. However, it should be noted that these paws, according to their position, could also belong to the central character, whereby they would be directed towards the hind legs of the pair of reversely oriented herbivorous animals. The umbo is similar as in the previous specimen, filled by a relatable character with slightly more dominant anthropomorphic features. It is noteworthy that arranged along the bottom edge are the already mentioned short dashes in the form of rays that may indicate its solar meaning. Here, too, depicted below the umbo is the skirt of the central figure, which extends to its feet, but in this case without any traces of wings.[63] In this pin, as in the previous one, depicted laterally from the figure is a pair of herbivorous animals, which in the first case stand on their hind legs, while in the second one - are turned upside down.

R. Dussaud thinks that the central character from the second pin depicts the hunter-god, probably Mithra, surrounded by stars (in our opinion more likely by suns). It is indicative that in these interpretations he

[62] Drawings: A. Godard, *The Art*, 54 (Fig 34); G. M. D'Erme, *The Cappella*, 409 (Fig. 6). Photo: P. R. S. Moorey, *Some Elaborately*, Pl. IIIb.
[63] Drawing: A. Godard, *The Art*, 56 (Fig 36).

F7



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does not mention at all the protomes and front paws of the two lions depicted to the left and right of the head of the central character.[64]

We know of two more pins with a discoid head where the same iconographic arrangement occurs. The first one is from **LACMA** (F7: 1, 2),[65] while the second - from a **private collection in Basel** (F7: 3, 4).[66] Unlike previous cases, the shoulders of the central character (bearded with animal ears) here are not supplemented by animal protomes, but by **human busts** depicted in profile, which with their hands reach towards or hold the two laterally depicted lions by their front paw. It should be emphasized that this component makes these examples much closer to the depiction from the Cincinnati plaque (compare with F6: 6). In both pins (one broken off in the lower part), the umbo covers the whole body of the central character or, more precisely, he is represented only by his head (eventually also by the shoulders with the arms), without the other parts of the body. In the case of both pins, the lower edge of the umbo is complemented by a bordure of leaf-like elements alluding to the beard of the depicted anthropomorphic character or, analogously as in the previous example (F6: 4), to the rays of the supposed personalized solar disk that he could have represented. In one of the pins, depicted below the umbo is a composition consisting of a central human figure with an animal ear, riding an animal from the family of felines, but with hooves on its legs, at the same time holding it by the tail (F7: 4). In front of and behind it are two more human figures, both with tails and sharp animal ears, one of which is holding its own tail while the other is holding a barsom in its hand. The lower part of the other pin is broken off, so that, based on what is preserved, it can be concluded that a horned herbivorous animal was depicted here, accompanied by some kind of floral motif (F7: 1).

There are also other such pins with a similarly conceptualized iconography whose central part is occupied by a figure akin to the mentioned ones, with an umbo placed in the area of the torso (example F6: 5).[67] We decided on this occasion to not present them separately due to the absence of one of the key motifs that constitute the mythical image discussed here - the busts or protomes above their shoulders.

- Discoid pin from the LACMA collection

From the hitherto known Luristan pins with a discoid head, an exceptional specimen stands out (today in the LACMA collection) on which we believe that the birth of Zurvān's sons is depicted not once, but thrice in specific variants (F8).[68] We are convinced that these depictions are especially important not only for the study of the pictorial manifestations of this myth, but also for understanding its deepest essence.

Formed in the center of the disc is the usual umbo with a face, which, in this case, with its protruding cheeks and small slightly opened mouth, gives the impression of belonging to a child i.e. baby (F8: 4). Depicted above it is a composition with a central figure that can be defined as a reduced variant of the already described representations identified with Zurvān (F8: 1, 4 compare with F10). It consists of the now standard bearded male head, extending downwards from which are the two wings that with their contours should also suggest the typical bell-shaped torso i.e. cloak of the god (F12: 2 compare with 4, 5). Between the wings is an elongated element that is not present in the previous such depictions (F8: 1, 2). It represents a vertical segment that starts from a protruding circular motif located in the chest area, which, extending downwards, ends in the form of a triple leaf (a similar element appears in the remaining three similar compositions). Depicted laterally from the figure are two herbivorous animals, standing upright on their hind legs (with hooves at the ends), which are inclined backwards i.e. leaning on the central figure. With their forelegs they hold short objects,

[64] R. Dussaud, *Anciens*, 212, 213, Pl. IX: 2.
[65] P. R. S. Moorey, *The Art*, 92 (Cat. 452); P. R. S. Moorey, *Some Elaborately*, 22, 23 (Fig. 3).
[66] G. M. D'Erme, *The Cappella*, 409 (Fig. 7); P. R. S. Moorey, *Some Elaborately*, 22 (Fig. 2); E. D. Phillips, *The People*, 226.
[67] *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020, (M.76.97.169).
[68] Photo: *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020, (M.76.97.134).

F8



probably small twigs or leaves. The composition is flanked by another pair of animals, in dynamic poses, whose affiliation we cannot determine due to the fragmentation of the plate and the layers of oxidation (F8: 4).

The second composition is located under the left angle of the previous one (F8: 4, 6). It consists of a similar centrally placed torso, but executed in a slightly more compact form, with the two wings and the motif of a circle with a vertical segment placed between them, this time ending in a four-leafed palmette (F8: 5, 6). To the left and right of the torso are two symmetrical human figures, depicted in profile that lean on it with their backs. It seems that they have different faces - one large and beardless, the other much smaller with a mustache and a somewhat thicker and crooked nose, resembling an animal "snout" (F8: 6 compare with F4: 6). Their legs are bent at the knees, while in their arms raised upwards, there are once again some kind of floral motifs that this time seem to be more branched or more leafy. In both figures, depicted in the area of the abdomen are radiant motifs similar to the palmette under the wings of the central figure. To the left of the group is a depiction of an animal (probably a lion) jumping or standing on its hind legs (F8: 4).

The third composition is placed in the lower part of the circular field (F8: 4, 8). At its basis, too, is the bell-shaped torso similar to the previous two, composed of a pair of wings, with the difference that in this case the vertical segment between them starts not with one but with three protruding circular motifs, and ends in a palmette of at least five leaves (F8: 7). This time, at the top of the torso, depicted instead of the central bearded face are two human busts, as it seems with beardless faces, turned (and even joined) with their occiputs. As in the previous composition, they are depicted with one raised arm in the palm of which there is an object similar to the previous examples, this time larger, but not branched. Depicted under the arms of both figures i.e. in the area of their abdomen (which is not shown in this case) are radiant motifs that this time are larger and look more like leaves or flowers. This composition can also be observed in combination with the two laterally placed lions, which this time gravitate towards it with their hind legs (F8: 4).

On the right side of the disc is a scene different from the previous three (F8: 3, 4). It consists of a figure sitting on a small chair holding in its outstretched hand some kind of vertical rod-like object that rises from a palmette, and in the upper part is supplemented by "twigs" that seem to be formed only on one side. Depicted to the right of this figure is another one, in a standing position, with legs apart, which with its right hand holds the same elongated object. It seems that the seated figure has zoomorphic features on its face - an animal snout instead of a nose, and thick lips. The lion from the adjacent scene can be observed as part of this composition, too, but oriented oppositely and directed towards the sitting figure. It is obvious that the scene depicts the handover of some kind of rod-like object (barsom, scepter, flag?) between two figures of different character and rank.[69]

We are convinced that all the scenes from this pin, together with the character from the umbo, evoke some unified mythical-religious content, perhaps broken down into separate actions of some myth or individual aspects of some symbolically represented religious idea. The first three compositions have the same or similar elements or characters: a central bearded character with a winged torso, without limbs, complemented by a palmette; he is flanked by a pair of symmetrical figures, which in their raised arms or forelegs hold similar floral objects (F8: 1, 6, 8); depicted at the abdomen of the anthropomorphic figures are radial motifs i.e. palmettes (F8: 6, 8). The biggest difference is in the alternation of the lateral animal figures from the first image (F8: 1) with the anthropomorphic ones from the second (F8: 6) and their reduction to busts in the third image, followed by the elimination of the head of the central character (F8: 8). If we observe the three pictures in the order in which we presented them, these differences acquire the meaning of stages of

[69] A similar scene is found in the lower iconographic field of the relief bronze plaque from the Iran Bastan Museum, but with an additional figure standing behind the central seated character (P. R. S. Moorey, *Some Elaborately*, 26 – Fig. 7). Another similar scene is depicted in the lower zone of a discoid pin, in the middle of which is a bearded male figure sitting on a chair, accompanied by two standing figures and a third, smaller one kneeling at its feet (R. Dussaud, *Anciens*, 205 – Fig. 7). On two pins from the Royal Museums of Art and History in Brussels, a character sitting on a chair is accompanied by another one sitting on an animal (D. de Clercq-Fobe, *Epingles*, 26, 27, no. 52, 53).

the transformation of the depicted characters. The pair of lateral characters first appear in the form of animals (F8: 1) that transform into humans (F8: 6), and then integrate into the torso of the central character (F8: 8). He, in turn, in the third scene loses his head, which can be understood in two ways - as the extinguishment of his identity - at the expense of the lateral figures, or as his division into two entities. We think that such a meaning is also followed by the three different palmettes. The three small circles on the chest of the third figure (F8: 7, 8) may denote the existence of the three entities, whereby the absence of the middle head should be understood as its latent presence in an unmanifested form.

These components, viewed in relation to the previous interpretations of the myth of the birth of Zurvān's sons, allow us to identify the depicted characters, but also the remaining details. The central character of the three compositions would represent Zurvān, while the lateral ones - his sons Ohrmazd and Ahriman (the character with a mustache and accented nose from the second composition would correspond more to Ahriman). In that context, the first scene would denote the birth of the two sons from the body of Zurvān in the form of herbivorous animals (F8: 1), the second would represent their transformation into human beings (F8: 6), while the third - their reunion in the body of their father (F8: 8).

In previous chapters, on multiple occasions, we have pointed to the identification of animals with the natural forces, principles and elements, especially in the cases of symmetrical pairs that denote their complementary character. In support of such a symbolism of the two animals from the first scene, we can present two sources according to which Zurvān, before giving birth to his sons, creates the complementary elements that actually foretell and reflect the nature i.e. essence of these newborn characters.

Eudemus of Rhodes says that according to "the Magi and the whole Aryan race", the good god and the evil demon, or, before them, according to others, light and darkness, had separated from the Universe, understood either as Cosmos or as Time. According to both sides, this dual constitution of higher powers is a consequence of the differentiation of an undifferentiated being, whereby one of them is ruled by Ohrmazd, while the other by Ahriman.[70] According to Ulemā i Islām, Zurvān first gives birth to fire and water, and only then to Ohrmazd and Ahriman.[71]

The interpretation of R. C. Zaehner that Ohrmazd and Ahriman were in fact created from these primary elements is quite logical.[72] Multiple sources and modern interpretations unequivocally point to the relations, and even the identification, of the sons of Zurvān with the corresponding elements: **Ohrmazd** with **light, fire, the male principle, life and good**, and **Ahriman** with **darkness, water, the female principle, death and evil**. Parts of this theme are also the Spirit of Light and the Spirit of Darkness, which, too, emerge from the undifferentiated One.[73] It seems probable that the pair of animals, which in the first image are leaning on Zurvān, do in fact symbolize these two principles (F8: 1), based on which the indicated elements and the two complementary characters i.e. Ohrmazd and Ahriman, were then created (F8: 6).

[70] "… call the whole intelligible and unitary universe either Space or Time from which a good god and an evil demon were separated out or, according to others, light and darkness before these. Both parties, however, suppose that this dual constitution of the higher [powers] is subsequent to and differentiated out of undifferentiated being (physis). One [of these higher powers] is ruled by Ohrmazd, the other by Ahriman." (Damascius, Dubitationes et Solutiones, 125 bis: Clemen, Fontes, p. 95); R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 447; R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 216, citation – 182).

[71] "In spite of all the grandeur that surrounded it (Time), there was no one to call it creator: for it had not brought forth creation. Then it created fire and water; and when it had brought them together, Ohrmazd came into existence, and simultaneously Time became Creator and Lord with regard to the creation it had brought forth." (Ulemā I Islām. 8, 9); R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*. 67, 72, 73, 77, 201, citation – 410; R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 215.

[72] " … fire and water were the first things created by Zurvan, and from which Ohrmazd and Ahriman were formed". (R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 228, 267, 268).

[73] "Ohrmazd and Ahriman, the Spirit of light and the Spirit of darkness, emerge from the simple, uncompounded One, the one taking on the qualities of heat and moisture which are the positive side of the elements, fire and water, and the source of life, the other receiving only the negative, cold and dryness, the ingredients of death." (R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 215-218, citation – 216).

The absence of the head i.e. face of Zurvān i.e. its replacement by the heads of his two sons can be understood in several ways (F8: 8). According to the first, it would be a case of **withdrawal of the primordial god** (deus otiosus) and **handing over of the cosmos to the rule of his sons**. According to the second, it would be a case of **illusory depersonalization** of the single pancosmic god i.e. his withdrawal from the visible (material i.e manifest) spheres of the universe's existence. This image could reflect the essential division of the single entity into two dual principles i.e. replacement of the concept of **monism** by the concept of dualism.[74] The presence of the winged torso in the third scene and the merging of the two figures into it (F8: 8) shows that the two sons of Zurvān (= embodiment and personalization of the dual principles) nevertheless, despite their seeming uniqueness, are **fused within the body of their father**, forming one **dynamic trinity** that may be suggested by the three small circles depicted between the two wings (F8: 7, 8). This image can be interpreted according to the Zurvanite ideas on the last phase of the existence of the universe when it, together with Zurvān's two sons and the principles they represent, and even with Zurvān of the long Dominion (as Zurvān's material hypostasis), will once again merge into the Infinite (timeless and spaceless) Zurvān (Zrvān Akarana).[75]

The three compositions can also be observed in the **reverse order** according to which the third composition would be initial, denoting the two oppositional principles (= Ohrmazd and Ahriman) (F8: 8) in whose complementarity the third one appears (F8: 6) - as neutral and unifying (= Zurvān), acquiring the status of a single conceptual entity that stands at the basis of the cosmos. Thereby, the two principles, depicted as humans (= separate entities with their own will and mind) (F8: 6, 8) transition to the status of animals (cosmic forces i.e. elements, without their own will and entity) (F8: 1) which function according to the will of the central character, denoted through the presence of his human head.

In the **semi-rosettes** i.e. **palmettes** by which the three compositions are complemented, one could seek the cosmological aspects of the same myth. Here we have in mind the identification of the **circular segment** of the palmettes depicted between the two wings with the solar disk that emerges or sets behind the horizon, while the leaflike elements - with the rays emanating from it (F8: 2, 5, 7). The connection of these palmettes with the circles formed on the chest of the central figure may denote the conception and birth of the sun and the light from the womb of Zurvān, manifested through the birth of Ohrmazd as the personification of light. The increase in the number of leaves on the palmettes from 3 in the first, through 4 in the second, and up to 5 in the third scene, may denote some aspects of growth i.e. expansion of the indicated element within this process. In the same context, one could also interpret the **lateral half-rosettes** at the abdomen of the side figures (F8: 6, 8). If the lower rosette encodes the **birth of the sun from the underworld**, then one of the lateral half-rosettes, together with the figure on which it is depicted, would represent the **progressive phase** of the solar cycle (morning and spring) identified with Ohrmazd, while the other - the **regressive one** (evening, winter) in relation to Ahriman (on the possible fertility-stimulating, and even phallic meaning of the palmettes see p. 674).

Some kind of relations between **singularity, duality** and **triality** are also indicated by the alternation of the sole protruding small circle on the chest of the central figure in the first and second composition (F8: 2, 5) with the three small circles from the third composition (F8: 7). We consider the central small circle to be a miniature i.e. reduced equivalent of the umbo with an anthropomorphic character from the Luristan discoid pins (F6; F7) or the medallion with a face on the Cincinnati plaque (F2) which, in our opinion, denotes the conception i.e. birth of one of Zurvān's sons. This can also be taken as a justification for the **childish appearance of the character from the umbo** (F8: 4), although in this pin he is not placed in any relationship with the central character of the three compositions, who should represent Zurvān.

[74] The questions on the priority between Zurvān and his sons (in a hierarchical and functional sense) are opened by V. E. Larichev with his co-authors, but on the occasion of other pictorial representations on the Luristan bronzes: V. E. Larichev (et al), *Zurvanite*, 91, 92.

[75] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 91, 96, 107, 236, 237; R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 207.

F9



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For now we do not have a more argued interpretation of the fourth scene from this pin (F8: 3, 4). Perhaps it is a ceremonial act that really took place in Luristan culture as an earthly i.e. ritual manifestation of the mentioned myth in which the seated character represents Zurvān at the moment when he hands one of his sons some symbolic object (scepter, barsom) as a symbol of the granting of power over the universe.[76]

- Luristan pins with an openwork head

The motifs discussed here can also be identified on the Luristan pins with a quadrangular or circular openwork head. Two very similar pins with a quadrangular openwork head (from the Royal Museum of Art and History in Brussels and from the Godard Collection) depict a central anthropomorphic figure accompanied by other symmetrically placed animals, whereby emerging from its neck and shoulders are two heads of animals, which also have one paw outstretched forward (F9: 1 – 4).[77] Mythical contents analogous to the previous ones can also be recognized on a not so usual round Luristan pin with an openwork head from the LACMA collection (F7: 5, 6).[78] Depicted in the circular space, enclosed by the two usual arched zoomorphic protomes, is a composition almost unique within the frames of these objects. In the middle stands a human figure, depicted quite realistically, in the orans posture, with clearly designated features of the female sex: a narrow waist and a wide skirt under which one can sense accentuated hips and legs slightly apart. Female traits are also present on the head, especially expressed through the long hairstyle with lateral curled locks. The female impression is indirectly reflected by the small human figure in a standing pose depicted in front of the skirt and chest, alluding to a representation of a **child in its mother's lap**. To the left and right of the central figure are two more, facing symmetrically towards it, with their arms raised as if reaching for its. From their backs protrude arched segments in the form of wings that end in animal heads. Depicted below the legs of the central figure, at the junction of the two encompassing protomes, is a zooanthropomorphic head which according to its shape and position is typical of these objects (compare with G46; see p. 547).

This last described composition possesses the key components of the previously discussed scenes: a central frontal character, depicted on whose torso is another anthropomorphic character, as well as two symmetrical lateral figures that flank it. The difference consists in the absence of male features on the face of the central figure and the presence on its body of a character represented not only through its head, but with its whole figure. Although with a certain degree of doubt, we think of the possibility that in this case, too, it could be a different version of the scene of the birth of Zurvān's sons, in which the androgynous god is depicted with more pronounced female features (F7: 5 compare with F4: 9).

5. Main iconographic elements of the scene and their meaning

a) Identification of the body and clothes of Zurvān with the sky

In the previous chapters we have referenced some facts that indicate the direct identification of Zurvān's body with the **celestial vault**. The pictorial examples we analyze in this chapter lead us to present this issue in more detail here.

In the written sources relating to the ancient Iranian religions (Zoroastrianism and Zurvanism), "the firmament is the ‘first body’, and ultimately it is fashioned from the Endless Light". In the Dēnkart there is direct equation between **Spihr/Spahr** and the **Wheel** i.e. the **firmament** and the **"first body"** united with the

[76] Although R. C. Zaehner, points that „the *barsom* represents priesthood rather than Sovereignty“ (R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 67, 68).
[77] *Disc-headed (Royal M.)* 2020, (IR.0705); E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 146 – Fig.121.
[78] *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020, (M.76.97.210).

F10



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Spirit of the Power of the Word: "From the stage the name of which is formation and expansion (proceeded) the first body united with the Spirit of the Power of the Word; and its Avestan name is the Wheel and it also has the name of Spahr and in the language of men it is called the firmament (spihr). In it, like embryos, are the luminaries, the Sun, Moon, and stars, all of the same origin."[79]

Included within these concepts is also the term **"Endless Form"**, which bears the meaning of a material that is compared to the **embryo** in the period between its conception and birth. After birth, it becomes Spihr - **firmament**, **"first body"** and **"the body of Time"**, by which the macrocosm is understood as a formed creation and as a prototype of man. Following the conclusions of R. C. Zaehner, from these texts it can be deduced that in the Zurvanite system, Spihr, the body of Zurvān, is equated with the celestial vault and the macrocosm and is analogous to the Gnostic πρώτος άνθρωπος ("first/macrocosmic man" - an equivalent of Purusha, Ymir and Gayomard) from which the cosmic elements are created.[80]

Unlike Eznik and other sources related to him, the Pahlavi sources speak not only of the birth of Ohrmazd and Ahriman from Infinite Time (Zurvān), but also of the birth from it of the firmament i.e. the cosmos (Spihr). It is in fact the "body of finite Time", "the embodiment of the finite Zurvān" created from Infinite Time. From Spihr - the Primal Matter did then derive all material creation.[81] In these concepts, **Infinite Time** also implies **Infinite Space**, hence the terms "sky", "firmament", "heavenly sphere" and even "Wheel" do not only bear a temporal meaning, denoting finite and visible time, but also have a **spatial connotation** as **finite space** created from the Infinite one (behind which again stands Zurvān).[82]

These terms do not denote some kind of empty spaces and dead objects, but an embodied "rational and living being, like its Maker, intelligent and productive". In the texts, the Spirit of the Sky is compared to a man who "thinks, speaks, acts, knows, abundantly creates and recognizes." The things contained within the Heavenly Sphere (another name for Spihr in the Bundahishn) are compared to the bodily organs contained within the human body. It is a rational being in the form of a man - a **cosmic Man**. Hence the sky or the heavenly sphere is in fact a prototype of man and his body, but also a burden because, on the one hand, as much as it serves him for defense against the external enemy, on the other hand, it just as much enables that enemy to penetrate into man through that same body and attack him from within.[83]

Of the pictorial representations, the equation between the celestial vault and the human body is best presented by the medieval plaques from Velestino (F4: 7; F11: 2). Although this is an example significantly distant from the Luristan ones in both time and space, the high level of similarity in relation to them gives us the right to include it in our studies as a late, but exceptionally original and consistent remnant of the older traditions. As we have seen, on the edges of the torso of the depicted figure, which also looks like lavish

[79] (*Dēnkart.* Madan, 349, 1 i-p, 350, 1. IO; Sanjana, VIII, p. 387, 388); R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 111, 112, 369-374.

[80] "The material 'Endless Form' is here conceived of as an embryo proceeding from conception to birth. When born this Endless Form becomes Spihr, the firmament, here very plainly conceived of as the macrocosm, the formed creation and the prototype of man. Thus following up a different line of evidence we arrive at the conclusion we have already reached once before. In the Zervanite system Spihr, the body of Zurvān, is the macrocosm or the equivalent of the "protos anthropos" of the Gnostics. From it proceed the elements." (R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 128, 267; R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 225, 250).

[81] "For whereas Eznik and the sources allied to him tell us only of the birth of Ohrmazd and Ahriman from Time, the Pahlavï sources tell us of the birth of the Cosmos (Spihr) which is the body of finite Time from the Infinite (pp. i n ff.). Material creation evolves from this. Spihr is Primal Matter: from it derives the 'first form', the four elements; thence the 'second form' or the mixing of the primary properties, and finally the 'third form', Man and animals, that is organic life. With the advent of the 'third form' we have the fully developed Cosmos which exists for twelve thousand years when the whole is taken up into the 'last form' or 'final body' (ton ipasën) wrhich is in turn absorbed into the Infinite." (R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 266, 267; R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 222, 225, 250).

[82] R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 251.

[83] R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 258, 259. In a summarized form, the observations expressed in the previous paragraphs are also presented by I. L. Krupnik (И. Л. Крупник, *Зурванизм*, II.2 [56-62]; II.3 [68]; III.2 [99, 106]).

clothes, are formed four radiant rosettes for which we have already expressed the view that they should have denoted the phases of the movement of the sun along the celestial vault. In this context, its head, and consequently also the head of the central character from the analogous Luristan depictions could be equated with the dominant phases of the solar cycles: the midday sun, summer and the summer solstice. These rosettes fit perfectly with the metaphor of the **firmament as "visible time" and as "body of time"**. Although they more directly correspond to Zurvān of the long Dominion (the embodied Cosmos limited in a temporal and spatial sense), they could also indirectly evoke Zurvān Akarana (Infinite Time). Observed as solar phases, along with the central medallion or head, they, understood in a literal sense, correspond to the aforementioned Gnostic-Manichaean "Primal Man" and his **"armour consisting of 5 lights"**, which is intended for combat against the evil principle.[84]

We have seen that a similar arrangement can also be identified on the Slavic and Germanic two-plated bow fibulae (F3: 7, 9; F4: 1 – 3; F11: 1, 3). On the presented discoid pin from LACMA, these phases would be encoded through the mentioned palmettes or half-rosettes depicted under the wings of the central character (= sunrise, winter solstice, beginning of the new year) (F8: 2, 5, 7) and at the abdomen of the lateral figures (= morning or spring and evening or autumn) (F8: 6, 8). On other Luristan depictions these meanings would be borne by the rosettes placed next to the figures (F11: 5) or the half-rosettes that protrude from the encompassing annular frame of the pins' disk (F11: 7). The different sizes of these rosettes and their combination with floral motifs could also encode the rising and setting of the sun or the progressive and regressive phases of its cycles. Finally, the celestial meaning of the clothing of these figures would also be indicated by the solar nature of the character from the umbo of the discoid pins, denoted through rays (F11: 8) or similar segments that resemble them (F7: 1, 4). Accordingly, the rosettes from the mentioned images, and especially those on the Velestino plaques, identify the figure on which they are depicted as **Finite Time**, understood in its eonic proportions (as the "Cosmic Year") or as the personification of one of the earthly temporal cycles (earthly day, month or year) (F3: 8; F4: 7). Among the others, it could also be the "Spirit of the Year" - a form that time acquires after leaving eternity.[85]

These images also coincide with the **"Fortune of the Dēn"** depicted as the **star-studded girdle** of the firmament (Spihr), which functions as a barrier around the sky that the forces of evil cannot cross.[86]

It is theoretically possible that the four rosettes on the Velestino plaques, with or without the head of the depicted figure, also represent the **planets** placed in the sky. However, such an interpretation does not seem probable to us because their number does not correspond to the number of planets (which in the ancient epochs were 7 in number). The second reason is that in the Iranian religions these celestial bodies bore negative symbolism due to their "chaotic movement" which, unlike the movement of the stars, was not regular i.e. predictable. Therefore, they would correspond more to Ahriman than to Zurvān, his other hypostases, as well as to Ohrmazd.[87]

In previous chapters we have pointed out that the **cloak** worn by the discussed figures from the Luristan bronzes, and especially those from the Cincinnati relief and the Velestino plaques, could also denote the firmament. In the written sources that refer to Iranian culture, one can also trace the **identification of the sky with the clothing** of certain mythical characters who by nature and status are close to or in certain relations with Zurvān. In them it is presented as a lavish garment, whose shiny ornaments represent the celestial elements (sun, moon, stars, rainbow...). Here is how this identification is presented in the Avesta:

[84] M. Elijade, *Istorija* II, 305; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 391.

[85] "With the chanting of the Ahura Vairya time passes finally out of aeveternity in the shape of the 'Spirit o f the Year', and by means of it both creations are set in motion; and the full splendour of all that Ohrmazd had done in those first three thousand years stands revealed." (R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 257).

[86] "The 'Fortune of the Dēn` is depicted as the star-studded girdle of the firmament (Spihr), the barrier beyond which the powers of evil cannot pass." (R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 155, 156, 210; R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 93).

[87] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 152.

F11



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"It (the sky) looks like a palace, that stands built of a heavenly substance, firmly established, with ends that lie afar, shining in its body of ruby over the three-thirds (of the earth); it is like a garment inlaid with stars, made of a heavenly substance, that Mazda puts on, along with Mithra and Rashnu and Spenta-Armaiti, and on no side can the eye perceive the end of it".[88] The color and other components of the appearance of these garments, among other things, also reflect the **complementary aspects of the Sky**. Thus, the **dark blue garment is worn by Spihr** (the firmament and body of Zurvān of the long Dominion), symbolizing the **night sky**.[89] Similar, but also seemingly complementary to it is the **shining white garment of Ohrmazd**, behind which, of course, is the **light of the day sky**. There is also **Ahriman's garment**, which with its black and ash-like color is in contrast to the previous two.[90] Perhaps most corresponding to the depictions from Cincinnati and Velestino is the **garment of Vay** i.e. Spihr, with its red and color of wine, adorned with all kinds of ornaments of silver, gold and precious stones.[91] Other sources (Zātspram; Dēnkart) also mention some kind of garment that Time gives to Ahriman, as well as Ohrmazd to the god Vāy and the demon Varan or to the planets Jupiter and Venus. These garments, in addition to their appearance, also have corresponding actional powers appropriate to the nature of their wearer, which is why they are also named as weapons.[92] In the Greater Bundahishn it is described how the Spirit of the Sky wears the (material) sky, analogous to the valiant warrior who dons the **military armour** that will secure him victory over the enemy (meaning Ahriman). Incidentally, in some cases, the portrayal of this armour in the form of an iron coat of mail corresponds to the mythical action in which Ohrmazd creates the sky from steel in the shape of an egg.[93]

As parallels to this mythologem, one could also reference other **examples outside of ancient Iranian culture**. Such garments, equated with the sky, have the Akkadian Marduk, the Hellenic Artemis of Ephesus and the Roman Jupiter. The cloaks of shamans, priests and kings are also adorned in accordance with the sky and its elements. In Indian tradition, the relation ***garments = sky*** is reflected in the name of a Jain sect, called "sky-clad" (Digambara), because they did not wear clothes (i.e. they were dressed "in space" i.e. "in the four corners of the world"). In the medieval literary work "The Tiberian Sea", which is thought to reflect the cosmogonic notions of the Bogomils, the sun is created from the interior of the "Lord's shirt/cassock" (while the moon - from his face). Clothing, equated with the sky and celestial bodies, also appears in the oral forms of South Slavic folk literature.[94] An ancient Mexican myth offers us an exceptionally corresponding parallel to the figure from Luristan and especially to the one from Velestino, despite its cultural and geographical distance from the areas to which they belong. It tells us about the supreme god *("Bishop above all"*), who resides above the nine-tired heavens, in "the place of duality" (Ōmeyōcān). He has the functions of life-giver, guardian of the universe and manager of the movement of the moon and stars. For us, in this case it is

[88] (Frawardin Yasht. I. 3.)

[89] "From Time the firmament was fashioned, the body of Zurvän of the long Dominion, the good destiny of the gods (Signs of the Zodiac): he donned a dark blue garment and it had the stamp of the husbandmen …" (Greater Bundahishn, Ch. III); R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 124, citation – 333.

[90] (Greater Bundahishn, Ch. III); R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*,123, 124, 333, 334, 351, 377, 378.

[91] " … among garments in the red and winecoloured garment, adorned with all kinds of ornament, with silver and gold, chalcedony, and shining ruby;": *Denkart* (Madan, 203. 16-206. 23); R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 333, citation – 378.

[92] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*,118-125; R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 258, 265.

[93] (Greater Bundahishn 18.12-19.2); R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 258.

[94] In general on this mythologem and specifically on Marduk and Artemis: Н. В. Брагинская, *Небо*, 208; Dž. K. Kuper, *Ilustrovana*, 115; on Jupiter: Ž. Dimezil, *Drevna rimska*, 129, 130; on the Indian examples: У. Норман Браун, *Индийская*, 328; on the medieval example: И. Георгиева, *Българска*, 130, 131 (in the "Razumnik", another medieval work, it is said that the stars were created from the flesh of God); on the oral South Slavic examples: А. Лома, *Пракосово*, 247, 248; among the Ugro-Finns: В. Петрухин, *Мифы*, 360; among the North Asian peoples: А. Ф. Анисимов, *Космологические*, 10, 89, 90; on the shamanic garments: M. Elijade, *Šamanizam*, 125-131, 146-148; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 393, 394.

interesting that these celestial bodies in the myth are equated with **"the dress that dons the feminine essence of this god."** [95] As we can see, these functions are directly related to the lavish cloak of the hermaphroditic Zurvān and especially that of the celestial god from the Velestino plaques, whose "female essence" is explicitly depicted through the vulva (F3: 8; F4: 7 – leaf-shaped motif below the central medallion).

b) Identification of the wings of Zurvān with his body and with the sky

On most of the elaborated Luristan pictorial representations identified with Zurvān, his torso is complemented by wings. In some cases they are depicted next to the torso (F10: 1, 3 – 6; F6: 5), while in others on the torso itself (F10: 2). In that sense, the presence of this element on the medieval examples from Velestino is very indicative, given their much later dating (F3: 8; F4: 7). The three examples on the discoid pin from LACMA are interesting in that their torso is actually made up only of the pair of wings, without legs, arms and any other elements of the body, except for the head (F12: 1 – 3 compare with 4 and 5). This indicates the status of this motif, which is not at all some secondary attribute that complements the body, but a fundamental element that actually defines the depicted character **not as a "human with wings"**, but more as a **"bird with a human head"**. These avian features are with greater attention addressed by Yu. A. Rapoport, who, analyzing a later archaeological find, concludes that such an appearance is aimed at equating the there-depicted character with the sky. In support of this, he references verses from the Avesta in which the sky that from above and from all sides encompasses the earth is identified with the mythical bird that in the same way encompasses the egg. There are also the quotations from the Farvardin Yasht in which, one after the other, come the comparisons of the sky with the bird and with the garments of Ahura Mazda. The author also presents parallels from Hindu culture ("Matsya Purāṇa") in which an analogous cosmic bird (goose) appears as the embodiment of the supreme deity of the universe, which would be another argument in favor of the relations between our images and Zurvān.[96]

Among the illustrative material presented in the mentioned article by Yu. A. Rapoport, as a parallel, in addition to other analogies named as "grylles", there is also one quite interesting example (F12: 7) which on the one hand corresponds to the Luristan representations of Zurvān, but on the other hand points to a different iconographic variant of theirs in which the central character is depicted not as a human with wings but as a bird.[97] Two elements connect this depiction with the Luristan examples. First it is the central face, depicted frontally, which occupies the torso of the bird - analogous to the face from the medallion of the Cincinnati figure (F12: 4 compare with 7) or from the umbo of the Luristan discoid pins (F6; F7). The second element is the two lateral faces in profile that are also present on the mentioned objects. We do not know of any other corresponding parallels that would be close to the Luristan or wider Iranian complex, but, on the other hand, many examples with analogous iconography can be found in the circle of **medieval metal objects from the area of the Finno-Ugric populations** located along the Kama River and the regions east of the Ural Massif.

They represent **metal amulets** shaped in the form of a bird, shown from the front, on the abdomen of which is a human face depicted frontally (F12: 10, 11 compare with 4). It is even more interesting that in numerous examples the bird is depicted with three heads, which corresponds to the central and the two lateral characters from the Luristan examples (F12: 12, 13 compare with 4 and with F10: 6, 7).[98] We are encouraged in these comparisons by the older paradigms of these objects (from the same area, with engraved anthropomorphic lateral figures) which, with their pronounced cultic character and dating to the Early Iron

[95] М. Леон-Портилья, *Мифология*, 443.
[96] Ю. А. Рапопорт, *Космогонический*, 61-64, 68.
[97] Ю. А. Рапопорт, *Космогонический*, 59 (Рис 11: г). From what is presented it is not clear whether this is a Roman object from the Mediterranean or an older Iranian prototype from the Sassanid period.
[98] Л. С. Грибова, *Пермский*; Т.I: 2; Т.VI: 1, 1а, 2, 2а, 4; В. В. Седов, *Финно – угры*, Т. LVI: 7, 8; Т. LX: 13; Т. LXV: 20; Т. LXXVIII: 33; Т. XCVIII: 11, 14, 19, 20, 21; *Птицы* 2020.

F12

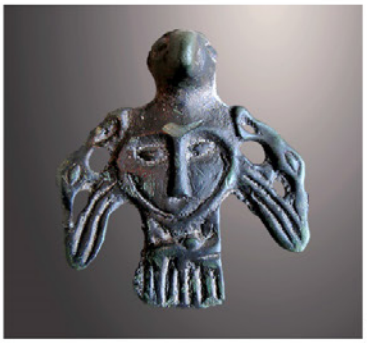

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Age (first half of the 1st millennium BCE), come close to the Luristan bronzes not only from an iconographic, but also from a chronological aspect (F12: 8; a somewhat younger specimen – F22: 1).[99] Without going into the various previous interpretations of the iconography of these objects, we would point to the already mentioned theories about the share of Iranian (or older Indo-Aryan or Indo-Iranian) influences in their genesis.[100] In support of this we would also point to some other Iranian or Indo-Iranian components present in the culture of the Finno-Ugric populations and the wider Siberian region, among which the traditions specifically connected to the cult of Zurvān are also apostrophized.[101] In the list of paradigms for these objects one can also include mythical characters from **ancient Mediterranean traditions** (culture of the Scythians, Illyrians) similar to the Hellenic winged Medusa (example F12: 6).[102] The here-suggested relations with the Luristan bronzes point to a different possibility, according to which one would seek in them common paradigms for both the Mediterranean and Finno-Ugric traditions. We could illustrate this through the scene of a vase from Vulci, which on a compositional level can stand side by side with our tripartite Luristan scenes with the winged Zurvān and his sons (F12: 9). The fact that in this specific case the scene is identified with the mythical bird Harpy that abducts two boys, could be understood as a secondary reconceptualization of an older mythical image close in meaning to the ones presented here.[103] The following two examples indicate the more intense presence in Etruscan culture of mythical characters quite similar to the presumed "Luristan Zurvān". The first example is an anthropomorphic figure painted on an early antique amphora from the Archaeological Museum of Florence, with four wings, winged shoes and the particularly important for us radial medallion in the middle of the torso (F9: 7). The same features are also borne by the bronze votive plaques produced in the circle of the Phoenician workshops that are considered a possible inspirer of the indicated and other corresponding Etruscan examples (F9: 6).[104] Without denying the proposed solar interpretations of the last two figures, we think that their relations with the Luristan examples (compare with F5: 2; F6; F7) leave open the possibility that it is a character that represents the entire sky, which would mean that the central radial disk should not determine his basic nature, but only denote the position of the solar disk in the middle of the sky. The proposed relations with the Luristan paradigms leave open the possibility that these characters arose as a result of direct Eastern influences (not only pictorial i.e. artisanal but also religious ones) realized without Phoenician mediation.

As the closest analogies in regards to this feature, one can take the depictions of **cherubim** and **seraphim** as shown in Byzantine and Western European iconography, consisting only of a human head and 4 or 6 avian wings (F14: 3, 4, 5 compare with 1, 2). Three elements of their depiction could point to direct or indirect genetic links with Zurvān. First of all, it is the **thousand eyes** scattered on their bodies, which correspond to Zurvān portrayed as the god of Time (and of Death) **from whose vigilance nothing escapes** (F14: 4, 5).[105] The second element is the **circles** regularly arranged on their wings, which interfere with the celestial bodies around Zurvān (F14: 3 compare with 1). The third element is the **human face depicted on the abdomen**, which corresponds to the face of one of Zurvān's sons who is located inside his womb or of Ahriman who tears it and comes out of it (F14: 3 compare with F6; F7).

c) Head i.e. Face on the torso of Zurvān

We have seen that on the discoid pins, the face of Zurvān is combined with a large head depicted on the umbo, which covers the entire torso (F10: 6, 7; F6: 1 – 5). In some cases this results in the absence of all

[99] On these older examples from the Iron Age: Ю. П. Чемякин, С. В. Кузьминых, *Металлические*.
[100] Г. М. Бонгард-Левин, Э. А. Грантовский, *От Скифии*, 130-133.
[101] On such influences at the level of language: Е. А. Хелимский, *Южные*; on the influences related to Zurvān: M. Waida, *Some remarks*; И. Л. Крупник, *Зурванизм*, 83.
[102] Г. М. Бонгард-Левин, Э. А. Грантовский, *От Скифии*, 132-133; Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 341-347.
[103] On the scene and the mythical character Harpy: V. Bérard, *Harpya*, 15 (Fig. 3709).
[104] On the objects, their primarily Phoenician genesis and solar meaning: I. Krauskopf, *Ex Oriente Sol*, 1265 – Fig. 3.
[105] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 239-242.

other parts of his body in the depiction (F7: 1 – 4). It occurs in anthropomorphic, zoo-anthropomorphic and zoomorphic variants, often surrounded by a radiant bordure (especially along the lower edge) which in some cases also acquires a phytomorphic appearance (F6: 1 – 5; F7: 1 – 4). As an argument in support of the solar meaning of this head, examples of such pins can be taken in which the solar iconography is quite transparent (C9: 1, 2), even with unexpected parallels from the Apennine Peninsula (C9: 3). As we have seen, in some examples one can trace the alternation of this central head not with the figure of Zurvān, but with the motif of the **Cosmic Tree**, most probably present in this context as **one of the epiphanies of the macrocosmic Zurvān** (B33: 1, 2; B41: 1, 2 compare with F27: 7).[106] The anthropomorphic head depicted in the middle or at the top of its trunk can bear two mutually interwoven meanings. Taking into account the already presented solar interpretations of this motif and the axial meaning of the Cosmic Tree, the head could represent the **personalized solar disk** i.e. the face of the **deified sun** located in the middle of the sky. If the sun is understood as an epiphany of light, then this same element could also represent the **birth of Ohrmazd** (as embodied light) from the body of his father, this time depicted as the Cosmic Tree or Tree of Life.

The **leonine features** of this head could at the same time function as a positive and as a negative argument in regards to the referenced solar interpretations (F6: 1 – 5). The positive aspect would consist in the already indicated **solar symbolism of the lion**, and in this case more specifically - of its head, based on the warm yellow, orange or reddish color of its fur and the identification of the lion's **mane** with the **rays** that surround the solar disk. The negative one, on the other hand, would be based on the Iranian and wider Middle Eastern and Mediterranean traditions, according to which the **lion's head** often appears as a **characteristic of Ahriman** (see pp. 403, 557, 558).

In this sense, of particular interest to our study are the illustrations from the Russian Old Ritualist manuscripts depicting the **"father of sins"** (F27: 4, 8).[107] He is shown as a naked bearded man who sits on a throne surrounded by numerous anthropomorphic figures as personifications of specific sins. In his lap he holds one such figure ("bes" i.e. demon/devil) whose head is surrounded by a motif which contains the two above mentioned paradigms that do not have to be mutually exclusive - the lion's mane and the flaming (solar) rays. As in the previous case (F27: 7) it could be an ancient image that entered Christianity through the illustrations of esoteric or heretical teachings and their manuscriptal works. At the basis of this image could be the figure of **Zurvān** (with an important place in these teachings) **who in his lap holds one of his sons**. If we treat the indicated motif as a lion's mane, he would be Ahriman (leontocephalus),[108] and if we prefer the solar rays, he would correspond more to the light-bearing Ohrmazd. For this image one can also present a heretical-pagan Slavic textual paradigm. We are speaking of the Slavic translation i.e. adaptation of a passage from the "Chronicle of the World" by John Malalas in which it is said that after Svarog's reign over the world, the new ruler becomes "The Sun-Emperor, son of Svarog i.e. Dazhbog". In our previous studies, as a paradigm of this adaptation, we have taken precisely the myth of the birth of Zurvan's sons, which in Slavic culture could have arrived through the Iranian or Indo-Aryan components involved in the ethnogenesis of the Slavs, or through the influence of dualistic teachings (Manichaeism, Messalianism) on their spiritual culture.[109] We will address this issue once again in one of the following sub-chapters when comparing the Luristan depictions with the anthropomorphic figure with a lion's head (leontocephalus) present within the frames of several oriental cults from the ancient period – Mithraism, Gnosticism, Manichaeism (see. p. 403).

[106] G. M. D'Erme, *The Cappella*, 413, 414.

[107] Д. Антонов, М. Майзульс, *Анатомия*, 215, 217 – Рис. 3, 4.

[108] И. Л. Крупник, *Зурванизм*, 55; J. Duchesne-Guillemin, *Ahriman*, 192.

[109] On these components in the ethnogenesis of the Slavs: В. В. Седов, *Славяне в древности*, 277-279; В. В. Седов, *Славяне в раннем*, 80-84; О. Н. Трубачев, *Этногенез (2003)*, 49-53; А. Лома, *Неки славистички*; Z. Vinski, *Uz problematiku*; Н. Чаусидис, *Дуалистички*, 103-105; in the Slavic pagan religion: В. Н. Топоров, *Об иранском*; Д. М. Дудко, *Иранские*; C. L. Borissoff, *Non-Iranian*; Н. Чаусидис, *Дуалистички*, 141-171.

The several examples from the previous paragraphs raise questions about the genesis and original meaning of a pictorial motif quite widespread in European art of the medieval and modern period. It is the figure (mainly anthropomorphic, but with demonic features) with a **human or animal face** (not rarely with a protruding tongue) depicted **on the abdomen**, in the **area of the genitals** or on the **entire torso**. For us it is important that these additional faces are often depicted in the area of the shoulders and knees, as well as on the head itself (in the form of a three-headed or three-faced figure). The oldest such medieval examples are linked to Western Europe and date back to the 12th century, from where, according to scholars, they would spread throughout Europe in the following centuries, including the regions of the Byzantine cultural circle (example F14: 9 compare with 6 and with G41: 7 – 9). The history of these hybrid characters (**grylles, blemmae**) is traced back to the ancient period, through numerous examples executed mainly on Roman gems and amulets, but also present in written sources (Pliny the Elder).[110] However, the mentioned analogies do not offer essential arguments in support of revealing the meaning of these figures and the reasons i.e. the justification for their unusual appearance. This is due to the fact that they represent much older motifs whose original meaning was completely forgotten since Roman culture.

We think that far more appropriate answers to the indicated questions can be given by the Luristan bronzes presented in this chapter, together with the corresponding interpretations and comparative material. The spatial and temporal bridging between the Middle East from the first centuries of the 1st millennium BCE and Christian Europe from the High Middle Ages can be realized through the corresponding motifs on the presented early medieval jewelry (Germanic and Slavic fibulae) that was constituted on the very eastern edges of Europe where Eastern (and specifically Iranian and Indo-Aryan) influences were always strong and continuous. This developmental line provides an appropriate justification for the demonization of these characters within the frames of Christianity, given that in the cultures from which they were appropriated (from the Iranian, Slavic, and Germanic circles, as well as from the circle of the dualistic heretical teachings) they represented the main mythical characters and deities.

The following examples give indications that these depictions were not present in Europe only as a pictorial motif void of its original mythical, symbolic and religious meaning. In the first case it is the already mentioned description of the idol of the West Slavic god **Porenutius** (perhaps originally **Piorunic**) recorded by Saxo Grammaticus. It was located in **Charenza on the island of Rügen**, and had a head with four faces and another, depicted in the chest area.[111] We also have a similar concept of multiplication and organization of heads on the already presented idol from **Sankt Martin am Silberberg** in Austria (F27: 9), which can be understood as a result of compressing the mentioned elements in a two-dimensional cultic object reduced only to the head of the depicted god. Thereby, the four faces, which according to the original paradigm were probably supposed to be oriented towards the four corners of the world, in this case are reduced to three, one of which is the main one, the two lateral ones are reduced in size and depicted on its cheeks, while the fourth one is omitted because in the original it was located on its back side and was therefore invisible. As a result of this, the fifth head, located on the chest of the god, was appropriately moved to the lowest point of the monument, represented here through the neck. Hence, we do not treat as coincidental the presence of a similar arrangement on a Luristan standard of the type "idols with protomes" (F27: 6 compare with 9, the whole standard: C19: 2).

d) A pair of animal protomes or human busts above the shoulders of Zurvān

On most of the Luristan compositions presented so far, the paired protomes and busts on the shoulders of the central character are symmetrical and have the same appearance (F5 – F10). Only on the pin from

[110] J. Baltrušaitis, *Fantastični*, 10-46 and further; Д. И. Антонов, М. Р. Майзульс, *Демоны*, 150-154, 246, examples: 39 (Илл. 8), 145 (Илл. 37), 184, 208, 209 (Илл. 47), 211 (Илл. 48), 241, 244, 246, 299, 328, 329.
[111] L. Leže, *Slovenska*, 64; А. Гейщор, *Митология*, 121.

F13



LACMA it seems that they have different faces (F8: 6). Among the presented analogies, their difference is most evident in the image from the Russian miscellany where the head of one character has anthropomorphic, while of the other - animal features (F4: 6). The equivalence of these elements does not correspond to the written sources in which the **dissimilarity of the sons of Zurvān** is clearly emphasized, and not only at the level of their character i.e. nature, but also their external appearance. Thus, in contrast to Ohrmazd, Ahriman is portrayed as **dark and smelly**, whereby we think that the second feature could be in favor of his **animal appearance**, especially if we take into account the indications that he had a **leonine head**.[112]

Given that the protomes and busts depicted on the shoulders are one of the key iconographic elements of the compositions discussed in this chapter, and also more broadly of the Luristan bronzes, we decided to dedicate more attention to them in one of the following sub-chapters (p. 406).

e) Mithraic, Gnostic and Manichaean iconographic parallels

A significant contribution to the identification of the images presented here is given by the cultic sculpture formed within the frames of some oriental cults of Late Antiquity, which in academic circles is mainly associated with Mithraism, Gnosticism and Manichaeism. Thereby, especially important are the statues and reliefs where the main figure depicts the creator of the universe (F13). Although according to the dominant interpretations it represents **Zurvān** or **Aeon**, some researchers, accepting the indicated function, think that it nevertheless depicts **Ahriman** who in the myths is the real and immediate creator of the material world.[113] Ultimately, this dilemma is irrelevant if Ahriman is treated as an epiphany of Zurvān i.e. as a manifestation of one of his aspects.

In these comparisons we include several statues and reliefs that are mainly associated with the **Mithraic cult**. The first statue (from the museum in Mérida) shows an anthropomorphic male figure, entwined by a snake, with a leonine head depicted on its chest (F13: 5).[114] If we take into account the usual identification of the figures of such type as Aeon or Zurvān, this specific leonine head could depict Ahriman being born by tearing his father's chest apart. The position of the leonine head interferes with the above-presented Luristan scenes, especially those of the discoid pins where the umbo that covers the torso of the central anthropomorphic figure depicts a character with the features of a lion (F13: 1; F6: 1 – 5).

The second statue (from Villa Barberini) also depicts a male character, but this time winged and with his own leonine head, accompanied by a pair of snakes and also with a few more elements of great interest to us (F13: 8, 9).[115] First of all, these are the **additional leonine heads**, one of which is depicted **on the abdomen** and two **on the knees**. Although based on the above mentioned interpretations it would be more likely that this figure represented Ahriman than Zurvān, the additional leonine heads point to the opposite. They could also be related to the birth of Zurvān's sons, most probably as a remnant to some older paradigm that depicted Zurvān. The placement of the first head at the abdomen may encode the rupture of Zurvān's womb by Ahriman, while the presence of the other two - on the knees, may be associated with the birth of Ohrmazd. This scene most directly interferes with one of the Luristan "columnar figurines" where, in addition to the stylized head at the abdomen, a realistic human head is also depicted on the knees of the main character (F14: 11 compare with 10).

In both cases, the presence of **heads at the knees** may indicate the **birth of the legitimate heir of Zurvān**, for which as an argument one could present the custom of accepting the newborn by the father, recorded in ancient sources. Namely, in traditional patriarchal cultures, the mother was treated only as the biological creator of the newborn, whereby the birth was considered only as an act of its introduction into the

[112] И. Л. Крупник, *Зурванизм*, 53, 55; J. Duchesne-Guillemin, *Ahriman*, 192.
[113] И. Л. Крупник, *Зурванизм*, 54, 55; J. Duchesne-Guillemin, *Ahriman*.
[114] M. J. Vermaseren, *Corpus*, 273, Fig. 211 – Mon. 777 (Museum Merida).
[115] M. J. Vermaseren, *Corpus*, 147, 148, Fig. 89; Fig. 90 – Mon. 326.

F14



spheres of the natural. The definite constitution of the child as a cultural and social being was realized by the father so that, after its birth, **he would put it on his knees**, legitimizing it as his **own child** and as a **member of his family and kin** (*γεγονότα ορθώς* - "firstborn", **originated from the "knee" of their parents**). These phenomena are based on the primordial symbolic identification between the genitals and human legs, and within that framework also of the thighs and knees, especially those of the man. Hence, in numerous myths, some characters are literally conceived on the knee or in the thigh of their parents (especially of the fathers) and are born from there, whereby it is obvious that these parts of the leg bore the meaning of vulva and uterus, and in certain contexts also of a phallus, which is manifested by their naming with words that have the same root.[116] As a visual illustration of this phenomenon one can take a category of **ancient greaves** whose upper part (which rests on the knee) is shaped in the form of a human head, which implies the identification of the whole greave (and the lower leg on which it rests) with the body of some kind of anthropomorphic or a hybrid creature (F14: 7, 8).[117] This motif, probably with a forgotten original meaning, also passed into European medieval miniatures (F14: 9), and is also present in archaic cultures outside the "Old World".[118] Its roots can be traced back to the Eneolithic, through an example of a ceramic female figurine from Macedonia, on whose protruding knees, as it seems, are depicted strongly stylized anthropomorphic heads (C25: 6 compare with 3 and with F14: 7 – 11).[119]

The second interesting element for us in the statue from Villa Barberini is the **eye, depicted on the chest of the main figure** (F13: 8, 9). If we take into account that in traditional cultures this organ often appears as a **symbol of light**, we can assume that in this case, too, we could treat it as an equivalent of the leonine head and a symbol of the **birth of Ohrmazd as an incarnation of light**.[120] This element can also be related to Zurvān if we take into account that in some sources he was portrayed with three eyes.[121] Such emphasization corresponds to his identification with **time**, from whom no one has managed to escape alive. As we have seen, the multiplicated eyes are scattered throughout the winged body of the cherubim and the seraphim, which is quite similar to that of Zurvān (F14: 4, 5). The third eye could symbolize the power of the person who possesses it to perceive the supraphysical i.e. what is unreachable to the ordinary eyes.[122] In this context, the presence of that third eye on the chest (instead at its real place) may figure as a symbol of the ability to perceive spiritual aspects through the heart and soul located there.

The third significant element of this statue is **the tricephality**, in this case present through the **three-headed hound** depicted next to the legs (with the heads of a dog, lion and ram – F13: 8, 9). On some reliefs depicting Aeon or Zurvān entwined by a snake, a leonine head is again present on the abdomen, but this time combined with two other animal heads protruding from the loins (F13: 3; F24: 1).[123] Observed together, they could symbolize the **birth of Ahriman from the womb of Zurvān**, this time depicted as a **three-headed mythical creature**. This scene would best correspond to those variants of the "idols with protomes" where below the main character with spread legs, shaped in the form of zoomorphic protomes, there is a zooanthropomorphic figure with one human and two animal heads that is being born (example F13: 4; F20).

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[116] Р. Онианс, *На коленях*, 183-194, also see 295-301; examples: И. Маразов, *Мистериите*, 152, 154, 290-302; И. Маразов, *Парадните*, 10; И. Маразов, *Бащи*, 37-40; М. Попко, *Митология*, 135, 167.

[117] Examples (mainly Thracian) and various interpretations: И. Маразов, *Парадните*, 10, 11, 24-30, 46, 49; D. Boteva, *The Greaves*.

[118] Examples: J. Baltrušaitis, *Fantastični*, 149, 150; F. Eber-Stevens, *Stara*, comparative table III: 166-181; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 413, 414 (Д4: 11, 12).

[119] On the figurine (without the indicated interpretation): И. Атанасова, *Антропоморфна*, 144, 145 – Сл. 14.

[120] On the meanings of the eye (the luminous, but also the chthonic one, often with a negative meaning): A. M. Potts, *The World's*; Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 534-537; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 189, 190, 275, 276, 280, 281, 291, 312, 336, 402, 403.

[121] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 230, 231 (*Rivayat, Z 36*), 408, 409 (Zand-Avesta) – seven faces, with three eyes each.

[122] D. M. Srinivasan, *Many Heads*, 173-175.

[123] M. J. Vermaseren, *Corpus*, 253, 254, Fig. 197 – Mon. 695 (Museum Modena).

Taking into account the pronounced macrocosmic nature of the main figure from the last and previous Mithraic depictions, these multiplicated heads, along with those on the abdomen and knees, could also indicate the phases of the movement of the (personalized) sun through the universe (F14: 10 compare with 1, 3, 9).

The next interesting element for us is the **four arms** on the second of the presented statues (F13: 8, 9). We have seen that it appears as a feature of the central character from some standards (F13: 7; E7: 7), probably as a symbol of his dual nature, of his emphasized power and authority over various zones and aspects of the universe (compare with E8; see p. 327).

The fourth statue that we present is fragmented and depicts the lower part of a zooanthropomorphic figure (defined as "Gigant"), whose **legs have the form of serpentine protomes** (F13: 6).[124] This element corresponds well to the above mentioned figure from the "idols with protomes" depicted with spread legs that are metamorphosed into animal protomes (originally with the function of a birth-giving goddess), especially if we take into account our assumptions that it could represent the **female** i.e. **maternal aspect of Zurvān** (compare F13: 2 with 6, with D20 and D23; see pp. 303, 307).

6. Anthropomorphic character with a pair of zoomorphic protomes or a pair of additional human busts on the shoulders

Finally, in this place, came the turn to discuss this iconographic representation, announced several times in the previous chapters. The examples presented above have shown that the anthropomorphic character with an additional human face on his chest was often depicted with a pair of symmetrical animal protomes or human busts on the shoulders (F6; F7; F9; F10). This is one of the key iconographic elements without which the interpretation of the mythical image of the birth of Zurvān's sons could not be completed. Therefore, in this sub-chapter we will try to elaborate in detail its presence on the Luristan bronzes, as a basis for the identification of the indicated mythical image on the standards as well. We think that the alternation of the zoomorphic protomes on the shoulders with anthropomorphic busts, in the same iconographic arrangement, on the same type of objects, and also indirectly on one and the same specimen (the pin from LACMA – F8), is a clear indicator that these are variants of the same mythical image, which encode specific aspects of some unified mythical action. Therefore, we decided to analyze both variants in parallel.

a) Previous interpretations

We will first present the identifications and interpretations of the character with protomes or busts on the shoulders, proposed by previous researchers, which refer more to other types of Luristan bronzes than to the standards.

A. Godard refers to the character with these features in his analysis of discoid-headed pins, which he dates to the second half of the 2nd millennium BCE, considering them a product of the influence of Elamite sculpture and hardstone carving. According to him, it is a god of fertility who with his body feeds the animals (goats, ibexes) as his attributes, whereby on each of his shoulders is a sacred dragon - a symbol of the god **Ningishzida/Ningizzida** (F16: 7; F6: 1, 2). In a similar format he is present on a Sumerian relief from Berlin (F16: 2, 3) and on the imprint of a cylinder seal (F16: 4), depicted holding the ruler Gudea by his left hand. The author identifies a comparable character on another pin of the same type (F16: 6; F6: 3, 4), yet this time not with dragonesque, but with leonine protomes on the shoulders, which is why in this figure (probably

[124] M. J. Vermaseren, *Corpus*, 200, Fig. 142 – Mon. 491.

because of the leonine protomes) he recognizes the god **Ningirsu** as "lord of the benevolent rain".[125] We cannot agree that these are two different compositions that show varying deities, nor that on the first pin the god is depicted as a tree. We think that it is a case of different variants of the same composition with a depiction of one and the same mythical character i.e. deity.

P. R. S. Moorey also dedicates some attention to the characters of this type during his elaboration of a Luristan standard of the type "columnar figurines", collected in the Ashmolean Museum. On that occasion, he references its possible Mesopotamian paradigms, some of which have already been suggested by previous researchers (Ningizzida, Ninhursad/Nintu – F21: 2), as well as a parallel from the Caucasus (F21: 5).[126] In a later work he elaborates on such representations hammered on Luristan quivers, on pins with a discoid head, and on other appliques, but primarily from a formal aspect, at the level of their appearance and typology, whereby he also presents corresponding analogies found on Middle Eastern cylinder seals (F16: 1).[127]

This iconographic arrangement is also the subject of **G. Dumézil**'s interpretations within the frames of the characters depicted on the quiver from the Metropolitan Museum (F16:10; F5: 3, 4). He thinks that they represent the **heads of dragons** ("les deux tetes de dragon") that accompany the heads of the gods **Mithra** and **Varuna**, whereby he assumes that it is a case of stylistic expression of Sumerian culture ("là une expression, en style sumérien"). Referring to the Rigvedic hymns (RV I, 56), he thinks that the three heads symbolized the **great power** of the indicated gods and their **triple sovereignty** ("la triple souveraineté") i.e. authority over the "**three lands**" i.e. the three realms of the universe.[128] This interpretation does not seem to be accepted by **R. Ghirshman**, who, following his interpretation of the central figure from the fifth cassette of the same object as **Zurvān** (F5: 5), asks "If so, why not identify the figures on the third register as Zurvan's two sons **Ahuramazda** and **Ahriman**, the powers of Good and Evil?".[129]

In regards to the mentioned depictions on the quiver from the Metropolitan Museum, **R. Dussaud** says that it is the same god depicted twice, whereby once in his sanctuary (F5: 3; F10: 1). The pair of winged supplements that hang under his arms are treated by the author as palm branches, which is why he considers him a god of vegetation. Dussaud defines the pair of animal heads that emerge from both sides of the god's head as **dragon heads** ("une tête de dragon"), considering them as appropriations from Sumerian art. He is of the opinions that the four surrounding disks underline the celestial nature of the depicted character (F5: 3; F11: 5) whom he identifies as **Varuna** i.e. **Ahura Mazda**, according to the functions that Zoroaster had given to him.[130]

H. Potratz is one of the rare researchers who also senses the hybrid character discussed here on the Luristan "standards", whereby it seems that he nevertheless does not explicitly define this impression as a mythical character with three heads.[131]

The motif of a pair of protomes on the shoulders has also been touched upon by **S. Ayazi** on the occasion of an image of a similar anthropomorphic winged figure on a Luristan discoid pin, depicted with two

[125] A. Godard, *The Art*, 55, 57 (Fig. 34 – Fig. 36); basic information on the mentioned Mesopotamian deities: J. Black, A. Green, *Gods*, 138-140; also see: L. A. Campbell, *Mithraic*, 129.
[126] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 159, 160; on the Caucasian specimen also see: A. A. Zakharov, *Materials*, 84, 85 (Fig. 86); О. А. Брилёва, *Древняя*, 393 (Kat. 792).
[127] P. R. S. Moorey, *Some Elaborately*, 21-26 (Fig. 6).
[128] G. Dumézil, *Dieux*, 21, 23.
[129] R. Ghirshman, *The Art*, 70.
[130] R. Dussaud, *Anciens*, 214-217.
[131] „Von den voll ausgebildeten Stangenaufsätzen mit reichem Oberflächendekor leitet sich eine ebenfalls reich dekorierte überschlanke Menschenfigur ab, aus deren Schulter anstelle von Armen zwei abwärts blickende Vogelkopfprotomen herausschauen." (H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 31).

F15


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leonine protomes on the shoulders, but without the presence of the central anthropomorphic head (F23: 1). On that occasion she cites the opinions of other authors and presents parallels from the older cultures of Mesopotamia.[132]

b) Visual and textual parallels

- Middle Eastern analogies

From the parallels pointed out within the theories of previous researchers, we think that two motifs should be additionally elaborated here, mainly present on Middle Eastern cylinder seals.

In the first case, it is a human figure, sometimes with denoted breasts, which is usually depicted sitting on a chair with a backrest, whereby protruding from both of its shoulders is an elongated and arched protome (F15: 1 – 4, a similar motif – 5). The protomes most closely resemble as being serpentine, with some of their heads in certain cases being leonine. According to certain interpretations, these could be pictorial manifestations of the Babylonian myth of **Etana**, but at the same time there are also doubts about such an interpretation.[133] In Mesopotamia one could also observe **anthropomorphic variants** of this mythical image, where all three heads of the anthropomorphic figure are human, whereby the lateral ones are slightly smaller than the central one. The most famous one is the already mentioned depiction from a pair of ceramic reliefs (from the Baghdad Museum, dating to the beginning of the 2nd millennium BCE) which is identified as **Ninhursag/Nintu** - the Sumerian Mother Goddess, patroness of birth and creator of humans (F21: 2).[134] The function of this goddess can be recognized on the relief through the two figures in the fetal position (see p. 426).

The second example refers to the god Ningishzida (or Ningiszzida), who is pointed out by A. Godard and P. R. S. Moorey as a parallel to the characters from the Luristan bronzes. Here we have in mind the representations of this god on cylinder seals (F16: 4; F17: 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11), but also on reliefs (F16: 2, 3), where two animal protomes emerge from his shoulders. He is depicted in a standing or sitting position, accompanied by a hybrid animal ("lion-bird") as his almost permanent attribute, usually in the role of a throne or pedestal on which he sits or stands (F17: 9 – at the end of the procession).[135] Thereby, we would particularly apostrophize his frontal depiction on a seal from the J. Pierpont Morgan Library (F17: 3, 6).[136] It, with its columnarity (xoanon-like), stiffness and symmetry, corresponds quite well to the standards, especially those of the type "columnar figurines" in the variant with protomes (F17: 3, 6 compare with 1, 2 and with F19). These relations, although indirectly, are indicated by another motif which on the seal is present in the form of oblique dashes arranged in the lower part of Ningizzida's body (F17: 3). It is thought that they represent the bodies of **two snakes** entwined around his columnar legs, whose protomes actually protrude from his shoulders. Their tails are also depicted, in the form of some kind of vague "M" motif formed at the very base of the figure. Strong confirmation of this interpretation is given by the mentioned ancient **Mithraic depictions of Zurvān**, which according to their composition are identical to it (F17: 4 compare with 3 and with F13: 3, 5).[137] They are at the same time the third component that connects this composition with the

[132] S. Ayazi, *Luristan*, 34 (Cat. 31, Museum N°: 1868).
[133] E. Porada, *Problems*; E. Porada, *Discussion*; H. Pittman, *Anchoring*, 376-379.
[134] A. Parrot, *Sumer*, 301 (Fig. 368); P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 159. A similarly conceptualized three-headed bronze figurine has also been recorded among the Iron Age cultures of the Caucasus (F21: 5): A. A. Zakharov, *Materials*, 84, 85 (Fig. 86); О. А. Брилёва, *Древняя*, 393 (Kat. 792).
[135] E. D. Van Buren, *The God Ningizzida*, 70-76; A. L. Frothingham, *Babylonian*, 181-192.
[136] W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 129 (No. 368b); A. L. Frothingham, *Babylonian*, 185 (Fig. 6; Fig.7a); on this one, but also on another seal with an analogous motif: E. D. Van Buren, *The God Ningizzida*, 74, 75.
[137] A. L. Frothingham, *Babylonian*, 185, 186.

F16


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standards, if we take into account the proposed interpretations on the presence of Zurvān on Luristan objects. These relations become even more convincing when compared to a similar depiction from another seal, also from the J. Pierpont Morgan Library, where the mentioned protomes do not start from the shoulders of Ningizzida, but continue towards his palms which are joined at the abdomen and from there (probably after being crossed), the snakes descend along the edge of his skirt (F17: 5, 8).[138] For this variant we have a parallel in another specimen of the "columnar figurines", this time not particularly typical, because the usual protomes in its case do not end on the shoulders of the main figure, but in the area of the chest where its forearms are located (F17: 7 compare with 8). In this one, but also in other standards of the indicated subtype, the protomes are not serpentine but avian (usually of roosters), whereby the bodies to which they would belong - snakes or any other animal - are never depicted (F19).

The association of **Ningizzida** with some kind of **vertical pillar** is evident on the seals, which can be clearly detected through his alternation with variants where the same intertwined snakes, instead of this god, entwine some kind of **columnar element in the form of a caduceus**, which in turn justifies the columnarity of his figure (H16). The best evidence for this is the sacrificial vase of Gudea from the Louvre, whose inscription explicitly states that the column entwined by snakes depicted there is the god Ningizzida himself (F17: 10 compare with 3, 4, 7, 8; H21: 10, 11; H30: 6 – 8). The two intertwined snakes are treated by A. L. Frothingham as symbols of the **male and female principle** and their copulation.[139] In this context, he connects the figure of this god and the compositions in which he participates with the Middle Eastern cosmogonic myths related to the **marriage between the Sun-God and the Earth-Goddess**, which was cyclically repeated at the beginning of the year (in spring).[140] We will once again return to this god, the caduceus and their possible relations with the Luristan standards in the chapter dedicated to the character and purpose of the Luristan standards (see p. 624).

- Ancient Balkan-Mediterranean analogies

From the Balkan examples, deserving of special attention is the figure of the **Gorgon Medusa** depicted three times on the tripod from **Trebenishte** (RN Macedonia), dated to the 6th century BCE (F18: 6). It is interesting to us because of its composition, quite similar to the Luristan examples, which consists of a frontal female anthropomorphic figure with a grotesque head, accompanied from the sides by two arched serpentine protomes that grow from her shoulders or root of the neck (compare with F10).[141] Conceptualized in the same way are also the figures of multiplicated Gorgons from the **Proto-Attic amphora from Eleusis, Archeological Museum**, from the 7th century BCE (F18: 2, 3), where pairs of larger snakes emerge from the joint of their shoulders with the neck, and also smaller ones from the head itself.[142] Both examples are linked to the myth of the **decapitation of Medusa** by Perseus, whereby Pegasus and Chrysaor were born from her severed neck. In some ancient pictorial representations of this myth, her body is depicted headless, whereby the two creatures emerge directly from the severed neck (F23: 10 – 12).[143] Interpretations have been made according to which this action actually encodes the **coitus between Medusa and Perseus**, whereby the severed neck acquires the meaning of a vulva i.e. an opening in her womb from which the children conceived

[138] W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 129 (No. 368f); A. L. Frothingham, *Babylonian*, 186 (Fig. 8); E. D. Van Buren, *The God Ningizzida*, 75 (Pl. XI: a).

[139] A. L. Frothingham, *Babylonian*, 175, 181, 182 (Fig. 3), 187, 188, 192, 194.

[140] A. L. Frothingham, *Babylonian*, 175, 187, 188, 194; on the god's relations with snakes and the sun: E. D. Van Buren, *The God Ningizzida*, 65, 67, 68.

[141] It should be noted that a similar hybrid figure, but this time with legs metamorphosed into snakes, is depicted on each of the pair of volute handles of the krater that had stood on this tripod (D21: 2); on this, the iconography and the meaning of the Trebenishte kraters: Н. Чаусидис, *Требенишките*.

[142] Cosmological interpretations of the depictions: E. G. Suhr, *An Interpretation*, 100-103; *Protoattic* 2020.

[143] A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 716-722 (Fig. 656-659).

by that contact are born.[144] We think that in this context the referenced examples should be treated not as a **scene** i.e. an **excerpt** from the mentioned action, but as a **compressed image** i.e. a **diagram** that contains its essence, at its basis close to the myth of Zurvān: the two newborn beings are epiphanies of the Gorgon/Medusa herself i.e. personifications of some of her essential functions, whereby her death is a condition for their coming into this world. The killing should be understood as an act of her withdrawal from this world, as her transposition from one form to another, or as a **manifestation of her essential (dual) nature** (compare with F12: 1 – 3).

Three examples from Greece come close to the proposed meanings - two from Sparta (F18: 8, 9) and one from the Athenian Acropolis (F18: 12), where, to the left and right of the central character or of the top of its head, are depicted two symmetrical horse protomes. These representations are placed in relation to **Artemis Orthia**, the **"mistress of animals"** or the **"mistress of horses"** (potnia hipon), whereby their protomodels are sought in the Orient, and even specifically among Luristan objects.[145] We have mentioned them in previous chapters because they also allude to the **arms** of the depicted character, metamorphosed into equine protomes (E18; E19). Despite the absence of features of Medusa, the connection of these depictions with her are hinted at by the horse protomes, given the emphasized relations of this mythical character with horses.[146] Observed in this context, the meaning of **newborn creatures** is also acquired by the protomes that grow from the necks of the figures from Trebenishte (F18: 6), but also by the protomes in the analogous Luristan examples (F10).

Towards this group we could also include other ancient zooanthropomorphic figures, if they are perceived through the above presented paradigms. Here we have in mind the Scythian depictions of the female mythical figure with zoomorphized legs, curling up above whose shoulders is a pair of dragon protomes that leave the impression of wings (F18: 10; F15: 8). Similar examples, but with protomes growing from the loins, are also found in Etruria (F15: 7).[147] The mentioned Scythian examples indicate more direct relations with Medusa, if we take into account that the "snake-legged goddess" in Scythian myths is also presented as a monstrous character.

The examples presented here shed new light on the analogous asymmetric zooanthropomorphic figures of this type that can be traced throughout the entire ancient period (F18: 4, 5), and even later (F18: 7).[148] Characters with this feature are also recorded in ancient literary works, such as, for example, the description of the three-headed Hecate portrayed with the heads of various animals (dog, snake, horse, lion, cow, boar).[149]

- Indian analogies

A high level of resemblance to the Luristan figures that have a pair of protomes on the shoulders is shown by the pictorial representations of **Vaikuntha Chaturmurti**, for which it is thought that they actually represent the **four-headed (or three-headed) aspect of the god Vishnu**, whose heads are associated with the corners of the world, but also with some other categories (F22: 7, 8). They are mainly characteristic to the northern part of India i.e. the region of Kashmir. In addition to the main human head, the figure of Vaikuntha is supplemented by the head of a lion, a boar, and a demonic creature. We include this character in our

[144] И. Маразов, *Фиалата*, 394; И. Маразов, *Мит. на Тракиte*, 213-215; Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 509, 767.
[145] M. Egg, *Die Herrin*, 74, with presented literature.
[146] On the Gorgon and horses, with presented literature: Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 506-513.
[147] Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 119, 121, A59: 1, 4, 8; С. С. Бессонова (С. С. Бессонова, *Религиозные*, 93), connects the protomes at the shoulders of the figure from Kul-Oba to the analogous feature of Azhi-Dahaka (see our following sub-chapter on this).
[148] M. Sanader, *Kerber*, 24-51; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 247, 248; later medieval examples: F. Edgü, *Magic*, 2; F. Büyükkarci, *The world*.
[149] (Orph. *Argon.* 975, &c.; Eustath. *ad Hom.* 1467, 1714); *Hecate* 2019.

F18


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comparisons because his pictorial representations often also appear with **three heads** in which the demonic one is omitted, so that we get a figure quite similar to the Luristan ones - with one central human head depicted frontally, whereby the two animal ones are depicted with smaller dimensions, laterally from it, emerging from the neck (F22: 7, 8 compare with 3, 5, 6 and with F33). Such three-headed variants have so far been shown to be older than the four-headed ones, and even an original variant that would later be supplemented by a fourth head. According to some opinions, the indicated three-headed depictions of Vishnu are also the starting point of the representations of Vishvarupa (G48: 11). The two lateral heads of the Vaikuntha are depicted quite similarly, with half-open mouths filled with long teeth so that it is not very conspicuous that they are different animals. According to some interpretations, his three heads represent the three functions of the universe: the central one belongs to **Vishnu** himself and represents **preservation**, while the lateral ones represent **Varaha** and **Narasimha** as the embodiment of **creation** and **destruction**. Although this character is described in religious writings as being eight-armed, he is often depicted **with four arms**, which is another component that brings him closer to the analogous figures from the Luristan standards and the corresponding characters included in our comparative research (E7; E8). For the first time, Vaikuntha appears in the writings of the 5th century CE, while the cult based on this character will appear in Kashmir, during the 8th - 12th centuries.[150]

- Siberian analogies

We have seen that the anthropomorphic or zoo-anthropomorphic figure with an additional pair of human heads on the shoulders is also present in the area of Western Siberia which is usually associated with the local populations of Finno-Ugric origin (F12: 7, 8, 10 – 13). In this case, one such bronze applique from the 1st - 3rd century CE, discovered in the regions along the Ob River, seems to us to be particularly important (F22: 1, a similar medieval example F4: 4).[151] In addition to the two smaller anthropomorphic heads on the shoulders, it is interesting because of two other elements that are also present on the Luristan bronzes. First it is the **fourth head in the area of the chest**, which, in this case, seems to be complemented by a schematized body with legs and arms or wings (compare with F12). The second element is the **arched animal protomes** which, extending between the shoulders and the waist of the main figure, evoke its zoomorphized arms, which corresponds well to a previously discussed subtype of Luristan standards (F22: 2 compare with 1 and with E17).

- Celtic analogies

A corresponding triple structure is present on the pair of bronze elements that belonged to a chariot from the La Tène period, discovered in Orval (Manche, France) and dated to 300 - 250 BCE. It consists of an adult male head, depicted frontally, and two more at a younger age, depicted in profile - symmetrically in relation to it (F22: 4). It is linked to the compositions discussed here in that the two lateral heads are **connected with the hair of the central one** i.e. it seems as if they **emerge i.e. are born from the two locks into which it is divided**. This relationship, and also probably the connection of the objects with the chariot and its wheels, have led G. Poitrenaud to interpret that the "Old Man" depicted in the middle, together with his two "sons" are united in some kind of kinetic vision associated with the wheel, the cosmic axis and the force of life.[152] Agreeing with this interpretation, we can notice the similarity of this image with the above-presented Luristan compositions that consist of three anthropomorphic characters (F6: 6; F7: 1 – 4). This

[150] A. J. Gail, *On the Symbolism*; *Vaikuntha* 2019.

[151] Б. Маршак, М. Крамаровский, *Сокровища*, 50 (without the interpretations presented below).

[152] "`L'ancien` au milieu et ses deux `fils` sont intégrés dans une vision cinétique liée à la roue, aux liens et à la force vitale. N'est-ce pas parce qu'il `est` l'axe de l'univers qu'il peut protéger particulièrement les axes?" (G. Poitrenaud, *Cernunnos*, 5).

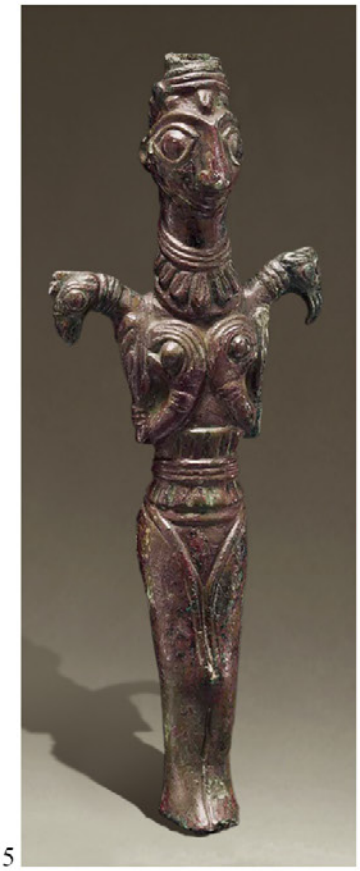
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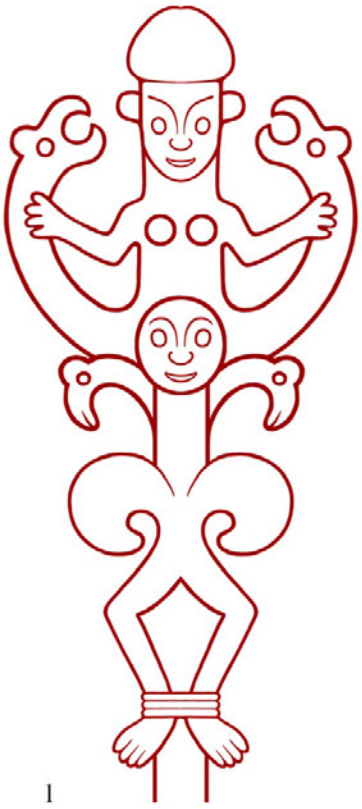

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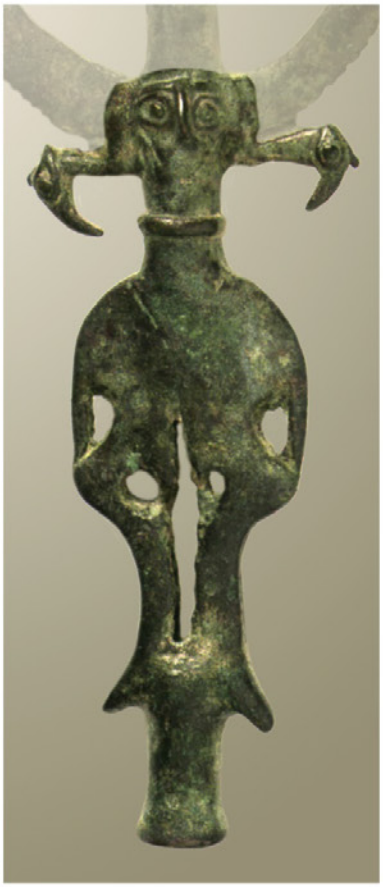
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example opens the possibility of including in these comparisons of numerous other sculptures and reliefs of Celtic deities depicted with three anthropomorphic heads on the shoulders, which were, among other things, also discussed by the mentioned author. These comparisons will be presented in the next chapter of this monograph (G31; G32; see p. 511).

- Macrocosmic characters

Preserved in many cultures are myths in which other creatures are created from the body parts of some character that usually has a primordial and macrocosmic nature. In this case, we are interested in those examples where these creatures appear from the upper parts of his torso, which could be associated with the pair of zoomorphic protomes or anthropomorphic busts that is the topic of this sub-chapter. Previously we have already mentioned the myth of the creation of the **first man** and the **first woman** from the **sweat** secreted from the **left armpit of the Nordic Ymir**. Given the archaic nature of this myth and its clear relations to the analogous Indo-Aryan mythical actions (especially those associated with Purusha), in previous chapters we have tried to take it as a paradigm in explaining the figure from an unusual Luristan standard, depicted with two hands, but also two pairs of protomes that protrude from its shoulders and/or armpits (F15: 6; see pp. 329, 332). In that context, these protomes could also acquire the meaning of creatures that appear from the indicated body parts of this figure. We assumed that in the original versions of this myth, the **woman** was **created from the left**, while the **man** from the **right armpit**, which would mean that one of the two protomes of the standards could represent the creation of the man, while the other - of the woman. In support of this hypothesis, we have also presented the aforementioned "zoomorphic standard" from the Metropolitan Museum where the two symmetrical animals, raised on their hind legs, are complemented by genitals of the opposite sexes (B6: 1). Even closer to our zoomorphic protomes would be the Iranian myth in which **Ohrmazd creates a bull from his right hand**, from whose seed, in turn, other animals would later be created.[153]

P. Lajoye also references other examples of similar mythical actions, this time from the "exotic" parts of the world, for which he believes have Indo-European roots. Such is the legend from **Madagascar** in which God, after the creation of Adam, created his seven wives from various parts of his body, including one from the shoulder.[154] An analogous mythical image was also integrated into the esoteric Islamic traditions of **Southeast Asia** (Vietnam). We are talking about the notion according to which *Svarga-Devata* sits on the right shoulder of Allah, while *nabi Yonnök* on the left one; *nabi Yonnōč* on his right foot, and *nabi Adam* on the left foot. Thereby, the first pair represents the "heavenly principle", while the second one - the "earthly principle".[155]

- Zahhak - Azhi Dahaka - Ahriman

An interesting parallel to our character with two protomes on the shoulders is **Zahhak**, known in Eastern traditions through "Shahnameh". He is portrayed as a man to whom a snake will grow from each shoulder due to malice - after kissing Ahriman. It is logical to assume that this transformation occurred as a result of the "infection" of the former character by physical contact with the latter, from which it follows that the **indicated appearance is in fact characteristic of the chthonic Ahriman**. A retrospective tracing of the history of this character leads to **Azhi-Dahaka** who in the "Avesta" and later Iranian texts is presented as a

[153] (*Pahlavi Rivāyat*, 46.15) according to: P. Lajoye, *Puruṣa*, 37; R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 128, 136, 138, 319, 366; R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 259.

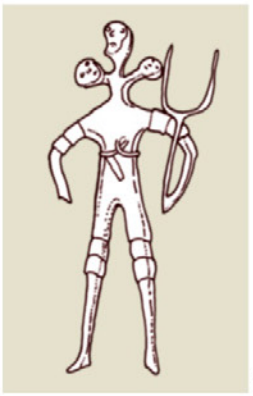
[154] P. Lajoye, *Puruṣa*, 47, 48.

[155] “Si l'on vous demande: les bras et les jambes d'Allah, de qui sont-ils la demeure? Répondez: la demeure de ces quatre nabi, car le Svarga-Devata siège à l'épaule droite, le nabi Yonnōk à l'épaule gauche, le nabi Yonnōč au pied droit, le nabi Adam au pied gauche. (...) Répondez Le Svarga-Devata et le nabi Yonnök sont la souche céleste, le nabi Yonnōč et le Pō Adam sont la souche terrestre.” (according to: P. Lajoye, *Puruṣa*, 53).

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dragon i.e. a serpentine figure of gigantic proportions, with three heads, six eyes and three mouths, probably winged and with anthropomorphic features. Although both characters are dominated by chthonic i.e. negative aspects, there are indications that behind them originally stood a macrocosmic mythical character (analogous to those of the previous chapter) whose domains related to the whole universe. Such a nature, among other things, is also suggested in some interpretations according to which the **three heads of Azhi-Dahaka** symbolize the Indo-Iranian notions of the **three worlds: heaven, air and earth**. **Ahi Budhnya** is considered to be the Vedic equivalent of Azhi-Dahaka, which, in addition to their other relations, is also indicated by the closeness of the two theonyms.[156]

However, the genealogy of Azhi-Dahaka also leads us to the action of the **mythical twins**, in Hindu tradition represented by **Yama** and his sister **Yami** (the original meaning of these names is "twin"). In Iranian traditions, their equivalents are **Yima** and his sister **Yimak**. Interestingly, there are also birds that appear in these myths (as symbols of the sacred category *hvarna*), which leave Yima.[157] We could put them in relation to the avian protomes located to the left and right of the head of the main character from the "columnar figurines" (F19) and the lower character from the "idols with protomes" (F20). In Indian traditions, Yama appears as a double character, while in Iranian traditions he is divided into two characters - Yima as wise and righteous and Azhi-Dahaka as evil.[158] According to N. V. Dyakonova, behind the three-headed mythical figure of the type of Azhi-Dahaka could stand one of the great macrocosmic gods of ambivalent dual nature, such as Varuna, who would have then be divided into two separate characters with complementary symbolism: Varuna - as the embodiment of darkness and Mithra - of light.[159] There are indications that the character of the three-headed chthonic god Azhi-Dahaka had actually integrated the ambivalent and not very clear aspects of the ancient **all-encompassing god** (also three-headed), who necessarily contained within himself not only the progressive and productive principles, but also those of a regressive and destructive nature.

A similar character and function in the Rigvedic hymns is also borne by the three-headed **Vishvarupa**, whereby it seems that each of his heads also refers to one of the three zones of the universe (the **"three realms"**) (E7: 2). The fact that this god unites within himself the male and female principles, puts him in relation to the above-mentioned myths on the creation of the first pair (of humans?) from the body of the primordial god i.e. man.[160]

- Slavic analogies

Traces of the stadial division presented in the previous paragraphs can also be noted in the Slavic pagan traditions. Within the cosmological iconography of the medieval stone idol from Zbruch, the lowest zone is filled by a male character with accentuated chthonic features. He is depicted with three faces i.e. three human heads, how he, in a kneeling position, holds the earth's plate in his hands (F21: 10; G40: 4). Due to his tricephality, he is identified with the gods **Triglav** or **Trojan**, recorded in medieval written sources. A character with three anthropomorphic heads also appears on the elongated plate of the early Slavic two-plated bow fibulae, who, given the earthly symbolism of this plate, should also bear a chthonic meaning (F21: 7, 8).[161] But, in some of the referenced written sources regarding the meaning of the idol of the god **Triglav**

[156] P. O. Skjærvø, Dj. Khaleghi-Motlagh, J. R. Russell, *Aždahā*; Н. В. Дьяконова, *Терракотовая*; Л. А. Лелеков, *Ажи-Дахака*.
[157] Н. В. Дьяконова, *Терракотовая*, 197-199; on hvarna as a bird of prey, a flying fire and a symbol of the positive principle, light and fire, as well as an emanation of the sun: Ю. А. Рапопорт, *Космогонический*, 65.
[158] Н. В. Дьяконова, *Терракотовая*, 203.
[159] Н. В. Дьяконова, *Терракотовая*, 201-203.
[160] (Rigveda III, 56, 3); commentary: Т. Я. Елизаренкова, *Ригведа I – IV*, 717; D. M. Srinivasan, *Many Heads*, 179, 180.
[161] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 241-260.

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from Szczecin it is said that he is the supreme god (*summus paganorum deus*) and that he has three heads because **he rules** (*procuraret*) **over the three kingdoms - heaven, earth and the underworld**.[162] A similar cosmological differentiation can be sensed in the South Slavic folk tales regarding the **three-headed mythical character Trojan**, according to which one of his heads ate **fish** (according to us representatives of the lower cosmic zones), the second one - **cattle** (according to us representatives of the terrestrial level), while the third one - **people** (it would have been ideal if it were birds as representatives of the celestial level).[163]

The macrocosmic symbolism i.e. the jurisdiction over the three zones of the universe is present in the case of these characters, which favors their supreme (pan-cosmic) rather than chthonic nature. If from this point of view we once again analyze the mentioned Slavic fibulae, we will notice elements that go more in favor of the pan-cosmic than the chthonic nature of the three-headed character present there (F21: 7, 8), whereby the latter may have been dominant in some other subtypes. The first such element is the "fingers" of the semicircular plate, which within the frames of its celestial meaning usually represent the phases of the movement of the sun along the celestial vault (A9: 2, 3, 9 – 11). But, in the aforementioned fibulae, the circular and hemispherical shape of these "fingers" changes in the direction of their transformation into some kind of tasseled floral motifs, which speaks of the change of the stated meaning. In our previous studies we have pointed out that these are fibulae in which there has been an inversion of the iconography, whereby the celestial meaning was transferred to the elongated plate, while the earthly meaning to the semicircular one. In this particular case, the newly acquired image of the universe was equated with the **Cosmic Tree**, whereby the mentioned growths of the semicircular plate, from suns, were reconceptualized and reshaped into **roots**. The three-headed character had fitted into this image not as a chthonic, but as a macrocosmic god whose body is equated with the universe. There is another iconographic element that goes in favor of this interpretation - the pair of young moons depicted between the two plates of the fibulae i.e. the lower part of the tree, which corresponds to the chthonic aspects of this celestial body as a symbol of night, darkness and the underworld.[164]

The same two stages of existence of the three-headed mythical character can be also detected on the Luristan standards. Depicted on the "columnar figurines" is the primordial three-headed god that **encompasses the entire object**, suggesting his spread throughout the universe (F19). In the "idols with protomes", on the other hand, he occupies the **lower part of the objects**, which indicates the process of his narrower specialization as a chthonic god (F20), which corresponds quite well to the character of Azhi-Dahaka in the "Avesta" and the three-headed god on the Slavic idol from Zbruch (F21: 10; G40: 4).

Anthropomorphic mythical figures with three human heads can also be ascertained in other parts of Europe and the Mediterranean. In this case, as the closest in appearance, we point out the following ones: the figure on the rhyton from Gallehus (Denmark) (F21: 4), the bronze figurine from the museum in Cagliari (Sardinia, probably of Phoenician origin) (F21: 3), the depictions from medieval Finno-Ugric appliques (F12: 8, 12, 13; F22: 1), as well as other stone monuments associated with the cultures of the Celts and Thracians (see p. 508).[165] The issue regarding the three-headed depictions from the Luristan standards, their parallels and meanings will be addressed once again in the next chapter of this monograph (see p. 505 and further).

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[162] (Ebo, *Vita Ottonts episcopi Bambergensis*. III, 1). Interpretations: J. Dynda, *The Three-Headed*; L. Trkanjec, *Chthonic*, 14-16; А. Лома, *Пракосово*, 188; В. В. Иванов, В. Н. Топоров, *Исследования*, 178; В. Чајкановић, *О српском*, 58-65 (insists on his chthonic nature). The same function (master of animals from the three cosmic zones) is bestowed by Yahweh upon Adam, creating him according to his own image (Genesis I, 1, 26, 28, 30).

[163] В. Чајкановић, *О српском*, 60; L. Trkanjec, *Chthonic*, 17-18; В. Петрухин, *Троян*, 377.

[164] On the indicated (and other) levels of meaning of these objects: Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 255-260, on the moon: 278-285.

[165] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 249-253, Г26 – Г28; on the specimen from Cagliari: Ph. Ackerman, *The Oriental*, 218 (Fig.1a), 221; drawing: G. Leńczyk, *Światowid*, 54 – Ryc. 17a.

- Two-headed variants without a central head

The third composition of the above elaborated discoid pin from LACMA points to the possibility that Zurvān was depicted not only with one or three, but also with two heads, which, in this specific case, we linked to the withdrawal of this god from the phenomenal world, at the expense of the advent of his two sons (F23: 7; F8; F12: 1 – 3). On another Luristan discoid pin, one can identify an additional such example, with all the features typical of Zurvān (dominant torso, bell-shaped skirt, wings, multiple heads on the shoulders), but this time not with one or three anthropomorphic or zoomorphic heads, but with a pair of animal (leonine) protomes with wide open jaws and necks covered with circular motifs (F23: 1 compare with F10).[166] He is also present on an openwork Luristan pin accompanied by a pair of animals standing upright on their hind legs (F23: 2).

As the most interesting parallel to these examples, we can take the relief motif formed on a cup made from electrum, which is currently housed in the Louvre (F23: 9). The find originates from western Iran, is associated with the "Marlik" culture, and dates back to the second half of the 2nd millennium BCE. The motif is thought to have been borrowed from the Middle Assyrian glyptics of the 14th century BCE (one such example – F23: 6).[167] The central motif of the composition is the hybrid character formed by elements of various animals: the lower part consists of a pair of animal rumps which are complemented by mutually intertwined avian legs. Formed in the upper part is a pair of symmetrical protomes of animals from the family of felines (judging by the spots probably leopards), while depicted below them are two spread wings. What makes this depiction close to the Luristan two-headed examples are the anthropomorphic elements concentrated in the middle of the figure, which is actually shaped like a torso of a woman with plastically executed hips (equated with the animal rumps) that convert to a narrowed waist. The torso ends at the top in the form of clearly shaped breasts with accentuated nipples, while extending sideways from the shoulders are human arms in the palms of which hang antelopes attached by their tails. We have seen that a similar concept of fusion of the animal pair in a figure with accentuated female features can be found on the Luristan standards, with the difference that there the composition always ends in the upper part with a central anthropomorphic head which can be accompanied by a pair of animal protomes (compare F23: 9 with 8). On Luristan discoid pins and quivers, similar figures are combined with a pair of herbivorous animals, which are sometimes also oriented upside down (example – F6: 4). A two-headed character that is even closer to the one from the Luristan discoid pin is present on another gold cup from Marlik (F23: 5),[168] as well as on a war hammer from Bactria dated to the second half of the 2nd millennium BCE (F23: 4).[169]

One can also include in this analysis other examples of similarly conceived zooanthropomorphic creatures with two protomes on the shoulders.[170] We consider as particularly interesting the already referenced depictions of the beheaded Gorgon Medusa, from whose neck or shoulders emerge Pegasus and Chrysaor (F23: 10 – 12).[171] Within the frames of Hindu culture, the anthropomorphic variant of the mythical character Gandaberunda was depicted in a similar way (F23: 3). An Egyptian amulet (from the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, Michigan) shows a similarly conceptualized male figure, from each of whose shoulders, depicted without the head and neck, emerges a protome of a snake and an ibis.[172]

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[166] Basic information on the object: S. Ayazi, *Luristan*, 27, 34, 49, Cat. 31.

[167] *Goblet* 2020; A. Godard, *The Art*, 80 (Fig. 34). P. R. S. Moorey points to the similarities with an analogous hybrid creature from a Luristan bronze plaque from the Barbier Collection (P. R. S. Moorey, *Some Elaborately*, 24 – Fig. 5, Pl. IV-c).

[168] Z. Kazempoor, M. Marasi, *The Study*, 202-204 (Fig. 12).

[169] Г. Н. Курочкин, *Скифское*, 111, 112 (Рис. 5: 1).

[170] Other such analogies: P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 206, 207; S. Ayazi, *Luristan*, 34.

[171] A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 716-722 (Fig. 656-659).

[172] G. Bohak, *Art and power*, 7.

F23



Some of the two-headed parallels presented here are united by the presence of **female components**, also followed by features of a **monster**, especially emphasized in the depictions of Medusa (F23: 10 – 12), but also in the figure on the cup from the Louvre (F23: 9). In the Luristan examples they would be represented through the **female aspect of the hermaphroditic Zurvān**. An important common component are also the **wings** of these characters, whereby particularly striking is the identification of the two pairs of wings of Medusa (F23: 12) with the same feature in the first of the Luristan (F23: 1) and in the Mesopotamian examples (F16: 1). The mentioned similarities indicate some more direct relations between the apostrophized examples, especially considering that the most interesting such depiction of Medusa comes from Cyprus (Golgoi) (F23: 12) which was under much stronger Eastern influences than the Balkans and the western parts of Asia Minor.

c) Why do the protomes and heads emerge from the shoulders of the anthropomorphic character?

The presence of protomes and heads precisely on the shoulders of the main character is an enigma because it is a peripheral part of the body in which there are no vital organs that could be placed in relation to the mentioned iconographic arrangement. Researchers rightly express doubt whether the emergence of the two busts on the shoulders of the central figure on the Cincinnati plaque could indeed denote the birth of Zurvān's sons from his body (F2). We think that the answer to this question must be sought elsewhere, with several possible options available.

The first solution would be based on the **real functions of the shoulders** that serve as a foundation that bears i.e. supports the neck with the head and arms. The same function was used by man to bestow upon them appropriate cultural functions, such as: supporting and carrying various objects, animals and people. Shoulders are elements of the body that, according to their shape, volume and strength **distinguish man from woman**. In that sense, one could even apostrophize the following opposition: *man - wide and powerful shoulders - narrow hips; woman - narrow and graceful shoulders - wide and powerful hips*. These physical traits and predispositions (perhaps in some cultures also verified by appropriate rules and taboos) could have served as the basis for the fact that fathers often carry their children on their shoulders, unlike mothers who for this action use their hip, lap or back, but almost never the shoulders. Such a character of the shoulders and hips as **classifiers of sex** could have also been the basis for their **symbolic equivalence - what are the hips to a woman, the same are the shoulders to a man**.[173] Hence, when a hermaphroditic (but still more male than female) mythical character is given the role of giving birth to his own offspring, it would be logical for this to happen not through the hips (an eminently female bodily feature) but precisely through the shoulders, as a characteristic of his masculinity and manliness. This is one of the components that could justify the depiction of Zurvān's sons on the shoulders of their two-sexed father, as an allusion to their birth from there.

If the real functions of the shoulders are taken into account, the symbolic meanings derived from them would be very **close to the function of the arms**, but more focused towards the **mechanical** than towards the more articulated creative functions, which the shoulder, unlike the arms, does not possess. Based on this relation, the protomes or busts depicted on the shoulders of a figure can be understood as a kind of **equivalent to its arms** (especially if they are shaped in the form of animal protomes), primarily due to the similar functions of the two elements and the fact that the zoomorphic protomes and the arms rest on the shoulders.

We have seen that on an atypical Luristan standard the central figure is depicted with two pairs of arms, whereby one of the two pairs of protomes by which it is supplemented seem as it is emerging i.e.

[173] As paradigmatic examples of this meaning of the male shoulders we can take the famous ancient Greek statue "Moschophoros" (man with a calf on his shoulders) and the early Christian "Christ - the Good Shepherd" (with a lamb on his shoulders); an analogous example from the Middle Elamite period with a sheep on the shoulders is also present in Western Iran: P. R. S. Moorey (et al), *Ancient Bronzes*, 32 (Cat. 102).

growing not from its shoulders, but **from under its armpits** (F15: 6). Such an interpretation is encouraged by an already mentioned bronze figurine from Western Iran (housed in LACMA), in style and chronology quite close to the Luristan ones. It shows a woman with plastically executed breasts and raised arms, whereby formed at the junction of her arms and neck are two small human heads, which are complemented by serpentine bodies that descend along the back of the figure (F21: 1).[174] The combination of small (children's?) heads, their position, the raised hands of the figure and its accentuated female features actualize the issue of the **armpits** as another reason for the presence of protomes or busts on the shoulders of the Luristan figures. Thereby, we are alluding to the **identification of the armpits with the female genitalia**, which we have already discussed in one of the previous chapters (see pp. 329, 336). In that case, the presence of protomes or busts on the shoulders could be justified by the intention **to depict their birth from the armpits of that character** located right there - under the shoulders. If the scenes from the above presented Mesopotamian seals, supposedly related to the myth of Etana, are observed through this prism, one should not rule out the option according to which the snakes depicted there also emerge not from the shoulders, but from the open armpits of the female character (F15: 1 – 5). Indicative in that sense is also the composition with **Ninhursag/Nintu** - the Sumerian mother-goddess, patron of birth-giving (F21: 2), where the emergence of two human heads from her shoulders is accompanied by **two naked human figures** depicted next to her legs in a fetal position. Based on the denoted ribs of both figures and the clear aging signs on the face of one, it can be assumed that they depict **old people** and possibly even ones that are **deceased**. If these two elements are put in relation to the function of the depicted goddess, then the two heads on her shoulders could represent the **resurrection** i.e. **rebirth** from her womb of these old i.e. deceased people.[175]

d) Relations with the "Zodiac Man"and other medieval examples

In this chapter it is worthwhile to elaborate another overlap of the iconography of the Luristan compositions presented here with some medieval pictorial representations from Europe. This time it is about the images of the so-called "Zodiac Man", which are included as illustrations in various medieval and later manuscripts (F24: 2, 4, 5). It is a representation of a naked man, in a standing position, depicted on whose body are the zodiac signs, whereby, in most examples, their choice and position within the frames of the figure are quite stable i.e. invariable. Quite similar examples, created independently of the European ones, can also be found in the Middle East (F24: 6). These images reflect the **identification of the constellations that they denote with specific parts of the human body**, which can be traced from the Middle Ages, back through Antiquity, all the way to the cuneiform records of Mesopotamia. It, in turn, is the result of the beliefs that the human body is divided into **"areas" that are managed by specific constellations**, which in global terms also reflects on its health.[176] On this occasion, we are interested in the **pair of boys** (as a sign of the constellation "Gemini"), depicted on the arms or shoulders of this character (F24: 4 – 6; F25: 6).[177] They coincide with the above elaborated Luristan examples where, according to the proposed interpretations, the analogous pair of figures would represent Ohrmazd and Ahriman placed at the shoulders of their father Zurvān (F6: 6; F7: 1 – 4), and in one specimen, as we will see later, also on his arms (F26: 6). This relation is further reinforced by the fact that in the Luristan examples, too, they would represent brothers, and even twins, given that they were conceived in their father's womb at the same time.

How to interpret this striking overlap between the indicated examples that are so distant in space and time? It is thought that the referenced medieval European motifs are the product of the influences of ancient

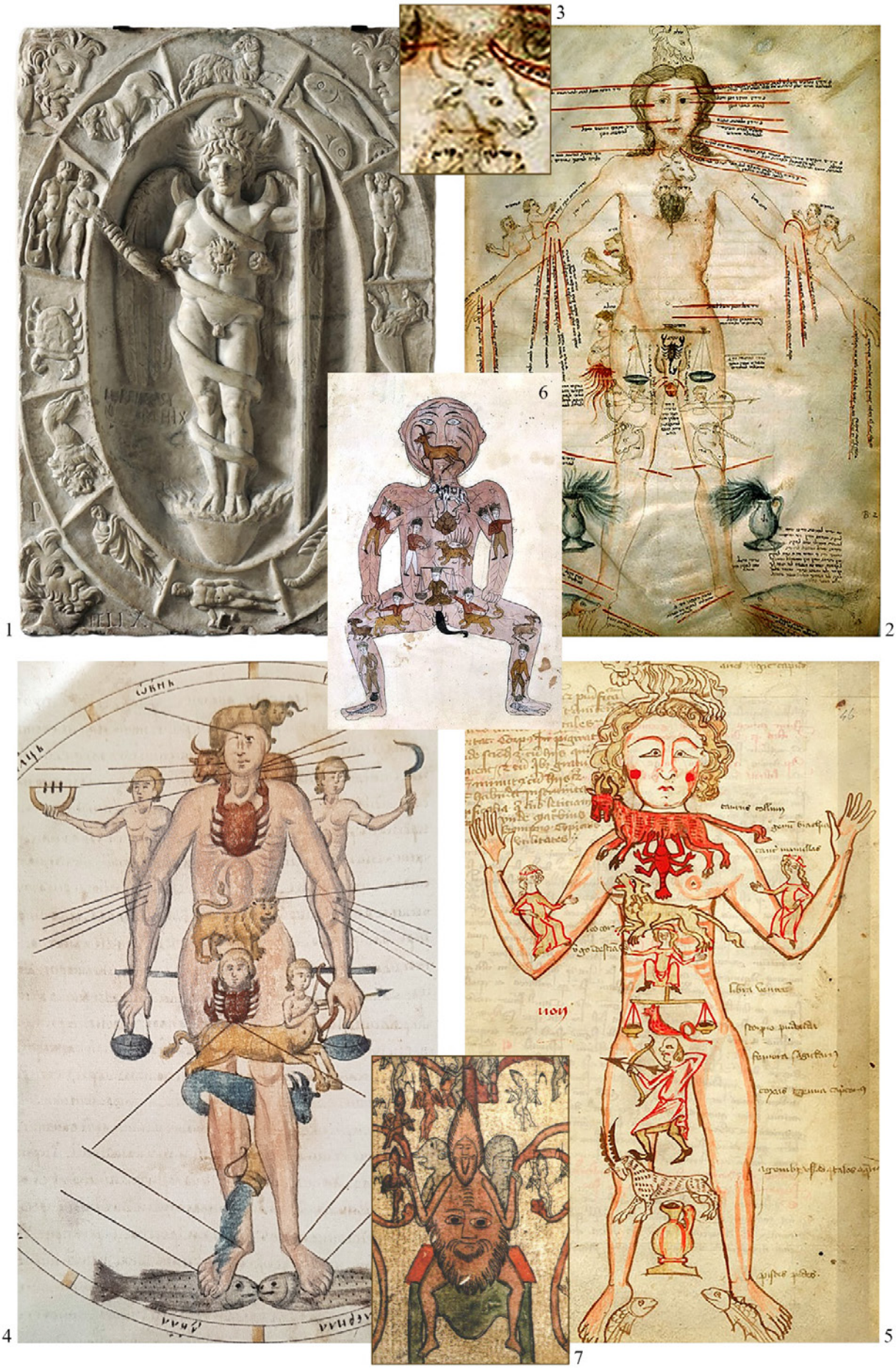
[174] P. R. S. Moorey (et al), *Ancient Bronzes*, 101, 102 (578).

[175] On the figures in this pose and their meaning: Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 208-235; in the case of the mentioned object and the Luristan bronzes: А. В. Мельченко, *Редкие*, 623-625.

[176] L. Parmly Brownp *The Cosmic Man*; basic information, with numerous examples and presented literature: A. Jokinen, *Zodiac Man*; J. Z. Wee, *Discovery*; illustrations: *Homo signorum* 2019.

[177] J. Z. Wee, *Discovery*, 219, 229, 230.

F24



Mediterranean, Mesopotamian and/or Egyptian paradigms that could have reached Europe through the mediation of Mithraism, Judaism or the Gnostic teachings.[178] This can also be confirmed to some extent through analogous statues and reliefs from the Roman period (mainly related to the Mithraic cult) that depict an anthropomorphic or zooanthropomorphic figure (Aeon, Leontocephalus) supplemented by zodiac signs (F24: 1; F25: 1). But, these examples cannot be taken as a justification for the indicated coincidence with the sign "Gemini" because it is not depicted on the arms of the main figure. This could mean that the medieval European images of the "Zodiac Man" were created according to some ancient pictorial templates unknown to us, which were probably made of organic materials (sculptures and reliefs in wood, images depicted on parchment, papyrus or textiles) or were even created only based on textual paradigms.

Several examples lead us to assume about another possible trajectory of movement of the undoubted Middle Eastern paradigms of these images towards Central and Western Europe, and not through the Mediterranean, but through Eastern Europe.

The first of them is the mentioned drawing from Persia (F24: 6), while the second one - the already presented illustration from a Russian Old Ritualist book depicting a hybrid character whose shoulders and arms are accompanied by two half-length figures, but without the other additions characteristic of the "Zodiac Man" (F24: 7; F27: 7). Thereby, one of them has a human, while the other an animal face which, on the one hand, is not inherent to the "twins" from the European images, but on the other hand corresponds to the myth of Zurvān in which Ahriman is often portrayed with zoomorphic features, as opposed to Ohrmazd who is completely anthropomorphic. As we have already mentioned, the main character depicted here also bears other features inherent to Zurvān that are not present in the European images. It is the **bearded face** that fills his torso, as well as the **equation of the whole figure with a tree**. This could mean that the specific Russian example was created according to pictorial or textual paradigms that are closer to the Middle Eastern myth of Zurvān than the European "Zodiac Man", which could have even participated in the creation of the latter.

Individual elements of the European "Zodiac Man" can be identified in the appearance of two idols from Central Europe described by medieval chroniclers. The first is Conrad Bothes' account from 1492 CE on the appearance of the god **Krodo** in Saxony (according to him similar to the Roman Saturn), whose statue was allegedly taken down in 780 CE, during the victory of Charlemagne over this country. It had the appearance of a man positioned at the top of a pillar, standing on a large fish, holding a vase of flowers in his right hand and a wheel in his left (a later illustration based on these textual descriptions – F25: 3). In the same source there is also an illustration of a statue of another god, named **Radegast**, revered by the Slavic tribe of the Obodrites, settled in the area of Mecklenburg (Northern Germany). His statue on the chest has a shield with a depicted head of a black bull, in his hand holds an axe, while a bird is shown on his head (F25: 2).[179] Although academia has so far not shown much confidence in regards to this data, we decided on this occasion to not reject such an possibility *a priori*, precisely because of the presence of some elements also represented in the images of the "Zodiac Man". In the first case it is the **fish** on which Krodo stands, which corresponds to the fish (the constellation "Pisces") that are almost without exception present under the feet of the "Zodiac Man" and this time one under each foot (F25: 3 compare with F24: 2, 4 – 6). In the second case, it is the **shield** on Radegast's chest (F25: 2) which partly corresponds to the **bull** that is usually depicted behind the neck of the "Zodiac Man", but in some cases also in front of him and even in the upper chest area (F24: 4 – 6; F25: 6). Although it is usually a representation of the whole animal, there are also examples where only its head is depicted (F24: 2, 3). The other element is also indicative - the bird on the head of Radegast which follows the same concept of complementing the main figure with other smaller ones (F25: 2). It should be noted that the meaning of the three supplementary animals mentioned here can be also sought outside the zodiac system - as **zoomorphic signifiers of the three cosmic zones**: fish - feet - down - lower zones of the universe (earth,

[178] A. Jokinen, *Zodiac Man*; J. Z. Wee, *Discovery*.
[179] (Conrad Bote, *Cronecken der Sassen*. Mainz: Peter Schöffer, 1492).

F25

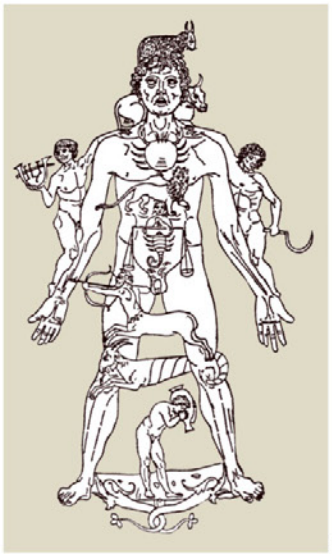

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earthly waters, the underworld); bull - neck/chest - middle - middle zones of the universe (above ground); bird - head - up (sky).

How could one explain the shared components of the mentioned pagan idols and the "Zodiac Man"? If we follow the conviction of previous researchers that these gods and idols were invented by the authors of the indicated or some other older works, then in the "Zodiac Man" one could even seek the paradigm i.e. inspiration for these fake gods. But if, at least theoretically, one accepts that the referenced sources nevertheless reflect the real existence of these elements as religious phenomena, within the frames of specific regions and ethnicities, then we are offered with two possible options. According to the first one (in our opinion less probable), they would be the product of the **appropriation and remythologization of the "Zodiac Man"** i.e. his transfer from the spheres of the then international "literary esotericism" to the spheres of the local pagan cults of Central Europe, followed by the presence of appropriate deities, cultic objects and rituals. According to the second option (in our estimation more probable), they would be **authentic religious traditions** that found their place in the given regions as a consequence of their movement along the route Middle East - Eastern Europe - Central/Western Europe, which, based on the previously apostrophized examples, we know that it functioned at the latest from the Early Medieval period. Indirect indicators of this route would be the mentioned motifs from the Russian Old Ritualist manuscripts, more precisely some of their older medieval paradigms (F27: 4, 7, 8). One should also not rule out the participation in these processes of the **Iranian** or **Indo-Aryan component** in the ethnogenesis of the Slavs and in the formation of their pagan religion, as evidenced by the corresponding characteristics of the Slavic pagan theonyms. In that case, taking into account that the religious aspect of a phenomenon is often earlier and more authentic than the literary one, these relations could be due to the indicated idols (but also to others for which no information has been preserved) i.e. their functioning as paradigms for the "Zodiac Man".

In this context, one should perhaps reconsider once again another phenomenon from Central Europe, which has also so far been rejected *en bloc* by academia as a forgery. This time we have in mind the **bronze statuettes from Prillwitz** (in the already mentioned area of Mecklenburg), primarily those that depict an anthropomorphic or zooanthropomorphic figure with the above indicated additions (F25: 4, 5, 7 – 9).[180] Here we mean the figurines with a taurine head on the chest and a bird on the head, and in particular - the specimens with a leonine head, a snake on the body and an additional human face on the chest, given that they contain the above-mentioned features of the corresponding ancient statues of the Leontocephalus (Aeon, Zurvān and Mithras) (compare with F13; F14; p. 403).

7. The myth of Zurvān on Luristan standards

We are convinced that the extensive and detailed review of the pictorial depictions from the Luristan standards, together with the relevant comparative material related to Zurvān and the three-headed mythical characters, represents a solid basis for realizing our main goal - identification of the pictorial depictions of the myth of the birth of Zurvān's sons on the Luristan standards. In approaching this procedure, we are encouraged by the analyzes of the other iconographic layers of these objects conducted in the previous chapters, which also have shown us that they should not be expected to have the same or similar iconographic arrangement as in the previously discussed Luristan bronzes, composed of the same iconographic elements and their same spatial layout. The reason for that is that this time we have in front of us objects that are different from the previous ones, with completely unique architectonics and technique of production. In the cases of the Cincinnati plaque, the discoid pins and the quivers, they represent shallow reliefs where the mythical action is depicted in the form of an almost two-dimensional image executed on a flat metal plate in

[180] First publication of the statuettes: A. G. Masch (et al), *Die gottesdienstlichen*; a critical review of the finds: R. Szczesiak, *Auf der Suche*.

the techniques of hammering and engraving. The situation is similar with the openwork pins and cheekpieces, the difference being that in their case the reliefs are made by casting. In contrast, the standards are three-dimensional objects with intricately branched contours, which were conceived to stand vertically, to be seen from all sides, and were realized in a casting technique by means of a wax model.

The previous analyzes have shown that the scene which is the focus of our interest is encoded through two key iconographic elements. The first one is the **human face represented on the chest and/or abdomen** of the main figure, while the second - **the pair of zoomorphic protomes or anthropomorphic busts depicted on its shoulders**. Concrete observations show that on one standard, depending on the type and variant to which it belongs, both elements do not always have to be represented, but only one of them. In the sub-chapters that follow we will present these standards, grouped according to the type to which they belong.

a) "Zoomorphic standards with a human head"

The first standard of this type is from the **Nasli M. Heeramaneck Collection**, today housed in **LACMA**. It bears the characteristics of a rarer subgroup of "zoomorphic standards with a human head" whose protomes, here replaced by human busts, are oriented outwards (F26: 1).[181] The object has two parallel iconographic levels with the same degree of impressiveness. The first one is usual for the standards of this type and shows two animals, standing on their hind legs, this time with human heads, between which there is another head, also human, with somewhat larger dimensions and a hat on its apex (C4: 1 – 6 compare with 7; see p. 175). Within the frames of the second level, the fused bodies of the two animals form an anthropomorphic figure with a clearly shaped human head, accentuated hips, animal legs, a thin waist girded with a belt, and arms joined at the chest, giving the impression that the human heads of the animals protrude from its shoulders.

The second standard, from the **David-Weill collection**, bears the same features, with even more pronounced rumps and hind legs of the animals i.e. hips of the anthropomorphic figure, and with a higher level of stylization of the details (F26: 2; similar standards but with zoomorphic protomes – C4: 1 – 6).[182] The key difference in regards to the previous specimen is in the shaping of the pair of busts which in this case, too, despite their high level of stylization, can be clearly defined as human, with depicted ears, overemphasized noses and hemispherical apexes that, judging by the horizontal incision, could be identified as hats. We know of two more standards, similar to the previous one, from the **LACMA collection** (F26: 7; F28: 2) and from the Royal Museums of Art and History in Brussels (F28: 3).[183] They differ from it in some minor details: the main character of the first specimen wears a ribbed hat, while the other does not have it at all, but instead has a neck ring and a ribbed belt; both standards have differing arm postures and different feet; they also vary in the manner of modeling, which is characterized by more rounded contours and softer and more blurred details.

The standard from the collection of the **Ashmolean Museum** also belongs to the same group and the same developmental line as the previous four (F26: 3).[184] It contains all the mentioned elements, additionally supplemented by a pair of small rings (= earrings?) below the ears of the central character. In this case, too, the key specifics relate to the pair of lateral anthropomorphic characters. Namely, this time they are not busts but whole human figures that are shaped quite realistically. Judging by the shape of the heads (with hats, quite

[181] Basic information: P. R. S. Moorey (et al), *Ancient Bronzes*, 55 (No. 227), the author classifies the standard in the group “anthropomorphic tube”.

[182] Basic information: P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 93 (No. 218); the author classifies the standard in the group “idole tubulaire”.

[183] *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020, (M.76.97.7); *Funerary idol (IR.0627)* 2020, (IR.0627).

[184] P. R. S. Moorey categorizes it in the group "anthropomorphic tube", whereby he believes that the combination of the standard with a pin is the result of a modern compilation (P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 158, 159, Pl. 35: No. 182). This pin is not shown in our illustration.

F26



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realistically formed noses, ears and beards), they should represent male characters. Their arms are with bent elbows, while their legs - with bent knees, which at the same time denote the arms of the main figure. Through the replacement of the pair of lateral protomes or busts with whole human figures, their connection with the zoomorphic figures to which they once belonged is completely severed, so that in this standard they cannot be recognized at all.

The second standard, from the **David-Weill collection**, differs from the previous ones, primarily from a formal i.e. compositional aspect (F26: 4, 5).[185] The pair of zoomorphic figures here can be recognized only by their hind legs, which in this case are depicted even more realistically than in the previous specimens. There are also differences in the girdle of the main figure, which is wider than in the others. Here, too, the main specifics relate to the two lateral characters. They are once again human figures with simply shaped heads (this time without hats) and arms placed on the chest in a position similar as in the previous specimen. In this case, too, their legs are equated with the arms of the central figure, resulting in a rather unconvincing and statically unbalanced pose with a vertically upright body and legs completely unnaturally thrown backwards.

The fifth specimen is known to us from notices of auction sales (F28: 9).[186] According to the basic conception (lower part, shape and orientation of the lateral busts), it is closest to the second and third standards (F26: 2, 3), while according to the notched girdle - to the previous object, whereby this element here is even higher (compare with F26: 4, 5). It is original in the detailed and quite elegant execution of the lateral heads, of which it seem that only the faces are depicted, without the back half of the skull. The characters they belong to are depicted with raised forearms in which they seem to hold the central head. An identical representation is formed on the other side of the standard which is preserved together with the bottle-shaped support, and with the bronze pin (without a decorative head?) inserted into it and into the standard.

The sixth standard is known to us from an article by Ph. Ackerman (F26: 6).[187] Although at the level of iconography it is close to the previous ones, from a typological aspect it differs from them to the extent that it can no longer be classified in the group "zoomorphic standards with a human head". Based on its basic columnar corpus, it is closer to the "idols with protomes", but it lacks the arched protomes characteristic to them. Instead, depicted to the left and right of the central character's neck are two human figures in a sitting position, as if they are sat on his shoulders or arms. From the available photo it can be concluded that their hands are lowered on their thighs, while their feet are leaning on the loins of the central character. In this case, too, their legs can be treated as the arms of the central character whose palms rest on his waist.

In the last three standards, we should emphasize the depiction of lateral figures in a sitting position with moderately or more pronouncedly bent legs. Through this component we can connect them with the already mentioned figures present on various other Luristan objects, depicted in a similar pose that, due to the strongly bent legs, comes close to the **fetal position** or the **sitting position specific to monkeys** (F2: 4, 5; E13: 1 compare with F21: 2; B33: 1). In that sense, we can point out a Luristan pin that also depicts two such figures oriented with their backs towards each other, which as a composition shows closeness to the last of the presented standards (F26: 8 compare with 6).[188] In our previous studies on figures with such a pose, present in the circle of Balkan prehistoric and early antique cultures, we concluded that they represent mythical characters embodying the meaning of the fetus as a symbol of the **newborn** i.e. the **child**, of **conception** and

[185] This specimen, too, is classified by P. Amiet in the group “idole tubulaire” (P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 93 – No. 219).
[186] *Anc. Lur. Bronze* 2019, (Lot 0099, provenance: Ex David Saidian Estate, New York city).
[187] Ph. Ackerman, *The Oriental*, 219 (Fig. 2: c), the article does not specify the collection in which it is located. The interpretations of the object proposed by the authoress (p. 222) will be analyzed in the next chapter.
[188] Basic information on the pin: P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 73, 79 (No. 172), the author thinks of the possibility that they could be figures of monkeys; a similar pin, but with only one figurine at the top: *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020, (M.76.97.224).

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F29



birth, but also of **death** and **resurrection**.[189] This meaning would fit very well with the proposed interpretation of the iconography of the above analyzed standards, because the figures depicted in this way would quite appropriately encode the **birth of Zurvān's sons from the body of their father**.

b) "Standards – statuettes"

An iconographic arrangement similar to the previous ones can be also identified on a standard from the category that we named "standards - statuettes", collected in **LACMA** (F27: 5).[190] It depicts a central anthropomorphic character with a large head, a pointed beard, denoted breasts, and arms outstretched to the sides. Below the waist girded with a belt, instead of the wide hips i.e. rumps and hind legs of the former pair of animals, depicted here is a skirt under which protrude realistically shaped human lower legs. Depicted above the rounded shoulders of the figure are two anthropomorphic heads (probably bearded), placed on elongated necks and oriented outwards. In their contours, one could also recognize older paradigms of some kind of zoomorphic protomes with open muzzles or beaks, this time facing inwards. The arms of the central figure can at the same time be treated as the arms or front legs of these lateral characters. Comparison with other specimens of this group shows that this is a rare modified version of these standards where the pair of usual animal protomes is reshaped into human busts (F27: 5 compare with 1 – 3).

c) "Columnar figurines"

We have seen that the anthropomorphic figure with protomes on its shoulders is almost standard for the "columnar figurines", nearly always with clearly denoted breasts and arms that touch, encompass or support them from below (F19; C27; C28). Its identification with the presented myth of Zurvān and the birth of his sons can be supported on the basis of the arguments put forward above, but with the absence of the face depicted on the torso. However, we are familiar with several standards of this type where this element is also present (F29: 1 – 4, 10).

The first such example (already mentioned in the previous chapters) can actually be considered as one of the most complete standards in which all the presented elements of the myth discussed here are depicted (F29: 2). In addition to the features common to objects of this type (elongated proportions, zoomorphic protomes on the shoulders, arms on the breasts), the figure also has **hermaphroditic traits** (a **beard** on the face and a **pubis** in the form of a triangle with a vertical line).[191] We have already pointed out that one of the two additional heads - which is anthropomorphic, depicted at the knees, could belong to Ohrmazd, who through contact with this part of his father's body acquires the status of his legitimate heir (F14: 7 – 11, see pp. 403, 405). Consequently, the other head, probably zoo-anthropomorphic, depicted below the chest (with a beak or a protruding tongue), would represent Ahriman who comes into this world violently, piercing through his father's womb (F29: 2).

The second specimen, from the **Metropolitan Museum**, lacks the pubis, which can be justified by its coverage with the clothing depicted on that part of the figure (F29: 1). This time only one of the additional heads is present, depicted at the abdomen, and it is grotesque, with wide open eyes and protruding tongue (compare with F4: 2, 3).[192]

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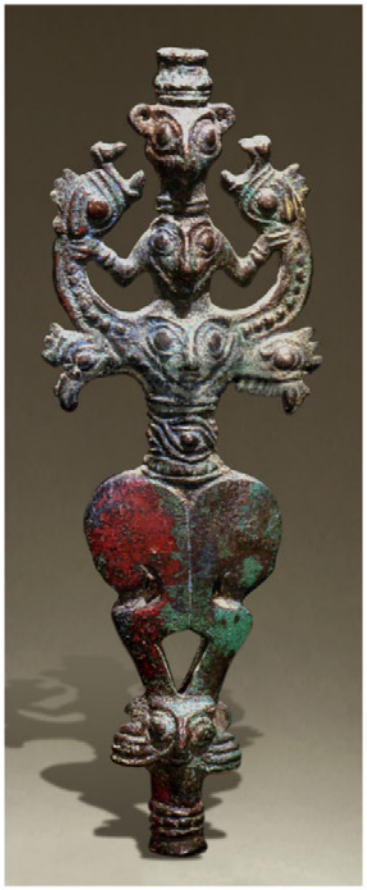
[189] Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 208-235, within those frames, see also on the meaning of the monkey and the Cosmic Axis on which figures of this type are often depicted; on the presence of this motif on Luristan bronzes, with corresponding parallels: А. В. Мельченко, *Редкие*, 623-625.

[190] *Bensozia* 2020.

[191] Basic information: G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 116 (No. 241).

[192] Basic information: O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 151 (No. 238).

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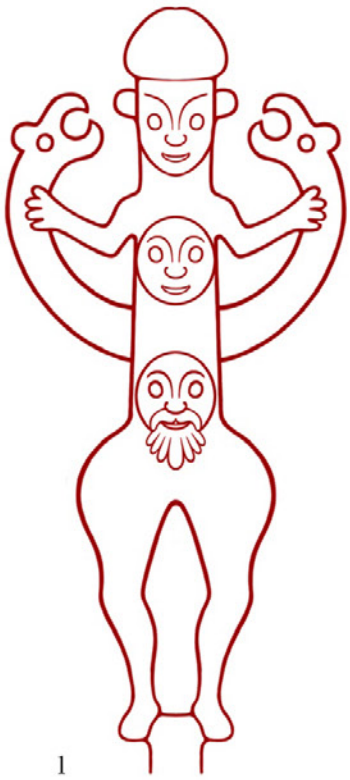


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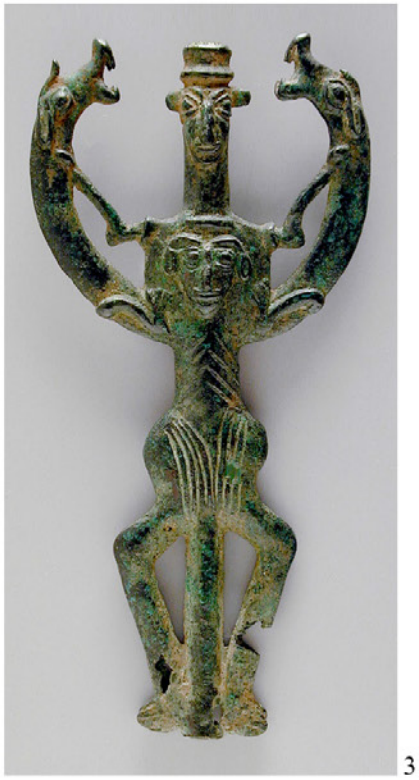


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Despite the rarity of these two specimens, they, with their elongated proportions, relatively clean and realistic execution and belonging to the standards in global terms, can be taken as an important argument in favor of the identification of the same character in other "columnar figurines" as well (F19).

To these specimens we can add three more where in the area of the torso one can sense a zoomorphic or zooanthropomorphic face with a pronounced sharp beak, similar as in the first standard (F29: 3, 4, 10 compare with 2). It is especially interesting that in one of these standards it is inscribed in an almond-shaped field which (despite the inappropriate position and scale) could encode the **open womb** (vulva) of the two-sexed Zurvān from where his son is born (F29: 4). Within the comparative analyzes of this motif we have seen that a similar arrangement also appears in other cultures (D16; see pp. 261, 264). On this occasion, the most interesting are the Christian traditions where it, among other things, is also identified with the wound that Christ received during his crucifixion, and from which the Christian church was metaphorically born (D16: 12 compare with 7). This encourages us to assume that in the mentioned standard, too, the elliptical opening depicted on the abdomen of the main character could denote the wound that Ahriman opens in the body of his father, in order to be the first one to emerge through it from his womb. The head of the central figure in this standard is laterally supplemented by two more human heads depicted in profile, which could be treated as reduced versions of the busts or whole figures of the two sons of Zurvān, regardless of the fact that in this specimen, too, the act of their birth is already encoded through the usual avian protomes on the shoulders (F29: 4 compare with 5 – 9). In one of the specimens (variant without protomes on the shoulders), the avian head is formed in the genital area, perhaps followed by some identification of the beak (or protruding tongue?) with the phallus of the figure (F29: 3).

d) "Idols with protomes"

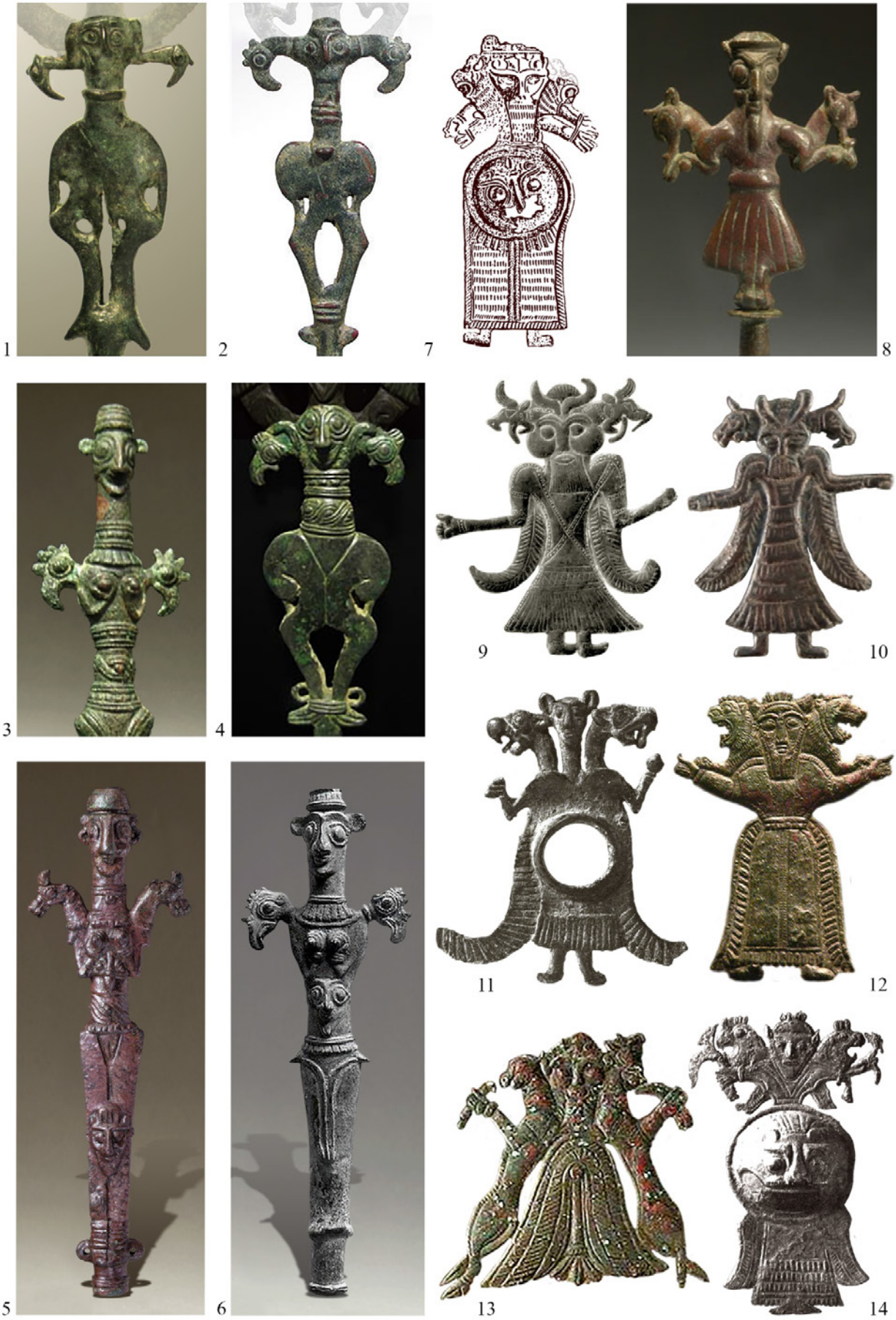
Unlike other types, in the standards of this group the myth of the birth of Zurvān's sons is not represented so clearly and decisively. The reasons for this can be sought on various sides. One of them is the hyperproduction of these standards which could easily have led to the degradation of the original iconographic paradigms, their demythicization, reconceptualization or covering by other scenes (F30). As a second reason, one can take the strictly defined contours of these objects, perhaps protected by appropriate taboos, in which there was no place for protomes that grow from the shoulders of the main character, at least not the one that occupies their upper part. It remains as a possibility that this meaning was taken over by the large arched protomes which in specimens where the whole standard depicts a single character (the macrocosmic giant), they would emerge from his loins (F31: 1 – 3). As we have seen, they will appear on the shoulders of the figure formed in the lower half of these standards, but more likely as a feature of the chthonic three-headed god, and not of the supreme Zurvān (F31: 4, 7 – 10; F20).[193]

Due to the indicated reasons, the birth of Zurvān's sons was refocused towards the other above presented forms of visual encoding. Here we have in mind the emergence of the head of such a figure from the chest, abdomen or crotch of its two-sexed father (F31: 1, 4 – 6, 11). The question which of the three variants is represented on a specific standard depends on the number and position of the additional anthropomorphic heads present on it, but also on the paradigm that will be taken into account by the observer and interpreter of these objects.

The first variant appears if the standard is observed in context of the representations of the macrocosmic giant (this time identified with the primordial Zurvān), with the pair of protomes that grow from

[193] We are not familiar with a standard from the category of "idols with protomes" where the large pair of protomes would be replaced by anthropomorphic busts. Coming closest to such an arrangement is the specimen from Musée Cernuschi in Paris, where human heads emerge from the mouths of the protomes (D32: 4): N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 194 (No. 196).

F33



its loins or are equated with its arms (F31: 1 compare with F30). In that case, the second head of the pillar, depicted in the area of its chest, could represent Ahriman who is coming out (or is ready to come out) from his father's chest. Thereby, the third head, located in the area of the abdomen, would denote Ohrmazd conceived in the womb i.e. uterus of Zurvān (F31: 1, 4; F32: 1 – 3).

The second variant comes to the fore if we equate Zurvān, as a hermaphroditic god, with the figure of the mythical **birth-giving woman with spread legs** that end in the form of zoomorphic protomes (F31: 5, 6, 11). In this case, too, the three heads retain the same meanings, whereby the third, being located between the spread zoomorphized legs of the two-sexed Zurvān, would represent the head of Ohrmazd at the moment of its exit from the vulva (F31: 6; F32: 1 – 3; D29). If in this iconographic arrangement we include the whole male figure depicted below the zoomorphized birth-giver, then we get the same scene again, but in the phase after the end of the act of childbirth, when below the body of Zurvān emerges the whole figure of his newborn son (F31: 5, 10). If it is **three-headed** (with a central anthropomorphic and lateral zoomorphic heads), it would be more likely that it belongs to the **chthonic Ahriman** (F31: 4, 8, 9; F20), and if it is **one-headed, with pronounced circular contours**, it is more likely that it represents **Ohrmazd** depicted as **deified light** and **sun** (F31: 5, 11). However, the legs of this character, almost always depicted with ends shaped in the form of fins and tied by a rope, point more to the first variant i.e. his chthonic nature (F20), especially if he has a pronounced mustache (D35). The presented iconographic elements can retain the same meaning and relations with Zurvān even if the figure of the birth-giver would not be identified with this god, but would keep its female character (F31: 5, 6). In that case, it could represent the **mother of Ohrmazd**, which, as we have seen, is mentioned in some written sources as an **epiphany of the female aspect of Zurvān** (see pp. 303, 307).

We have already mentioned several times that the figures of Zurvān's two sons cannot be decisively identified on the Luristan bronzes. This also relates to the Luristan standards. The **grotesque face**, especially common on the pillar of the "idols with protomes", has shown to be more typical of chthonic mythical characters, which, in turn, would be more indicative of **Ahriman**. But, on the other hand, it is also inherent of **solar characters**, which would go in favor of its identification with **Ohrmazd** as a **manifestation of light**.

We think that through the detailed analyzes and extensive comparative studies presented in this chapter we have managed to show that the myth of the birth of Zurvān's sons is one of the most dominant scenes on the Luristan bronzes and especially on the standards. Despite the differences in composition and details, it can be traced on most categories of Luristan bronzes (F32; F33). It appears quite often on pins with a discoid head (F32: 4 – 7, 9; F33: 7, 12 – 14) and on metal quiver coverings (F32: 8; F33: 9), as well as on some other objects of unknown purpose (F2; F33: 10), whereby, although less commonly, it is also present on cheekpieces (F33: 11). We believe that in this chapter we have also succeeded in pointing out its presence on the Luristan standards as well, on almost all of their types: "zoomorphic standards with a human head" (F26; F28: 2, 3, 9), "columnar figurines" (F33: 3, 5, 6; F29: 1 – 4, 10), "standards - statuettes" (F27: 1 – 3, 5; F28: 1; F33: 8) and "idols with protomes" (F30; F31; F32: 1 – 3; F33: 1, 2, 4).

Chapter IX

HUMAN HEAD WITH TWO OR MORE FACES ORIENTED IN VARIOUS DIRECTIONS



IX. HUMAN HEAD WITH TWO OR MORE FACES ORIENTED IN VARIOUS DIRECTIONS

Most Luristan standards do not actually have a front and a back side, but two faces i.e. all the elements cast on one of their sides, within the frames of the same contours, are also replicated on the other. As a result of such duplication, their top acquires the appearance of a head with two human faces oriented in opposite directions - forwards and backwards (examples C13: 4 – 6; C24: 6, 7).[1] This element raises the dilemma of whether such duplication is due to the intention to depict a **mythical character with two faces** or, on the other hand, only the desire to also provide **visibility of the whole composition to the observers standing behind the standard, and not only to those in front of it**. In support of the first assumption, one can take to some extent a type of standards (referred to in this paper as "idols") where the human face is the only figural iconographic element, due to which its duplication acquires a more pronounced semiotic status (G1 – G3). The head formed in such a way and placed at the top of the elongated cylindrical corpus resembles some kind of columnar idol that depicts a mythical character with two faces. The acceptance of this association would imply that the same character is actually also depicted on the "idols with protomes", but not in an elementary form - as in the "idols", but supplemented by other anthropomorphic and zoomorphic elements that round off a hybrid figure or a more complex scene that encompasses the whole object (G7; G10; G11). The evident and the frequent, and even obligatory, presence of this element had led to its identification even by the earliest researchers of the Luristan bronzes, which was followed by the appropriate naming of the "idols" according to associations with the Roman double-faced god Janus (see below). Although the human head between the pair of animals from the "zoomorphic standards with a human head" also posseses two faces (C2 – C5), we have no arguments whether in this case, too, behind the mentioned element, stands some kind of double-faced mythical creature or it is just a mechanical duplication of the whole composition executed because of practical or aesthetic reasons.

[1] This feature is not inherent to the category "zoomorphic standards", where no anthropomorphic head is present at all (B1; B2; B5 – B10), as well as to the "columnar figurines" which, usually, are shaped in the form of an anthropomorphic figure (with or without zoomorphic additions), on the rear of which are modeled the corresponding elements of the back side of the human figure (occiput, back, buttocks, posterior compartment of the legs) (C26 – C28).

G1



If we accept the view that behind this feature stands some mythical character i.e. deity with two faces, take into account that it occurs in many of the indicated standards and that it, at the same time, occupies the central place in their iconography, then from these observation would follow the conclusion that it is a **character who within the frames of Luristan culture had a particularly high, and even supreme status.**

The mentioned components were the reason for the preparation of a special chapter within this monograph in which, through a more comprehensive semiotic and comparative analysis, we would examine the presence and possible meanings of the mythical character with the indicated features.

We will dedicate the subsequent sub-chapters to the presentation of the standards and other Luristan bronzes on which one can identify this mythical character. First will follow the section on the standards of the type "idols" where this feature appears in pure i.e. elementary form,[2] and then on the other types ("zoomorphic standards with a human head" and "idols with protomes"), as a continuation of the previous chapters where their basic typological and iconographic characteristics were already elaborated. This will be followed by an extensive iconographic, comparative and semiotic analysis of the mythical character with two or more faces, with special emphasis on the Italic god Janus, aimed at revealing the nature, meaning and functions of this character within the Luristan bronzes and the culture in which they existed.

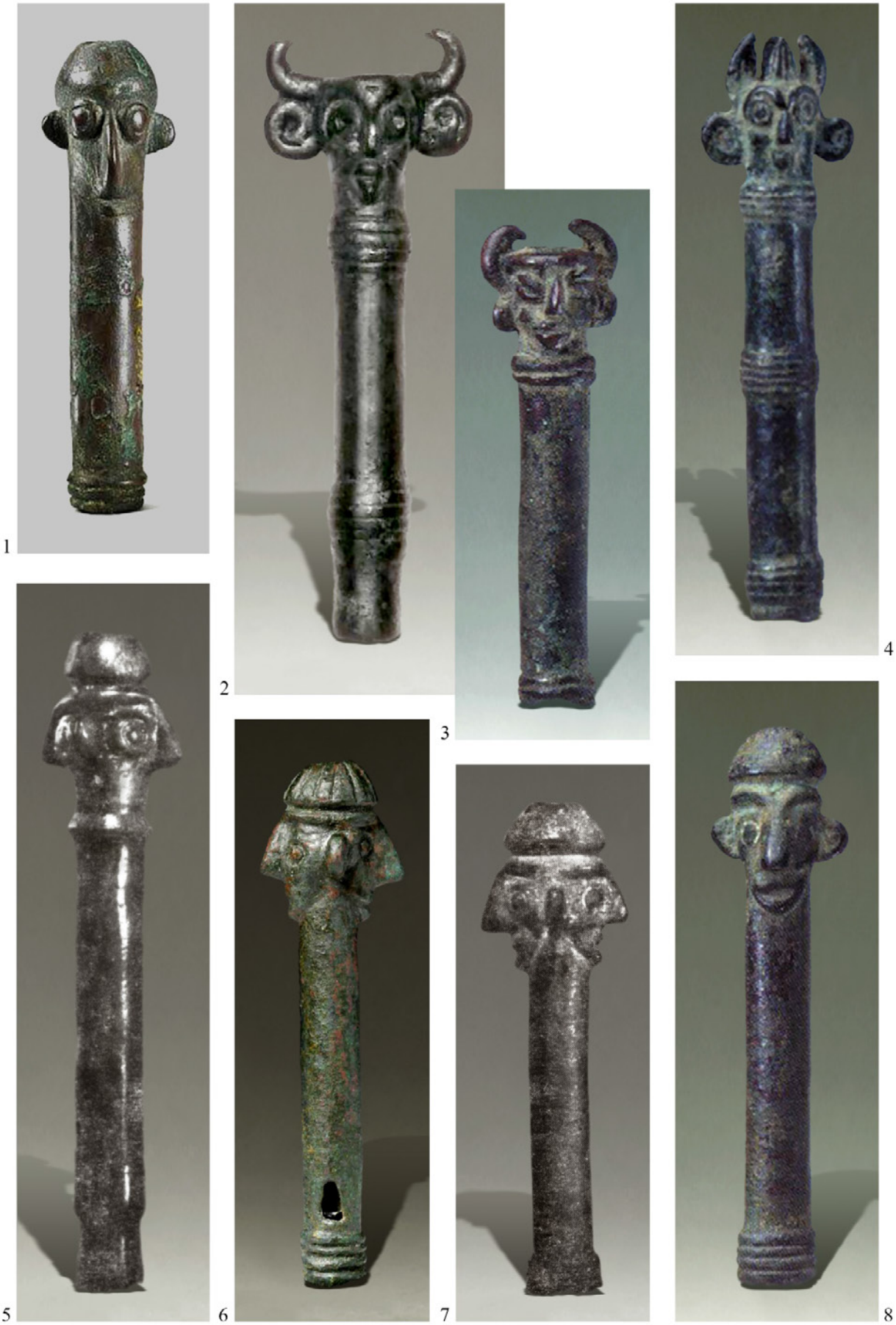
1. General characteristics of the "idols"

Among the Luristan standards, there is a specific group that stands out, consisting of an elongated cylindrical corpus (this time also hollow inside) at the upper end of which are formed two or more heads, more precisely one head with two or more faces, oriented in opposite directions (G1 – G3; G4: 3, 6; G5: 1 – 3). In some variants, analogous elements are also formed at the lower end of the object (G3: 4; G4: 1, 2, 5). These objects round off a separate typological group, which clearly stands out from the remaining types of standards. Several names have been proposed for it, based on the tubular shape of their corpus ("anthropomorphic tube",[3] "idole tubular",[4] "Röhrenidole"[5]) or the associations between their main feature and the analogically conceived double-faced depictions of the Roman god Janus ("idole tubulaire janiforme",[6] "decorated tube with grotesque Janus head"[7]) (see p. 13 and Fig. 2; 2a on pp. 9, 10).

In most specimens, the mentioned heads i.e. faces are **anthropomorphic** and depicted quite plastically - with a prominent nose, wide open eyes, accentuated eyebrows, engraved mouth (G1 – G3), as well as ears (one pair common to both characters) that are often overemphasized, so that with their size and shape they seem as belonging to animals (G1: 3, 6, 7; G3: 2, 3). There are examples where the heads are also supplemented by horns (again one pair for both characters) (G2: 2, 3; G4: 2), but also by some other not fully clear elements (G2: 4). In numerous specimens, formed above the head is a rounded segment that resembles a hat, some kind of vessel, but also the **glans penis**, if the whole object is perceived as an anthropomorphized phallus (especially G1: 1; G2: 5 – 8; see p. 239). Although less common, the heads can also be **zoomorphic** (bovine, ibex, animal from the family of felines etc.) or **zooanthropomorphic** (G4). Usually, the cylindrical corpus is smooth, mainly divided by two or three transversely ribbed zones, one of which is usually below the

[2] Some elements of the iconography of this type of standards were already presented in Chapter VI (see p. 239).
[3] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 152; within the frames of this type, P. R. S. Moorey classifies these specific standards as "other anthropomorphic tubes" (P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 164, 165).
[4] E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 103, 104, 113, 114 (the author proposes their classification into three main subtypes).
[5] G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 117-119.
[6] E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 103, 104, 114.
[7] P. Watson, *Luristan*, 10, 11.

G2



G3



1



2



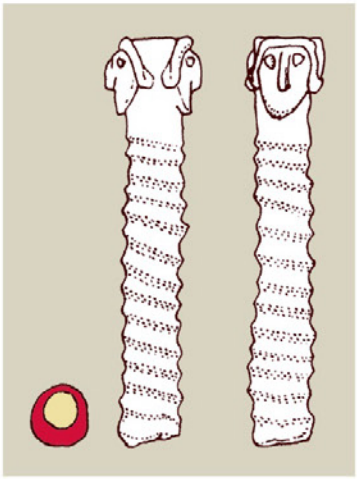
3



4



5



6



7

G4



1



2



3



4



5



6

faces (resembling a ring i.e a torc worn on the neck), the second is in the middle (alluding to some kind of girdle or belt), while the third one is at the bottom, just above the slightly broadened foot of the object (G1 – G3). In rare cases, the entire corpus is ribbed by horizontal cannelures (G1: 1; G3: 6, 7).[8] The standards of this type can be classified into three basic groups which we will discuss separately in the following sub-chapters.

a) "Idols" with heads only at the upper end

It represents the most common subtype whose variability can depend on the **affiliation of the heads** (anthropomorphic, zoo-anthropomorphic, zoomorphic), their **number** (two, three or four) and the **mutual combination** of the indicated components. The most common are the **combinations in pair of anthropomorphic heads**, while slightly rarer are the anthropomorphic variants with some **small zoomorphic supplement** - most often horns or animal ears (G1 – G3). In some cases, one can recognize in them **another pair of characters** (most commonly anthropomorphic and without a mouth), but conditionally - within the framework of the elements of the basic pair of faces, taking over i.e. borrowing from them the eyes and ears, whereby the latter ones acquire the meaning of noses (G1: 8; G2: 5; G3: 1 – 3). It is also not uncommon to find **combinations of anthropomorphic and zoomorphic heads** (but without the indicated concept of "borrowing"), arranged alternately, whereby the dominant impression is that the front and back positions belong to the anthropomorphic ones, while the lateral are occupied by the zoomorphic ones (G4: 1, 6). In the three-headed variants (which, by the way, belong to the following group), usually all heads are either anthropomorphic (at the lower end of the standard – G3: 4; G4: 1) or of animals (G4: 5 – at the upper end).

b) "Idols" with heads at both the upper and lower ends

We mentioned that in some "idols", certain iconographic elements are also formed at the **lower end**. These can be the indicated elements from the upper end (the multiplicated heads or the phallus-like segment) or just one head, most often with zoomorphic or zoo-anthropomorphic features (G3: 4; G4: 1 – 3, 5, 6). In this subtype, the multiplicated heads are never present only in the lower position, but are always combined with one of the mentioned variants at the upper end. Thereby, they occur in **two orientations** - normal i.e. analogous to those of the upper end (G4: 2, 5) or rotated by 180 degrees (G3: 4; G4: 1). Unlike the upper ones, the heads from this part can also be singular, most often represented by a zoo-anthropomorphic or zoomorphic variant, whereby currently we do not know of such examples with a rotated orientation (G4: 2, 5). In several objects, one can notice a tendency for **triple grouping** of these heads (in an anthropomorphic, zoomorphic or zoo-anthropomorphic version) rotated by 180 degrees (G3: 4; G4: 1). Such an orientation raises the question of the orientation of the whole "idol" i.e. which was actually its upper and which its lower end.

In the following lines, we will note the key iconographic elements of several specific examples of this subtype upon which we will base our interpretations of these standards. In the specimen from the Metropolitan Museum we have a combination of a pair of horned human heads at the upper end, with an animal (leonine) head at the lower one (G4: 2).[9] In another "idol", the analogous singular zoomorphic head located at the bottom is combined with three bovine heads at the upper end (G4: 5). In these cases the tendency for non-multiplication of the lower head is very indicative, although such a solution would be quite expected by analogy with the multiplication of the upper ones. This means that this and other similar solutions in such objects were not executed on the basis of some kind of **pictorial concepts**, but upon strictly defined **mythical-symbolic rules and paradigms**. It can be assumed that, according to some such rule, the zoomorphic head depicted in the lower zone of the "idol" was not supposed to be multiplicated, probably because it would not correspond to the appearance and meaning of the character that it represented. In one such standard, formed at one end are two heads of ibexes and between them two more zooanthropomorphic ("sub-human") heads,

[8] E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 104 – Fig. 84 (No. 122); C. Goff, *Excavations*, 38, 56 (Fig. 14: 26), 64.
[9] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 152 (No. 242)



1 2 3

4 5 6

while at the other - three anthropomorphic faces (G4: 1; in reverse orientation G28: 1).[10] We are familiar with another similarly conceptualized specimen, with two half-length human representations at the upper end and three heads ("masks") at the bottom (G3: 4; in reverse orientation G28: 2). By the way, this is one of the rare standards discovered during archeological excavations, in a profane building at the site Baba Jan.[11]

c) Atypical "idols"

In this conditional group we classify all "idols" that do not fit into the previous two subtypes, and which, through supplementation with new specimens, could also constitute new subtypes. The first two are united by the fact that the anthropomorphic face at the upper end of the columnar corpus (probably repeated on the back side) is supplemented by one or two more human faces formed below it (G6: 4, 5). In one of them, the corpus is accompanied by three pairs of avian protomes (G6: 5), while in the second - by ibex heads (G6: 4), which is not at all characteristic of the standards of the "idols" type.[12]

To this group we can add another, at least for now, unique specimen whose usual corpus (a tubular pillar with two faces at the top) is supplemented in the middle by two laterally-oriented symmetrical figures (G5: 1 – 3).[13] Although in the description of the object it is suggested that they represent animals from the family of felines, we think that it would be more likely that they are zoo-anthropomorphic characters in a crouched posture with features of a monkey and a dwarfish human, who, as we have seen, also appear on other types of Luristan bronzes (E13: 1; B33: 1).[14] Particularly striking is the pair of pointed growths in the area of their chin (fangs, tusks, locks of beard?), which gives these figures some kind of demonic symbolism. In this case, the posture and position of these figures suggest their ascent along the columnar idol. The two lateral loops, common to the other but not to this type of standards, could bear the meaning of the curled tails of these figures. We also highlight a specimen from LACMA that shows clear relations with the category of "columnar figurines" (G6: 6 compare with C26).

Within the frames of the standards of the "idols" type, there are also specimens that do not fit into the characteristics of this otherwise quite homogeneous group, which could even call into question their definition as standards. Such is, for example, the three-headed specimen from the Metropolitan Museum, which, given its pointed lower tip, evidently could not stand on a flat surface, or on a support common to the standards, but was probably inserted into some soft surface or a socket (G6: 7). In its case, under the three depicted heads, one can sense the contours of the anthropomorphic figures to which they belong, as another feature that would be atypical of the "idols".[15]

d) Genesis and relations with other standards

In terms of its double-facedness and other stylistic and morphological features (phallic shape, emphasized ears i.e. horns, and the hat), the top of the "idols" is quite similar to that of the "idols with protomes", but also of some "zoomorphic standards with a human head" and "columnar figurines" (G7).[16] But, regardless of these evident relations, for now there are no indicators which one of the two types is older and whether both may have existed at the same time i.e. synchronously with some of the other types of

[10] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 165 (No. 190A).
[11] G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 118 (244).
[12] P. R. S. Moorey, *The Art*, 65 (277); *Idole tubulaire* 2019.
[13] *LOT 88* 2019.
[14] Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 208-235; in the case of the Luristan bronzes, with corresponding parallels: А. В. Мельченко, *Редкие*, 623-625.
[15] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 153, 154 (No. 247).
[16] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 164.

G6



1



2



3



4



5



6



7

standards.[17] H. Potratz gives this type of objects a secondary character, treating it as a product of the internal process of **dissolution of the figurality** (der bildliche Auflösungsprozess) of the "idols with protomes", which started even with the "zoomorphic standards".[18] This researcher thinks that in the "idols with protomes", the pair of animals began to be suppressed at the expense of the newly emerged central anthropomorphic divine character until he, at the end (in the "columnar figurines" and ultimately in the "idols"), remained alone (the author specifically apostrophizes C33: 8).[19] It seems that O. W. Muscarella is not convinced of the provability of this view, believing that the "idols" should not have to be treated as a product of the culmination of this process, but as a variant that existed in parallel with the other standards.[20] The definitive resolution of these dilemmas is currently impossible due to the absence of a larger number of dated specimens. In addition to the previously mentioned one (G3: 4), discovered at the Baba Jan site was also an "idol" with a transversely cannelured corpus, in layers from the 7th century BCE (G3: 6; similar specimens – G3: 7 and G1: 1).[21]

We think that, at least on an iconographic level, the "idols", together with the "zoomorphic standards", represent the **two basic (and probably also starting) points**, whose mutual combination and further transformation (anthropomorphization, zoomorphization and acquisition of other elements) did then led to the formation of the "idols with protomes" (G7: 2, 4, 6, 10, 12; C15) and the "columnar figurines" (G7: 14). As we have mentioned, this genetic line can be recognized in the columnar corpus of the latter two types (especially the first of them), as well as in the specific tops in the form of a hat or glans penis. But, this certainly does not mean that the emergence and existence of these two types was followed by the extinction of the "idols", but on the contrary - it implies the parallel existence of all three types.

The genesis, in turn, of the "idols" themselves i.e. their templates could be sought on two levels.

As their iconographic paradigms, one can take the **real columnar idols** (most probably wooden and phallus-shaped) with somewhat larger or monumental dimensions, which were quite likely used as cult objects in Luristan culture as well. In favor of this we will take the already mentioned atypical standard which could be treated as a miniature copy of some kind of real idol with much larger dimensions (G6: 4).[22] An analogous impression is left by another previously referenced similar object, this time supplemented by three human faces arranged one below the other and accompanied by pairs of symmetrical avian heads (G6: 5 compare with E4: 1; E7).[23] A similar columnar object can be also identified on an openwork Luristan pin. It has three heads at the top (the central is human, while the lateral ones look like bovine, probably also repeated on the other side), whose real dimensions can be perceived based on the pair of ibexes that are flanking it (G6: 1).[24] Well-fitting within this context is also the **phallic component**, presented in one of the previous chapters, according to which the pillar of the Luristan standards represented the personalized phallus, which at the ideal level interfered with the Macrocosmic phallus and the Cosmic Pillar, while at the material level – with the real idols shaped in the form of miniature or gigantic phalluses (D1 – D6; p. 241).

As a second (material i.e. "mechanical") template of the Luristan "idols", we can take several **cast tubular objects with an anthropomorphic head at the top** which, although close in shape to the "idols", differ from them in the tubular corpus which is thinner than theirs and without divisions (G8: 1 – 3 compare

[17] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 152.
[18] H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 33, 34.
[19] H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 29, 30: H. Potratz, *Die Luristanbronzen*, 212.
[20] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 152.
[21] C. Goff, *Excavations*, 38, 56 (Fig. 14: 26), 64; O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 152.
[22] Basic information: P. R. S. Moorey (et al), *Ancient Bronzes*, 65 (No. 277).
[23] *Idole tubulaire* 2019.
[24] Basic information: G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 71, 72 (144).

G7



with G1 – G3).[25] Such shape of theirs leads us to the assumption that at least some of these objects were intended for **implanting through the rings formed between the legs of the two upright standing animals in the "zoomorphic standards"**, through which then a pin with a "decorative head" was inserted to secure the joining of the standard with the bottle-shaped support. In order to test it, we performed two photomontages of such hypothetical arrangements (G8: 4 – 9 compare with 1 – 3), based on one such existing specimen, which, in our opinion, includes an element like this (C20: 8). With time, this tubular element started being cast together with the standards, resulting in the "zoomorphic standards with a human head" (G9: 1 – 3). This process evidently also included the variants with a glans penis formed above the head, which had a decisive role (direct or indirect) in the formation of almost all subsequent types of standards (G9: 4 – 9, 12, 14). The **"idols"** were created by the extraction and further development of this element as a separate object i.e. separate type of standards (G9: 6 compared with 1, 5; H12: 6). The **"idols with protomes"** were created by the fusion of this element into the "zoomorphic standards" or "zoomorphic standards with a human head" (G9: 4, 5, 7, 8, 12), and in some cases also of the openwork pins with a pair of animal protomes and a central human character (C20; C21). The **"columnar figurines"** were formed by the anthropomorphization of the "idols" i.e. their transformation into columnar human figures (G9: 6, 9). The phallus-like top is also borne by some **"standards - statuettes"** which indicates their origination from the "columnar figurines" and "idols with protomes", as a result of them getting closer to the Luristan statuettes (G9: 9, 12, 14). In most cases, one can sense the role of some **external paradigms** in these transformations and the formation of the mentioned types of standards (G9: 10, 11 compare with 9; 13 compare with 12).

We end this overview with a scepter i.e. mace from the territory of Iran, which has an iron shaft and a bronze top shaped in the form of a human head with two faces (G6: 2, 3). The style of execution of the head, with certain elements of the ancient Mediterranean style, shows that objects similar to the "idols" presented here had continued to be used in the following centuries as well, possibly as a continuation of the traditions of the Luristan standards.

e) Previous observations on the iconography, origin and meaning

Speaking of the bifacial character from the Luristan standards ("idols with protomes", "zoomorphic standards with a human head", and also indirectly of the "idols"), **S. Przeworski** points to the presence of an analogous character in Sumerian culture, but not depicted in a struggle with wild animals, as in the mentioned objects (G7; G10; G11). In these comparisons he also includes **Usmi**, the double-faced demon - **servant of the god Ea**, who appears on Mesopotamian reliefs and seals, immediately prior to the Akkadian dynasty (26th century BCE) (G17; G18: 1, 2). He is also present on later Syrian-Hittite seals, and in the second half of the 2nd millennium BCE in the glyptics of Upper Syria and Cyprus (G18: 4). The author thinks that an identical mythical hero could be behind the character from the Luristan standards, which would be also indicated by other relations between Luristan and Upper Syria in the period between 1400 and 750 BCE. Leaving the final solution to the question from where did the two regions borrow this iconographic conception, he thinks of the possibility that it was Upper Mesopotamia.[26]

In her research on the oriental roots of Janus and the many-faced Hermes, **Ph. Ackerman** also includes the bifacial character from the Luristan standards whose nature she defines as a **"talismanic demon (or god?)"**. At the same time, she thinks that there is no reason for postulating immediate continuity between

[25] The speciemen G8: 2, is referenced by E. F. Schmidt (in the signature of Pl. 260: b) as "Copper Tube", whereby in regards to the origin of this and two other completely different objects he states "Said to be from Qumish". In Chapter. 35, on p. 494, within the catalogue of "Unexcavated objects" he gives the following description of the object, marked with Kha 53 (ch. 27J): "Tube, one end of which consists of two horned beardless human heads with pierced ears, back to back" (E. F. Schmidt et al, *The Holmes*). We have found two more specimens, one quite similar to the previous one, in the collection of the Royal Musums of Art and History, Brussels: *Idol (IR.0553)* 2020; *Torch* 2021.

[26] S. Przeworski, *Luristan Bronzes*, 256.

G8



them, yet it seems more probable to her that they represent three separate branches sprouted from one and the same stem, which was almost certainly located on the Iranian Plateau.[27]

R. Ghirshman thinks that the bifacial character from the "idols with protomes" depicted **Sraosha - the god of justice**, whereby, he also seems to connect with this identification the main features of the indicated character from the standards - his polycephaly i.e. the orientation of the two faces in opposite directions, and the overemphasized eyes and ears as symbols of his omnipotence. He also puts the last two features in relation to **Mithra**, who is presented in the Avesta with a "thousand ears and myriads of eyes". He justifies these relations with the close ties between the cults of the two gods. The author thinks that the supports on which the standards bearing the god's depiction were fastened, in fact symbolize the weapon i.e. club with the help of which he fights demons. In that context, Ghirshman also interprets the presence of the roosters, namely as an attribute of the god (Sraosha?) whose function was to **awaken the community** i.e. to call on its members to perform their religious duties. Together with Mithra and the goddess **Rashnu**, Sraosha participated in the **trial of the souls** as they crossed the **Chinvat Bridge**, which would also be a justification for the placement of these objects in graves.[28]

Although **P. R. S. Moorey** thinks that it would be futile to speculate about the identification of the mythical character depicted on these standards, he nevertheless emphasizes some of its relations with Mesopotamian culture, once again with the already mentioned Sumerian **Isimu** (Akkadian **Usmu**, Hittite **Izzumi**), in the function of a clerk and messenger of the god Ea.[29] **H. Potratz** fits the multifaced creature from the "idols" into his "lunar conception", identifying it with the **"Moon Goddess"** (Mondgöttin).[30]

Most previous researchers agree that the standards of the "idols" type also depict the mythical character "Master of Animals", or, at the very least, use this paradigm to name these objects.[31] We could not agree with such an epithet of the central character from these standards, for the simple reason that the animals are often absent from them, but even when they are present, they are not placed in an arrangement that would designate them as subordinate in relation to him (G1 – G4).

We think that the fairly realistic execution of the referenced Mesopotamian parallels (G17; G18), depicting all the elements of the body, makes them different in regards to those from the Luristan standards where the double-faced characters are much more stylized and with hybrid features (in the "idols with protomes") or only with heads formed at the top of the pillar, without any other depicted elements of the body (in the "idols"). An exception is the seal from the Department of the History of Art, University of Pennsylvania, whose iconography is at the same time much closer to the "idols" or more broadly to the other types of standards (G18: 6).[32] These similarities are represented by the central position of the figure with two faces, its elevated columnar contour, and its pronounced size. No less important is the presence of two symmetrical animals (in this case gryphons with spread wings) which gives the central figure the function of "Master of Animals", placing it in more direct relations with the "idols with protomes" (compare with G7; G10; G11). The connections between this seal and the Luristan standards are also indicated by its association with the Kassites, a people that some of the previous researchers consider to be the bearers of these objects (see p. 679).

It seems to us that the status of appropriate templates can also be borne by the **idols with multiple faces** from the surrounding areas to the north of Luristan, or specifically from **Armenia**, closer to them due to their columnar (and conditionally phallus-like) corpus (G36: 1, 2). In fact, we think that such cultic pillars i.e. idols, supplemented at the top by two or more human faces, were widespread in Europe, the Mediterranean and the Middle East, which we will discuss in more detail in the following sub-chapters. On this occasion, we

[27] Ph. Ackerman, *The Oriental*, 222-225.
[28] R. Ghirshman, *The Art*, 44, 45.
[29] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 164.
[30] H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 33, 34.
[31] E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 114.
[32] *Cylinder seal* 2020.

G9



would mention two wooden examples which, despite their much later origins, show close relations with some Luristan "idols" at the level of the basic contour and composition. We present them here not as direct analogies, but as examples that reflect some ancient archetypal concepts in the organization of cultic objects. The first is a wooden columnar object discovered in **Riga**, attributed to the medieval cultures from the territory of Latvia, where we have a combination of human faces at the upper end (4 in number) and a zoomorphic head at the lower one.[33] It corresponds to an aforementioned Luristan "idol" with a pair of horned human heads at the top and a leonine head at the bottom (G49: 6 compare with 7). The second object is from **Łęczyca** and is associated with the Slavic cultures from the territory of present-day Poland (G4: 4).[34] Its division into an upper half, shaped in the form of a human bust, and a lower one - in the form of a phallus, corresponds on a global level to the composition of another Luristan "idol" (G4: 4 compare with 3).

2. Implicit and explicit multifaciality

We have seen that in some of the "idols" and "idols with protomes", observed from the side, in the space between the two faces, one can recognize two more, whose eyes are "borrowed" from the neighboring ones, while the meaning of noses is acquired by their elongated ears (G1: 8; G2: 5; G3: 1 – 3). In fact, in that way, at the top of these standards, emerges an implicit depiction of some kind of mythical character who has **not two but four faces**, especially if their observer bears this visual paradigm in advance in his consciousness or subconscious. With that, in these objects we get another of the ambivalent images so typical of the Luristan bronzes, whose presence or absence depends on the preconception i.e. the mental image of the observer.

This element in the standards has been previously noted by several researchers. **Ph. Ackerman** identifies it in an atypical standard that most closely resembles the "idols with protomes", where, in place of the protomes, are the hands of the central character on each of which sits a single human figure ("he is multiple visage with either two faces back-to-back or four, the two pairs of eyes serving, in shifting relations, for all four sets of features") (G5: 6; G10: 1).[35] **E. de Waele** touches upon it in relation to the faces from the lower zone of some "idols with protomes", which will be discussed later (G11).

The concept of formation of a multifaced creature whose **eyes are shared by two adjacent faces** also appears outside of Luristan culture. It can be found on a **mace** from the **"Marlik" culture**, neighboring and synchronous to it (see p. 468), formed on which are three anthropomorphic characters, whereby between them, analogously as in the standards, one can recognize three more, but without mouths (G13: 7). Analogous compression is also present among the Gallo-Roman cultic stone plastics from Western Europe (G32: 2, 3, 4, 6, 10) and Scandinavia (G39: 5). Similar solutions continued to also exist in the Middle Ages. As an example, we can take the miniature ancient (wooden?) idol from **Svendborg** (Denmark), associated with the Slavic pagan cultures (G42: 1). Formed within the frames of its phallus-shaped top are four faces with individual elongated slender noses and pointed beards, but with only four eyes, each of which at the same time belongs to two adjacent characters. It represents a quite common concept that we will also discuss in the following sub-chapters. It is also present in the "exotic" cultures (G35: 6, 8), and even in Christianity (G35: 1, 3, 5; see pp. 511, 513, 520 – 525).

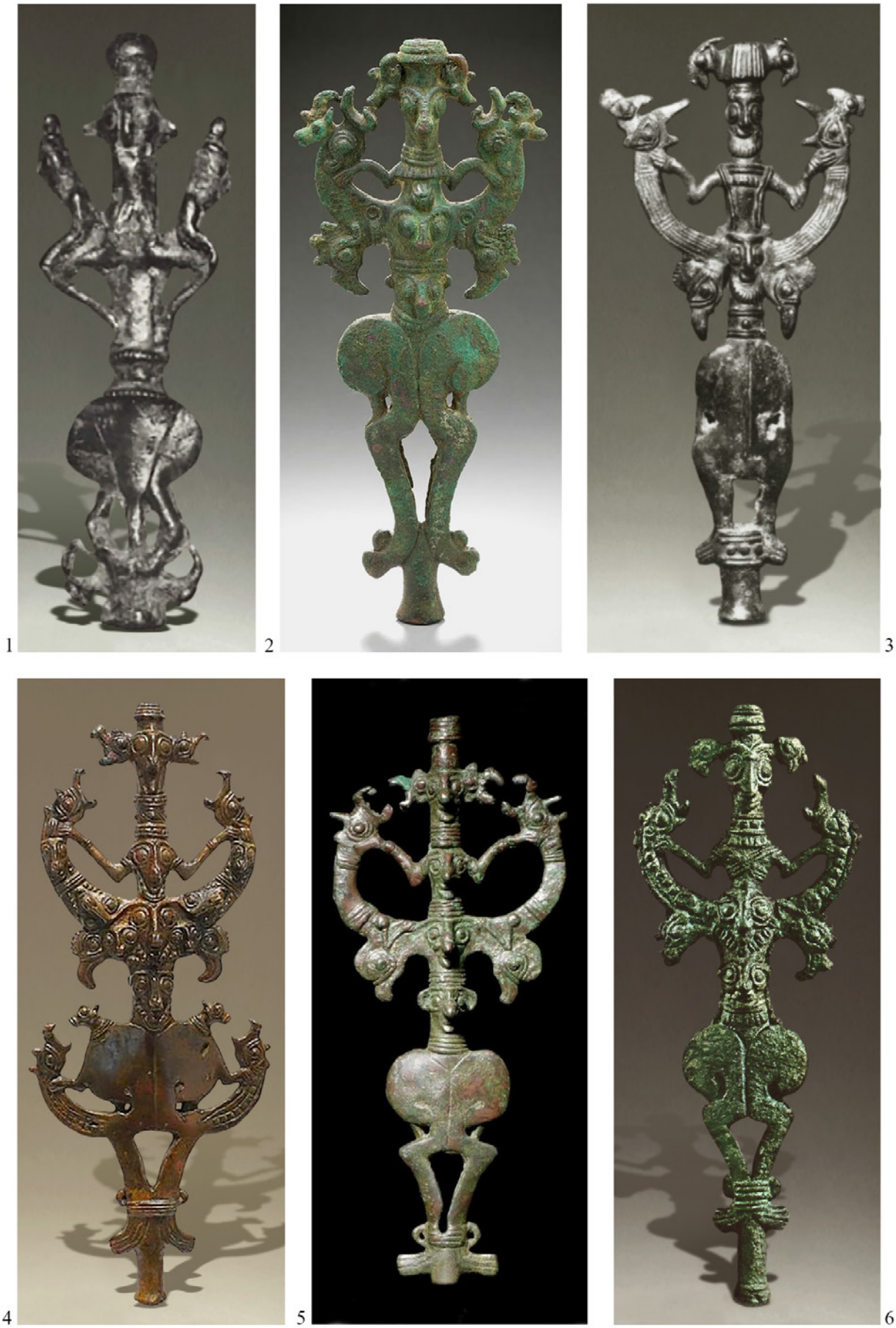
3. Multiplicated faces in other Luristan standards

a) Upper zone of the standards

We have seen that the multiplicated faces i.e. heads are an indispensable feature not only at the upper end of the "idols", but also of the "idols with protomes", in variants that from a morphological, iconographic

[33] А. В. Цауне, *Антропоморфные*, 131, 132, Рис. 32: 3; P. Szczepanik, *Wczesnośredniowieczne*, 51, 53 – Ryc. 5.
[34] W. Hensel, *Early*, 197, Fig. 12.
[35] Ph. Ackerman, *The Oriental*, 222.

G10



and stylistic aspect are very close to each other and even identical (G7). Thereby, we should nevertheless also point out some differences between them. So far we do not know of a specimen of the "idols with protomes" in which only zoomorphic heads would be depicted in this position. At the upper end of these standards, as in all other types with the exception of the "idols", the anthropomorphic faces are only present in pairs. Their grouping into a triad is not present at all, while quadrifaciality, as we have seen, can be detected (implicitly or explicitly) only in rare exceptions (G10: 1). We are familiar with several "idols with protomes" where the pair of anthropomorphic heads at the upper end is supplemented by another pair of zoomorphic ones (avian, caprine), which are smaller and placed laterally relative to them (G10: 2 – 6). The presence of these heads can be understood in two ways - as a product of the tendency to multiplicate the protomes or human heads which is clearly expressed in the same specimens, or as a result of certain mythical-symbolic paradigms that we discussed in the previous chapter.

So far we know of only one standard (from the group of "zoomorphic standards with a human head"), at the top of which are quite explicitly depicted four faces oriented in all directions (G5: 5 compare with C4).[36] Such an impression is due to the fact that, in addition to the usual borrowing of eyes from adjacent characters and the identification of their noses and ears, also depicted in this case are four mouths - one for each of the four characters.

The same concept of merging multiple faces (specifically - using one eye for two adjacent faces) is also applied within the frames of the middle zone of one "idol with protomes", where, in this way, a pair of faces is depicted between the two large protomes (G3: 5; F1: 5; an uncompressed variant present at the same position G10: 4).

Multiplication of anthropomorphic heads in a number greater than two was noted by us in only one specimen of the type "columnar figurines" (G5: 4; D16: 7). Based on the available photo that shows only its front side, it can be concluded that it is a case with three heads i.e. one central and two lateral ones, slightly smaller than the former. It is not excluded that it might be a case of four heads, if the elements on the front side are also repeated on the back, although such a procedure is not characteristic of the standards of this type.[37]

b) Lower zone of the standards

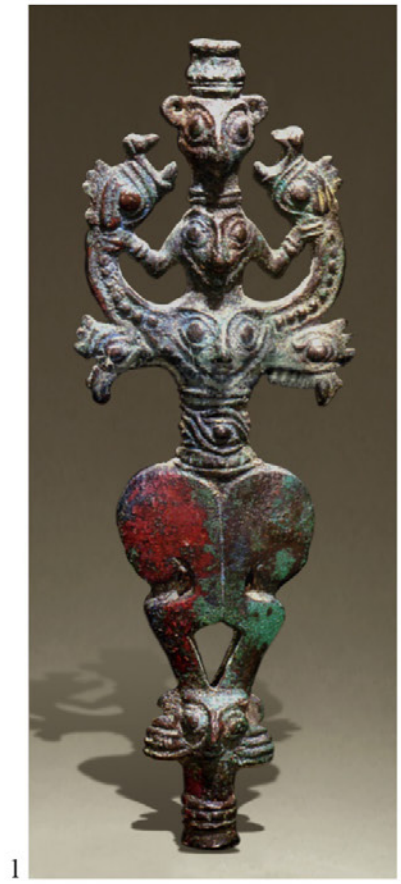
We have already mentioned that anthropomorphic faces are also present in the lower zone of some standards. These are rarer specimens of the "idols with protomes" in which, under the feet or fins of the lower zoo-anthropomorphic character, there is a depicted human head (in some cases, it seems, with an emphasized mustache), also repeated on the opposite face of the object (G11). In some specimens, it is rotated by 180 degrees (G11: 8, 9). In certain cases, observed from a lateral perspective, in addition to these, also emerge two other faces formed according to the indicated concept of "borrowing" elements from the adjacent ones (G11: 4). This time, too, those are the eyes, the ears (in the meaning of noses), but also the toes i.e. fins of the legs of the here-depicted figure, which acquire the meaning of a mouth.[38] This implicit quadrifaciality can be ascertained only in those specimens of which we have a lateral photograph, drawing or an appropriate textual description.

[36] *A lur. br. finial* 2019.

[37] The publication does not include information on the back side of the object (P. R. S. Moorey, *Ancient*, 31, Pl XII: A).

[38] “En outre, cette dernière partie, vue de profil, représente deux têtes monstrueuses dont la gueule en pointe est constituée par les protubérances latérales à quadruple nervure, les yeux par ceux des masques humains, les oreilles par leur nez et la bosse frontale par la boucle terminale des queues.” (E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 99 [Fig. 80: No. 120], 103).

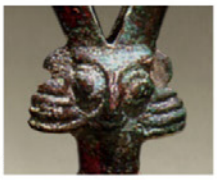
G11


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G12



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c) Bottle-shaped supports

The motif of multiplicated heads i.e. faces also appears on some Luristan bottle-shaped supports (G12; example with a pair of animal heads - H10: 14, 15).[39] If we take into account that the standards (of any type) were fastened onto them, then it follows that these heads or faces also occupied the lower zone of the iconography formed by both elements.

On the shoulders of the support from the **"David-Weill" collection** are depicted seven alternately arranged "masks of male heads and birds" ("sept masques d'hommes et d'oiseaux alternés") (G12: 3, 4).[40] Based on the presented photograph and catalogue information, it is not possible to determine whether they represent four male and three avian heads or vice versa. One such support from the **"Elisabeth und Peter Suter-Dürsteler" collection** stands out from the others in that the multiplicated faces in this case are depicted twice - once in the middle of the neck, and a second time at its widening i.e. at the shoulders (G12: 7; G28: 8, 9). The number of depicted faces in both cases is three, with the upper ones having quite clear anthropomorphic features, while the affiliation of the lower ones is much more difficult to determine. The second group is highlighted by the large round eyes, the triangular opening of the mouth and the enframement of the face with a beaded bordure. They could represent anthropomorphic or zoo-anthropomorphic faces (enframed by a stylized beard and hair), heads of lions (with a wide open muzzle and surrounding mane) or birds (of prey or gryphons) with an open beak.[41] On a support with similar proportions, from the **LACMA collection**, four human faces are depicted in the middle, each with a separate nose, but only with four eyes shared by all (G12: 6).[42] Rudimentary remnants of faces (probably 6 in number) can also be sensed on the shoulders of another support from the **"David-Weill" collection** (G12: 5).[43] We are also familiar with two other specimens where the pair of anthropomorphic faces is formed at the very top of the neck.[44] In one of the cases it is a pair of anthropomorphic faces, between which one can implicitly identify two more, but without a mouth (G12: 1). In the second support, the heads are supplemented by bovine horns, on the basis of which A. Godard recognizes Gilgamesh in them (G12: 2).[45]

4. Multiplicated faces in other Luristan objects

a) Maceheads

The described explicit or implicit multifaciality present at the top of the standards gains in its verity when compared to another type of bronzes from Luristan and neighboring Amlash, known as "maceheads", where this arrangement occurs as a combination of three, four or six faces. One such Luristan object depicts four faces, formed within the frames of the upper droplet-shaped protrusions (G13: 2),[46] while another, from the **"Sackler" collection**, depicts three large and an additional three smaller ones between them (G13: 3, 4).[47] The aforementioned concept of "borrowing" elements between two adjacent faces is also applied to the already mentioned macehead from **Amlash**, whereby, in addition to the three explicit ones, we can also

[39] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 164; O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 153.
[40] P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 91 (No. 200), the support is combined with a "zoomorphic standard", perhaps in more recent times.
[41] S. Schmid, *Ständer*, 47, 48 (Cat. 8).
[42] *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020, (M.76.97.12).
[43] P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 94 (No. 227), the identification of the characters we are proposing should be checked as they are not mentioned in the description of the object.
[44] P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 94 (No. 226); *Bouteille* 2020.
[45] A. Godard, *Bronzes*, 84, 85 (No. 192).
[46] G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 38 (Kat. 57).
[47] *Ancient fertility* 2020.

G13


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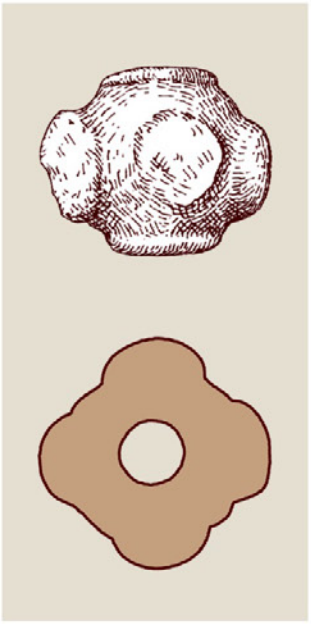

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recognize three more (without a mouth) (G13: 7).[48] A similar specimen is also found in the **"David-Weill" collection**, whereby in its case, there is no mutual fusion of the three heads (G13: 9).[49] The same iconographic concept is also present on other Middle Eastern maceheads whose cultural affiliation we are not able to determine with certainty. On the first specimen, from the **"Dr. Khateeb"** collection in Dubai, plastically shaped in a remarkable way are four impressive human heads with inlaid eyes (G13: 1),[50] while on the second, their protruding heads are also accompanied by stylized anthropomorphic figures executed in shallow relief (G13: 8).[51] It is quite interesting that maceheads with analogous iconography can be also found in Europe, but much later in the Middle Ages (G13: 5, 6).[52]

The genesis and meaning of these objects can be sought in the analogous **stone maceheads** (usually with four cross-like arranged hemispherical knobs) within the frames of the Bronze Age and older cultures of Eastern Europe (G14). Despite the name, it is thought that these were not utilitarian items i.e. weapons, but objects with a **symbolic i.e. ceremonial function** - probably used as signifiers of a particular social or religious status. Such bronze objects are also present in the circle of Luristan and neighboring cultures (G14: 10).[53]

b) Pendants in the form of a foot

Found among the Luristan bronzes is a category of pendants, shaped in the form of a human foot dressed in a shoe i.e. boot, which in previous publications are most commonly referred to as **"foot pendants"**,[54] or **"pendeloque en forme de bottine"**.[55] In this chapter we discuss them because formed at their top is the iconographic element to which it is dedicated - two or four anthropomorphic faces oriented in different directions. In the following paragraphs we reference several such specimens (G15).

The first one is shaped in the form of a **pair of shoes** that in the upper part are connected by a cuff, which is not usual for this group. Formed above it is a head with **two faces** that ends at the top with the indispensable ring for hanging (G15: 2). The next two pendants show separate shoes which, judging by their identical shape, probably constituted a single set in pair. This time they have a sharp tip that is slightly bent upwards (G15: 1). Modeled at the upper end is a head with **two anthropomorphic faces** oriented towards each other with their occiputs, supplemented by pointed noses and a pair of side protrusions (ears, horns?).[56] In the subsequent specimen, the shoe, complemented by double oblique incisions and plastically executed dots at the heels, is combined with a motif of **four human faces**, whereby each of the four eyes belongs to two adjacent faces (G15: 4).[57] We are also familiar with other such pendants, supplemented at the top by four "masks" with four noses and mouths, but only with two pairs of eyes (G15: 3, 5 – 7).[58]

P. R. S. Moorey points to the widespread presence of such pendants in the Middle East through multiple periods, with the peculiarity of the Luristan ones being the addition of multiple human faces.

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[48] E. D. Phillips, *The People*, 236; R. Ghirshman, *The Art*, 37 (Fig. 46); M. A. Barbara Muhle, *Vorderasiatische*, 466, 467 (Typ 3.2 - c4).
[49] P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 35 (No. 31); M. A. Barbara Muhle, *Vorderasiatische*, 481 (Typ 4.3- c4).
[50] *A Western* 2014.
[51] *Abstract Faces* 2019.
[52] J. P. Lamm, *On the Cult*, 225 (Fig. 13); А. Кузев, *Маршрутът*, 149 (Обр. 2).
[53] In more detail on these objects, with presented bibliography: Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 545-555.
[54] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 234, 235
[55] E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 181.
[56] Basic information: G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 79 (No. 164, 165).
[57] S. Przeworski, *Luristan Bronzes*, 260 (No. 33), Pl. LXXVII: 33.
[58] E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 172 (No. 271), 173 (Fig. 143), 181, another specimen but without depiction of faces (No. 272); P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 140 (No. 140) – a pair of pendants with four faces each; P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 234, 235 (No. 431, 432); *Amulet - shod foot* 2020.

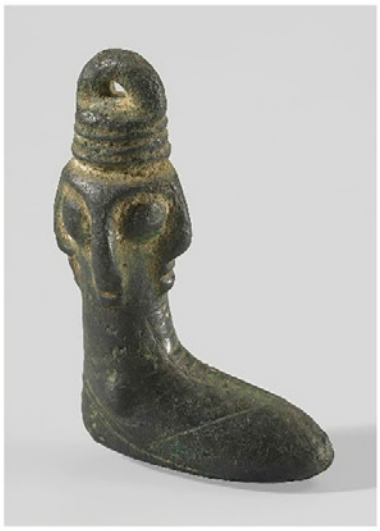
G15


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Referencing the interpretations of previous researchers regarding the ceramic models of shoes and analogous metal pendants found in Hittite graves, he points to the possible connection of the Luristan specimens with sympathetic magic aimed at **facilitating the journey of the dead to the underworld**, or the relation with the **"Divine Foot"** which provides them with **supernatural power and protection** during this journey.[59] Building upon these interpretations, **E. de Waele** also includes among them the **"power of the mountain genies"** ("le pouvoir magique de génies montagnards"), probably as justification for the presence of the human head with "rough masks" at the top of these pendants.[60] Presenting in his monograph one such specimen, fundamentally similar to the previous ones (G15: 5), **A. Godard** states his opinion that these could be objects in the function of **"ex voto"** that were offered to the deities, in order for them to help the donor in some way. Regarding the specific object (as well as others in the form of a hand), he wonders if these pendants were attached to women's necklaces.[61] **R. Ghirshman** puts forward the following assumption in regards to these objects: "But this element may not be merely decorative; an isolated foot when it has a god's head above, can to symbolize the god in question".[62]

Three questions related to these pendants are of essential significance to our analyzes: *Is their focus on the depiction of the shoe or the foot? What kind of semiotics i.e. symbolic meaning is behind the unusual and even bizarre complementation of this element by two or four human faces? What were the motives for modeling pendants with such a form i.e. what purpose could justify their unusual shape?*

The dilemma related to the first question may not be so relevant if we take into account that the semiotics of the shoes and the human leg i.e. foot are mutually interwoven because the shoe, encompassing and covering the foot i.e. leg, takes upon itself the basic meanings of this part of the human body. Previous studies have shown that the basic symbolic meaning of the human legs is quite homogeneous, at least in the cultures of the Old World. In addition to the above indicated meaning related to the basic function of the legs (**walking, movement, travel, dynamics**), their symbolism also refers to human biological functions i.e. **sexuality**, and the **chthonic spheres**. These relations are based on the direct morphological and functional connection of these organs with the genital region in which they are located (they "grow from it", participate in coitus and childbirth) and with its "impure functions" (urination, defecation). We think that the fragmented depiction of this part of the body and its supplementation with a human face is aimed at emphasizing some category that it represents and its personalization i.e. **the treatment of the leg i.e. foot as a separate character i.e. entity**. We should remind that we had a similar form of personalization among the hybrid figures with legs or arms metamorphosed into animal protomes. The presence of two or four faces oriented in different directions significantly raises the status of this image because this iconographic element appears as the main feature of several types of Luristan standards, representing a mythical character who, without a doubt, had a high position within the frames of Luristan culture.[63]

All of these components lead us to the assumption that the presented pendants depict the **foot or leg of the indicated Luristan mythical character or deity** i.e. they personify some category or function that stands behind that god, and is in some relation with legs.

In elaborating on the pictorial representations of the macrocosmic character from the Luristan standards, we pointed out as a parallel the myth of the creation of the universe from the body of the Nordic primordial giant **Ymir** (as an equivalent of the Vedic **Purusha** and the Iranian **Gayomard**). Precisely in the sources referring to this mythical character we can trace on a verbal level the symbolic arrangement that

[59] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 234, 235.
[60] E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 181.
[61] A. Godard, *The Art*, 68, 69 (Fig. 59).
[62] R. Ghirshman, *The Art*,76.
[63] On our observations regarding the meaning of the human leg, foot and of footwear, with appropriate examples (especially containers in the form of a shoe): Н. Чаусидис, *Предисториски*, 167-194, on the combination of the foot and head of a deity (Serapis): 159.

stands at the basis of the presented pendants - the **personalization of his legs** i.e. their portrayal as **separate entities i.e. creatures**. Here is what is sung in the "Lay of Vafthrudnir" from the Elder Edda: "They said that under the frost-giant's arms / a girl and boy grew together; / one foot with the other, of the wise giant, / begot a six-headed son."[64] A somewhat more specific variant of the same action is also presented in the Younger Edda: "… Now it is said that when he slept, a sweat came upon him, and there grew under his left hand a man and a woman, and one of his feet begat a son with the other; and thus the races are come; these are the Rime-Giants. The old Rime-Giant, him we call Ymir."[65]

In both variants, it is said that the **son was born to Ymir by his two legs**, possibly as a result of some kind of **interaction** between them.[66] Standing at the basis of these verses could be the **identification of the legs with the married couple i.e. husband and wife**, whereby their indicated implicit interaction acquires the meaning of **coitus**. This means that **one of Ymir's legs was female** while **the other was male**, which is not so unusual if we take into account the androgyny of this mythical character. In the specific case, as a real paradigm of the coitus between Ymir's legs, one can take masturbation by mutual rubbing of the two legs that can lead to an orgasm which, in turn, given its ejaculatory follow-up, can function as an equivalent of fertilization.

The legs have a similar symbolism in other regions, too, especially well documented within the ancient Mediterranean cultures where their asymmetry (lameness, monopodiality, or one dressed while the other is barefoot) reflects the oddness, unpairedness i.e. genderial and sexual imbalance, and thus also the pretensions of the character to overcome this condition.[67] Among our pendants we also have an example with two feet (G15: 2), and probably also single versions that could have been worn in a pair (G15: 1). Wearing a single such pendant could have been a sign of the openness of their wearer i.e. the seeking of a partner i.e. readiness for pairing.

For us, of especially essential importance is the question, *what is the depiction of the two-faced or four-faced god doing at the top of the Luristan pendants?* If we accept that this is the same primordial mythical character (the first being) represented through the pillar of the standards, then his appearance in the form of a **personalized phallus** and the presence of this motif on the pendants can be justified as a paradigm **of all further pairings i.e. all subsequent multiplication of humanity**. It is indicative that in the mentioned passages, born from the union of Ymir's two legs was a **character with multiple heads** (this time six), who fundamentally corresponds to the multi-faced character from the pendants, regardless of the fact that he appears there with only two or four faces. An important argument in support of these parallels is of course the name of Ymir and his Western Germanic equivalent **Tuisto**, whose etymology contains the meanings of *double*, *bisexual* and *twin*,[68] which fully corresponds to the bifacial mythical character from the "idols" and "idols with protomes".

c) Pins with a decorative head

A columnar motif with multiple faces at the top can be identified in the iconography of an already mentioned Luristan pin with an openwork quadrangular head (G6: 1). In this case it is a human face shown frontally and two animal (probably bovine) ones depicted laterally in profile, whereby the pair of eyes is

[64] (Elder Edda, Lay of Vafthrudnir. 33); C. Larrington, *The Poetic Edda*.
[65] (Prose Edda, Gylfaginning. 5); S. Sturluson, *The Prose Edda*, 18; В. Петрухин, *Мифы др. Скандинавии*, 71, 72; L. P. Słupecki, *Mitologia*, 28.
[66] An Egyptian pharaoh is said to have been born "from the two thighs of the Nine Gods" (Р. Онианс, *На коленях*, 189, other examples of the relationship *male leg, thigh, knee - birth*: 183-194).
[67] И. Маразов, *Хубавата*, 7, 42, 43, 49, 54, 93, 99-107, 112, 118, 153; И. Маразов, *Мистериите*, 154, 290-302, 321.
[68] L. P. Słupecki, *Mitologia*, 25-50; Е. М. Мелетинский, *Имир*, 510.

shared among the three characters (compare with G4: 6 and G10: 2 – 6). The presence of two ibexes next to this motif, raised on their hind legs, would indicate the large dimensions of the possible real object (idol) that could have served as the true paradigm for this motif. The question remains open whether the depicted columnar object was conceptualized with three or four heads (two human and two animal ones, as in some of the "idols"), whereby the absence of the fourth would be justified by its invisible rear position.

d) Hilts of swords and daggers

The motif of two human heads oriented towards each other with their occiput is also present on the hilts of some Luristan swords and daggers which, like the blade, are made of iron, and date between the 11th and 7th centuries BCE (G16: 3, 5, 7). The heads are male, with a beard and accentuated noses, and in some cases, a leonine head complements their back end. In some examples the hilt of the sword is in its lower part supplemented by figures of two lions, in continuation of whose open muzzles comes the blade.[69] Usually taken as the most appropriate analogy for such iconography of the swords is the relief depiction of a sword carved into a rock in the Hittite sanctuary of **Yazilikaya** near Boghazköy (Asia Minor), dating to the 13th century BCE (G16: 1). It is thought that this sword represents the **Hittite god whose name was written with the sign for "sword"**, analogous to the name of **Nergal** - the god of the underworld in Mesopotamia. P. R. S. Moorey does not rule out the influence of these traditions on the formation of the mentioned Luristan swords, whereby, according to him, its realization could have been mediated by the Assyrians, Hittites or Hurrians, given that Nergal was part of the religious traditions of all these cultures. If we accept the possibility that on the Luristan swords as well, the two-headed god bore the character of a **chthonic deity**, then, according to this researcher, the presence of these objects in graves receives additional justification.[70]

It is especially important for us that in the depiction of the sword from Yazilikaya, the separate anthropomorphic and zoomorphic elements (human head, two pairs of lions) can actually be observed as a **single hybrid zooanthropomorphic figure** with a human head, whose shoulders and arms are equated with the upper pair of lions, while the legs with the lower pair, whereby the **blade** overlaps with the **phallus** (G16: 1). In support of this identification, and especially of the last element, speaks the interpretation of A. B. Cook, according to whom this sword actually represents **"the youthful consort of the Hittite earth-mother"**, whereby its vertical depiction on the relief, with the tip of the blade sunk into the horizontal surface, indicates the **ritual plunging** of such swords into the ground as an act of **union (coitus, hierogamy) between Sky and Earth**.[71] The comparison of this depiction with the Luristan swords clearly shows the secondary character of the latter in which the indicated zooanthropomorphic figure is to a large degree disintegrated (G16: 3, 5, 7 compare with 1). However, in forms quite similar to the sword from Yazilikaya, we find it on other Luristan bronzes (G16: 2 compare with 1), such as some standards (F26; F27; F29), quivers and pins with a discoid head (F5 – F12).

Several facts show that the traces of this concept in Luristan swords and daggers did not have to come from the mentioned autochthonous Western Asian cultures, but from the new traditions, probably with an Indo-Aryan or Iranian character, that entered the Iranian Plateau from the north, most probably through the Caucasus. Primarily, we have here in mind **Herodotus'** account according to which the **Scythians** venerate their god of war (whom the author equates with the Greek Ares) so that, at the top of a mound composed of

[69] P. R. S. Moorey, *The Decorated*; P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 316-319 (Pl. 85: 540, 541); E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 46, 47 (No. 42; Fig. 35, Fig. 36), 53; P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 36, Pl. 43, Pl. 44; B. Overlaet, *Luristan during*, 388, 389 (Fig. 18.9); E. F. Schmidt et al, *The Holmes*, Pl. 261: b; O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 186-189; O. W. Muscarella, *Multi-piece* (according to: B. Overlaet, *Luristan Bronzes*).

[70] P. R. S. Moorey, *The Decorated*, 7, 8; on the relief depictions from Yazilikaya: М. Попко, *Митология*, 128, identification of the sword with the human body in Hittite mythical songs – 135, 137, 144; on the sword-god and his possible Aryan character: А. Петросян, *Следы*.

[71] A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 550-552, Fig. 428.

G16



piles of brushwood, they form a square surface on which they place **an antique iron sword that represented the idol of Ares**. Every year they sacrificed to it horses, other livestock and every hundredth of their captives, whereby the heads of the latter were beforehand sprinkled with wine, and then their blood was poured upon the sword.[72] Eight centuries later, **Ammianus Marcellinus** notes a similar form of worship of the war god among the **Alans** - a people who have close genetic ties to the Scythians. According to him, in conformity with their barbaric custom, they drive a naked sword into the ground and reverently worship it as **Mars** in the role of patron of the lands over which they range.[73] Another ancient source indirectly reports similar traditions among the **Huns** in the time of Attila which, according to some academic interpretations, adopted them from the Scythians or the Alans.[74] Another account, by **Claudius Marius Victorius**, supports P. R. S. Moorey's assumption that the hilt of the Luristan swords, analogous to the sword of the Alans, could represent the **god of the underworld and of death**. It says that they **treat their god of war also as the god of the "other world"** who ruled over the **souls of the ancestors** that died a happy death during battle, serving this god.[75] We do not have information whether among the mentioned peoples the treatment of swords as gods was also properly manifested on a visual level by their supplementation with certain figural iconographic elements.

Some researchers attribute **cosmic meaning** to the mentioned Scythian ritual, whereby the mound on which the sword was placed is equated with the **Cosmic Mountain**, while the vertical rising of the sword from its top acquires the meaning of the **Cosmic Axis** or the **Cosmic Tree** which extends from there to the sky.[76] Agreeing with such a possible interpretation, we refer to the relations that the two-headed character from the Luristan swords would have with the analogous character formed at the top of the pillar of the Luristan standards, who also shows clear relations with the Cosmic Axis (G1 – G3; G7). Thereby, the indicated chthonic interpretations should not be treated as a counter-argument because in the spheres of myth and religion are not that uncommon parallel (and even complementary) interpretations of the nature and functions of one same character or deity, usually specific to certain periods or areas in which it was venerated.

The possible relations between the mentioned rites and the Luristan swords (G16: 3, 5, 7) are indicated by the finds from the Luristan **sanctuary in Sangtarashan** where there were ascertained at least three components common to the traditions presented here: swords i.e. daggers present in a sanctuary, fastened with their blades into the ground and accompanied by cult vessels intended for libation (H8; H9; see p. 602).

All of the above mentioned phenomena, including the Luristan swords with hilts supplemented by human heads, can be compared to a type of object that is still part of a living culture today. We are speaking of the cult objects known under the names **kīla** or **phurba**, which are mainly used within the frames of **Tibetan Buddhism**, and whose genesis can be traced back to the Vedic period (G16: 4, 6, 8 – 10). It is a ritual blade with a lower part formed in the form of a short sword, dagger or stake, at the upper end of which continues a handle that in its upper part is most commonly supplemented by **three human heads** oriented in various directions. The objects are made out of different materials: brass, iron (in some cases meteoric), various types of wood, bone and precious stones. One can note several components that are common to these items and the above mentioned traditions related to the sacralized sword.[77]

The kīla i.e. phurba has a clearly expressed cultic i.e. religious character within Tibetan Buddhism, Tantrism and Shamanism. In an iconographic sense, it is conceptualized similarly to the sword from

[72] (Herodotus, 4, 62); commentary and interpretation of the source with an overview of the whole issue and with presented literature: Ю. А. Плотников, *Еще раз*.
[73] (Ammianus Marcellinus 31. 2. 23); А. В. Дарчиев, *О военном*, 6.
[74] (Priscus of Panium 3. 102); А. В. Дарчиев, *О военном*, 6; A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 548.
[75] (Claudius Marius Victorius 5. 111); on the source and the relations with the character Batyraz (Батыраз), from the Ossetian Nart epic cycle and with the sword of King Arthur, embedded into a rock: А. В. Дарчиев, *О военном*, 8, 9.
[76] Ю. А. Плотников, *Еще раз*, 66.
[77] On these objects, their character and meaning: R. Beer, *The Encyclopedia*, 245-249; *Kīla* 2020.

Yazilikaya, and conditionally, as the mentioned Luristan swords and daggers. Here we primarily mean the hilt of their blade which is supplemented in the upper part by multiplicated human heads (most commonly three) (G16: 4, 6, 8 – 10). Within the frames of the indicated religious systems these objects are explicitly identified with a specific deity - **Vajrakilaya**, who in some cases was depicted or imagined with three heads, six arms and four legs (G16: 9). The multi-headed god of the upper part is combined with a character with accentuated chthonic features (the dragon Makara), depicted in the lower part of the hilt in a manner analogous to the sword from Yazilikaya and some of the Luristan swords - with a **wide open mouth from which the blade comes out** (G16: 4, 8, 10 compare with 1). The Tibetan kīla is associated with the **mythical mountain** (Mandara, Meru), whereby itself is equated with the Cosmic Axis i.e. Cosmic Tree that grows from its top. This corresponds to the Scythian mound of brushwood described by Herodotus and the identification of the sword implanted into its top with the Cosmic Axis, as suggested by some researchers. The main cultic use of the kīla consists of its thrusting into the ground for various, fundamentally magic reasons (stabilization, calming, enrichment, healing, destruction of something) that corresponds to all the other examples mentioned above. It represents an object that, among the other cultic practices, is also used **in sacrifices**, which coincides with the character of the Scythian sword mentioned by Herodotus, and probably of the Luristan swords, judging by the examples from the Sangtarashan sanctuary (H8: 4 – 6).

The motif of a human head with two faces is present on another category of objects which, although cannot be directly included in the group of Luristan bronzes, indicates certain relations with it, according to the time it originates from, the territory in which it extends, the style of execution, and the wider iconographic context in which it is fitted. It represents a subgroup of **metal trumpets** where the mentioned motif is depicted on the middle spherical resonator or under the mouthpiece (G28: 13 – 20). They are found in Iran and especially in its northern adjacent areas - the region of Oxus i.e. Bactria and Margiana, dating between 2200 and 1800 BCE. We know of only two specimens in which such a depiction occurs (G28: 15 – 20),[78] while in the larger number of cases it is present in three-facial variants (G28: 13, 14, 21 – 24). Therefore, we will discuss these objects in more detail in the sub-chapter on depictions with three faces i.e. three heads.

5. Iconography and comparative analysis of the mythical character with two or more faces

Many researchers have used the name of the **Roman god Janus** in their descriptions and interpretations of the Luristan standards and, as we have seen, even in naming their specific types. But, with the exception of a few authors, such an action by them does not seem to exceed the character of an ordinary association and working i.e. narrowly-professional term. We do not know whether any researcher has attempted to articulate these associations through a more comprehensive analysis (comparative, iconographic, and mythical-religious), based on some kind of concrete historical relations between the ancient cultures of Luristan and the Mediterranean.

Our summarization of the contemporary knowledge on Janus and his Eastern Mediterranean equivalents, based on ancient sources, pictorial representations, but also on modern linguistic and other comparative research, has shown that he fits in quite well with most of the above-apostrophized aspects of the double-headed character from the Luristan standards (compare G1 – G3 with G20 – G22; G51; G52: 4, 5, 8). This similarity could be justified in several ways:

- As a coincidence, based on archetypal elements, universal for all mankind.

[78] B. Lawergren, *Oxus*, 47 (Fig. 3: F2), 61 (Fig. 8: F7), 76 (Fig. 23); A. Hakemi, *Shahdad*, 635.

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- As a common Indo-European component resulting from the dispersion of Indo-Europeans i.e. their culture in two mutually distant areas.

- As a product of some kind of concrete later communications (migration, cultural or religious influences) between Luristan and Italy or more broadly between the Middle East and the Mediterranean.

In fact, we took these relations with Janus as an occasion, in this sub-chapter to realize a much more extensive study of the mythical characters and deities with two, three, four or more faces, which would cover the entire territory of the Old World throughout all historical periods. We decided to group the voluminous material and its explications according to the number of faces i.e. heads, although this is not always the most relevant component in determining the character and meaning of these characters.

a) Characters and pictorial representations with two anthropomorphic faces or two heads

- Middle East

As we have already mentioned, the anthropomorphic mythical character with two faces oriented in opposite directions appears on the **Middle Eastern cylinder seals**. In Sumerian and Akkadian specimens, he is a standing figure that regularly accompanies another god (apparently of a higher rank), seated on a throne, surrounded by streams of water usually flowing from his arms or shoulders (G17: 1 – 6; G18: 1, 2). He is also present on **stone reliefs** from the same period (G18: 3). The bifacial character is identified as **Isimud** (Akkadian **Usumu**) which as a name is quite appropriate for him (*ú-su-mi-a = ša 2 pa-nu-šu*) because of the meaning of *two-faced* i.e. *with two faces* (zwei-gesichtig). He is a companion i.e. messenger (*sukkallu*) of **Enki** (Akkadian **Ea**) - the god of water, the underworld and the benefits of civilization, who is represented on the seals through the mentioned seated figure.[79]

Interpretations have been put forward according to which this two-faced figure, in addition to the indicated mythical character, can also depict the **man with a two-faced mask** who participated in the Mesopotamian rites accompanied by sacrifice. We are speaking of the annual ritual which, among other things, consisted in the actual or ritual killing of the deified king due to his rejuvenation or replacement by a new young king. This is the act in which one would also seek the meaning of the two faces of this mythical character or the mask worn by the man who represented him. Thereby, one of them would symbolize the **old divinized king who dies**, while the second - the **young one who is born or resurrected**. On some of the seals, the death of this character is represented through his slaughter or burning on a pyre, while the resurrection is implicitly encoded through the presence of the figure of the "nude goddess" as the factor that will ensure his rebirth (G17: 7, details 8, 9). The logic of the ritual is based on the identification of the god-king with the whole community and with the universe, from which the belief would follow that his vitality is a prerequisite for the prosperity of the community and the fertility of nature, and consequently for the good yields in agriculture and animal husbandry. Therefore, it was considered necessary to regularly replace the king with a new young and vital heir.[80]

Apart from Mesopotamia (Sumer and Akkad), seals with the mentioned iconographic elements continued to also exist in the younger cultures of its surroundings (Syria, Anatolia, Cyprus), followed by certain simplifications and other modifications (G18: 4). In some of these environments, there have also been confirmed variants of the above-mentioned theonyms. It is precisely through these cultures that the two-faced

[79] C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*, 194-200, 202-207; W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 58, 99, 102- 104, 106, 280, 364; Ph. Ackerman, *The Oriental*, 221 (Fig. 3), 223, 224.

[80] C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*, (the entire study, together with the comparative material, is aimed at connecting the two-headed characters with the ritual of the annual sacrifice of the king or of his son).

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mythical character will reach the Eastern Mediterranean, and within those frames, the Aegean and Greece.[81] Also known are later examples, similar in appearance to the previous ones, such as the figure with two faces and two pairs of wings from an early Achaemenid seal from **Persepolis** (G18: 5).[82]

Here we should also mention the Sumerian god **Anshar/Ashur**, who may have also been two-faced or two-headed, taking into account the texts that mention his four ears and four eyes.[83]

In this overview one could also include the **miniature terracotta figurines** from **Maresha** (Israel) dating to the transition between the Persian and Hellenistic periods (5th - 2nd century BCE). They are shaped in the form of a pillar with two human faces, although not oriented in opposite directions but placed one below the other on the same side (G18: 7; G48: 7 – 9). They probably represent **some of the Canaanite or Syrian deities**, whereby the question remains open whether the two faces belong to different gods or to one two-faced god.[84] The second option should not be excluded given that the back of the objects has not been executed in detail, most likely because they were conceptualized to be viewed from the front only, due to which the rear anthropomorphic face was moved to the forepart.

From the ancient Egyptian examples we can mention the gods - opponents **Horus** and **Seth**, who sometimes were depicted in the form of one figure with two faces.[85]

- India

In India, mythical figures and deities with two faces or two heads are not as common as those with three and with more heads. The earliest such examples can be found among the ceramic motifs from **Mohenjo-daro** with faces oriented in opposite directions, which were obviously part of some kind of figure (G19: 1, 2). The second example from **Kalibangan** is different from the previous one, among other things due to the upward orientation of the faces (G19: 3). From the later Kushan period there is the **Kuṣāṇa Dvimukha Linga** from the Mathura Museum (G19: 7), and a **two-faced terracotta** from the State Museum, Lucknow (G19: 5, 6). From the post-Indus specimens, we can include the **double head** from the Museum für Indische Kunst in Berlin, executed in the Bharhut style (G19: 4), as well as the object of unknown origin from the Asmolean Museum (G19: 8 – 10).[86] There are assumptions that the early Indian depictions with two faces could have been created on the basis of **impulses from Mesopotamia**, as a result of the intensive trade relations between the two regions, confirmed since the 3rd and 2nd millennia BCE. During the Mature Indus Period these objects were produced locally, but under the influence of objects of a similar type that reached the region through trade routes with the Middle East.[87] Among other things, it should also be mentioned that the Hindu goddess **Aditi** was called ***two-faced*** because she was the one who begins and ends ceremonies.[88] The god Agni is often depicted with two heads, as symbols of the two aspects of the fire that he represented - domestic and sacrificial fire (G27: 8).

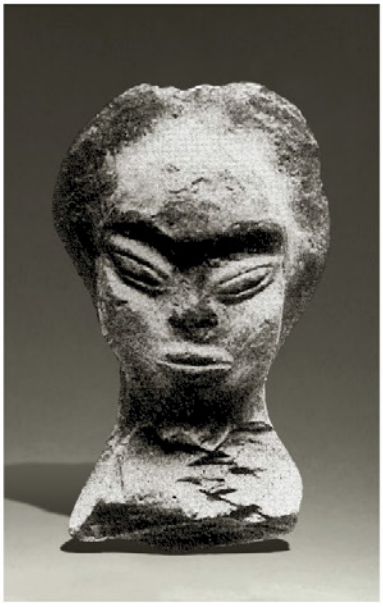
- Eastern Mediterranean

In the Eastern Mediterranean and the area of influence of Hellenic culture, the motif of two human faces oriented in opposite directions (Greek *disprosopos*, Latin *bifrons*) is not tied to some single mythical character or deity, but to several different entities. Because of that, in academic literature, they are often

[81] C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*, 200-202, 207; Ph. Ackerman, *The Oriental*, 222-225; F. Kinal, *Der Ursprung*, 8.
[82] А. В. Подосинов, *Символы*, Рис. 33.
[83] C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*, 194.
[84] A. Erlich, *Double Face*.
[85] В. В. Иванов, *Близнечные*, 175.
[86] D. M. Srinivasan, *Many Heads*,180-182.
[87] D. M. Srinivasan, *Many Heads*,183.
[88] Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (Shatapathabrahmana) III. 2, 4, 16 *ubhayaḥtaśīrṣṇi* and Eggeling's note (according to: *Janus* 2019, 10).

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referred to by the narrowly-professional term **"Double Hermes"**, although in most cases they were not related to this god, but perhaps much more to **Dionysus** and his cult. Most of these characters actually did not originally belong to the inner circle of ancient Greek culture, but to the non-Greek communities that with time were drawn into the cultural field of Hellenic civilization. It is assumed that the two-faced characters in Greece came mainly from Ionia, sometime in the late 6th century BCE.[89] It is known that the double-headed Dionysus was popular among the Phrygians, probably adopted by them from the Hittites[90] (a possible paradigm G18: 8). Depicted with two faces were also the mythical characters **Argos** (G20: 1 – 3) and **Boreas** (G20: 4), probably ancient deities or demons who over time lost their status and corresponding cult, moving into the realms of the narrative, as symbols and personifications of certain abstract categories or elements of nature.

In the indicated area, the bifacial character was manifested through several specific elements of material culture, including: on coins, on stone plastics and on ceramic objects.

Coins

On the obverse of the coins of **Tenedos** (town and island in Troas), starting from the 6th and up to the 1st century BCE (but also later, in the Roman period), the motif of two human heads joined with their occiputs appears almost obligatorily. One of them regularly shows an adult man with a lush beard, while the other is beardless, whereby the latter appears in two variants, depicting a woman (G20: 7) or a young man without a mustache and beard (G20: 9). In numismatic descriptions the first head is most often identified with **Zeus**, while the other with **Hera**, although in many cases the female character of the second one is at the very least debatable. Also suggested are combinations of **Dionysus and Ariadne**, **Zeus and Dionysus Zagreus**, as well as some other pairs. This image, almost regularly, on the reverse is accompanied by a depiction of a **labrys**, which has given rise to assumptions on the symbolic identification between its two blades and the two faces from the obverse (G20: 9). In support of this one can take certain historical sources that refer to Tenedos and other places in the Aegean (Keos, Pegasai), alluding to the identification between Dionysus and the axe used to sacrifice animals within his cult: Dionysos Pelekys (*Dionysus Double Axe*); Dionysos Anthroporrhaistes (*Dionysus Smiter of Men*); a double axe called the "ox-slaughtering servitor of king Dionysos". These facts make the assumption quite probable that **one of the characters on the mentioned coins did actually represent Dionysus**.[91] There have also been elaborated theories according to which the male and female characters could depict the **two aspects of some hermaphroditic deity** or some kind of **divine married couple** as representatives of certain complementary categories (male and female principle, celestial and chthonic, birth and death ...). Considering the very frequent relation between the axe and thunder, we have suggested the possibility that these characters are patrons of the two aspects of this meteorological phenomenon: the **male** one in the role of **representative of thunder** as a sound blow, while the **female** one - of **lightning** as its light and fiery epiphany.[92]

The motif of two joined human faces, this time both female, also appears on some coins of **Lampsacus** (G20: 5, 6), **Syracuse** and **Athens**, in the latter case probably as a symbolic representation of the two complementary natures of the goddess Athena.[93] A double face, one bearded and the other beardless, also appears on the coins of **Cilicia**, on the reverse combined with a three-faced bearded head (G20: 8). On the

[89] J. Marcadé, *Hermès*; C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*; Ph. Ackerman, *The Oriental*; J. Gagé, *Sur les origines*; A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 374-392; A. Audin, *Janus*, 83-86.

[90] C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*, 220.

[91] A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 654- 657; J. Marcadé, *Hermès*, 610- 612 (Fig. 19); C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*, 221, 222; *Tenedos* 2019; M. Hoti, *Prethistorijski*, 57-59; Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 701. Opinions have also been put forward that the female character does not reflect the original condition but is the result of forgetting the authentic meaning of the composition (C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*, 223).

[92] Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 701-709.

[93] J. Marcadé, *Hermès*, 615, 620 (Fig. 24:1); *Lampsakos* 2019; J. Burns, *Boreas*, 219, 220.

coins of **Malos**, located in the same region, there were depictions of the winged and two-faced **Kronos** ("Kronos ailé et bifrons") holding a disk that appeared to represent the celestial calotte ("calotte celeste"). From there, such depictions would spread to **Cyprus**, **Rhodes** and other eastern Mediterranean islands.[94]

On a coin (aes grave) minted after about 350 BCE in **Volterra** (Etruria), there is a depiction of a two-faced head wearing a hat of the petasos type (G22: 9; G51: 9). The claims that it depicts **Janus** are opposed by W. H. Rocher, according to whom it is a representation of **Hermes**, whereby he argues this opinion with the absence of beards, but also with the presence of the mentioned hat. This example can be considered as one of the possible prototypes of the real Janus who will usually be depicted on the Roman "assēs", but most commonly with two bearded heads and without a hat (G22: 1; G51: 1 – 3, an eventual beardless example – 6).[95] The presence of Janus on the indicated coin is also rejected by I. Krauskopf, who identifies the two-faced head with the Etruscan god **Culsans**.[96]

Stone objects

Arrangements similar or even identical to the previous ones also appear within the frames of ancient **stone sculpture** and **small plastics**, both in the Hellenic and Hellenistic, as well as in the Roman period. They are represented mainly by the **double-faced hermai**, where we have a combination of two male busts, one of which is bearded and the other beardless, or of a bearded male head with the head of a woman. In addition to the above, the following combinations are also known: **Zeus with Satyr**, with **Serapis** or with **Hermes**; **Apollo with Silenus**; **Dionysus with Silenus** (G21: 7); **Dionysus with Ariadne** (G21: 8) and others.[97] As with the coins, there are also examples with two female heads.[98] The motif appears on gemstones as well, also during all periods of antiquity (example G21: 4).[99]

In this overview we should also mention **Apollo Tetracheir** (*Apollo the four-armed*) who, according to sources, was venerated in the area of **Laconia**. Although he had only one head, the four hands of this god could indicate the head's former duplication, which would be supported by the account of the veneration of **Hermes Polygios** (Ερμης πολυγιος), who according to the inhabitants of **Troezen** had six arms but combined with three heads (see below). The **double-headedness of Apollo** is also indicated by his epithet tetraotos (with four ears) recorded in Sparta.[100] Visual manifestations of mythical characters i.e. deities with the indicated features are also known. The bronze coins of **Baris** (Isparta) in Pisidia, minted during the time of Septimius Severus, depicted a god (similar to Heracles?) wearing a lion's skin or a plain cloak, with two heads and with two or four arms holding a bow and club (G22: 2, 3). The second example is a bronze statuette from **Teti**, Sardinia, which depicts a mythical character, equipped as a warrior, with four arms, this time holding a pair of swords and a pair of shields (G22: 6). He has one head, but depicted on it are two pairs of eyes, whereby several eyes are also scattered on the arms.[101]

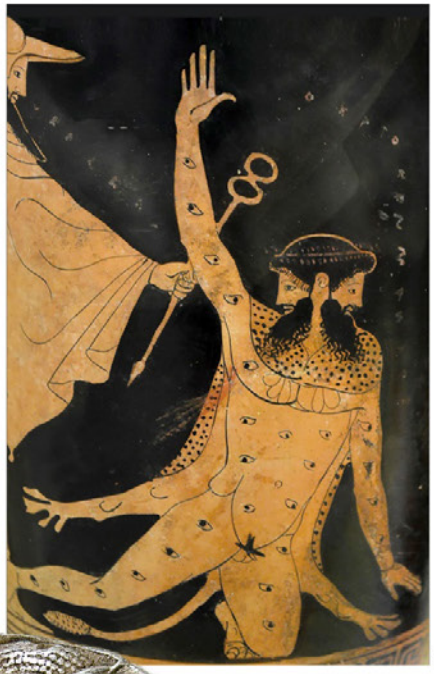
Ceramic vessels

Among the ceramic vessels from the Hellenic cultural circle, the motif of two joined faces mainly appears in three formats: as a figure painted on vases, as a motif of two pairs of eyes painted on kylixes and as vessels shaped plastically in the form of two human heads joined with their occiputs. The painted vases are

[94] A. Audin, *Janus*, 85.
[95] A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 382-385, on the coins featuring Janus: 331-334; C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*, 226.
[96] I. Krauskopf, *Culsans (LIMC)*, 307, 308; I. Krauskopf, *Culsans*, 156.
[97] A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 387-392 (Fig. 290, 295, 297, 299, Pl. XXIII).
[98] J. Marcadé, *Hermès*, 620 (Fig. 24: 2), 621.
[99] Examples: A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 385, 389 (Fig. 292, 293, 298); J. Marcadé, *Hermès*, 611 (Fig. 18).
[100] (Hesych. κ 3853, *cf.*κ 4558; Sosibius. *FGrHist* 595F27; Lib. *Or.* 11.204; *IG* V.1.259; Zenobius 1, 54); according to: J. Marcadé, *Hermès*, 614; T. Bilić, *The swan*, 448; B. C. Dietrich, *Some Evidence*, 12.
[101] A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 446, 447 (Fig. 353-356).



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dominated by the double-faced figures of Argos Panoptes and of Boreas, as well as the depictions of double-faced hermai, which, according to their features, mainly belong to Dionysus.

The mythical character **Argos Panoptes** has already been included in our previous analyzes and in the studies of other researchers on Janus and the "Double Hermes" (G20: 1 – 3). The epithet *panoptes* (*the one who sees everything*) reflects the omnipresence of the gaze as the main function of this character, which, in addition to the **two faces**, is also encoded through the **hundred-ish eyes scattered all over his body** (G20: 2, 3).[102] We have already mentioned that the two-faced variants of this character are considered to be older (6th century BCE), but also occurring is their combination with eyes scattered on the body. Assumptions have been put forward that the two-faced version is authentically Hellenic, while the one with a larger number of eyes is the result of the influence of **Persian traditions associated with the god Mithra**.[103] In this context, we refer to one of the previous chapters where we mentioned the eyes scattered on the body of the Christian **cherubim and seraphim** (F14: 4, 5) and the presence of this motif in relation to **Zurvān**, as a symbol of the "all-seeing Time" (F14: 10 - a leontocephalus with an eye on the chest).

Boreas is a mythical character who signifies the **north wind**, which as a meaning is also consisted in his name. He was portrayed as a winged man with a beard and spiked hair, wearing a short chiton with a chlamys and high boots. In some cases he was depicted with two bearded faces, one oriented forward and the other backward, whereby the beard of one was dark, while of the other - light (G20: 4). According to some assumptions, his two faces, with the corresponding color of the beards, symbolized the dual nature of the north wind that can suddenly bring black clouds and storms, and just as quickly clear the sky. According to other hypotheses, it is a case of personification of the two opposite winds (Boreas and Antiboreas) very important to seafaring. There are opinions that the connection with the wind also lies at the basis of Hermes, who was represented through the double-faced hermai, as well as of Janus who, among other things, was the god of wind. Among the symbols, features and actions associated with Boreas, horses occupy an important place, mainly as symbols of the speed and fertilizing power of the winds.[104]

Some vases depict a **herma with two faces**, usually both bearded and accompanied by ivy, indicating that they belong to **Dionysus** (G21: 6). The surrounding of these hermai with people, including aulos players and dancers, indicates that it is a depiction of real objects, most likely made of wood and other organic materials, which were part of the cultic buildings and ceremonies dedicated to this god, and perhaps to some other ones.[105]

Separating itself as a special group is a specific type of **Greek luxury vases** (usually kylixes) whose painted decoration is dominated by **two pairs of giant eyes** placed on the two opposite sides of the vessel, whereby one pair is dark or painted on a dark background, while the other - light or on a light background (G21: 1 – 3). Although there is no agreement on the character i.e. meaning of the indicated motif, the prevalent opinion is that it had **an apotropaic function** - to protect from various negative factors the drink that was poured into these vessels, as well as the symposiast that drank it. Thereby, such capability could have originated from the power of the mythical character to whom the painted eyes belonged, or the apotropaic power of the penetrating eyes in and of themselves. The assumptions to whom did the eyes belong are

[102] *Argos* 2019; C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*, 212-217; A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 379 (Fig. 286), 381 (Fig. 287); on the relations between Argos and Janus: A. Audin, *Janus*, 63-66.
[103] On the indicated influences: A. Nikolaev, *Ten Thousand Eyes*.
[104] *Boreas* 2019; J. Burns, *Boreas*, 221, 222, 225; W. H. Roscher, *Ausführliches I*; A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 380, 381; S. Klempf-Dimitriadou, *Boreas*.
[105] A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 381, 382 (Fig. 289); C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*, 217, 218; J. Marcadé, *Hermès*, 619 (Fig. 23).

G21


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dominated by those associated with **Dionysus**, his companions (**satyrs, maenads**) or a **Gorgon**.[106] A similar concept of decorating vessels and other objects with multiplied eyes can also be traced in prehistory. In this context, it is worth mentioning the Iron Age spherical openwork objects from Macedonia on which one could recognize four open eyes oriented towards all four sides (G38: 3).[107]

The third group consists of **Hellenic vessels** (mainly aryballoi and kantharoi) that are **plastically modeled in the form of two human heads** joined with their occiputs (G21: 9 – 11). Particularly standing out among them is the combination of a **female head** (of some goddess or nymph) painted in a light color or in the color of the ceramic, with the head of a **"Negroid" male** with curly hair and a face completely covered by black varnish (G21: 11). The female head is also often combined with the head of a bearded man with features of **Silenus** or **Satyr**. Also known are same-sex combinations such as two identical female heads (G21: 9), two Seilenoi (G21: 10), etc.[108] The justifications for the unusual iconography of these vases are sought on various sides: based on the simplest semantic concepts (woman, black man and vessel as *elements that serve* during symposia), through global religious concepts (relations with the **cult of Dionysus**),[109] and even to those who in their iconography look for the main symbols of the **mystery cults** (the black face as a symbol of darkness, and the white one as light and a symbol of spiritual enlightenment).[110]

The motif also appears on other ceramic objects such as **portable fireplaces** ("réchaud en terre cuite")[111] and the various forms of joint depiction of a **tragic and comic theatrical mask** (G21: 5).[112]

Rituals

According to **Ioannes Laurentius Lydus**, in his native land i.e. the city of **Philadelphia** (Lydia, Asia Minor), up until his time (6th century AD), a procession took place on the first day of January in which participated "no less a personage than **Janus** himself, dressed up in a two-faced mask, and people call him **Saturnus**, identifying him with **Kronos**". Given the territory and time to which this source refers, we believe that the indicated ritual was associated with Kronos, whereby Janus and Saturn are just additions of the author, aimed at adapting the information to the then cultural milieu interwoven with a strong influence by Roman culture.[113] The aforementioned Middle Eastern rite of annual sacrifice of the god or of the king as his epiphany is found by C. N. Deedes in some Mediterranean traditions based on Eastern paradigms. In addition to the already mentioned figures of Argos (G20: 1 – 3), these also include some older representations of **Heracles**, who too was depicted with a double head (G22: 2, 3), as well as some January festivals that evoke the ritual killing and reawakening of the king disguised in a mask with two faces.[114]

The examples that we presented in the previous sub-chapters clearly show that behind the anthropomorphic figures, hermai and other objects that bear a depiction of two joined human heads i.e. faces did not stand a single mythical character or deity but various characters: **Zeus and Hera, Dionysus and Ariadne, Attis and Cybele, Hermes/Priapus and Aphrodite**, some other **male god and Artemis**, and others. In the combinations of two male heads or faces, the identifications are based on the relation **"god-father and god-son"** (Zeus – Dionysus Zagreus), **"gods - opponents"** (Zeus – Dionysus or Zeus – Hades) or

[106] A. Prentice, *Athenian*; A. J. Clark, M. Elston, M. L. Hart, *Understanding*, 90, 91; J. R. Mertens, *Attic*; A. M. Potts, *The World's*, 35-37; J. Marcadé, *Hermès*, 607, 610.
[107] On these objects and other prehistoric analogies: Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 543-545.
[108] M. Frank, Jr. Snowden, *Blacks*, 25, Fig 12-14; F. Lissarrague, *Identity*, Fig. 1; J. Marcadé, *Hermès*, 611-613 (Fig. 20); A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 390, 391, Pl. XXI.
[109] F. Lissarrague, *Identity*.
[110] И. Маразов, *Мистерии*, 253, 254.
[111] J. Marcadé, *Hermès*, 623 (Fig. 25).
[112] A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 388, 389 (depicted on a gemstone – Fig. 298); C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*, 224-226.
[113] (Lyd. de mens, 4.2. p. 65 II ff.); according to: A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 374 - footnote 2.
[114] C. N. Deedes, *The Double*-Headed, 208-217.

G22



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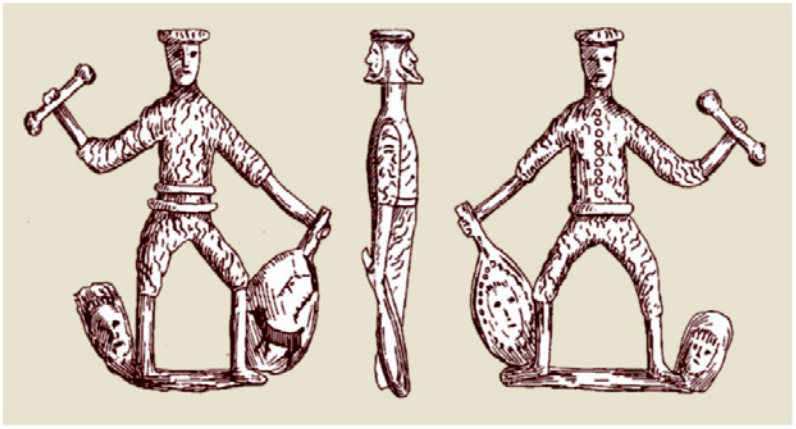
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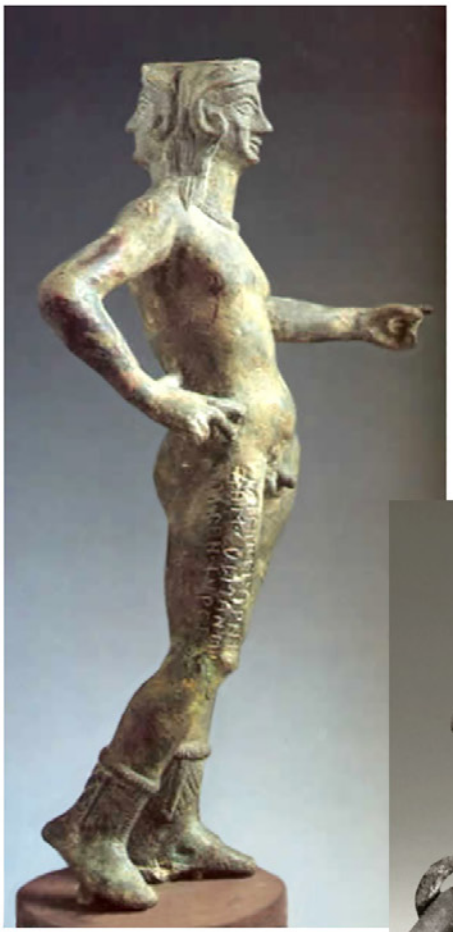
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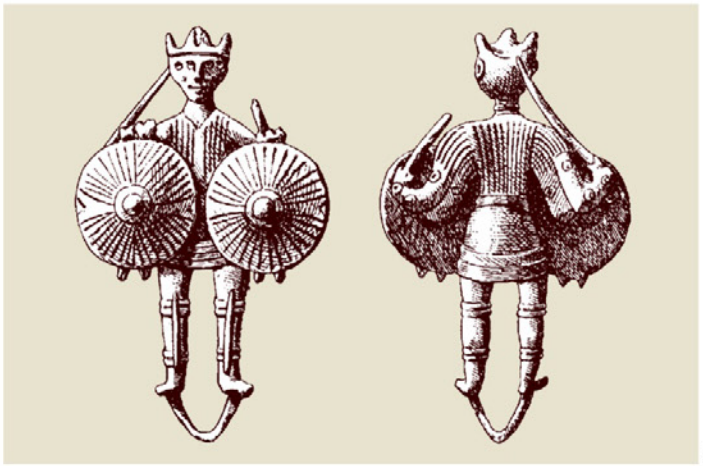
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some other relations (Dionysus – Hermes), while the two female faces can reflect the relationship **"goddess-mother and goddess-daughter"** or the **two natures of one same goddess**.

- Apennine Peninsula

Although in this region the main representative of the category of mythical characters with two faces i.e. two heads is the god **Janus**, we will not discuss him in particular here (G22: 1). We will do that within the frames of a more detailed comparative analysis, whereby his different features and functions will be presented in separate chapters (G51 – G53; see p. 558).

Within the frames of Etruscan culture, double-facedness and multi-facedness were present as features of the gods: **Culsans** of Felsina, the **two-faced god of Volterra**, the **four-faced god of Falerii**, but also some others, of which the most famous is the one from **Volsinii** (Velusna) with the epithet **"deus Etruriae princeps"**. It is difficult to determine the character and functions of these gods given the absence or contradiction of information which, in turn, points to different directions of development of these features, depending on the given period and the city in which the indicated gods were venerated. In the city of Rome, as a former Etruscan colony, the venerated god was **Vertumnus**, the god of the city of Volsinii which was actually a metropolis i.e. the founder of Rome. Based on the sources, it can be observed that he bore the features of a solar and military god, but he also functioned as a god of the Tiber River and as a changer of the seasons. His sanctuary in **vicus Tuscus** was modeled in the form of an **arch under which was the statue of the god** carved from a maple tree, analogous to that of **Janus Geminus**, due to which the sources draw a parallel between the two gods.[115]

Somewhat more information can be extracted in regards to the Etruscan god **Culsans** whose name, confirmed on several inscriptions, based on other Etruscan lexemes, is related to the meaning of *door*. He has been identified on several archaeological objects, including on a bronze statue from the 3rd century BCE found in **Cortona** (buried at the north city gate) (G22: 7), as well as on the coins of the city of **Volterra** minted after 350 BCE (G22: 9). An analogous character is also found on a terracotta bust from **Vulci**, as well as on the relief of a sarcophagus from **Tuscania** (G22: 4), in regards to which there are dilemmas whether they may have depicted Janus (in the first example) and Argos (in the latter). In the representations of this god, one can note certain differences in relation to the Roman Janus: both of his faces are youthful and beardless, he is naked, except that he wears boots, a torc, and a specific hat (G22: 7).[116] Applied to the rim of a bronze cauldron from **Vetulonia**, whose templates lead to the Middle East and specifically to Urartu, is a winged character with two bearded faces and a hat resembling a "Phrygian" one (G22: 8).[117]

From **Sicily** originates a prehistoric bronze figurine with two faces and dressed in fur (G22: 5),[118] somewhat similar to the aforementioned statuette from Sardinia (G22: 6). In later times, the coins of **Panormos** (modern Palermo) will adopt the bifrons motif, accompanied by a depiction of a ram, which is treated as a prefiguration of the ram that was offered to Janus during the holiday of Agonalia (G22: 1).[119]

- Iberia

The anthropomorphic character with a pair of oppositely oriented human faces appears in the Iberian Peninsula through two categories of objects - on **stone reliefs** dating mainly between the 6th and 3rd centuries BCE, but also later to the Roman period (G23: 1 – 3), and on a category of **openwork bronze appliques for**

[115] A. Audin, *Janus*, 86, 87.
[116] I. Krauskopf, *Culsans*; I. Krauskopf, *Culsans (LIMC)*, with several other two-faced examples from Italy; *Culsans* 2019; about the two-faced figures on Etruscan objects: J. Marcadé, *Hermès;* A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 374-378.
[117] M. Pallottino, *Urartu*, 45, 46 (Fig. 19, 20); K. R. Maxwell-Hyslop, *Urartian*, 151, 152, Pl. XXVI; Pl. XXXIII: 4, 5.
[118] A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 374, 375 (Fig. 281).
[119] A. Audin, *Janus*, 86.

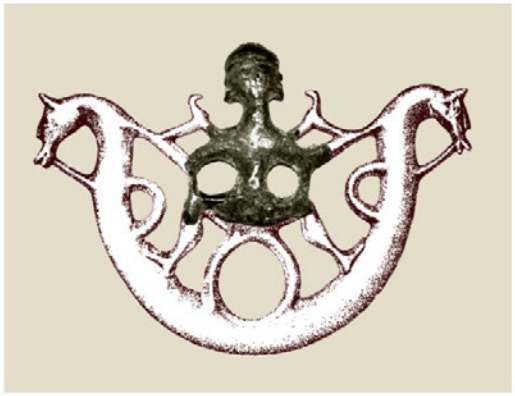
G23



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cheekpieces (6th - 5th century BCE, G23: 4 – 6). In objects of both categories, this character appears as a central figure with male features, often with divided legs, in some cases sitting on a chair, flanked from both sides by a pair of horse figures towards which he usually reaches with his hands. Due to this arrangement, in academic literature this character is called **Despotes Hippôn** i.e. "master of horses" (*señor de los caballos*) or **"tamer of horses"** (*domador de caballos*).[120] The two-facedness of this figure is not mandatory for all reliefs. There is no dilemma that this motif in Iberia came by sea from the Eastern Mediterranean, most probably from the Orient, through the mediation of Phoenician and Greek culture. Assumptions have been put forward that the indicated reliefs were not placed in urban areas or in cult buildings, but in nature and eventually in locations where horses were being bred (G23: 1 – 3). They could have stood on the boundaries between pastures as landmarks, border stones and even as "magic guards", which would correspond to the functions of the hermai in ancient Greece.[121] By the way, this last function would also correspond to the two-faced **Argos** who in the myths is portrayed as the **guardian of Io** transformed into a cow (G20: 1 – 3). Researchers also point to the possible connection, this time both of the reliefs and the cheekpieces, with the local Iberian warriors-riders and the stables where their horses were being kept. There are also theses according to which behind the central two-faced anthropomorphic figure there did not have to be a "god of horses" at all, but the **celestial god** (Father-Sky) who in pastoral communities dominates as the supreme god, and within those frames also as the guardian of livestock.[122]

It is especially important for us that the genesis of the mentioned type of cheekpieces points to the Eastern Mediterranean and to corresponding specimens from mainland Greece and the Aegean islands, whereby it is also often pointed even to the **similar objects from the circle of Luristan bronzes** (G23: 4 – 6 compare with 7).[123]

Although researchers do not pay much attention to the bifaciality of the central character, we think that precisely it is the key indicator of the eastern origin of these Iberian traditions, not only as a simple pictorial motif, but also along with its symbolic and cultic meaning. Combined with the two symmetrical horses, it indicates relations with the mythical twins such as the ancient equestrian brothers the **Dioscuri**, the **Cabeiri**, and the corresponding Hindu **Ashvins**, imagined as two brothers, horsemen and tamers of horses, but also as a pair of horses. The indicated parallels do not necessarily mean that these features existed in the same form in the Iberian Peninsula as well, but that they, in that context, were quite likely adapted to the needs of the autochthonous communities and their traditions.

- Western and Central Europe

The presence of a mythical character or deity with two faces or two heads, in this area is primarily manifested through two types of objects - **stone objects** (idols i.e. stelae) and **coins**, whereby both categories are mainly linked to the **culture of the Celts**.

The first stone object (made of sandstone, 2.30 m high) was found at **Holzgerlingen** (Southern Germany), without a precisely recorded location and context (G24: 1, 2). It shows a human figure with two front sides, each with forearms placed horizontally on the abdomen, and with its head joined to the occiput of the other. Protruding laterally from the head were two arched growths (one broken off), which could have denoted the horns, ears, wings of the head, the so-called "crown of leaves" ("Blattkrone") of the depicted character or some other artificial accessory with a symbolic character. There are two theories about the dating and cultural affiliation of this monument. According to one, based on certain details and stylistic features, it

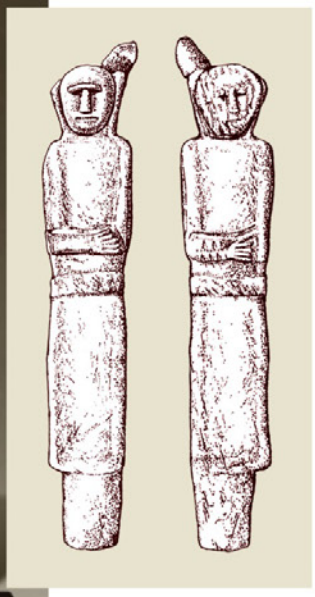
[120] M. C. Marín Ceballos, A. Padilla Monge, *Los relieves*; in more detail about the cheekpieces: F. Quesada Sanz, *Un elemento*, 110-116; F. Quesada Sanz, *El gobierno*.
[121] M. C. Marín Ceballos, A. Padilla Monge, *Los relieves*.
[122] M. C. Marín Ceballos, A. Padilla Monge, *Los relieves*, 481-484.
[123] F. Quesada Sanz, *Un elemento*, 234; M. C. Marín Ceballos, A. Padilla Monge, *Los relieves*, 116.

G24


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dates back to the **La Tène period** and is associated with the **culture of the Celts**, while according to the other it dates back to the **Middle Ages** and is associated with **Pagan Slavic culture** (compare with the Zbruch idol G24: 7; on the second theory see below).[124]

The second object is the monument from **Weltersbach**, near Leichlingen (Germany), made of basalt, in the form of a head with two human faces oriented in opposite directions (G24: 3, height 18 cm). H. Lehner thinks that, judging by the shape and the fracture in the lower part, it represent the top of a stone idol. According to the manner of modeling, it belongs to the **La Tène period**, and during its formation, the maker had applied a concept that is characteristic of wood working, which indicates certain wooden templates.[125]

A stone monument in the form of two human heads joined with their back ends has also been found within the frames of the famous Celtic sanctuary at **Roquepertuse**, which is associated with the **Salyes** settled around Massalia (G24: 4, today in the Musée d'Archéologie de Marseille). Analyzes have shown that the details of its faces were accentuated with appropriate colors, and both heads were covered with a hat and with mistletoe leaves (feuilles de gui). The object dates back to the 5th century BCE, and based on the preserved details it is thought that it was placed on a lintel or at the top of some pillar representing the cult of some local **twin gods**. According to other interpretations, this and other sculptures from the sanctuary functioned as symbolic representations of the local military and political elite.[126]

Two bifacial stone monuments have been found in **Northern Ireland**. Today, both are located on the island of **Boa** (G24: 6), although one of them (the smaller one) has been unearthed on the nearby island of **Lustymore**. Their upper part is preserved at a height of about 70 cm. Due to the lack of exact data, two assumptions have been put forward regarding their dating. According to one, they are pagan objects from the Iron Age, associated with Celtic culture, while according to the second - early Christian finds (probably funerary) which also incorporated older traditions.[127] Two different determinations are also suggested for the unusual stone monument from **Roughan Hill** near Clara (Ireland) (G25: 9, 10). It has the form of a pillar whose top is shaped like the letter "T", the horizontal bar of which is modeled in the form of two symmetrical human heads joined by their beards. According to one interpretation, it represents a Celtic monument, while according to the other - a Christian "T"-cross placed as a marker of church borders.[128] Heads with two faces each have also been found in **Killinaboy**, Clare (Ireland), as well as in **Corbridge** (ancient Corstopitum) and **Kent** (Great Britain).[129] Oral information has also been recorded of a janiform stone head discovered in **Corleck Hill** (Ireland).[130]

Two **bronze knife hilts** from the Iron Age also indicate the presence of our motif on smaller objects with an utilitarian or cultic-utilitarian purpose. The first one was found in **Zemplin** (Slovakia) and dates to the Late La Tène period (G24: 5), while the second in **Žerovnišček** (Bločice, Slovenia) (G24: 11).[131]

During the 3rd century BCE, the **Celts inhabiting the course of the Danube** began minting copies of the tetradrachms of Philip II. Thereby, in some series, as part of their accidental or intentional adaptations of their iconography, in place of Zeus' head from the obverse, they depicted the motif of two bearded heads joined with their occiputs (G24: 10). On the reverse, this motif was combined with various adaptations of the representation of a rider or a horse. An analogous adaptation, this time with a pair of beardless faces, was

[124] Basic information and interactive three-dimensional image: *Die keltische Stele* 2019; R. Knorr, *Eine keltische*, 16, 17; J. Csemegi, *A ládi*, 61, 62.
[125] H. Lehner, *Hölzerne*, 8-10.
[126] Basic information: D. Coquille, *Les têtes*; D. W. Harding, The *Archaeology*, 196-199.
[127] Basic information: *Boa Island* 2020; A. Ross, *The Human*, 16, Pl. IV; report from the excavation of the space around the idols: C. Foley, E. Murray, *Excavations*.
[128] *Roughan* 2020.
[129] A. Ross, *The Human*, 16, 17.
[130] A. Ross, *A Celtic*, 54, 55.
[131] On the object from Zemplin: B. Benadik, *Die spätlatènezeitliche*, 81, 85 (Abb. 17); from Žerovnišček: B. Laharnar, *The Žerovnišček*, 108, 146 – Pl. 2: 13.

made on copies of the staters and quarter-staters minted by the **Mediomatrici** people of Gaul, probably in their capital city of **Divodurum** (G24: 9). The motif of two beardless faces also found its place on the copper coins of **Cunobelinus** and his successor (1st century CE), issued in **Camulodunum** (Essex, Britain), this time combined on the reverse with a representation of a boar (G24: 8).[132] The question remains open why a head with two faces appears on the indicated coins, although that motif is not present on the coins that were used as their templates. According to the first option, it would have been the result of the transfer of this motif from some other coins existing at the time, such as those from Lampsacus or Tenedos (G20: 5 – 7, 9), or from the Roman Republican "assēs" which in the 3rd century BCE were already in use (G22: 1, 9; G51). According to the second, it would have been a case of aspiration to insert in these coins some local motif with a high symbolic status i.e. an image of a deity which in the culture of the indicated Celtic communities was venerated in the form of an idol i.e. a cult statue or some other pictorial representation. The second assumption is supported by the adaptations of the horse figure from the reverse of these coins (combination with a wheel, rosette or human head), which we discussed in one of the previous chapters (B25: 10, 11; see pp. 121 – 125).

Germanics and Nordics

An important place in our comparative research is occupied by the Norse god **Heimdallr**, although in regards to his appearance the presence of two faces i.e. two heads is not explicitly stated. But, as we will see in the following sub-chapters, many of his features and functions bring him closer to Janus and other bifacial mythical characters. These similarities will be presented during the elaboration of the individual components of the characters of this type.[133]

Some kind of bifacial character, equated with Janus, is mentioned by **Geoffrey of Monmouth** - a British priest from the 12th century. Speaking of King Lear's burial, he says that the king's daughter Cordeilla laid him in a chamber which he had ordered to be built under the riverbed of Sora, in honor of the two-faced Janus. It has been suggested that **Llyr**, like the Celtic **Dis**, was a **god of beginnings** who had more than one face, due to which he was identified with Janus. The city of Leicester seems to have been a major center of this cult, where an inscription in support of these relations was allegedly discovered (*"Deo Jano Liro Sacrum"*).[134]

The notion of a mythical character with two faces had also survived in medieval European traditions condemned under the epithet "witchcraft". The devil that was venerated by the witches in **southern France** in the 17th century was "janiform", and at the "Sabbaths" was represented by a man wearing a double mask.[135]

In this place it is worth mentioning the account of **Tacitus**, although he does not refer to two-headed but to a pair of mythical characters. He speaks of a cult of twins among the Germanic tribe of the **Nahanarvali** located between the rivers of Odra and Wisla. "Among these last [the Nahanarvali] is shown a grove of immemorial sanctity. A priest in female attire has the charge of it. But the deities are described in Roman language as Castor and Pollux. Such, indeed, are the attributes of the divinity, the name being Alcis. They have no images, or, indeed, any vestige of foreign superstition, but it is as brothers and as youths that the deities are worshipped."[136]

Slavs

At first glance, it seems that two-headedness was not particularly emphasized within the pagan culture of the Slavs. Hovewer, our overview shows that this impression is not particularly accurate. We know of several pictorial representations that could be included in this overview with considerable probability. First, it

[132] A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 323-325; C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*, 233, 234, 236.
[133] Basic information and interpretations: E. M. Мелетинский, *Хеймдалль*, 587; G. Dumézil, *Gods*, 126-140.
[134] A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 325, 326.
[135] C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*, 239, 240; A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 326.
[136] (Tacitus, Germania, 43).

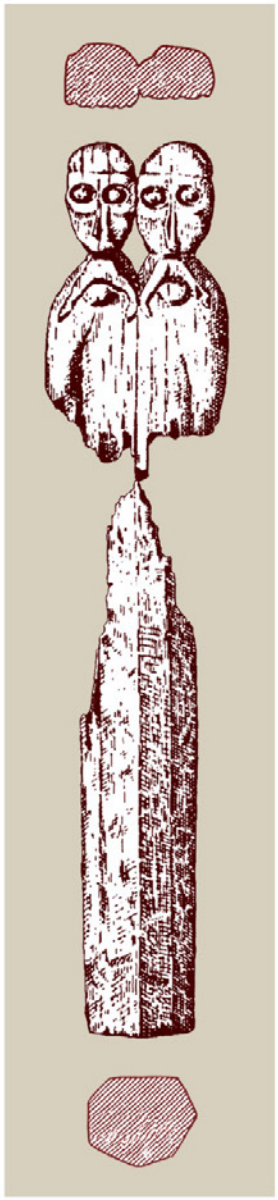
is the already mentioned idol from **Holzgerlingen** that some researchers associate not only with the Celts but also with the Slavs (G24: 1, 2). The most convincing arguments in support of this are offered by J. Csemegi according to whom: the shape and details point to a wooden prototype carved from a tree, which is not typical of Celtic idols; the long mantle in which it is dressed and the position of its arms are similar to the figures in the upper zone of the Slavic idol from Zbruch (compare with G24: 7; G40: 4); in the region where it was found, at the end of the 1st mil. AD the presence of Slavs has been recorded; the proposed Celtic analogies are not appropriate, including the accessory on the head; the idol does not have the typical Celtic style and ornamentation.[137] A second example is the top of the two-faced stone idol from the village of **Lád** (Badacsony, northwest coast of Lake Balaton, Hungary), during whose accidental discovery one face had already been broken off (G25: 6). J. Csemegi, on the basis of comparative analyzes, connects this find with the Slavic culture, the formation of which (probably in the 8th - 9th century) does not exclude the traditions of the Celts and Avars who in various periods were present in the given region.[138] The third object is a stone monument from **Nowy Wiec** in Gmina Skarszewy (Poland) dating to the 10th century CE (G25: 3), which in the meantime has been destroyed, so that today only a replica of it is kept in the Archaeological Museum in Gdansk. In addition, there have also been expressed doubts regarding the authenticity of this find.[139]

Particular attention in this context deserves the wooden idol from **Fischerinsel** near Neubrandenburg (Germany), discovered during archaeological excavations of the Early Slavic settlement located there, in a layer from the 11th - 12th century (G25: 1, 2). The idol is in the form of a polygonal pillar with a height of 1.78 metres, on the upper part of which are formed two busts with mustached heads.[140] Unlike the other examples mentioned here, they are oriented in the same direction, which can be justified by the change of the space in which the two-faced idols were placed and the attitude of the devotees towards them. The fact that this idol is modeled on only one side shows that it did not stand in the center of the cult space in which the devotees could encircle and observe it from all sides, but next to some kind of wall or in a niche so that the communion of the devotees with it was reduced to their approaching and visual communication with it mainly from the front side.

Here we should also mention the stone find from **Mosel** near Wieting (Carinthia, Austria), although there are no elements for its chronological or cultural determination (G25: 8). It is shaped in the form of two heavily stylized human heads depicted next to each other and facing in the same direction.[141] Parts of another potential two-headed Slavic idol originate from the village of **Lopushna** near Vyzhnytsia (Western Ukraine). It is a stone pedestal for a monumental Christian cross that was supposedly part of a pagan idol with two or four faces and four legs (G25: 7). According to a legend of the local population, at the end of the 18th or until the middle of the 19th century, it was found in the local river, and according to another, it was constantly standing at one of the local crossroads. Then, at the initiative of the local priest, the idol was made into a cross. Judging by the four legs, some scholars have concluded that the idol must have been conceptualized in the form of two human figures with fused backs and with heads facing in opposite directions.[142] From the small findings, in this place we should mention a half of a mould from **Wolin**, intended for casting a metal fitting with a loop for hanging (G25: 4). Unlike other similar finds in which four faces are present (G43: 4 – 8), in this case only two are formed, whereby a stylized animal is depicted on the front side. It is not excluded that there was a third face on the lost half of the mould.[143]

[137] J. Csemegi, *A ládi*, 61-63; G. Leńczyk, *Światowid*, 42; A. Plichta, *Čtyřhlavá*, 156.
[138] J. Csemegi, *A ládi*; on Celtic-Slavic closeness and contacts in the region of Pannonia based on linguistic facts: О. Н. Трубачев, *Этногенез (2003)*, 45-53.
[139] L. J. Łuka, *Kultura*, 67 (according to: *Nowy Wiec* 2019).
[140] L. P. Słupecki, *Slavonic*, 205, 206, with presented bibliography.
[141] P. Gleirscher, *Ein Doppelkopf*; S. Eichert, *Zentralisierungsprozesse*, 44-46 (Abb. 13: b).
[142] Р. Забашта, *Святовид*, 17-29, on its two-headedness: 19-21; current condition: І. Гах, *Лопушанський*.
[143] J. P. Lamm, *On the Cult*, 223-225, Fig. 10.

G25


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In this context we should also reference the only known written source for the existence among the Western Slavs of two-headed idols as well. It is a vague account by **Helmold** according to whom "many of them (meaning Slavic idols) had two, three or more carved heads."[144]

Double-headedness is also present on several early medieval metal objects (jewelry, cult objects) attributed to the Slavs. One two-headed human figure is incorporated into the reliefs of the **ring from Strobjenen** (G25: 5). It is shown in a reclining position with two heads placed on two separate necks growing from the shoulders. Based on the conducted analysis, we have pointed out that, judging by the specific pose and position within the frames of the whole scene, it could be a character with chthonic features that swims or dives in the earthly waters or those of the underworld, holding a cup in his hand.[145] Despite its obvious two-headedness, we are not convinced that this figure by its nature corresponds to the Luristan "Januses" and other analogies presented above, mainly due to the reclining position which is in direct contrast to the vertical columnar disposition of the representations that interest us. Two bearded human faces also appear on the early medieval **bronze hand from Romania**, as well as on other bronze objects from the same period, but this time they are shown separately, so it cannot be claimed that they make up a single character with two heads or two faces.[146]

Other examples from Eastern Europe

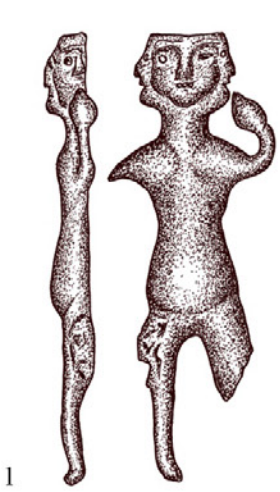
On the territory of present-day Ukraine and Russia, in the regions north of the Black and Caspian Seas, there have been discovered several dozen **cast bronze objects** with two human faces oriented in opposite directions. Yet this time they are not columnar objects, but relatively realistically executed anthropomorphic figurines, shown without clothes, with a height of 8 to 25 cm (G26). The finds are dated between the 8th and 10th century, and their cultural affiliation, despite the absence of definite facts, is usually associated with the "Saltovo-Mayaki" culture and the various nomadic peoples that in the given period existed in this region, mainly from the Turkic ethno-linguistic group (Polovci, Tatars, Bulgars, Khazars). Theories about the Slavic origin of these finds have also been put forward, as well as assumptions about their relations with the Iranian or some older cultures. In part of the figurines, the torso, which is shown quite realistically, with a front and back side, is complemented by a head which, apart from the normal face, has another one on the occiput (G26: 7 – 10). In others, the torso has no rear but two front sides, whereby depicted on one is a stylized phallus, while on the other - a vulva (G26: 4, 5). In some cases, this complementarity is accompanied by the presence and absence of breasts and signs of pregnancy denoted by the bulging abdomen on which one arm of the figure is placed (G26: 9, 10). The head is often covered with a conical cap that is common to both faces. These figurines are followed by other features that indicate the mythical-religious nature of the depicted character. First of all, it is the **"crippledness"** of the figures i.e. the absence of some parts of the limbs, most often a representation of one arm without the forearm or without the palm (G26: 1, 2, 7), a partial representation of the legs (G26: 9), one ear, and one eye. The second feature is the **depiction of a human face on inappropriate parts of the body**: on one of the breasts (G26: 6, 7), at the tip of one arm (G26: 7), and it seems, in some cases, also on one thigh of the figure (G26: 1). In one specimen, the head that is depicted on the breast is complemented by a whole figure of a child extending in the area of the abdomen (G26: 2), while in others, from the chest of the figure appears a barely noticeable animal head, probably of a bull (G26: 10 compare with F24; F25). On this occasion, especially indicative is the alternation of the **two-facedness** of

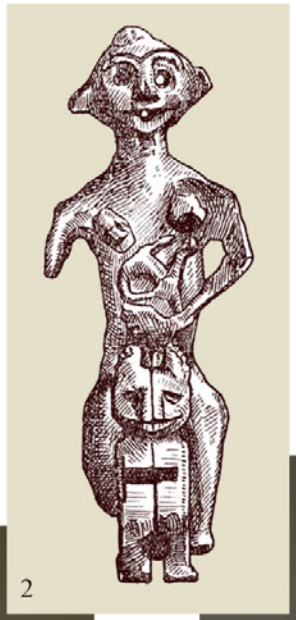
[144] "Multos etiam duobus vel tribus vel eo amplius capitibus exsculpunt." (Helmold, Chronica Slavorum, I, 84); R. Pettazzoni, *The Pagan*, 136.

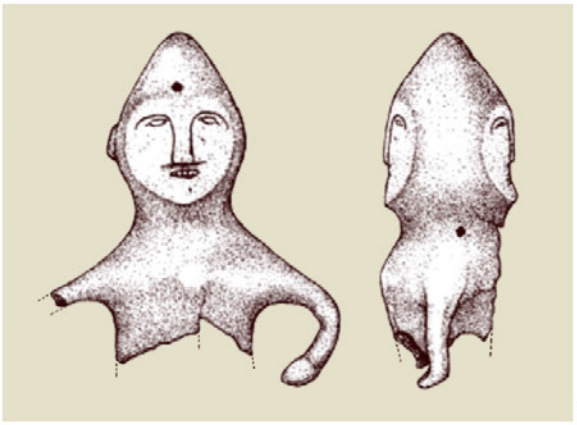
[145] Н. Чаусидис, *Кольцо*, 534, 535, Таб. 8: 2 (with corresponding pictorial analogies).

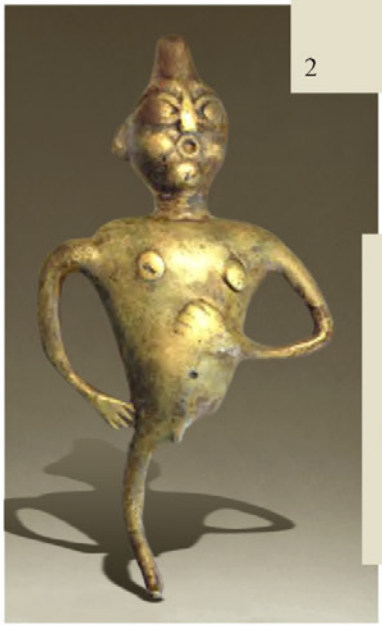
[146] Н. Чаусидис, *Раносредновековната*, 48-51; according to the latest observations, this object probably does not originate from Romania, but belongs to the famous hoard from Velestino in Thessaly (F. Curta, B. S. Szmoniewski, *The Velestino*, 136-144).

G26


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some such figurines with **four-facedness**, whereby, in addition to the front and the back faces, also formed on the head are two lateral ones (G26: 1; G42: 7, 8).[147]

The unusual iconography of these figurines is usually put in relation to the culture of the indicated Turkic-speaking peoples i.e. to the various mythical characters associated with their epics, totemic genealogies, the cult of the dead, and mainly with shamanic traditions. These are various characters (usually in the nature of mythical ancestors or helpers of shamans) that possess some of the mentioned features of the indicated figures. In first place comes the crippledness i.e. the absence of some part of the body, but also the duplication and multiplication of another. Also inherent to them is nudity and androgyny, as well as the presence of double i.e. two-faced or two-headed characters who most often depict the married couple of mythical ancestors.[148]

- Exotic examples

It should not be forgotten that the image of two human heads or faces joined with their occiputs and oriented in opposite directions is a phenomenon common to all mankind. Such a character is due to the fact that it is a manifestation of the basic symbolic concepts inherent to mythopoetic thought that belong to man as a species. In this specific case, the symmetry and complementarity of the two faces refer to the concepts of thinking in **binary oppositions**, manifested through various mythical characters based on any two complementary aspects, two natures, epiphanies and functions of the entity to which they belong. Therefore, such a deity or mythical character can be also found in cultures outside the Old World that did not have communication with it, so their existence in those cultures could be due to an autochthonous genesis within the frames of the native environment. From the voluminous material, on this occasion we reference only a few randomly selected examples. From **Africa** these are the objects belonging to the peoples of **Yoruba** and **Idoma** (Nigeria) (G27: 4, 5), to the people of **Bassa** (Liberia) (G27: 1 – 3) and **Koma** (Ghana) (G27: 6).[149] We also present an example from the cultures of **pre-Columbian America** (**"Huastec" culture**) where one head is shaped in the form of a human skull (G27: 9).[150]

This motif can be traced back to the **Neolithic period**. From such otherwise not very common examples we reference a ceramic vessel from **Căscioarele**, Romania (G27: 7).[151]

- Semiotics

We have already mentioned that the role of a template of this image within the frames of the Luristan standards of the "idols" type could have been fulfilled by some larger cultic objects with a similar shape (idols i.e. xoanons) that did not contain a mythical character i.e. deity with a fully depicted anthropomorphic figure (G1 – G5 compare with G6). Behind the indeterminate columnar shape of such idols, and even of the corresponding Luristan standards, could be the paradigm of the **Cosmic Axis**, whether it was conceptualized as a tree, a pillar or an axis (following the example of the threshing floor pole or the axle of a wheel). Based on the presented "sexually-reproductive" iconographic layer of the standards and the contours of the upper part of these objects, we believe that such a cylindrical shape is due to the intention of the producers and users (perhaps unconscious) to **equate** the depicted columnar two-faced character with the **personalized phallus**, and more specifically with the **macrocosmic phallus** as another manifestation of the Cosmic Axis (especially G2: 5 – 8 compared with D2; see pp. 239, 241).

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[147] В. В. Давыденко, В. К. Гриб, *Многоликие*; А. Х. Халиков, *Маклашевская*; with the newly discovered finds, the territory of distribution of these objects is significantly expanded (В. К. Гриб, В. В. Давыденко, *Новые*).

[148] В. В. Давыденко, В. К. Гриб, *Многоликие*, 193, 196.

[149] *Sango Staff* 2020; *Bassa* 2020.

[150] F. Eber-Stevens, *Stara*, T. XI: 374.

[151] S. Hansen, *Bilder, Tel II*, 414: 2.

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In context of the indicated macrocosmic meaning of the corpus of the Luristan "idols", one can also understand the supplementation of its lower end with a head that has the features of an animal or a human. We believe that it could encode the presence of some **chthonic zoomorphic or zooanthropomorphic mythical character** as a signifier of the lower zones of the universe (underworld, earthly waters) equated with the roots of the Cosmic Tree. This element will be discussed in a separate sub-chapter (G46; G49; see p. 547).

The meaning of the two faces formed at the upper end of the "idols" was already elaborated in the previous chapters, and we will return to it once again in one of the following (see p. 558).

- Genesis and movement through space and time

Multiple researchers link the appearance of the Mediterranean two-faced (and multi-faced) anthropomorphic representations with the Middle East, whereby the line **Mesopotamia – Middle East – Eastern Mediterranean (Asia Minor, Balkans, Aegean, Greece) – Apennine Peninsula** imposed itself as the most interesting and most-well argued one. Among some authors, this phenomenon is treated as a consequence of the **movement of objects** with the indicated motifs i.e. their production in some cultures, sale in others, and then also their copying and imitation in the new environments. Other authors also attribute to it a certain spiritual context, as the movement of some kind of traditions in the spheres of religion and myth.[152] Regarding the two-faced depictions of **Culsans** (G22: 4, 7), it is assumed that they were taken over in the archaic period, perhaps **directly from Babylonia**, or with the **mediation of the Hittites** and their god - guardian of the underworld.[153] The main recipient of these influences was Etruria which would play a decisive role in the further development and transfer of this motif to Roman culture (as the god Janus) and thus would be dispersed throughout the Apennine Peninsula, and then, with the mediation of the Roman Empire, also throughout the entire Mediterranean and Europe.[154]

The indicated **Etruscan-Anatolian route** fits well with the theories of the eastern genesis of Etruscan culture. According to it, this character could have reached Italy from the 12th century BCE and onwards as a result of the **migrations of the Pelasgians i.e. the Tyrrhenians** who at the time inhabited Lydia, northwestern Asia Minor, the islands of the northeastern Aegean Sea, and the Balkan regions along the northern edge of Greece.[155] These territories are also indicated by some concrete facts related to the bifacial mythical characters. According to ancient sources, Janus is by origin from Greece, more precisely from **Perrhaebia**,[156] an area that is located in northern Thessaly, one of the Balkan regions where the Pelasgians also lived. It is indicative that a deity with two faces also appears on the coins minted in the cities of the mentioned part of the Aegean Sea - **Lampsacus** (G20: 5, 6) and **Tenedos** (G20: 7, 9), and the route of these influences is also indicated by the two-faced figurines from **Sicily** (G22: 5) and **Sardinia** (G22: 6). Especially indicative in that sense is the winged figure with two faces from the bronze cauldron from **Vetulonia**, whose direct templates lead to the Middle East and specifically to **Urartu** (G22: 8).[157]

This route also raises the question regarding the **Iberian bifrontēs** (G23) i.e. are they also the result of the expansion of the same process further west, especially given the assumptions about their eastern (probably **Phoenician**) origin. It is especially important for us that also accentuated are the **specific relations**

[152] A. Audin, *Janus*, 86, 87 and other works mentioned below.

[153] *Culsans* 2019; I. Krauskopf, *Culsans*; A. Audin, *Janus*, 86.

[154] A. Audin thinks that Janus has an Etruscan genesis i.e. is derived from the god of the Etruscan city of Volsinii (A. Audin, *Janus*, 90).

[155] C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*, 226, 227; A. Audin, *Janus*. 86; K. R. Maxwell-Hyslop, *Urartian*; on the eastern genesis of the Etruscans: R. S. P. Beekes, *The Origin*; for our observations: Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 901-904, 1000, 1001.

[156] (*Plutarch, Quest. Rom. 22*); there are also indications of his origin from the Trojan Dardanians or from the cult of the Cabeiri on Samothrace (*Janus* 2019, 7).

[157] K. R. Maxwell-Hyslop, *Urartian*, 151, 152, Pl. XXVI; Pl. XXXIII: 4, 5; M. Pallottino, *Urartu*, 45, 46 (Fig. 19, 20).

with Luristan, through the Iberian cheekpieces with a central human and a pair of animal figures and the corresponding Luristan objects (G23: 4 – 6 compare with 7 and with B23: 4, 11).

Also shown to be possible, although currently less argued, is the line **Middle East – Balkans – Central Europe – Western Europe**, or the line **Middle East – Black Sea – Eastern Europe – Central Europe – Western Europe**. K. R. Maxwell-Hyslop suggests the **Black Sea route** of movement of the metal cauldrons **between Urartu and Italy**, and within those frames - also of the two-faced motif on the cauldron from Vetulonia (G22: 8). It is significant that in these theses, importance is also given to Luristan and the Luristan bronzes.[158] This also actualizes the thesis according to which the most important (and possibly decisive) impulse in the development of the bifrontēs from continental Europe (Celts, Germanics, Slavs – G24; G25) did not come from the Mediterranean, but directly from the Middle East.

Although indirectly, due to their later (medieval) origin, this line is supported by the bronze **"crippled" figurines from Eastern Europe** (G26), and not only because of the significant number of specimens (according to some estimates around 60), but also their uniform iconography, as well as the presence within it of several quite archaic elements (two-facedness, double-sexedness, appearance of human heads from various parts of the body). This core of objects can be interpreted through two completely opposite models. According to the first, it would be another product of the Middle Eastern influences which in this region are confirmed not only at the level of material culture but also at the level of language (see p. 377). According to the second model, these would be remnants of the earliest and most archaic traditions of Eurasia that existed in parallel with the oldest bifacial characters from Mesopotamia and Luristan, which could have even influenced the formation of the latter. In Eastern Europe we find them so late, in the Middle Ages, probably because in earlier times they existed in the media that are invisible to science - oral tradition and pictorial representations executed in organic materials.

It cannot be confirmed with certainty whether the above-mentioned handings and takings took place primarily at the level of **form and appearance**, eventually also of **iconography and myth**, or that they also included certain **aspects of religion i.e. cult**. Tracing the origins of the winged character with two faces from Vetulonia, named with the narrowly-professional term "Siren" (G22: 8), researchers reduce their analyses primarily to the level of **movement of pictorial motifs and of artisanal products**. Thereby, they do not elaborate on the issue of the mythical i.e. religious aspects of these relations and of the particular character, although it is **part of a cultic vessel**. The bronze cauldrons of this type, supplemented on the rim by various cast appliques (protomes of animals, winged creatures, etc.), are religious objects that in the East were used within the frames of various ritual actions, and there are indications that they retained such a character in Italy as well.[159] Hence, their movement along the relation Urartu – Italy should not only be analyzed on a profane level, but also on a religious one.

The adoption of such an important and expensive religious object in two such distant cultures can be explained in two ways. According to the first, the new users could have acquired and adapted these vessels to their religious needs, regardless of how they were used in their native environment. According to the second one, they could have adopted them along with the religious system within the frames of which they functioned. In accordance with the latter option, the movement of these objects actually acquires the meaning of a **material manifestation of the spread of a certain religious phenomenon**, **from Urartu to Italy or more broadly - from the Middle East to the Mediterranean**. This option also imposes the following question: *did the particular phenomenon (cult, religious teaching) move "on its own" (such as Christianity) or as a consequence of the more massive movement of a certain population that practiced it?*

[158] K. R. Maxwell-Hyslop, *Urartian*.
[159] K. R. Maxwell-Hyslop, *Urartian*, 152, 153.

b) Characters and pictorial representations with three anthropomorphic faces or three heads

The topic of three-headed mythical characters and deities is very extensive and complex, and one of its aspects (the **anthropo-zoomorphic variants**) has already been discussed in our previous chapters (see p. 406). On this occasion we will focus on the **anthropomorphic variants** with an accent on cult plastics and especially the **columnar representations** at the top of which are three human heads oriented in different directions. The reason for this is the already mentioned Luristan standards (of the "idols" type) and their supports on which this motif is present (G28: 1 – 4, 8, 9). By the way, it should be noted that three-headedness as a motif can also be detected on some other Luristan objects, such as, for example, a type of **bracelets** that are decorated at both ends with three heads, which according to some descriptions are defined as "leonine masks" (masques de lions) (G29: 5).[160] We will begin this sub-chapter with an overview of analogies grouped into appropriate chronological-geographical units, which will then be followed by a semiotic analysis of the iconographic arrangement that they represent.

- Middle East

In the Middle East, the mythical character with three faces or three heads does not appear particularly often, at least not in variants corresponding to the Luristan examples. Exceptions are two categories of object that have already been mentioned in previous sub-chapters. The first consists of the bronze **maceheads** that are associated with the "Marlik" culture, which is otherwise quite close to the Luristan one (G28: 6, 7; G13: 7, 9; see p. 468).

The second category is made up of the **metal trumpets** from Central Asia, on which, in some cases, on the central spherical resonator, and less often at the mouthpiece, there are reliefly-formed human heads. They are present in three variants - with one, two (G28: 15 – 20), and most often with three human faces oriented in different directions (G28: 13, 14, 21 – 24). These mainly represent male characters, except for one specimen where they are female (G28: 21), and another one is known where they have bovine horns (from silver), which give them a zoomorphic or zooanthropomorphic nature (G28: 13, 14). Although the main core of these objects (dating between 2200 and 1800 BCE) extends along the Oxus (the region of ancient Bactria and Margiana), certain finds have also been discovered in the Iranian plateau (G28: 15, 16). The motif is depicted in an iconographic arrangement quite close to the Luristan standards - in the form of a central tubular pillar that ends at the top with an extension. The shape of this part interferes with the phallic top of the standards, regardless of the fact that in this case it arises from the function of the objects i.e. their adaptation into a mouthpiece through which the trumpet was blown (G28: 13 – 24 compare with G1 – G3). Analyzes have shown that these are not musical instruments, but devices designed to send sound signals during military actions, or more likely, during hunting - as an imitation of the voice of a deer or some other animals. Some of the finds were discovered in graves.[161]

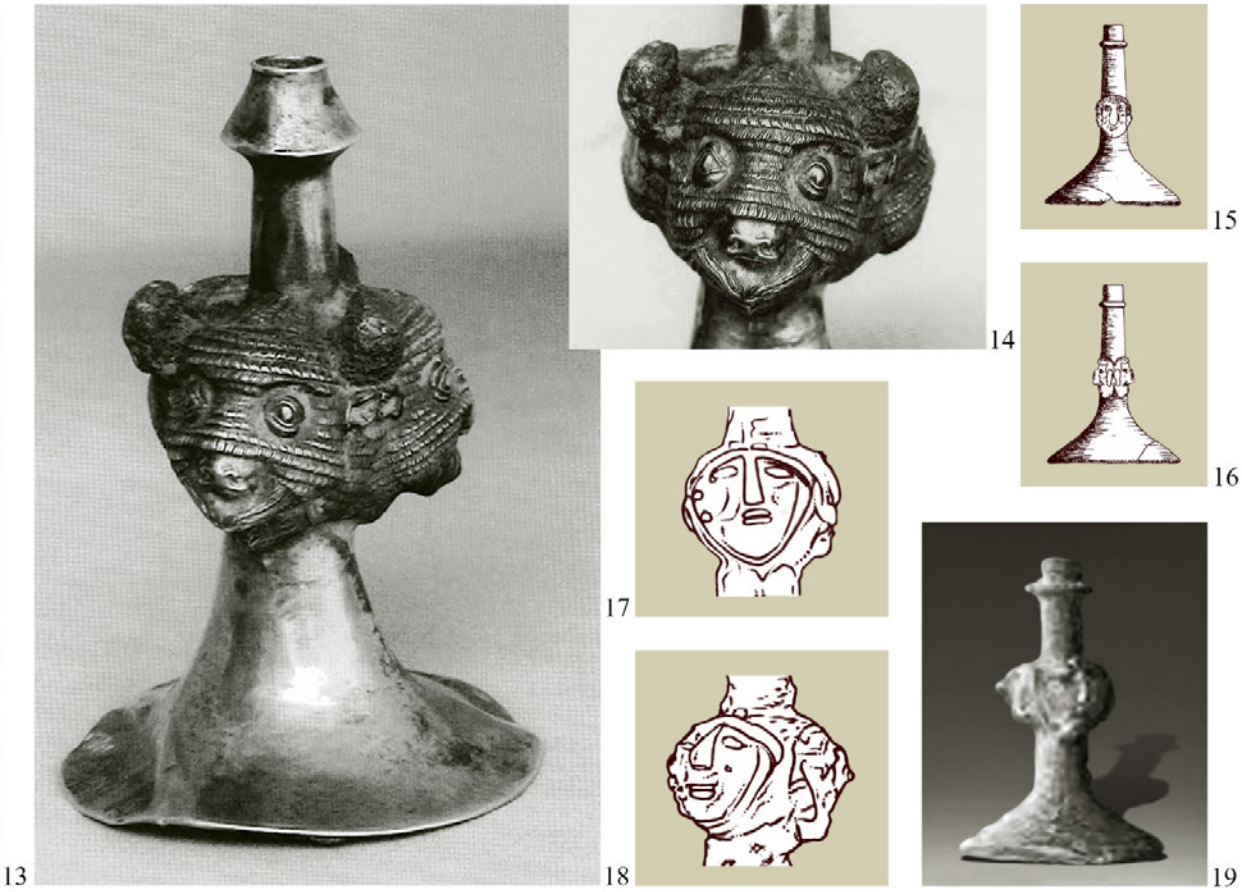
In the Middle East, there also appear completely anthropomorphized three-headed representations in the form of a human figure whose head is supplemented by two more lateral ones, placed in the area of the shoulders. In the previous chapter (see pp. 406, 425; F21) we have already mentioned some such examples: the ceramic reliefs (beginning in 2 millennium BCE) with a depiction of Ninhursag/Nintu - the Sumerian mother-goddess, patroness of birth and creator of men (G28: 10); an example from the Caucasus region (G28: 5); a bronze figurine from Western Iran, in style and chronology quite close to the Luristan ones (G28: 12). We supplement these examples with another figurine, this time a ceramic one, which belongs to the Bronze Age cultures from the territory of Syria (G28: 11). In the lower part it is conceived similarly to the previous one, but in the upper part it has three heads of equal size.

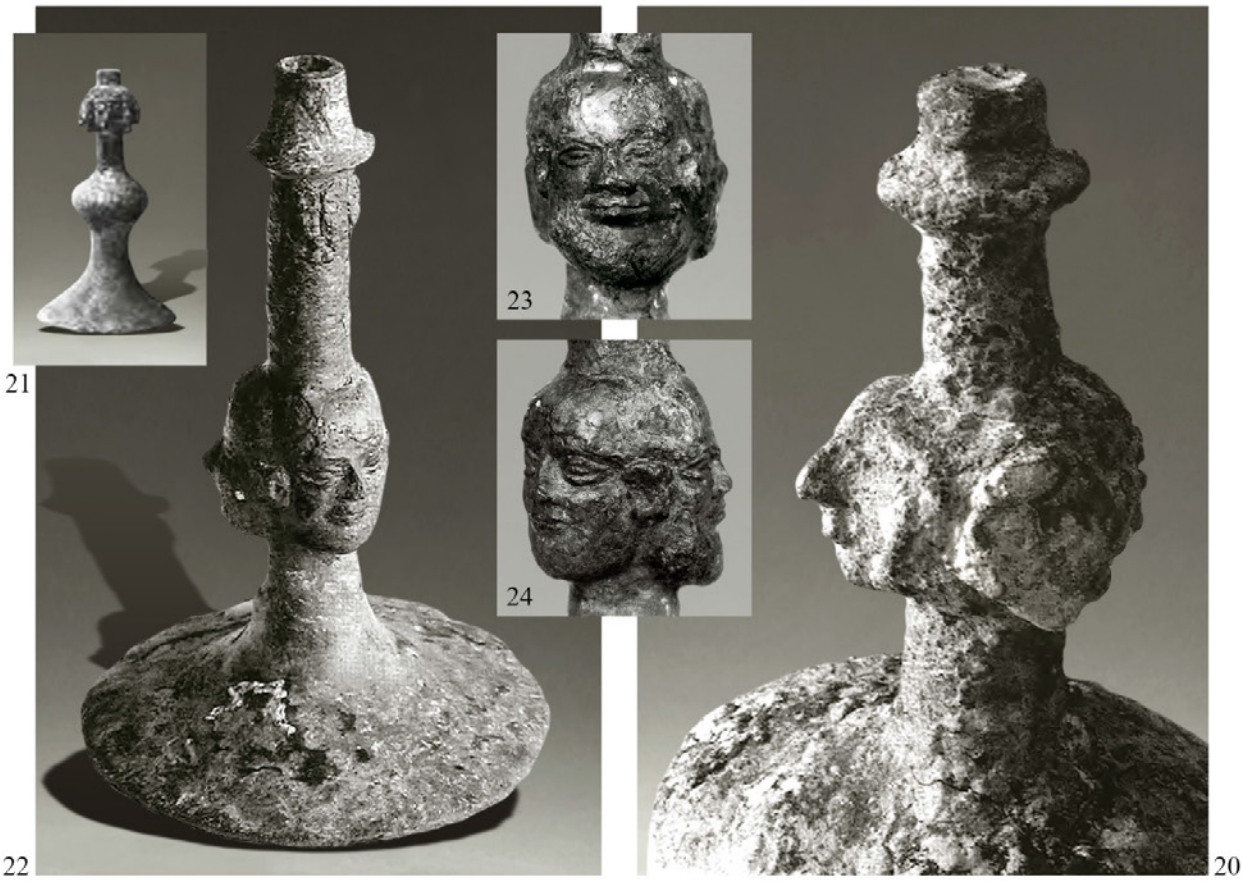
[160] E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 194 (No. 328, Fig. 163), 194 (No. 332, Fig. 167).
[161] B. Lawergren, *Oxus*.

G28



G28





- Balkans and the Mediterranean (antiquity)

Venerated in **Athens**, as early as the 6th century BCE, was the **three-headed (and four-headed) Hermes**, whose representations were placed at crossroads, ostensibly to protect the roads that merged there. There was also a three-headed Hermes at the location of Nonacris in Arcadia. According to some interpretations, the old idol of **Hermes Polygios** (Ερμης πολυγιος), in the settlement of **Troezen** in the Peloponnesus had three heads and six arms.[162] Also depicted in the form of three-headed hermai were the **Cabeiri**. One such herma collected in the **Vatican Museums** depicts the three deities of Samothrace in the form of a bearded man, a woman and a child (Axiokersos, Axiokersa and Cadmilos, respectively) (G29: 1, 2). There are examples where the first character is alternated with Apollo Helios, the second with Aphrodite, and the third with Eros.[163] The Museum of **Rhodes** houses a similar three-headed herma that is associated with the cult of Dionysus, depicting two male heads (one bearded and one beardless) and another female one (G29: 6, 7).[164] Also appearing on Greek painted vases is the three-headed **Heracles** (G30: 4).[165] Here we should also mention the **Hekataion** - statues or hermai of the triple Hecate placed at crossroads, depicted with three heads or with three fully formed and mutually fused figures (G29: 4, 8).[166] In this overview one should also mention **Typhon** and **Geryon**. The former has a zooanthropomorphic body composed of an upper anthropomorphic part and a lower one in the form of a snake. In some cases, such as the example from the tympanum of the old temple at the Athenian Acropolis, the creature is tripled i.e. depicted with three human busts complemented by the lower parts in the form of snakes that are mutually intertwined (G30: 8).[167] Geryon appears in anthropomorphic form, most often depicted as a three-headed warrior equipped with helmets and weapons (G30: 7).[168]

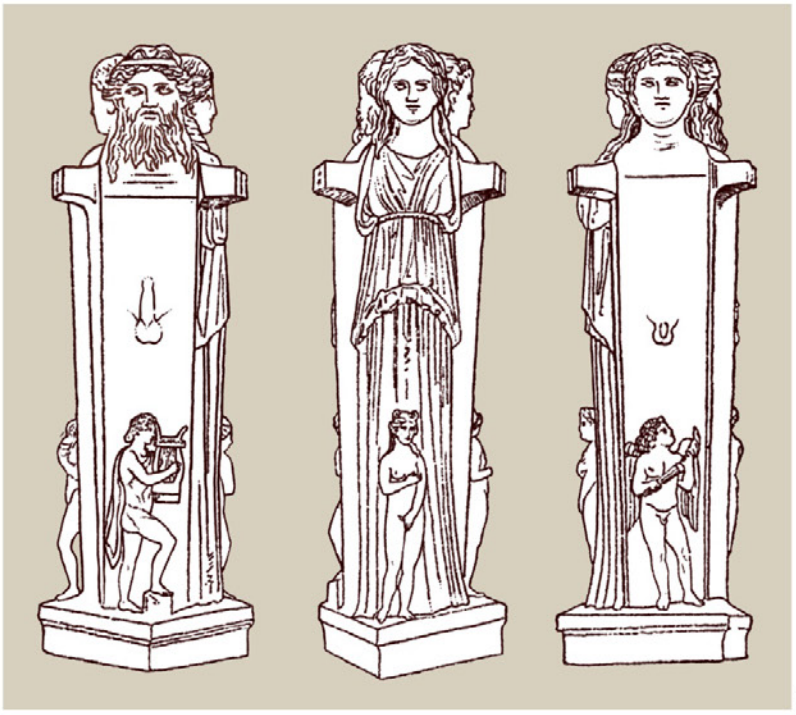
The three-headed character has been identified on several monuments from the Roman period that are associated with Thracian culture. They represent relief plaques of the **"Thracian horseman"** type, which depict the usual god-rider sitting on a horse in a gallop, with a wavy chlamys, surrounding figures, and other accompanying elements. On seven currently known reliefs he is depicted with three heads, a beard, and in some cases also with a double axe in his raised hand - elements that are not present in other reliefs of this type (G30: 1, 2). All such specimens originate from the area of the cities of **Chirpan** and **Plovdiv** (Bulgaria), which indicates that they depict some **local deity** that according to its features and cult differed from those represented on other monuments of this type. Several elements go in favor of his chthonic nature. First of all, it is his three-headedness, which we have seen that, among other meanings, often bears a chthonic symbolism. On two of the indicated seven monuments, this is further accentuated by the three-headed dog depicted under the horseman, whose relations with Cerberus speak most directly of their chthonic meaning.[169] As a chthonic element one can also take the **labrys** which, among other meanings, often bears the character of a cultic and sacrificial weapon and an attribute of the chthonic gods.[170] According to some scholars, the three-headed rider represents a character syncretized with **Hades** and **Pluto**, while according to others - a **male correlate of Hecate**. The first option is supported by the cult of Hades, which is clearly attested in the mentioned region.[171] Depicted on one of the seven monuments are busts of **Sol** and **Luna**, which was taken as a reason for the

[162] S. Reinach, *Mercure Tricephale*, 65.
[163] F. Lenormant, *Cabiri*, 761 (Fig. 902-904); *Lexicon iconogr. III,* 1986, (Bachus), p. 792, Pl. 455: 261.
[164] *Lexicon iconogr. III,* 1986, (Dionisos), pp. 468, 782, Pl. 360: No. 535.
[165] *Lexicon iconogr. V,* 1990, (Heracles), pp. 78, 664, Pl. 89: 2503.
[166] On the Hekataion and other similar triple female statues: C. Graml, *Creating*.
[167] C. L. Brownson, *The Relation*; *Typhoeus* 2020.
[168] V. Karageorghis, *A New Geryon*; J. M. Blázquez Martínez, *Gerión*.
[169] Д. Ботева, *Репроблематизация*; Г. И. Кацаров, *Принос*, 1-4.
[170] Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 653-777.
[171] Г. И. Кацаров, *Принос*, 3; Д. Ботева, *Репроблематизация*, 279, 280. In this, as in the other presented cases, there is a possibility put forward that he is a four-headed god whose rear head was not depicted due to the front point of view.

G29



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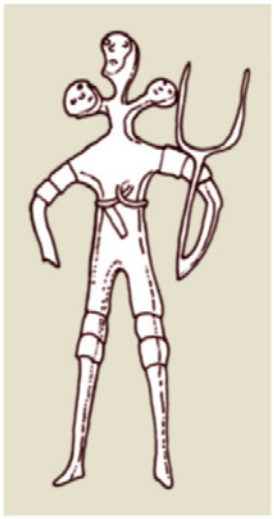
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G30


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celestial definition of the three-headed rider. We think that the latter elements may equally indicate his **pan-cosmic nature and domains**, which would be supported by the presence of the same motifs on Mithraic monuments, as well as those dedicated to the Danubian horsemen.[172] In support of this and in general to the multifacetedness of this character, one can take the presence of one, and maybe two, such reliefs with a depiction of a **two-headed rider**.[173] These variants fit well in our overview where the alternation of two-headed, three-headed and four-headed mythical characters and deities is not uncommon at all.

An analogous combination of the multi-headed god-rider (interpreted as Apollo) and the labrys is also attested on the cult reliefs from **Hieropolis** in Phrygia, and those from the area of the northeastern territories of the same region.[174] We have seen that a character with three mutually fused faces with shared eyes is also present on the reverse of the coins of Cilicia, on the obverse accompanied by a head with two faces (G30: 5; G20: 8). An analogous motif also appears on the obverse of the **coins of Samaria** from the 4th century BCE (G30: 6).

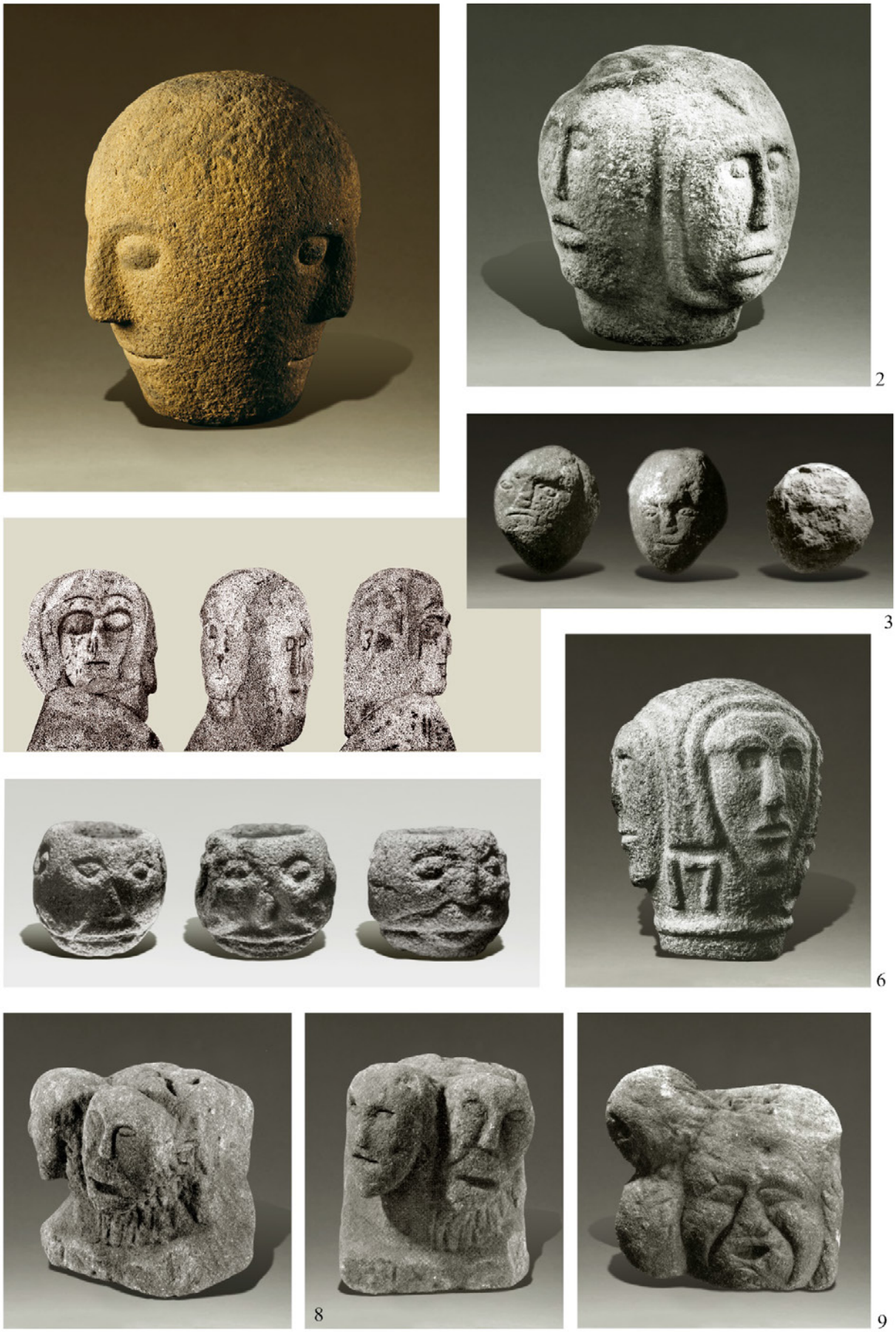
Tricephality as a feature of mythical characters and deities is also present on the Apennine Peninsula. One could include in this overview a **scarab** made of carnelian (collected in London) with a depiction of a human head with three mutually fused faces that have shared eyes and a common hat or helmet (G29: 3). Opinions have been put forward that it may have also depicted a character with four-faces (the rear one invisible), leaving open the possibility that it belonged to the Etruscan god **Culsans**, although he was usually depicted with two faces.[175] Some authors emphasize the frequent presence in Etruscan culture of the three-headed **Geryon**, and even the role of these traditions in the formation of the three-headed Celtic god.[176] On this occasion we can also mention the bronze figurine from the museum in **Cagliari** (Sardinia) (G30: 3).

- Western Europe (culture of the Celts)

Especially numerous stone monuments with three heads or three faces have been discovered in the territory of **Great Britain** and **Ireland** (dimensions of about 20 cm). The most famous one is the specimen from **Corlec** (Co. Cavan, Ireland) which is sculpted from sandstone, and probably originates from the Late La Tène period (G31: 1). The neck is not depicted at all, while the faces show a complete absence of expression.[177] Modeled on the object from **Netherton** in Lanarkshire, Scotland, are heads different in appearance and size, among which there is also a bearded one (G31: 7 – 9). A. Ross points to the possible connection of the monument with the triple epiphany of the god **Lugh**, with the sacred springs, and with **Clota** - the goddess of the local river Clyde.[178] The same author puts forward this interpretation also regarding the similar three-faced stone monument from **Woodlands**, Raphoe (Ireland), also formed of three faces, but with different sizes and features (G31: 4).[179] From **Wiltshire** (England) originates a spherical stone on which are sculpted three stylized human heads (G31: 3).[180] A similar three-faced object with a spherical form has also been found in **Sutherland** (Scotland) (G31: 5). It is made of a type of granite that is not typical for the territory of England and Ireland. On the depicted faces one can notice mustaches and accentuation of the size of the mouths, while between them there are engraved crosses. In the upper part of the monument is a hollowed out recipient, probably intended for libations which, in relation to the dimensions of the object,

[172] Д. Ботева, *Репроблематизация*, 284; Г. И. Кацаров, *Принос*, 3, 4.
[173] Г. И. Кацаров, *Принос*, 1; Д. Ботева, *Репроблематизация*, 282 – Обр. 7 (relief from Pizos), and also perhaps 280 – Обр. 3 (relief from Cherven).
[174] Д. Ботева, *Репроблематизация*, 286.
[175] I. Krauskopf, *Culsans (LIMC)*, 307, 305 (Abb. 5).
[176] P. F. Bober, *Cernunnos*, 42; G. Poitrenaud, *Cernunnos*,15.
[177] *A. Ross, The Human*, 13, 14 (Pl. IV); A. Ross, *A Celtic*, 54, (Pl. V: b); G. Poitrenaud, *Cernunnos*, 4, 5.
[178] A. Ross, *A Pagan*, 26, 32, 33 (Pl. 1 - Pl. 4).
[179] A. Ross, *A Pagan*, 32, 33 (Fig. 8).
[180] A. Ross, *A Celtic*, 53, 54 (Pl. IV).

G31



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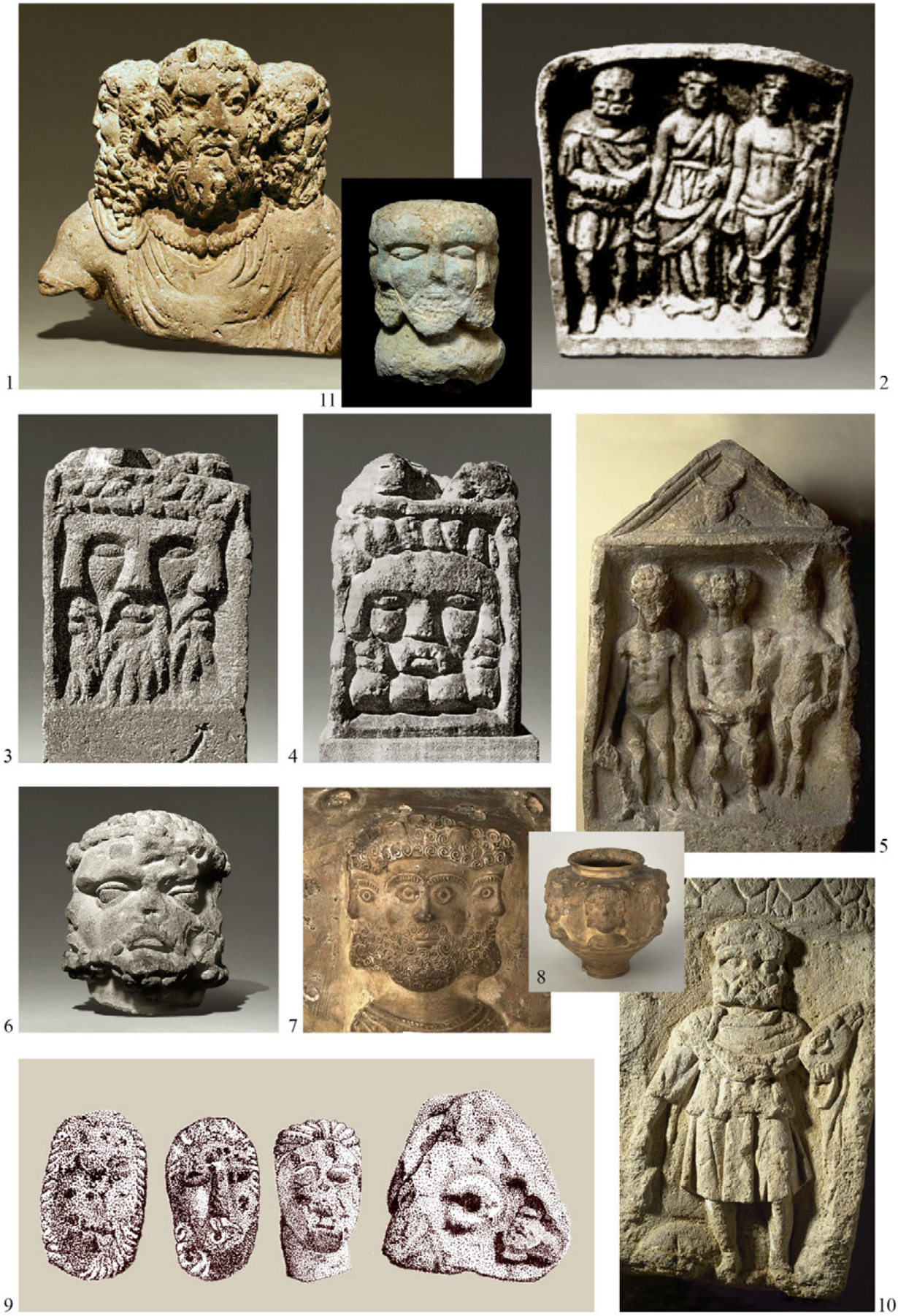
indicates its use as a "portable shrine".[181] There are also other three-headed i.e. three-faced monuments discovered on the British Isles that bear Celtic features.[182]

From the **Jutland peninsula** (Denmark) originate two stone objects, on which are formed three human faces (diameter at the base of about 30 cm). Both are carved in granite and probably functioned as the **tops of some kind of columnar objects**. They were found by accident, by the local inhabitants. In the first one, discovered at **Glejbjerg**, the three plastically formed faces are clearly separated from the corpus, whereby on the foreheads of two of them there are modeled "diadems with a triangular form" (G31: 2). The local population had included this find in their beliefs and superstitions. The second object originates from the neighboring place of **Bramming** (G31: 6). It is conceptualized similarly to the previous one, with somewhat sharper facial features, the same triangular motifs on the foreheads (this time supplemented by a central circlet), and a horizontal rib that surrounds the lower part of the object. Petrological analyzes have shown that the signs carved between the faces were of a more recent date. Given the absence of an archaeological context, the chronological and cultural determination of the two monuments and the definition of their character are performed according to the comparative method. Based on stylistic and iconographic parallels, they are defined as cult objects from the **Iron Age**, in the modeling of which were applied the characteristics of **Celtic cult plastics**.[183]

Numerous three-headed and three-faced anthropomorphic depictions have been found in the territory of **France** i.e. the former Roman province of Gaul. These finds can be classified into several groups. The first consists of **stone sculptures** executed in an archaic style (similar to the previous examples) that is typical of Celtic art. One such specimen was found on the banks of the Marne River near the town of **Aÿ** (Marne department). Depicted on it are two bearded and one beardless faces, whereby formed on its top side are three stylized ram heads (G32: 9).[184] Such features are borne by another monument from an unknown site, housed in a **private collection in France**, with three bearded faces, fused into each other, with a total of 4 eyes (G32: 11).[185] The next object only partially fits into this category because it is executed in a classical Greco-Roman style. It was found in **Lugdunum** (modern-day Lyon) and is dated to Roman times. It also depicts a head with three bearded male characters oriented in different directions, which have shared eyes (4 in total for the three characters) (G32: 6). Also known is a bust with three bearded heads, from **Condat**, which too is executed in a classical antique style (G32: 1).[186] The concept of "shared eyes by two adjacent characters" often appears also on other types of monuments from this region.[187] The second category is represented by **relief stone plaques**, depicted on which is a motif analogous to the iconography and style of the monument from Lugdunum, but executed in relief. They are again objects from the Roman period, mainly concentrated in the region of **Reims** (Roman Durocortorum) (G32: 3, 4).[188] The third group is represented **by larger relief stelae**, in whose main iconographic field is a depiction of a figure with three anthropomorphic heads or faces, alone or accompanied by other figures - from **Hôtel-Dieu** in Paris (G32: 10), from **Beaune** (G32: 5), and from **Dennevy** (G32: 2).[189] The fourth category is represented by **ceramic vessels** on which, in addition to the relief busts of other deities, also depicted is one with three heads i.e. three faces. Such examples are known from **Bavay** (Nord) (G32: 7,

[181] *A. Ross, The Human*, 10-13, Pl. III; A. Ross, *A Celtic*, 54 (Pl. V: a).
[182] *A. Ross, The Human*, 13-15.
[183] B. I. Dahl, *De mytiske*, 82, 83, Bilde 49, 50, parallels: 80-81; drawing of the first object: J. P. Lamm, *On the Cult*, 226, Fig. 14.
[184] A. Ross, *A Pagan*, 27, 30, Fig. 4; G. Poitrenaud, *Cernunnos*, 2.
[185] *Celtic Three-Headed* 2020.
[186] P. Lambrechts, *Contributions*, Fig. 7; G. Poitrenaud, *Cernunnos*, 1.
[187] M. Aldhouse-Green, *An Arch. of Images*, 207, 208, Fig. 7.15.
[188] M. Green, *Symbol*, 171-173, Fig. 76, 77; P. Lambrechts, *Contributions*, Fig. 13.
[189] M. Green, *Symbol*, 176-178, Fig. 79, 80; P. Lambrechts, *Contributions*, Fig. 11, Fig. 16; S. Reinach, *Mercure Tricephale*, 58-60, Fig. 1.

G32



8), from **Fligenberg, Troisdorf** near Bonn and other sites.[190] The character with three heads or three faces also appears on other objects (bronze statuettes, glass pendants ...) which too are linked to Gallo-Roman culture.

- Central Europe and the Balkans (culture of the Slavs)

We have already seen that numerous data indicates the presence of mythical figures and deities with three heads in the pagan culture of the Slavs. Some of the most explicit facts are the medieval written sources that mention theonyms based on the meaning of *three-headedness*, both explicitly (**Triglav, Troglav**) and implicitly (**Trojan** = *triune*). Some of them also mention Slavic idols with three heads, in **Szczecin**, **Wolin** and **Branibor** (Brandenburg).[191] A source from 1332 CE mentions some kind of **"stone of Triglav"** (*prope lapidem Triglav*) in the town of **Ptuj** (Slovenia), probably a Roman stele with a top supplemented by one human head and two animals, used as a "pillar of shame".[192]

In this overview we can also include two finds from **Carinthia** (Austria). The first is the cylindrical stone recipient from **the church of St. Helen and St. Mary Magdalene at Magdalensberg** (Štalenska gora) on whose outside are sculpted three evenly spaced human heads (G33: 1, 2). Although today located in a Christian building, it is considered to be an object that functioned within the frames of the pagan Slavic or Celtic culture.[193] In support of the second option one could reference the mentioned find from **Sutherland** (Scotland) conceptualized similarly, but with smaller dimensions (G31: 5). The second monument is the already mentioned marble slab from **St. Martin am Silberberg**, whose front side is modeled in the form of a human head (G33: 9). The fracture at the lower edge of the neck indicates a larger object which depicted a bust or perhaps an entire human figure.[194] Previous researchers see in it a character with three heads: one covering the entire monument, a second smaller one on its left cheek, and a third one on its neck. The same impression of three-headedness i.e. three-facedness remains if it is accepted that another face was also formed on the right cheek (traces of it are still visible today). Thereby, the fourth face would not participate in the three-headed identity of the depicted character because it is not located on his head (see p. 401).[195]

On this occasion, we should once again point out three more already mentioned objects. They include two specimens of the early Slavic **two-plated bow fibulae** (6th - 7th century CE) on whose elongated plate is a formed pillar or columnar figure with three human heads, in the first case of the same size, while in the rest of them - with a central larger and two lateral smaller ones (G33: 7, 8; F21: 8). Here also belongs the three-headed figure from the lower zone of the Zbruch Idol (G33: 10; G40: 4). It is shown how, kneeling, it supports the Earth plate with its hands. The figure's heads are depicted at different ages: one beardless (young), the second with a mustache (middle-aged), and the third with a mustache and beard (old). An analogous combination of three heads also occurs in a representation from a Christian temple, but organized differently - as three faces that form a dynamic circular structure. We are speaking of a fresco from **Gurk/Krka** in Carinthia (Austria) (G33: 6), whose paradigms can be traced back to antiquity (G33: 5).[196]

Discovered in the Balkans was another stone monument, which most probably had three heads. It is the idol from **Vaćane** in Dalmatia, modeled in the form of a cylinder with a protruding and rounded top and at least three human heads formed on the lateral surfaces (G33: 3, 4). Judging by the appearance of the lower

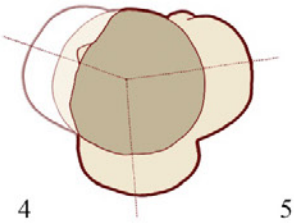
[190] P. Lambrechts, *Contributions*, Fig. 20; M. Green, *Symbol*, 175, 176 (Fig. 78); G. Poitrenaud, *Cernunnos*, 3, 4; R. Pettazzoni, *The Pagan*, Pl. 14: a.
[191] V. P. Goss, *The Three-Header*, 39; about the idol in Brandenburg, venerated by both Slavs and Saxons, speaks the "Pulkava Chronicle" (Fontes rerum Bohemicarum) from the 14th century (L. Leže, *Slovenska*, 24).
[192] М. Гарашанин, *Скулптура*, 67; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 246, 247.
[193] H.-D. Kahl, *Kultbilder*, 38.
[194] H.-D. Kahl, *Kultbilder*, 32-52; A. Pleterski, *Gab es bei*, 41, 42.
[195] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 251.
[196] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 252, 253, Г23: 12, 13; J. Baltrušaitis, *Fantastični*, 31-33.

G33


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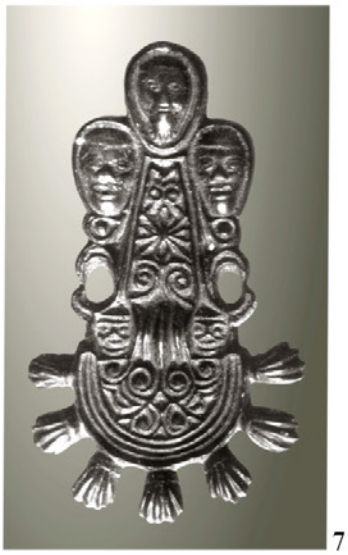

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edge, the object was probably the top of a larger columnar idol. M. Garašanin concludes that there are not enough arguments for its **Slavic affiliation**, although such a possibility cannot be completely ruled out. Based on the presented Slavic and Celtic analogies (most of them mentioned above), he prefers its **Celtic character**. As Celtic components he considers the iconography and the style of execution, as well as the rounded top which he treats as an **omphalos**, whereby he also presents Celtic parallels for it.[197] However, in these comparisons he does not notice that this element does not appear in any of the Celtic multi-headed monuments, including those which he himself references (compare with G31; G32), at the expense of the several Slavic ones in which it is clearly expressed (G40: 4; G42: 1, 2). We think that precisely this component is an important argument in favor of the Slavic and not the Celtic provenance of the idol from Vaćani. Its Slavic character is also emphasized by V. P. Goss, regardless of the fact that he also notes the Celtic and Roman-provincial features in its execution.[198] We have also put forward such a determination a few years before the publication of the referenced paper, not ruling out the possibility that the idol had four heads (compare G38: 6, 7) and was used within the frames of two cultures - the Slavic one and some other that preceded it. Thereby, we dedicated special attention to the **phallic corpus** and the complementary features of the two preserved heads - one smiling and with large round eyes, and the other with a small constricted mouth and sunken eyes in the form of small depressions.[199]

The three-headed characters are also present among the peoples of the **Germanic cultural circle**. They appear in myths, represented through giants who often have three heads such as **Hrimgrimnir**, have a doubled triad of heads (Thrudgelmir i.e. Ymir's son) or a tripled triad of heads (Thrivaldi).[200] However, in the pictorial medium, such characters are depicted as human figures whose three heads are attached to separate necks - one central and two lateral ones that are oblique. Such figures are represented on the golden horn from **Gallehus** (Denmark) (G34: 2) and on the medieval tapestry from **Skog**, Hälsingland (Sweden) (G34: 1). This makes them different from the previous ones where the three heads or faces are organized around a single axis represented by the middle head, the neck of the figure or the columnar idol at the top of which it is formed. There is information on the presence of a triad of deities in the sanctuary of Uppsala and among the neighboring Prussians.[201]

At the end, we would like to mention a few more three-headed representations whose cultural affiliation cannot be determined with certainty. The first one is the bronze mounting for a rhyton with three human heads from **Taplow** near Bucks (England) (G34: 4)[202] and another mounting of unknown purpose from **Hemdrup**, Himmerland (Denmark) (G34: 3).[203] We are also familiar with two already mentioned bronze maceheads on which are formed three human heads. The first, found near **Allinge**, Bornholm (Denmark), is not chronologically determined, but noticeable on it are stylistic features of Gallo-Roman culture (G13: 6).[204] The second one originates from the vicinity of **Varna** (Bulgaria), is dated to the 15th century, and is

[197] М. Гарашанин, *Скулптура*; on the implicit ithyphallicity of the Celtic monuments: G. Poitrenaud, *Cernunnos*, 4.
[198] V. P. Goss, *The Three-Header*, 36-39, 49.
[199] Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 465-471; N. Čausidis, *Poganska*, 441-443.
[200] (Elder Edda, Lay of Skírnir. 31; Elder Edda, Lay of Vafthrudnir. 29, 33; Prose Edda, Skáldskaparmál. 4), according to: C. Larrington, *The Poetic Edda*; S. Sturluson, *The Prose Edda*, 109.
[201] G. Poitrenaud, *Cernunnos*, 21, 22. The triad in Uppsala according to Adam of Bremen consists of Thor, Wodan (i.e. Odin) and Fricco (i.e. Freyr) (Adamus Bremensis, IV. 26-27). The same triad of gods can also be recognized on the Skog tapestry. It is interesting that these gods can be taken as representatives of the three stages of life - Freyr of youth, Thor of adulthood, and Odin of old age. The same also applies to the Prussian triad consisting of Potrimpos (beardless i.e. youth), Perkuno (bearded i.e. adulthood), and Patollos (with long gray beard i.e. old age).
[202] J. P. Lamm, *On the Cult*, 227 (Fig. 21).
[203] J. P. Lamm, *On the Cult*, 226 (Fig. 15).
[204] J. P. Lamm, *On the Cult*, 225 (Fig. 13).

associated with the Polish king Władysław III and the battle he fought there (G13: 5).[205] Considering the symbolism of the mace and the indicated motif, it is quite probable that, in addition to the utilitarian one, the last two finds also had some kind of symbolic function.

- India

Although in Hindu culture the pictorial representations of gods with three heads i.e. three faces are common, according to D. M. Srinivasan the eventual tricephality of these characters (Shiva, Vishnu, etc.) cannot be traced in the relevant religious texts. She thinks that the three-headedness in this case is actually a consequence of the frontal point of view from which only three of the four or five heads of these gods are visible. From the Vedic examples it appears only in a few gods. In the case of **Vishvarupa**, an avatar of Vritra, the three-headed variant (Trisiras) appears as an **emanation of chaos** (multiplicated variant G48: 11). In the case of the god **Soma** it symbolizes his omnipresence in the tripartite cosmos, while in the case of **Agni** it is related to his three altars and three cosmic emanations (G34: 9).[206] In support of our topic, one can also point to the triads of deities (**trimurti** - "three forms", "three characters"), composed of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva (or Rudra), as representatives of the three phases of existence: **creation**, **preservation** and **destruction**. Thereby, there is interwovenness between the three separate gods and the single entity that they, all together, make up. Similar triads are present in **Shivaism** as emanations of Shiva (G34: 5). There are also triads of female deities such as the **trideva** composed of **Saraswati**, **Lakshmi** and **Kali** i.e. **Shakti** (G34: 6).[207]

Representations of three human heads or skulls are present on the sacrificial vases of the category kapala, typical of **Tibetan culture**. The recipient of these vases is made of a real skull or in the shape of a skull, whereby the three heads function as parts of a triangular metal support to hold them in a vertical position (G34: 10). This support symbolizes the **fiery element equated with the mandala and the hearth** ("the wrathful element of fire as a blazing fire mandala, and the three skulls forming the cornerstones of its hearth"). The three heads i.e. the three skulls represent the destruction of the **three poisons**, the victory over the **three realms** and the **three times**, and "the unity of the **three kayas** as the purified body, speech, and mind of the deity". Their alternation with three turtles goes in favor of the former earthly and chthonic aspect of these elements.[208] Such combination of the three heads and the cult vessel interferes with the above-presented Celtic (G31: 5; G32: 7, 8) and Slavic examples (G33: 1, 2).

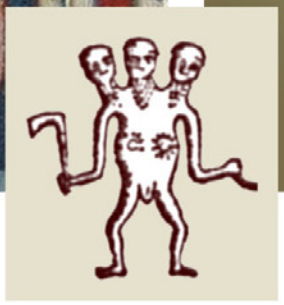
Within the frames of the same culture, the three heads are also present on the hilts of the already mentioned cult objects of the type **kīla** or **phurga** (G16: 4, 6, 8, 10), in some cases combined with an anthropomorphic figure with 6 arms and 4 legs (G16: 9). According to authentic interpretations, it represents the god **Vajrakilaya**, but also some other three-faced deities: Vairochana, Amrita Kundalin, Hayagriva, Yamantaka and Vajrakumara, who are invited to reside inside the phurga due to the performance of some of its religious or magical functions. These faces, among other things, also symbolize the **three kayas**.[209]

The earliest three-headed anthropomorphic characters in this part of the world are present on the seals from Mohenjo-daro and **Harappa** (3rd - 2nd millennium BCE), depicted in a cross-legged pose (G34: 8) which would also survive in later stages of Hindu culture, and would also appear in the distant culture of the Celts. Despite the doubts regarding the three-headedness of these figures, the positive attitude and the belief that these are actually representations of the **tricephalous proto-Shiva** prevail on this issue.[210] Here we should also mention a **metal figurine** belonging to the oldest cultures in the Indus Valley. It has three faces

[205] А. Кузев, *Маршрутът*, 149 (Обр. 2).
[206] D. M. Srinivasan, *Many Heads*, 173, 179, 180
[207] G. Poitrenaud, *Cernunnos*, 17, 18, 22
[208] R. Beer, *The Encyclopedia*, 265-267 (Pl. 119), 327, 328 (Pl. 141, Pl. 142).
[209] R. Beer, *The Encyclopedia*, 246, 247; *Kīla* 2020.
[210] D. M. Srinivasan, *Many Heads*, 179-182; in relations with Luristan: Ph. Ackerman, *The Oriental*, 224; with Balkan and European examples: Г. И. Кацаров, *Принос*, 6, 7.

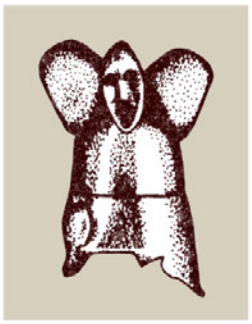
G34


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oriented in different directions, covered by some kind of wide hat or shallow vessel (G34: 7). From the later examples, deserving of attention is the representation of Shiva on the **gold coins of Huvishka** from the Kushan period. He is depicted with three heads, standing in front of his bull Nandi (G34: 5).[211]

Based on these and other examples, it can be concluded that triunity, and within that framework also tricephality, in Hindu culture symbolized **completeness**, **wholeness**, and in relation to duality, also a **synthesized unity of some two complementary categories or two entities**.[212]

- Exotic cultures

The two variants, in the form of three separate heads or one head with three fused faces, are also present in the "exotic" cultures that had no communication with the Old World. As in the case of the two-faced representations, this speaks of the **archetypal character** of this iconographic arrangement that occurs in different cultures independently of each other. On this occasion, we present as examples a three-headed wooden figurine from the **Lega** people of Congo (G35: 7), a mask with three mutually fused faces from the same people or the **Lengola** people (Congo) (G35: 6) and a wooden figure with a similarly conceptualized triple head from the **Fang** people (Cameroon) (G35: 8).

- Christianity

The same concept will permeate Christianity in two complementary contexts - **divine** and **diabolical** - with a clearly defined meaning (*vultus trifrons*). In the first case it is a representation of the **Holy Trinity** in two variants: as the figure of **Christ** with a tripled bearded face, a figure of an **angel** with a tripled beardless face (G35: 1, 3) or with a depiction of the heads of God the Father, Christ (The Son) and the dove (Holy Spirit) (G35: 2). Within the frames of the first concept, represented in an analogous way will also be the devil i.e. the **diabolical trinity**, not rarely supplemented by other anthropomorphic faces depicted at the abdomen, genitals, and joints (G35: 5 compare with G50: 5). Christian theology, equally both Eastern and Western, will never accept the depiction of the Holy Trinity as one body with three heads or three faces. These images, within the frames of ecclesiastical canons, were determined as erroneous or unanimously condemned by theologians as monstrous. It is thought that in the Byzantine cultural circle this representation will come from the West, starting from the 13th century. The motivation for its functioning, in spite of the indicated disapproval, is sought in the need to convey the complex dogma related to the Holy Trinity in a simpler way to the ordinary uneducated and illiterate believers.[213]

- Semiotics

There is no doubt that the tricephalic deities and mythical characters in different cultures and in different specific cases bore different meanings. The greatest contribution in revealing the character of such characters from continental and Western Europe was given by the examples from France, thanks to the large number of finds and variants (G32), as well as the written sources that mention specific Celtic deities with their autochthonous theonyms and attributes. A special share in this process is held by their well-documented Roman equivalents with their relatively clearly defined character and functions.

There have been discussions in academia whether behind the there-depicted three-headed i.e. three-faced characters stand **three separate gods** or a **single triune god**. We think that this dilemma is not of essential significance because in many cultures similar triads at the same time function both as separate deities and as hypostases of some more dominant or single all-encompassing god.

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[211] A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 790, 791 (Fig. 754).

[212] D. M. Srinivasan, *Many Heads*, 174.

[213] R. Pettazzoni, *The Pagan*; C. Sastre Vázquez, *Vultus*; A. Kučeković, *The Three-headed*.

G35

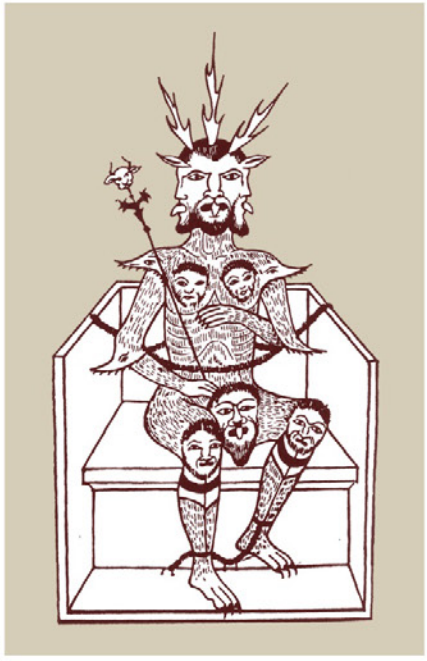

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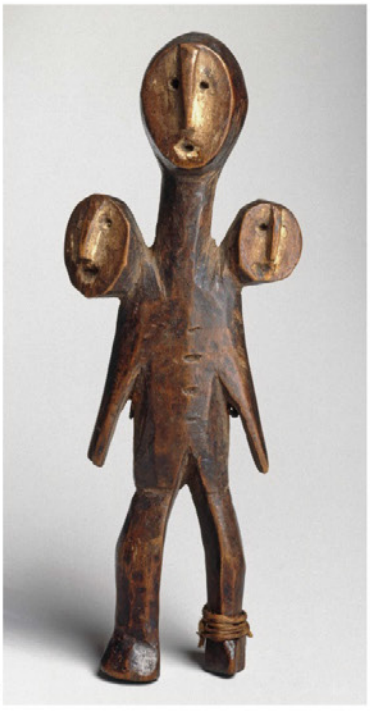

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The three heads can be treated as personalizations of some three principles i.e. three concepts: **beginning, middle and end** (with special emphasis on the first); **creation, cohesion and destruction**; **the number 3 as a sum of 1 and 2**.[214] The triple representation could also bear the meaning of ***many***, analogously as in ancient Egypt where the plural of a certain term was denoted by the triplication of the ideogram that symbolized that term.[215]

It is noted on the Celtic monuments that the central head is always the largest and most elderly (G31: 4, 7 – 9; G32: 9). This gives reason in regards to some of them, but also in examples from other regions, to recognize the myth of the **God-Father and his two sons**.[216] We have seen that one such example is the myth of Zurvān, Ohrmazd and Ahriman, also represented on the Luristan bronzes, and not only through the triad of figures, but also as a single three-headed figure (F28). It seems quite probable that the combination of the bearded and the beardless heads was intended to represent the opposition **old age – youthfulness** or **male – female**, if one of the heads has female features. The combination of the male bearded character with some female one may also suggest the triad **father - mother - son**, which we have seen was present in the Mediterranean within the frames of the cult of the Cabeiri (G29: 1, 2).[217]

In some examples, one can identify characters of **three different ages**, as in the case of the idol from **Aÿ** where, in addition to the beardless face and the character with an accentuated beard, there is also one depicted with a more moderate beard (G32: 9). We also have such a combination in the case of the three-headed figure from the lower zone of the **Zbruch idol**, whose one head is beardless (youth), the second with a mustache (middle aged), and the third with a beard and mustache (old age) (G33: 10). An analogous concept is applied in an **ancient grylle** where the three characters depicted in profile (beardless, a character with hair and a beard, and another one bearded but bald) fuse together into a single head, suggesting its rotation, probably as a symbol of the dynamics of temporal or, more specifically, of life cycles (G33: 5).[218]

On several Gallo-Roman stelae from **Reims**, the central human head is combined with the **lateral heads of a ram**, which as an animal is otherwise quite common on Celtic three-headed monuments.[219] We have seen that similar combinations (this time with the heads of ibexes) also appear on Luristan standards (G4: 1; G10: 2).

The three heads may denote the depicted god as the **master of space and time**, suggesting the tripartite spatial division of the universe (**sky**, **middle zone** and **underworld**) or the three components of time: **past**, **present** and **future**. In these, but also in the previously mentioned concepts, tricephality could signify the **completeness** and **omnipresence** of the god as well as his function of **patron of everything** i.e. the **whole universe**, both in its spatial and temporal aspects.[220] We have seen that such a character is explicitly expressed in the Slavic god **Triglav from Szczecin** and in some Hindu deities. The indicated triple aspects could also be encoded in the triangular motifs present on some of the Celtic monuments.

In almost all the mentioned cultures, the three-headed god, in addition to his comprehensive cosmological dimension, can also bear a **chthonic meaning**. In Slavic culture, such a character belongs to the mentioned **three-headed god from the lower zone of the Zbruch idol**, who while kneeling holds the Earth plate (G33: 10; G40: 4). In Hinduism it is **Vishvarupa** (G48: 11), in Hellenic culture - **Geryon** (G30: 7), as well as numerous other examples which, ultimately, can be reduced to the archetypal **three-headed chthonic**

[214] G. Poitrenaud, *Cernunnos*, 6, 8, 10, 17.
[215] D. M. Srinivasan, *Many Heads*, 172.
[216] On this issue: G. Poitrenaud, *Cernunnos*, 5, 6, 8-10.
[217] M. Green, *Symbol*, 174, 175; M. Aldhouse-Green, *An Arch. of Images*, 207, 209; G. Poitrenaud, *Cernunnos*, 5, 6, 8-10, 20, 21.
[218] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 252, 253, Г23: 12; J. Baltrušaitis, *Fantastični*, 31-33.
[219] M. Green, *Symbol*, 174, 175; G. Poitrenaud, *Cernunnos*, 9.
[220] G. Poitrenaud, *Cernunnos*, 5-7, 10, 17; A. Ross, *A Pagan*, 32.

dragon, such as the Greek **Typhon** (G30: 8).[221] Such a nature of the Celtic three-headed characters is indicated by their relations with the Mediterranean **Geryon**. The tricephality of these characters may also reflect their **triple sacrifice** (or more specifically - the severing of their three heads) aimed towards the creation of the three cosmic zones or some other three aspects of the universe.[222] It is quite indicative that this **chthonic and demonic aspect of tricephality** will also find its place within Christianity (G35: 5), even in a more dominant form than the representations of the Holy Trinity (G35: 1 – 4). There are indications that this "Diabolical Trinity", represented as a three-headed or three-faced devil, is even older than the former.[223]

Tricephality can also be justified in the context of some other semiotic concepts. So, the high frequency of such monuments among the Celts is associated with the **"cult of the head"**, clearly confirmed in written sources according to which this part of the body "was regarded by them as the **seat of the soul, the centre of the vital essence, symbolic of the regenerative forces of life**." Based on these beliefs was also its important role in rituals, the character of a military trophy, and an apotropaic element.[224] Combining these meanings with the meaning of the number **three as "many"**, tricephality can also be understood as the **quantification**, **amplification** and **intensification** of the mentioned or some other categories that the head symbolized.[225]

The trumpets from Oxus and the wider Central Asian region (G28: 13 – 20) are linked to a mythical act from the Avesta (Vendidad) in which Ahura Mazda gives **Yima** two instruments - a golden trumpet and a whip decorated with gold in order to, by using them, control (call and punish) the people and the animals. In the Pahlavi texts, an analogous trumpet is in possession of **Zahhāk** - the mythical character with a negative nature who will use it to accomplish his evil deeds: causing death, disease and hunger, and the temptation of people (especially attracting towards himself beautiful women).[226] We think that both actions could reflect the two phases of one same myth. In the first, both complementary functions would be performed by Yima, which would be supported by the dual i.e. ambivalent nature of this mythical character contained even in the meaning of his name (*twin*), and on a visual level in the bifacial head present on part of the trumpets (G28: 15 – 20). In the second phase, these functions were assigned to two different characters, whereby, although the positive one remained in the domain of Yima, behind it ultimately stands Ahura Mazda - the absolute bearer of the positive principle who precisely gave him the trumpet in the role of his patron. On the other hand, probably in the spirit of Zoroastrian dualism, the negative aspects of this object were taken over by Zahhāk (i.e. one of his older mythical predecessors - Aži Dahāka i.e. Angra Majnyu) as an opponent of Ahura Mazda and bearer of the negative principle. The question remains open as to who is represented by the two-faced and three-faced head from these objects. Their alternation shows that they are two hypostases of one and the same character, behind which could stand both Yima and the indicated chthonic gods. If we take into account that in Indo-European mythical traditions, three-headedness is a more common feature of chthonic characters, then the second option would be more likely in regards to some of the presented objects. This especially refers to the trumpet where the three faces i.e. the three heads have zoomorphic or zooanthropomorphic features which, according to B. Lawergren, represent bulls with silver horns (G28: 13, 14).[227] Their dark and demonic appearance seems to be in opposition to the remaining examples whose characters are represented by a calm and neutral expression of the face, among which, in some cases, one can even recognize a smile (G28: 22 – 24).

[221] On these mythical characters: Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 241-260.
[222] G. Poitrenaud, *Cernunnos*, 13-18.
[223] R. Pettazzoni, *The Pagan*, 150, 151; C. Sastre Vázquez, *Vultus*.
[224] *A. Ross, The Human*, 11, 12.
[225] G. Poitrenaud, *Cernunnos*, 5, 7; M. Green, *Symbol*, 170; A. Ross, *A Pagan*, 31.
[226] B. Lawergren, *Oxus*, 94-96.
[227] B. Lawergren, *Oxus*, 61 (Fig. 8: F8), 64, 70, 71 (Fig. 15, 16).

- Genesis and movement through space and time

Several conceptions are proposed in explaining the genesis of the presented three-faced motifs. The high frequency of this motif in Western Europe (G31; G32) initiated assumptions about the **Gallic** i.e. **Celtic** roots even of analogous characters from neighboring regions. Numerous older Celtic monuments show that the deity with three heads i.e. three faces was venerated by the autochthonous inhabitants of Gaul and the surrounding provinces even before the Romans. After their arrival it was equated with **Mercury**, to a lesser extent with **Mars**, but also with other Roman deities. In some of them one can note the combination of tricephality with hornedness (deer antlers, but also of other animals) and the sitting pose with crossed legs, which give arguments in favor of identifying such characters with the Celtic god **Cernunnos**.[228] In addition to the theories about the autochthonous genesis of the Gallic three-headed god, it has also been speculated that his **primary proto-model was in fact Hermes** - the Greek equivalent of Mercury, who is supposedly the most frequent Greek god with three heads.[229] Based on the number of discovered objects, it is thought that **Reims** was the main center of the cult of the three-headed Gallic god.[230]

The best evidence for the intensity and importance of these traditions is their **transposition in Christian iconography**, specifically in the depiction of the **Holy Trinity** in the form of three mutually fused faces of Christ with one shared pair of eyes (vultus trifrons) (G35: 1 compare with G32: 2 – 4, 6, 10, 11). Contrary to the non-canonical nature of this representation and the prohibitions by the church that started in the 14th century, it would maintain its popularity within the frames of folk culture until the 19th century. The first such representations can be traced back to the same regions where the three-headed Gallic god was venerated, featuring the key detail common to both the Pagan and Christian depictions - two eyes shared by the three faces. This can also be understood as a form of **continuation of pagan traditions** within the frames of the new religion (G35: 1 – 5; G50: 5).[231]

But the presence of such characters in other parts of Western (G31) and Central Europe (G33) was a sufficient argument to reevaluate this conception. Some researchers have **sought the origins of these traditions in the Balkans and the Mediterranean** (G29; G30), at least in relation to the European examples. Others, in turn, treat these regions only as **intermediaries** in the transmission of the three-headed deities to Europe (and more specifically to the Celts) along the route **Middle East – Asia Minor – Balkans – course of the Danube River**. Today, the most acceptable is considered to be the **polygenetic conception** in which all the mentioned conceptions can be included in a certain way. In that context, tricephality as a feature of the mythical figures and deities from the territory of the Roman province of Gaul cannot be considered the result of the influence of Roman, Hellenic or Oriental cultures. Their role is sought only in the **modification of the autochthonous traditions** associated with these characters.[232] In a similar way, within the frames of this conception, one could also explain the Slavic examples (G33), perhaps as a more direct influence of the Middle East, specifically along the already mentioned **Caucasus – Black Sea route**. This, among other things, would also be indicated by the strong Iranian and Indo-Aryan component in the ethnogenesis of the

[228] S. Reinach, *Mercure tricephale*, 65-70; P. F. Bober, *Cernunnos*, 30-42; G. Poitrenaud, *Cernunnos*, 1-3, 8, 9, 24, 25; *A. Ross, The Human*, 11, 12.
[229] G. Poitrenaud, *Cernunnos*, 8, 9; P. F. Bober, *Cernunnos*, 41, 42.
[230] S. Reinach, *Mercure tricephale*, 65-70; P. F. Bober, *Cernunnos*, 34, 38; G. Poitrenaud, *Cernunnos*, 8, 9.
[231] R. Pettazzoni, *The Pagan*; M. Aldhouse-Green, *An Arch. of Images*, 207, 209; C. Sastre Vázquez, *Vultus*; A. Kučeković, *The Three-headed*; S. Bogevska, *The Holy Trinity*.
[232] R. Pettazzoni, *The Pagan*, 146, 149, 150, 151; G. Poitrenaud, *Cernunnos*, 1, 21; Г. И. Кацаров, *Принос*, 7, 8; theories have also been put forward specifically about the role of the Cabeiric triads in the creation of the Celtic three-headed deity (G. Poitrenaud, *Cernunnos*, 20, 21).

Slavs and in their pagan religion.[233] The high degree of similarity between the Celtic and Slavic examples could be due to the long coexistence of the two cultures in the Pannonian region during the 1st millennium BCE, which is indicated by some new arguments regarding the oldest homeland of the Slavs.[234] The geographical position of this homeland would also not exclude the early influences from the Balkans and the Mediterranean.

R. Pettazzoni thinks that the concept of **mutual fusion of the elements of the three faces**, in Western Europe can be traced almost continuously from the Gallo-Roman monuments (G32) to the early medieval representations within the frames of Christianity (G35: 5 compare with G50: 5). He believes that characters of this type have an **oriental genesis**, and in Europe they could have come through Asia Minor, the Balkans and the course of the Danube.[235] Agreeing with the above observations, in the creation of these Christian representations one should also not exclude the role of pagan traditions i.e. the affinity of the people of continental Europe towards the images of their old three-headed deities. Thereby, one should also not overlook the **archetypal** i.e. **universal human nature** of this motif, which is indicated by the "exotic" examples from the world (examples from Africa G35: 6, 8).

The Oxus trumpets can have quite significant implications regarding the genesis of the Luristan bronzes and in particular of the standards, given the similar iconography of both types of objects (two-faced or three-faced head mounted on a vertical tubular pillar with a tip alluding to a phallus G28: 13 – 20 compare with G1 – G3), followed by significant geographical and chronological closeness. The dating of these objects, a whole thousand years before the Luristan bronzes, the location of their core in the immediate northern surroundings of Iran, and their relations to the Avesta and the traditions of the Indo-Iranians, give us the opportunity to treat these objects as products of some culture which, after settling in Luristan, would take part in the constitution of the Luristan bronzes, but also of the iconography and the mythical-religious system that stood behind them. Such a hypothesis becomes even more plausible if we consider one of the theories about the origin of the Indo-Aryans according to which they descended to Iran and Western Asia exactly from the Bactria – Margiana Archaeological Complex - the core of these objects (see p. 700).

c) Characters and pictorial representations with four or more anthropomorphic faces or heads

This iconographic type can be described as a **pillar at the top of which are formed four or more (five, six) human heads**, which with their occiput are fused into it. In some cases, the pillar extends slightly above the heads, ending semi-spherically. We have seen that this element is present on several types of Luristan bronzes, explicitly or implicitly. At the tops of the "idols", between the two faces oriented forward and backward, one can recognize two more lateral ones that from the previous borrow their eyes and their noses in the meaning of ears (G2: 5; G3: 1 – 3). The same concept is applied in the lower part of some standards of the type "idols with protomes" (G11: 1, 4). We know of only one standard where this arrangement is represented explicitly (G36: 4), but it is also present on some **Luristan maceheads** (G13: 2 – 4), as well as on the **pendants in the form of a foot** (G15).

This variant too is present in various parts of the world, which can be explained by its **archetypal** i.e. **universal character**, which in turn can be justified by the fact that it contains within itself the structure of the

[233] On these components in the ethnogenesis of the Slavs: В. В. Седов, *Славяне в древности*, 277-279; В. В. Седов, *Славяне в раннем*, 80-84; О. Н. Трубачев, *Этногенез (2003)*, 49-53; А. Лома, *Неки славистички*; Z. Vinski, *Uz problematiku*; Н. Чаусидис, *Дуалистички*, 103-105; in the Slavic pagan religion: В. Н. Топоров, *Об иранском*; Д. М. Дудко, *Иранские*; C. L. Borissoff, *Non-Iranian*; Н. Чаусидис, *Дуалистички*, 141-171.
[234] О. Н. Трубачев, *Этногенез (2003)*, 45-49.
[235] R. Pettazzoni, *The Pagan*, 146, 149-151.

three-dimensional cross that in this case is formed within the frames of the anthropomorphic code (A8: 1). On this occasion we will present several nuclei within the frames of the Old World where its presence is more pronounced.[236]

- Middle East

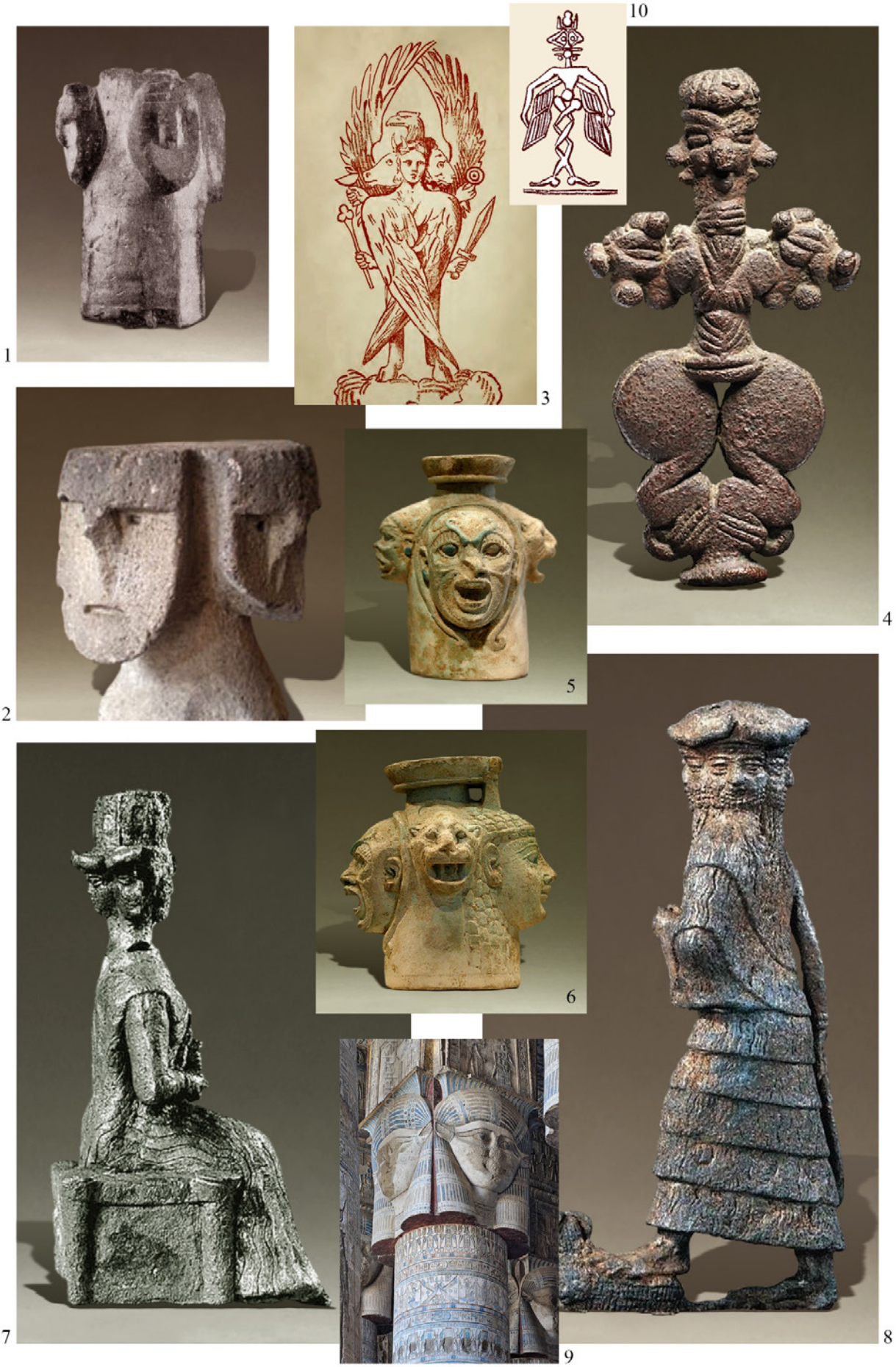
Deserving of particular attention in this overview is the pair of four-faced statues from **Ishchali** (Iraq), dating to the Old Babylonian Period (18th - 17th centuries BCE), which, according to some interpretations, depict the **"god of the four winds"** (G36: 8) and the **"goddess of rainstorms"** (G36: 7).[237] Also noteworthy is an unusual anthropomorphic figure from the Middle Eastern seals, with wings, legs twisted like intertwined snakes, and a head that consists of two or maybe three or even four faces (the rear one invisible) (G36: 10 compare with 4).[238] Although from a territorial, and to some extent from a chronological aspect, they are closest to the corresponding Luristan examples, they differ from them according to the high degree of naturalism i.e. the belonging of the four faces to quite realistically depicted human figures. However, these differences should not mean denying the possibility of participation of the ancient Mesopotamian cultures in the formation of the four-faced Luristan motifs.

From an iconographic aspect, far closer to them are two already mentioned stone idols from the territory of Armenia, dating to the period between the 13th and 8th century BCE. The first specimen, found at **Yayji** near Goris, is a broken off upper part of a larger columnar object made of basalt (76 cm high), shaped in the form of five anthropomorphic heads joined with their occiputs (G36: 2). It is thought that it stood as an idol in some sanctuary. The second object was discovered between the villages of **Navur** and **Itsakar** in Tavush Province (G36: 1). It is sculpted of limestone, in the form of an octagonal pillarette (height 6 cm, broken off at the bottom), in the upper part of which four stylized anthropomorphic figures are arranged regularly. It is thought to have been intended as an idol within the frames of a smaller sacral space (for example, a dwelling).[239] Currently we do not possess the ability to identify these objects i.e. to connect them with some specific religion and a specific mythical character i.e. deity. Given the geographical and chronological proximity, we tend to classify them in some cultural-historical complex close to the many-faced objects from Luristan and Amlash (compare with G13). We also reference an **aryballos from the Metropolitan Museum** which, although made within the framework of ancient Greek technologies, according to its iconography, points more to some kind of oriental paradigms (G36: 5, 6). It consists of two larger human heads (male and female) and two smaller ones, one of which is leonine, while the other is zoo-anthropomorphic.

Four zooanthropomorphic characters, somewhat similar to the previous example, are mentioned in **Ezekiel's vision**. They each have four arms, four wings, human legs, bovine feet, and four faces: a human, leonine, bovine, and an eagle's face (an early modern European illustration of these creatures G36: 3 compare with F14: 3 – 5).[240] Assumptions have been put forward that this vision of the prophet is based on the **idol with four faces** erected in the 7th century BCE at the **Temple of Yahweh in Jerusalem** by king Manasseh of Judah, as part of his policy of accepting foreign cults. According to some hypotheses, it could have been an

[236] The following overview is an extended and supplemented version of our older studies on this motif (Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 459-477; Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 555-565).
[237] *Four-Faced* 2018; A. Parrot, *Sumer*, 284, 285 (Fig. 351, 352).
[238] W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 304 (No. 954), 388 (No. 75); the figure is depicted twice and under an arch; another figure with intertwined legs: 305 (No. 955).
[239] С. А. Есаян, *Каменная*, 269-270.
[240] (Ezekiel 1, 4-12)

G36



idol of the god **Baal**, whose cult was transferred to this land from Phoenicia. Otherwise, the veneration of the four-faced Baal (tetramorph) in Phoenicia is noted by **Eustathius of Antioch**, while Islamic sources report the worship of the same god in the Syrian city of **Bakk** in the form of a golden statue with four faces, twenty cubits high.[241]

Deserving of a mention here are also the four-faced representations of the goddess **Hathor**, which appear in the form of **monumental pillars** of cult buildings such as the temple in Dendera (G36: 9), in the form of **miniature pillars**, or as **votive reliefs** on ceramic vessels. It is thought that the function of these representations was apotropaic and aimed at various forms of protection from the four cardinal directions.[242]

- India

Within the frames of Hindu culture, a large number of cult objects are supplemented by four human faces or four heads, often oriented in the cardinal directions (G37). Various deities i.e. mythical characters are depicted in such a way: **Brahma**, **Vishnu**, **Shiva**, other gods, as well as **Buddha** (G37: 6). This feature is justified through numerous interpretations that refer to the various aspects of existence and action of the characters depicted, or to the thing that they represented (the universe, nature, man, various cultural spheres and abstract categories). There are also known variants where the heads oriented in such a way are **mounted on a pillar** (G37: 3, 8) or on a realistically depicted **human figure** in which some other parts of the body can also be multiplicated (especially the hands) (G37: 4, 5). There are examples where the mentioned iconographic element is shaped also in the form of a **sacral building**, such as, for example, the four-faced Buddha on the **Bayon Temple**, Angkor Thom (Cambodia) (G37: 7). Closest to our paradigm are the representations of a **Lingam** i.e. **Shivalingam**, accompanied by four heads i.e. four faces (**caturmukhalinga**), because preserved in their case is the columnar base which, according to its name and form, indicates the **phallus** as a **Cosmic Axis**, **Cosmic Pillar** and the primordial element of cosmogony (G37: 3, 8). At the level of the name, the relation is due to the meaning of the word **lingam** (= *phallus*), while at the level of the form, it is the columnar corpus with the hemispherical tip that resembles the glans penis. The meaning of the lingam as a primary and primordial cosmic element is best reflected in the aforementioned myth of **Shiva's flaming phallus** (D6: 1, 2, 4; see p. 246).

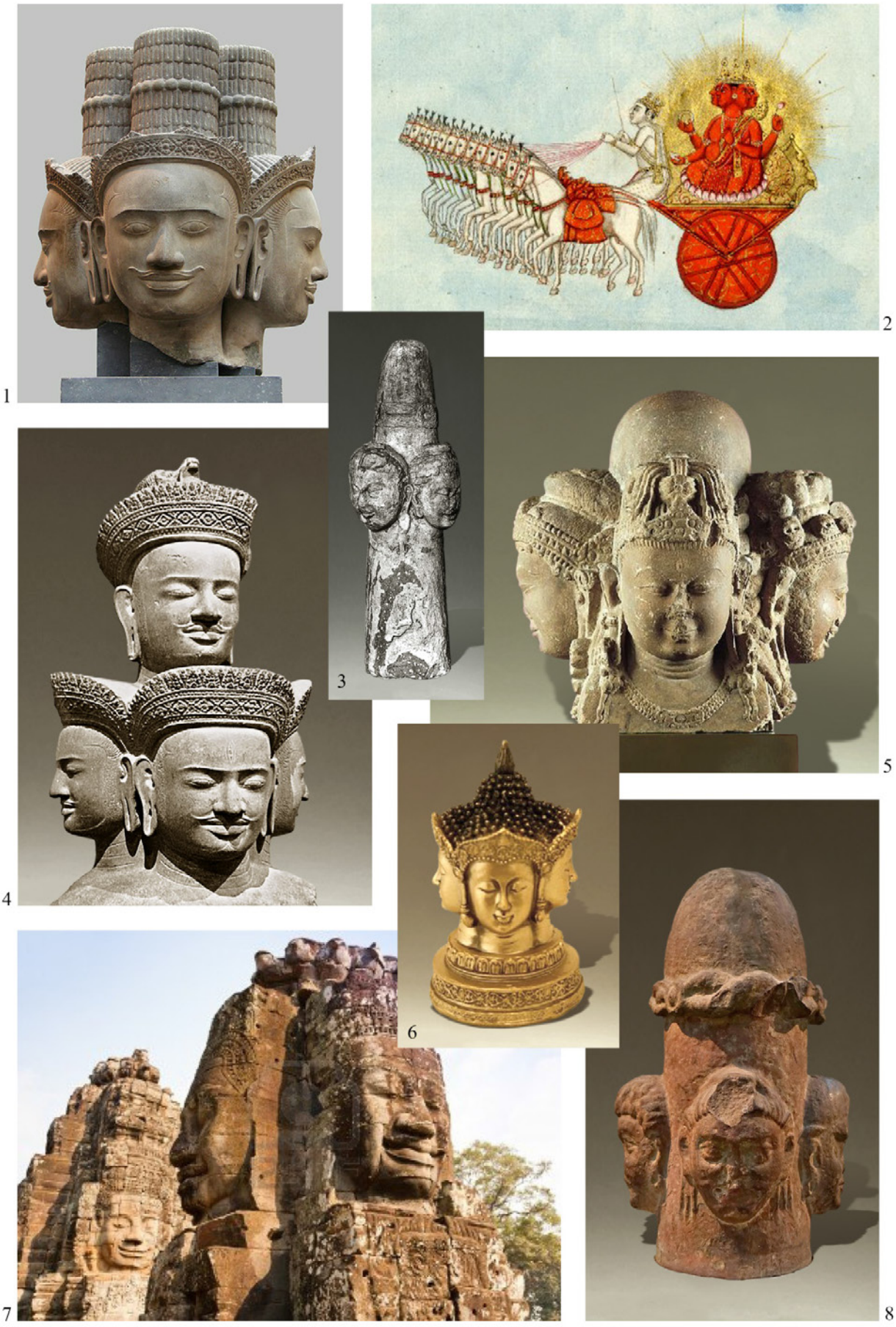
In the indicated cases, the four heads of the mentioned objects could represent the **four aspects of Shiva Maheśvara** (Brahma, Kāla, Rudra and Vishnu). According to other interpretations, the first face of Shiva realizes the *game*, the second - repentance, the third destroys or dissolves the world, the fourth protects the people, and the fifth, representing knowledge, completely envelops the universe with its power. Despite the fact that the pillars of lingam symbolize the five elements, the fifth head in their case is seldom present (Panchamukha Linga, example G37: 4). Also interesting to us is the identification of Brahma with the pillar i.e. the support that holds the world and functions as its axis.[243] This arrangement also coincides with the five main characters of the **Hymns of the Rigveda** positioned in the five main cardinal points: Soma in the north, Indra or Yama in the south, Agni in the east, Varuna in the west, and Vishnu in the center, equated with the Cosmic Pillar. In the **Atharvaveda**, they are represented as the four guardians of the world. With the complication of this system, a structure is obtained consisting of ten gods which, in addition to the four main points of the world, also encode the intercardinal points, as well as the positions up (zenith) and down

[241] А. В. Подосинов, *Символы*; M. Jastrow et al, *Ba`al*.

[242] Pillars from the mentioned temple: *Temple of Dendera* 2020; an example of a miniature pillar: *Column* 2019; a ceramic vessel: *An Egyptian* 2019.

[243] Sri Swami Sivananda, *Lord Siva*; M. Elijade, *Istorija. Tom I*, 185-210 (orientation towards the four corners of the world also appears as a feature of Hindu rituals).

G37



(nadir).[244] With the spread of Buddhism, this iconographic element, as a feature of the Buddha, will spread throughout the territory of China, Indochina, and other parts of Asia (G37: 6, 7).[245]

- Balkans and the Mediterranean (prehistory)

The mythical character depicted with multiple faces oriented in different directions can also be identified among the Iron Age cultures from the western part of the Balkan Peninsula. First, it is the **polychrome glass beads** depicting three human faces with emphasized eyes (and three more between them), found in Prozor near Otočac (Lika, Croatia) (G38: 8, 9) and Donja Dolina near Gradiška (Bosnia and Herzegovina). Their eastern (Phoenician) origin seems quite indicative to us, especially their spread to the west with the mediation of Scythian culture, because the oldest core of this iconographic type is located precisely in the indicated area. The relations between the depicted character and the mentioned type of deities are also indicated by the interpretations according to which the multiplicated faces of these beads belonged to the **mythical character who rules the universe through his omnipresent gaze**.[246] As a second example we can take a type of **bronze pins** from the circle of the Iron Age cultures of Dalmatia (Croatia) in which one can sense multiplicated anthropomorphic characters, but this time only implicitly due to the high degree of stylization and because the total of four hypnotically wide-open eyes, at the same time belong to two adjacent faces (G38: 11).[247] Especially interesting is a columnar object (candelabrum or **"vase-holder"**) from **Vetulonia**, according to its vertical disposition similar to the Luristan standards, applied at the top of which are four human heads cast separately in a same mould, covered with hats or helmets (G38: 4, 5).[248] Judging by other objects of this type, it is quite possible that it is a representation of the Cosmic Pillar or the Cosmic Tree, at the top of which is depicted the head of the many-faced god.[249] A quadruple structure, analogous to the ones presented here, can be identified on two types of Iron Age objects from Macedonia, with the difference that in one, the four elements are represented through aniconic segments (G14: 11), while in the second - by a depiction of an open eye with a pupil (G38: 3).[250]

- Mediterranean (antiquity)

In the ancient world, this iconographic arrangement appears as a feature of the cult columnar statues - **hermai**. Although the most common are the hermai with **two characters**, with their backs turned towards each other (G21: 6 – 8), there are known examples where they are combined from **four heads i.e. four faces** or **four figures** that are arranged cross-like i.e. oriented in four directions. They are made of stone, in a realistic style typical of ancient Greek and Roman art. Three such hermai are located in **Rome** and are thought to have originally stood on the Pons Fabricius or at the Temple of Asclepius on the nearby Tiber Island, perhaps in connection with the city's defense against a plague (G39: 7, 8). Although they are quite damaged, noticeable on them is the alternation of bearded and beardless characters. There are assumptions that they were made within the frames of ancient Greek culture, perhaps in the 4th century BCE.[251] A fragmented stone herma with four roughly executed bearded heads is evidenced in the former "National Museum" in Sofia

[244] Ф. Б. Я. Кёйпер, *Труды*, 105, 106, 109; Е. С. Семека, *Антропоморфные*, 93, 94; on number four and four-headedness: D. M. Srinivasan, *Many Heads*, 167, 168, on the number five as comprehensiveness and totality (the four corners and the center): 163-167, 186.

[245] Е. С. Семека, *Антропоморфные*,108 (footnote 51).

[246] A. Stipčević, *Kultni*, 135, 136, T.XXXIV: 4, 5.

[247] B. Čović, *Srednjodalmatinska*, 450, 451 (Sl. 26: 6); Б. Човић, *Од Бутмира*, 261 (Sl. 146 a), 262.

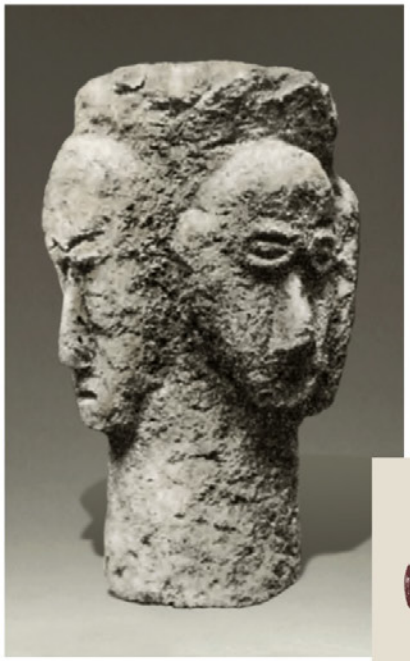
[248] I. Falchi, *Vetulonia*, 192 (no. 4), Tav. XVII: 28, 31; M. Hoernes, *Urgeschichte*, 499 (Abb. 9), 509; *Sovrani etruschi* 2009, no. inv. 7333.

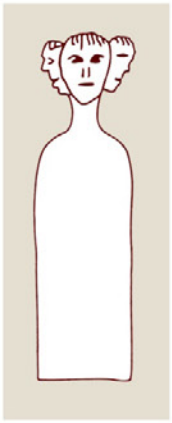
[249] Other such objects (without the indicated motif): M. Hoernes, *Urgeschichte*, 499 (Abb. 2, 3, 4, 9).

[250] Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 534-537, 543-549

[251] P. Gaietto, *Four-headed*.

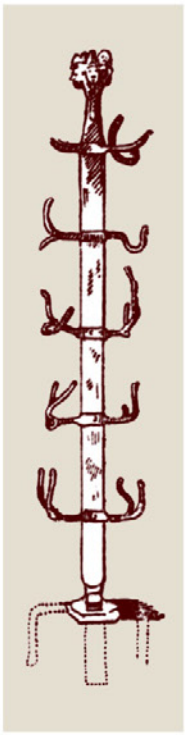
G38


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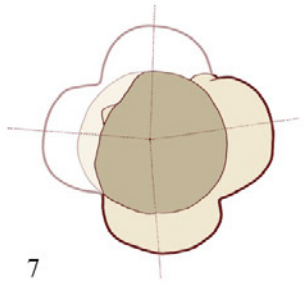

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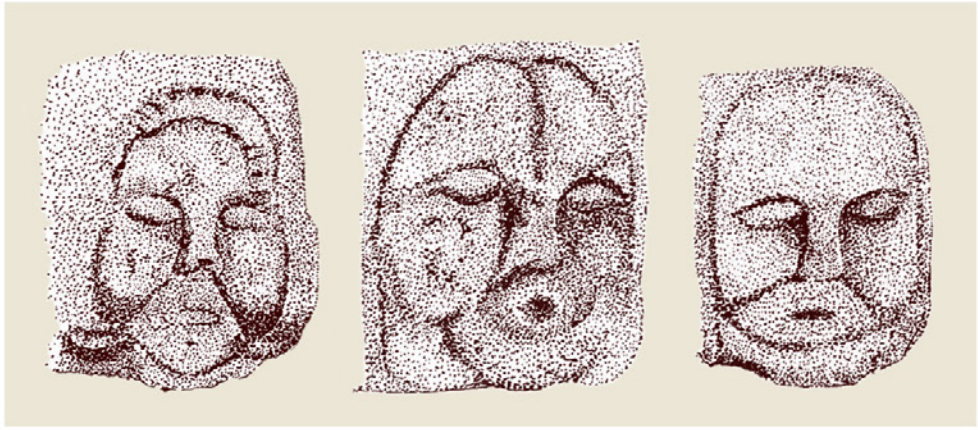

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(G39: 3). It has a height of 45 cm, is chronologically indeterminate, and with an unknown place of discovery (probably in the **surroundings of Sofia**). On the four roughly bearded heads, one cannot recognize at all the characteristics of classical antique styles, which is why we think that it could be an object that was not created in the traditions of Greco-Roman culture. It is identified with **Hermes Tetracephalus** (*Ἑρμῆς Τετρακέφαλος*) whose hermai were placed at crossroads, whereby their heads were facing the four road directions. According to sources, one such herma with four heads was located in the area of Kerameikos in Athens.[252] Much more common were the mentioned **hekataion** - multiplicated representations of the goddess Hecate, which, although most often modeled as triple statues or three-headed hermai (G29: 4, 8), sometimes (it seems especially in Asia Minor) appeared in quadruple variants, signified i.e. identified also as the **Four-faced Mother** (*Meter Tetraprosopos*) (G39: 11, a relief variant 12).[253] In addition to the indicated one, we should also mention another female character with this feature - the four-headed sculpture of a **Sphinx** from Egypt (2nd century AD) collected in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna (G39: 6).

As Roman equivalents to these statues one can take the representations of **Janus** which, in contrast to the usual two, on coins sometimes seem to have four heads (**Ianus Quadrifrons**) (G39: 1, 2). Considering the previous examples, it is not surprising that dedicated to precisely this god was the only Roman **four-sided triumphal arch**, located in Rome at the Forum Boarium i.e. the crossroads at Velabrum (G52: 10, 11).[254] In this overview we could potentially also include the aforementioned **scarab made of carnelian** (collected in London) with a representation of a head with three mutually fused faces that have shared eyes and a shared hat (G29: 3). I. Krauskopf, thinks that it could have depicted a character with three or four faces (the rear one invisible), leaving the possibility that it could also belong to the Etruscan god Culsans, although we have seen that he was usually depicted with two faces.[255] From Vulci, supposedly originates an **alabastron** (most probably a Phoenician product) in the form of a female figure at the bottom of which are formed four female heads oriented in different directions (G39: 9, 10). It dates to the 7th or 6th century BCE and is considered an Etruscan product made according to oriental, probably Phoenician, templates. Based on other examples, assumptions have been put forward about the Etruscan origin of the four-headed motif. At the top of some alabastra of this type also appears the motif of two oppositely oriented heads, which corresponds to the alternation of the same elements on the Luristan bronzes as well.[256] In context of the theories about the Eastern, and within those frames the Anatolian, genesis of Etruscan culture, the four female heads could be put in relation to the Anatolian Meter Tetraprosopos (compare with G39: 11, 12).

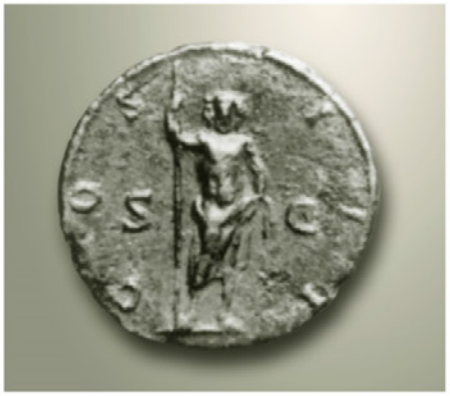
- Europe (prehistory and antiquity)

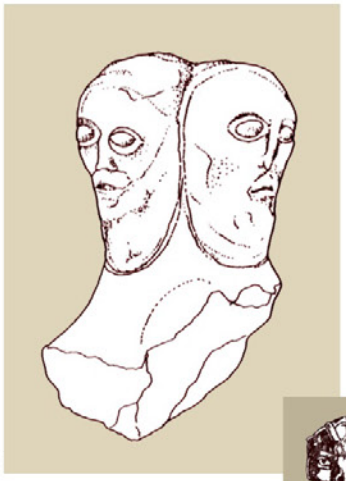
From this part of the world we are familiar with several four-headed sculptures created within the frames of Roman provincial culture. The first specimen is the **Cippus of Niederkerschen** (Luxembourg) modeled in the form of a pillar with four heads - two bearded ones of Hercules, and two beardless ones of Mercurius Viator, arranged alternately (G39: 4).[257] The second is a bronze statuette from **Bordeaux**, collected in the Bibliothèque nationale (France), which depicts Mercury, naked, with wings on his main head and a pouch in his right hand, whereby his front and back faces are beardless, while the lateral ones are bearded.

[252] Г. И. Кацаров, *Антични*, 53, 54 (Обр. 38, 39).
[253] *Monumenta (Vol. X)* 1993, no. 53 (from Beskaris Hüyük, Turkey); N. Eda Akyürek Şahin, *Eskişehir'den*.
[254] (Servius, *Commentarius in Vergilii Aeneida* 7.607; Isidorus, *Origines* 8.11; Augustinus, *De Civitate Dei* 7.4); according to *Quadrifrons* 2014; detailed information: *Constantine Arch* 2020.
[255] I. Krauskopf, *Culsans (LIMC)*, 307, 305 (Abb. 5).
[256] S. Haynes, *An Etruscan*.
[257] P. F. Bober, *Cernunnos*, 36 (footnote 134); F. Hettner, *Provinzialmuseum*, 33 (No. 42).

G39


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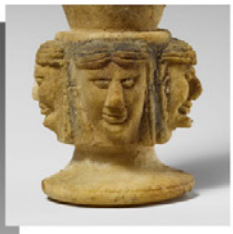

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The question remains open whether these examples reflect to a greater degree the autochthonous or classical antique traditions.[258]

A stone monument with four human faces has been found in **Ovingham** (Northumberland, Northeast England), which is classified in the group of Celtic many-faced monuments (G38: 10).[259] To this group we can also add one paradigmatic example, which unfortunately cannot be chronologically determined. In 1793, while digging peat in the **Ballybritain Bog**, north of Aghadowey, Co. Derry (Northern Ireland), discovered was a wooden idol with a height of 1.8 m. It was shaped in the form of a cylindrical wooden pillar resembling a trunk, at the top end of which were carved 4 heads, with denoted hair, oriented in different directions. Shortly after its discovery, the idol disintegrated, and its rough sketch was preserved in a publication issued several decades after its discovery (G38: 2).[260] Housed in the **Worms Museum** (Germany) is another four-headed stone idol, apparently without a more specific archaeological context, which has so far been compared to similar Celtic (the altar in Reims) and Slavic objects (Plaveč) (G38: 1 compare with G40: 3).[261]

- Europe (Middle Ages)

The vertical pillar supplemented by four or more anthropomorphic heads i.e. faces is quite common within the frames of the medieval pagan cultures from the territory of Central and Eastern Europe, the Baltic, and the Balkan Peninsula. A large part of these cultures have a **Slavic character**, but some are also associated with the **Germanic i.e. Nordic**, **Baltic** or **Finno-Ugric** populations.[262] These objects can be divided into several categories which we present in the following paragraphs.

Columnar objects with four or more faces

The first group consists of **larger columnar objects made of stone**, with four faces, which, according to written sources, could have stood in some kind of cult buildings (temples or sanctuaries). The idol from **Zbruch** near Husyatyn (G40: 4) and the one from **Ivankivtsi** in the Kamianets-Podilskyi Raion (G40: 5) (both in Ukraine) are the only ones known so far in which the four-headed top is executed monolithically as an integral part of the basic columnar corpus.[263] This is also the case with the stone idol that was secondarily implanted on the dome of the circular church in **Plaveč** (Moravia) (G40: 3).[264] There are known oral reports about two more stone objects with four faces on the territory of the Eastern Slavs. The first stood until 1850 in the village of Tesnovka (Kiev Governorate), while the other was located in the **basin of the Sozh River**, on the road from Rečyca to Babruysk.[265] There are also examples where the stone heads represented only the top of the idol, while the remaining columnar part was made separately, from the same material or from wood. Potentially, this is how the aforementioned enigmatic idol from **Bribir** near Vaćani (Dalmatia) could have been conceptualized, if we accept the possibility that it was medieval and with four heads (G38: 6, 7, compare with G33: 3, 4).[266] At this place we should also reference the already mentioned lower part of a stone cross from the village **Lopushna** near Vyzhnytsia (Western Ukraine) that according to some assumptions was part

[258] P. F. Bober, *Cernunnos*, 36 (footnote 134); G. Poitrenaud, *Cernunnos*, 6 (as guardian of roads); M. Green, *Symbol*, 178.
[259] A. Ross, *A Pagan*, 31 (Fig. 7).
[260] J. Waddell, *Equine*, 14 (Fig. 9).
[261] A. Plichta, *Čtyřhlavá*, 157 (obr. 5), with presented literature of an older date.
[262] Our first overview of these finds: Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 461-471.
[263] Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Руси*, 236-251; М. Ю. Брайчевский, В. И. Довженок, *Древнеславянское*.
[264] A. Plichta, *Čtyřhlavá*; A. Pleterski, *Wie auf der Erde*, 128, 131 (Abb. 15).
[265] L. Niederle, *Život. III/2,* 654; G. Leńczyk, *Światowid*, 41; Л. С. Клейн, *Воскрешение*, 200.
[266] Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 465-471; N. Čausidis, *Poganska*, 441- 443; V. P. Goss, *The Three-Header*; М. Гарашанин, *Скулптура*.

of a monumental idol with 4 faces and 4 legs, which in the 18th or 19th century was transformed into a large Christian cross (G25: 7).[267]

Among the medieval finds associated with Slavic cultures, also recorded are **miniature idols** with the same features. In the stone specimen from **Kouřimi** (Czech Republic), 5 faces were formed in the upper cylindrical zone, while in the middle there were additional 6 or 7 smaller ones, of which 3 are better preserved (G41: 7 – 9; in relation to the faces depicted on the chest compare with F14: 6, 9). Judging by the dimensions (height 17 cm) the object could have been used as a miniature family idol.[268]

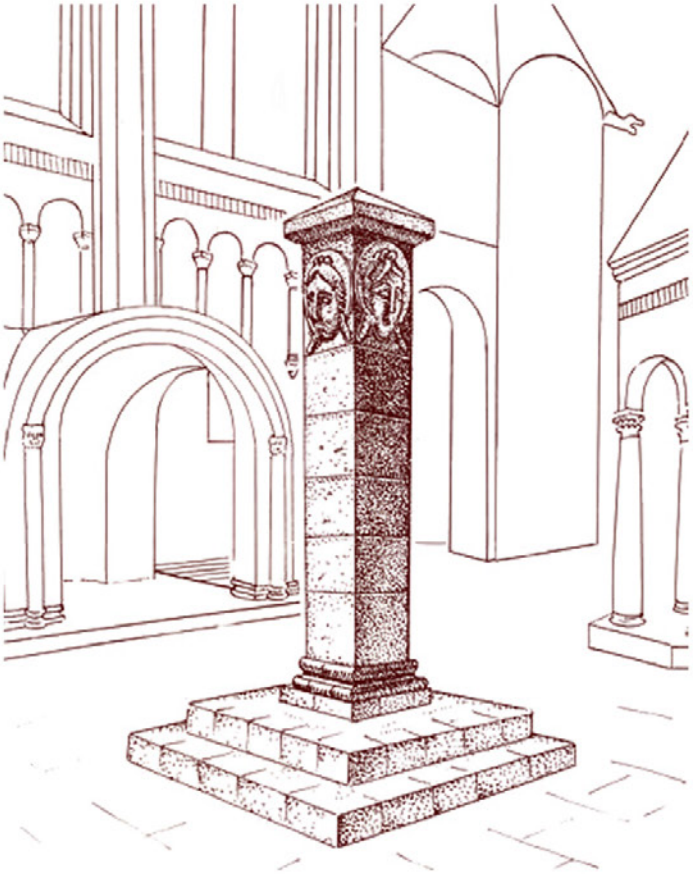
A similar character seems to have had the fragmented bronze idol from **Ryazan** (Russia) which at the time of its discovery (probably in an earth-dwelling dating to the mid-12th century) was still mounted on a wooden stake (G42: 7). It is thought that, together with its lost half, it had four faces and, analogous to the previous find, one or more faces were depicted in the area of the chest.[269] In Eastern Europe, at least three more such four-faced specimens have been found (G42: 8; G26: 1), which, together with the previous one, represent a sub-variant of the group of "crippled" bronze figurines (usually two-faced) discussed in one of the previous sub-chapters (G26).[270] This group is most often related to the culture of the Turkic-speaking populations, but such comparisons do not include the four-faced motif, most likely due to its absence in the traditions of the indicated peoples. Taking into account the previously referenced examples, it could be a component specific to the Slavic variants of these objects.

To the previous objects we can add another small bronze idol found in Perm (Russia), with a height of only 4.5 cm (G42: 10). The bowl formed above the four heads brings it closer to the scepter from Sutton Hoo (G43: 1, see below).[271] The following two specimens have been discovered in **Riga**, the first of which was already mentioned and commented on in previous sub-chapters. It is carved from wood in the form of a pillar with a height of 13 cm, at the upper end of which were depicted 4 human faces (two of them destroyed today), at the bottom - a zoomorphic head, and in the middle - a wavy ornament (G42: 5; G49: 6). The second object is also columnar (height 33 cm), with four faces in the upper part and ends decorated with a zigzag ornament (G42: 6).[272] As an argument in favor of the existence of miniature idols in the Baltic region, one can take the account of Ebbo who mentions the veneration of miniature idols among the Pomeranian Slavs.[273] The function of idols cannot be excluded in relation to some of the other presented objects.

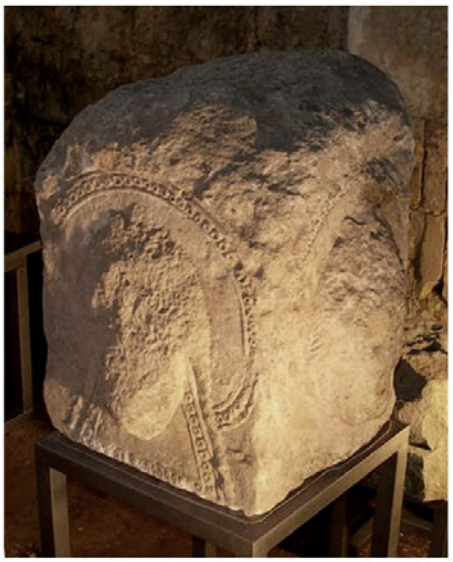
As an ideal paradigm of the presented objects, and especially of their cosmological aspect, one can take the **Zbruch idol** which is associated with the pagan religion of the Slavs (G40: 4). The four-facedness of this stone idol is broadened into **figures of four fully formed anthropomorphic deities**. Due to their fusion with the corpus and due to the shared hat, they actually participate in constituting the being of the **supreme four-faced god** (probably Svantovid) who can be related to **the supreme West Slavic god** to whom, according to written sources, "all other gods are obedient" and "originate from his blood".[274] Interpreting the rich iconography of this object, B. A. Rybakov comes to solutions that correspond to the ones presented above. According to him, the corpus of the idol represents the **macrocosmic phallus** that extends from the underworld to the sky (photomontage D4: 16), whereby the four faces reflect the omnipresent gaze of the supreme god directed towards the four points of the world (Svantovid = the one who sees everything/everywhere).[275]

[267] Р. Забашта, *Святовид*; современа состојба: І. Гах, *Лопушанський*.
[268] N. Profantová, *Pohanský*.
[269] А. Л. Монгайт, *Старая*, 191-193; a similar example: В. К. Гриб, В. В. Давыденко, *Новые*, 365 (Рис. 4).
[270] В. В. Давыденко, В. К. Гриб, *Многоликие*, Рис, 2; Рис. 3.
[271] J. P. Lamm, *On the Cult*, pins: 228 (Fig. 22).
[272] А. В. Цауне, *Антропоморфные*, 131, 132, Рис. 32: 1, 3; P. Szczepanik, *Wczesnośredniowieczne*, 51.
[273] For the source (Ebbonis III, 1) and about the miniature idols: P. Szczepanik, *Wczesnośredniowieczne*, 56, 57.
[274] (Helmold of Bosau, *Chronica Slavorum.* 1. 84); Š. Kulišić, *Stara*, 153; L. Leže, *Slovenska*, 53, 54.
[275] Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Руси*, 236-251.

G40



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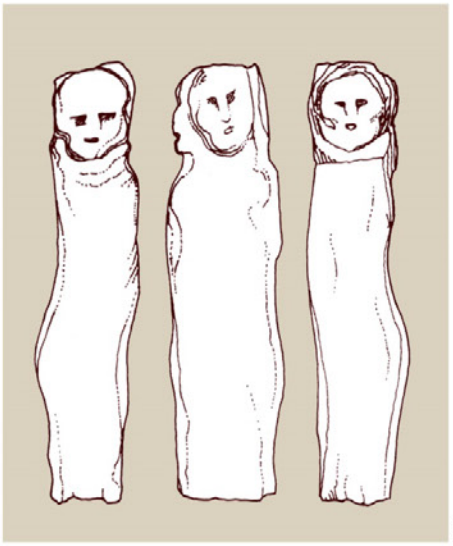
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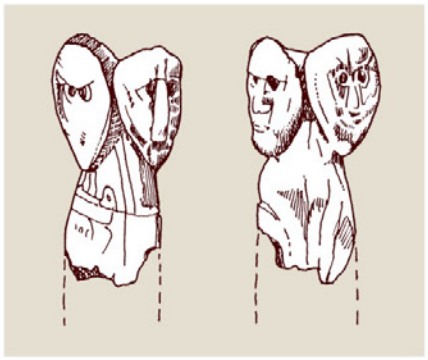


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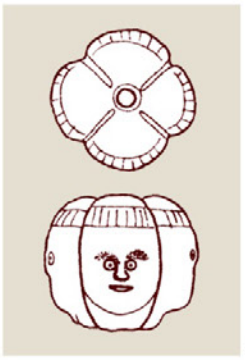
G41



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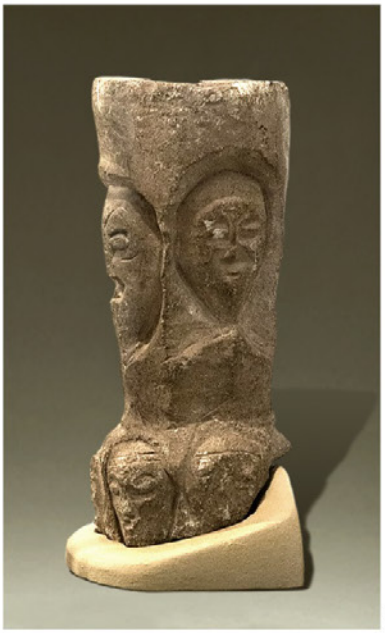
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Small pointed objects

These are objects made of deer antler, bone or wood whose lower part is pointed, while the upper one is flattened or rounded and supplemented by four anthropomorphic heads and in some cases also by whole figures (precisely six in number). Such specimens have been found in Poland, Denmark, Russia, Bulgaria and RN Macedonia (G42: 1 – 4). Deserving of special attention are the specimens from **Svendborg** (Denmark) (G42: 1) and **Čučer** near Skopje (RN Macedonia), specifically due to their **phallic top** (G42: 1, 2 compare with G2: 5 – 8). Various assumptions have been put forward regarding the purpose of these objects: such as miniature idols intended for domestic altars, amulets, magical or medical instruments intended for healing, tools for puncturing leather or "attaching" a bow, handles for a whip or for some kind of tool, and even as implements for writing on birch bark.[276]

Whetstones

This category is concentrated in the territory of the Baltic. It is represented by stone objects, with an elongated corpus that has the shape of a whetstone, at the upper part of which are depicted four human heads i.e. faces. A paradigmatic representative of this group is the mentioned whetstone from **Sutton Hoo** (England), where the motif of four heads is duplicated also at the lower end (G43: 1, 2). Despite its shape, it was probably a symbolic object, for which the best evidence are its oversized dimensions and the absence of any traces of its use as a whetstone. J. P. Lamm in this category includes several calotte-like bronze objects (or moulds for their casting) from the Baltic region, with a depiction of two or four human faces and a ring for hanging (**Szczecin, Museum Regionale Wolin**) (G43: 4 – 8). He thinks that they could have served as loops for whetstones. In this category he also includes the wooden specimen from **Wolin** (Poland) (G43: 3), in form corresponding to the previous ones. Thereby, as justification, he presents ethnographic data on wooden "whetsticks" which can be used for sharpening tools if beforehand they are coated with grease and sprinkled with sand.[277] Despite the persuasiveness of these interpretations, one should also mention the other propositions (referenced by the same authors), according to which some of the indicated bronze objects (G43: 4 – 8) could have also served as **cult bells**. Regarding the wooden specimen, the predominating views are that it was used primarily as a cult object or a miniature idol (G43: 3).[278] B. A. Rybakov also gives a more specific assumption according to which it had a function analogous to the Christian priestly altar cross ("throne cross"), intended for the blessing of believers during prayer.[279] In support of the symbolic character of these whetstones, one can take their presence in **Scandinavian mythology**, although in its context there are no mythical characters with four faces or heads. Here we have in mind the mythical action of the **duel between the giant Hrungnir**, armed with a whetstone, and **Thor** with his hammer Mjölnir, whereby the clash of these two implements is associated with the ancient techniques of obtaining fire.[280] This certainly does not mean that similar mythical contents were not present in the traditions of the Slavs and other peoples of the indicated region.

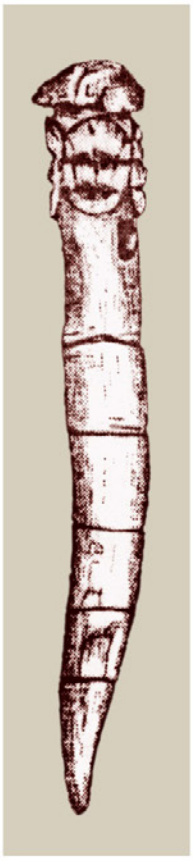
Other objects

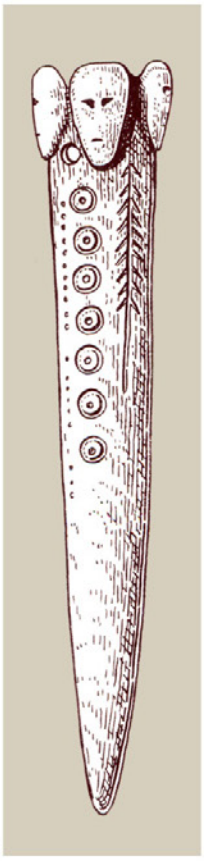
There are also objects with four human faces or heads whose shape does not fit into any of the indicated groups. Such is the case with two bone finds from Sweden (**Tunby**, Västmanland, and **Väsby**, Upplands) (G41: 1, 2, 5, 6), both discovered in cremated female graves which, judging by their shape, appear

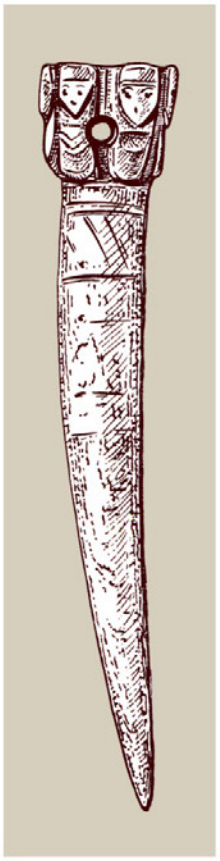
[276] Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Руси*, 356-358; J. P. Lamm, *On the Cult*; П. П. Георгиев, *Изображение*; Е. Манева, *Словенски*; Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 461-464.
[277] J. P. Lamm, *On the Cult*, 223-225; W. Filipowiak, *Słowiańskie*, 30-33.
[278] K. Kajkowski, P. Szczepanik, *The multi-faced*, 56 ff.; P. Szczepanik, *Wczesnośredniowieczne*, 50 ff.; W. Hensel, *Wczesnosredniowieczna*.
[279] Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Руси*, 245.
[280] On the myth and the relations of the whetstone with obtaining fire: В. Петрухин, *Мифы др. Скандинавии*, 200-204; A. Durman, *Simbol*, 20.

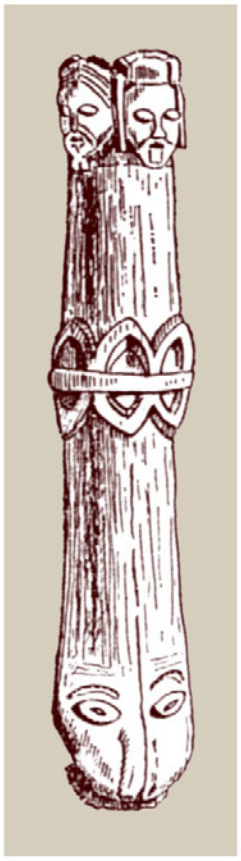
G42

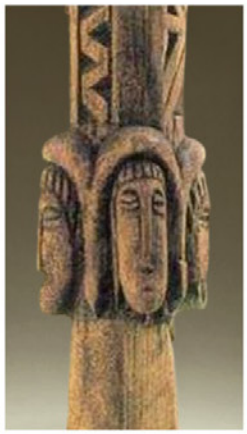

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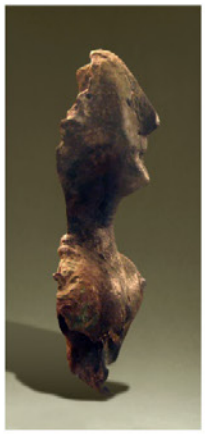

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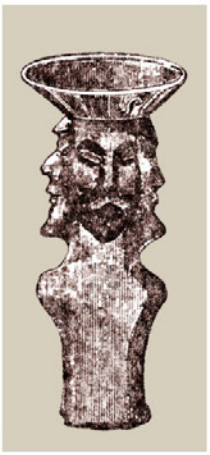

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to have been used as **handles for an awl** or **some other tool**.[281] In the mentioned region, we also know of jewelry with the same motif, specifically modeled in the form of decorative metal pins (G42: 11; G43: 9) and amber beads (G41: 3).[282] In **Wolin**, recently discovered was a tubular object made of deer horn (according to some interpretations **part of a musical instrument**) at the top of which are depicted 12 human heads (G42: 9).[283] We are inclined to understand it as a complex form of the four-faced specimens, evidently with a tendency to denote the **calendrical aspects** of this mythical character (see below).

In this overview, the Slavic examples receive a special status not only because of the number of finds but also because of the overlapping with the written accounts on the appearance of their pagan gods and idols, especially those of the West Slavs. Thus, medieval sources related to their christianization explicitly point out the **multi-headedness of the pagan idols** in their sanctuaries: **Svantovit in Rügen** had 4 heads; in **Charenza** on the same island there were three multi-headed gods - **Porenut** (*Porenutius*) with 4 faces on the head and one on the chest, **Porevit** (*Poreuithus*) with 5 heads, and **Rugievit** with 7 faces on the head; the gods in **Szczecin**, **Wolin** and **Branibor** had 3 heads each. The phrase *„Перунъ есть многъ“* ("Perun is many"), noted in a Russian manuscript from the 15th century, is also interpreted as multiplicity of this god (whether referring to his whole body or just his head). In support of this speaks the fact that dedicated to him was the fourth day of the week (Polabian *Peräunedån* = Thursday). This feature is even more clearly represented in **Perkūnas**, the Baltic equivalent of Perun, about whom the sources say: *"Perkūnas is fourfold: the first is East, the second is West, the third is South, and the fourth is North"*.[284]

Considering these facts, some researchers think that most of the above-presented objects also depicted some of the Slavic deities - Svantovit, Perun, Svarog or some other, specifically with the status of **supreme god**. On the other hand, the objects from **Zbruch** (G40: 4) and **Wiślica** (Poland) (G42: 4) are supplemented by **whole figures**, which indicates the presence within the frames of the depicted composition of **multiple individual deities**. This opens up the possibility to assume that in other objects, too, the multiplicated heads could have functioned as representatives of the whole body of the respective deities, which did not always have to be depicted.

This dilemma is solved by B. A. Rybakov within the frames of his cosmological interpretation of the "Zbruch idol", pointing to the parallel presence of both meanings (G40: 4). He believes that within the **first iconographic level**, the four figures represent the **four Slavic deities** (two gods and two goddesses), located in the celestial spheres and oriented towards the cardinal points of the world. At the **second level**, these characters (with or without their bodies) participate in the body of a **singe all-encompassing god** as **his four hypostases** i.e. his **"four faces"**, which in some of the above examples is encoded in two ways: by interweaving their faces (two adjacent faces have shared eyes, the nose of one character functions as the ear of the other) (G42: 1; G38: 8, 11; G36: 4; G15); by placing all characters i.e. heads *"under one hat"* (G40: 4). At this level appears the image of the **supreme all-encompassing god** (probably Svantovit) who with his four heads i.e. four faces, directed towards all four cardinal points of the world, perceives, observes and controls the whole universe, at the same time introducing within it his active aspects. By abstracting all of the above-mentioned anthropomorphic elements, one also reveals the **third iconographic level**, represented through the **phallic contour** of the Zbruch Idol (D4: 16, 17), which, according to B. A. Rybakov, denotes the essential **creative** i.e. **life-giving function of the supreme god** equated with the **active male principle**.[285]

[281] J. P. Lamm, *On the Cult*, 228, 229; P. Szczepanik, *Wczesnośredniowieczne*, 50, 51; P. Szczepanik, *Comparative*, 150, 153.
[282] J. P. Lamm, *On the Cult*, pins: 227 (Fig. 20), 229 (Fig. 25), 230 (Fig. 28), bead: 229 (Fig. 27).
[283] A. Janowski, *W wolińskim*, 27 – No. 36
[284] В. В. Иванов, В. Н. Топоров, *Исследования*, 24-30; also mentioned are 6 + 1 hypotheses of Perkūnas, which can be related to the previously elaborated three-dimensional cross (forward, backward, left, right, up, down and center).
[285] Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Руси*, 236-251.

G43


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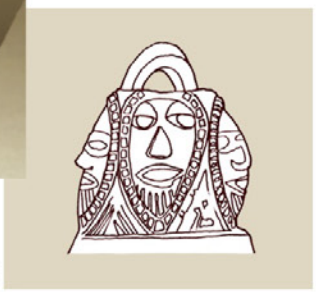

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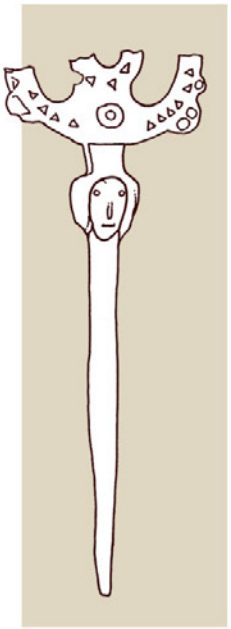

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The iconography of the Zbruch idol, but also the individual elements of some of the other presented examples, coincide with the meaning of the Hindu and older examples that we referenced above. Primarily, it is the presence of the **phallus**, well visible on the idol from **Zbruch**, if one abstracts the other figures that are depicted on it (D4: 16, 17 compare with G40: 4). This element is also present on the objects from **Svendborg** (G42: 1) and **Čučer** (G42: 2). As in the case of the Hindu traditions, this all-encompassing character on the mentioned Slavic objects is not represented as the figure of a deity, but as an **abstract category** that is denoted symbolically - through the **macrocosmic phallus which stands at the conceptual basis of the universe** (compare with the flaming phallus of Shiva D6: 1, 2, 4). As we have seen, this element is clearly represented on the Luristan bronzes (G1 – G3). The second component is the **cosmological conception of the iconography** which in the Zbruch idol is implemented vertically, through the clearly separated **three zones of the universe** (G40: 4), which corresponds to the phallus of Shiva that extends indefinitely up through the sky and down through the underworld. In the case of the Baltic Perkūnas, and indirectly the Slavic "multiplicated Perun", it is implemented **horizontally**, specifically by identifying the individual hypostases of the god with the **four cardinal points of the world**, which fully corresponds to the five main gods in the **Hymns of the Rigveda** (four related to cardinal points of the world and one central), the four guardian gods mentioned in the **Atharvaveda**, and the four faces of the Chinese **Huangdi** with which he observes the corners of the world.[286]

We think that all the medieval objects presented here, with their form and elements, point to some kind of more direct relations with the Middle East and even with the Luristan bronzes. We will address this issue once again in the concluding chapter of this monograph.

- Exotic examples

The pillar or figure with four human heads oriented in different directions is an image that also appears outside the Old World, which speaks of its archetypal character i.e. its parallel genesis in various parts of the planet, independently of each other. On this occasion, we present several characteristic examples from different regions of the world. This motif is especially common in **Africa**, in this case represented by the following examples: a wooden helmet from the **Fang** people (Equatorial Guinea and Gabon) (G44: 2) and a drum from the **Punu** people (Gabon) (G44: 1); a wooden tobacco container from the **Bambara** people (Mali) (G44: 8); a wooden figurine from the territory of Benin, Togo or Ghana (**Ashanti** or **Ewe** people) (G44: 7). We illustrate the examples from the **Far East** with the bronze head of the Buddha, whose four faces represent the main emotional states. In this case it is a modern specimen from **Borneo** (G44: 6). The second example is a wooden pillar from Taiwu, Kaviyangan (Taiwan) which represents a quadruple depiction of the female ancestor of the local chieftain (G44: 9).[287] We present the pre-Columbian cultures of America through a ceramic vessel with four painted faces, from the 13th - 15th century CE from **Casas Grandes**, Chihuahua (Mexico) (G44: 3), as well as two vessels with an equal number of faces executed in relief (anthropomorphic and zooanthropomorphic) from the **"Moche" culture** (Peru, 1st - 8th century CE) (G44: 4, 5).[288]

- Medieval Christianized variants

The millennial duration of the mythical characters and deities with four faces conditioned their integration into Christianity as well, adapted in accordance with the principles and dogmas of this religion. Therefore, a way was found to fit the pillar with four human heads oriented according to the cardinal points of the world into the canons of Christian iconography. The motives for this should be sought in the following two reasons. The first is the **archetypal** i.e. **universal character** of its symbolic arrangement, and the second - the aspiration of the church fathers to satisfy the affinity of the pagan or newly christianized population

[286] On Huangdi: Д. Бодде, *Мифы*, 370, 371; Б. Л. Рифтин, *Хуан-ди*, 605.
[287] *Paiwan* 2019.
[288] *Heilbrunn* 2014; *Stirrup Vessel* 2020; *Moche* 2020.

G44


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towards this image i.e. to use it for their **more successful conversion to Christianity**. One of the most interesting such examples is the four-sided capital with the same number of depictions of the head of the Virgin Mary, discovered in **Bogolyubovo** near Vladimir (Russia), dating to the 12th century (G40: 2). It is thought that it stood in the exterior, placed on top of a four-sided square pillar as a cult object dedicated to the Virgin Mary (G40: 1).[289] As a second example we can take the columnar three-headed motif from Russian medieval manuscripts, under the assumption that it was conceptualized with another head on the rear side (G41: 4).

The second variant is the Christian **tetramorph** - a composite figure that represents a unified personalization of the **symbols of the four evangelists**. It coincides with the presented four-faced composite creatures from **Ezekiel's vision** (G45: 9 compare with G36: 3). It develops especially within the esoteric levels of Christianity whose genesis is traced back to the Middle Eastern cultures of the Ancient Period.[290]

Also found in Central and Western Europe are two-dimensional variants of the mythical image presented in this sub-chapter. They are modeled in the form of **cross-shaped appliques**, whereby human heads are depicted on each of the arms of the cross (G45: 3, 4, 6, 7). Some variants of the tetramorph will also fit into this format (G45: 9). The indicated representations can be treated as **two-dimensional projections** of the elaborated spatial cruciform structures. The four arms of the cross with the depicted heads can be perceived as sides of a four-sided pillar that are recorded and opened in the form of a disassembled maquette. Although for most of these examples it is evident that they are Christian objects, it is clear that they follow up on older iconographic templates, which in Europe can be found outside of the Christian symbolic system (G45: 5, possibly 8).[291] The archaic and pre-Christian character of this composition is also illustrated by the motif on a **folk embroidery from the territory of Bulgaria**, dated to the end of the 19th or the beginning of the 20th century (G45: 2),[292] while the example from pre-Columbian America speaks of its archetypal nature (G45: 1).

- Genesis and movement through space and time

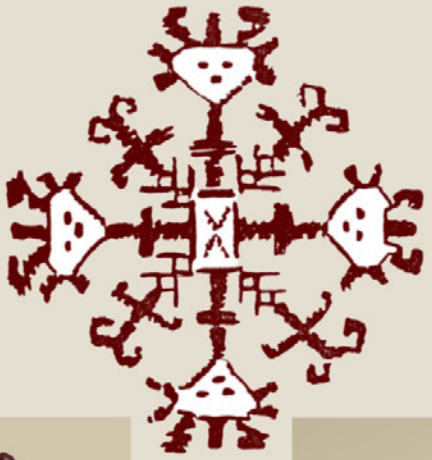
The concepts involved in revealing the genesis and movement of the mythical characters with two and three faces can also be used to explain those with four faces or more. Choosing the right one can be aided by the **frequency of this motif** in space and time, whereby two particularly rich cores stand out in our eyes. On the one hand is **India** (G37), and on the other the area of **Central and Northern Europe with a core around the Baltic** (G40 – G43), whereby, in both cases, they represent objects with a pronounced cultic character. Although at first glance the **Mediterranean** (G39) stands out with its quantity of specimens, their number becomes negligible if one compares the vast archaeological research of the region and their small representation in relation to the numerous other forms of depiction of the mythical characters and deities from this area. Hence, we consider it unlikely that the above-mentioned European examples of this type could have been created or reinforced by impulses from the Mediterranean. It seems more probable to us that this happened under the influence of the Middle East, specifically along the already mentioned route **Middle East – Caucasus/Asia Minor – Black Sea – Eastern and Central Europe – Baltic**.[293] This process could have taken place with the mediation of some population that was actively moving through these regions. Thereby, the focus falls on the **Scythians** who by the middle of the first millennium BCE actively moved along the

[289] Г. К. Вагнер, *Четырехликая*; Г. К. Вагнер, *Скульптура*, 88-95.
[290] А. В. Подосинов, *Символы*.
[291] Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 471, 472.
[292] Е. Петева, *Животински*, 128 – Обр. 4.
[293] In addition to other scholars, the eastern origin of the many-headed idols from Northern (and apparently Eastern) Europe is also preferred by J. Csemegi (J. Csemegi, *A ládi*, 64).

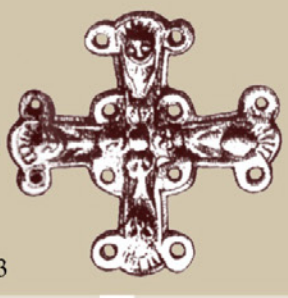
G45



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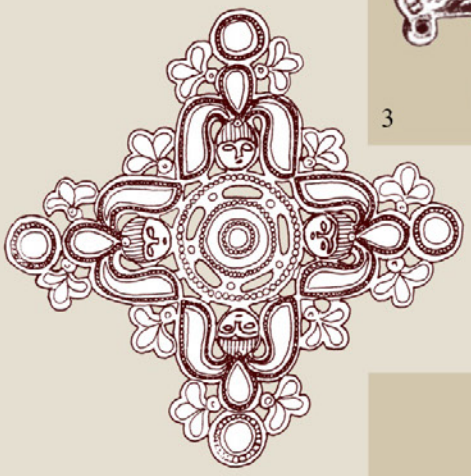
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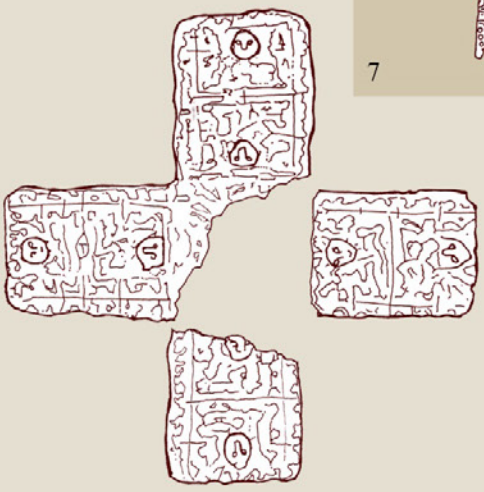
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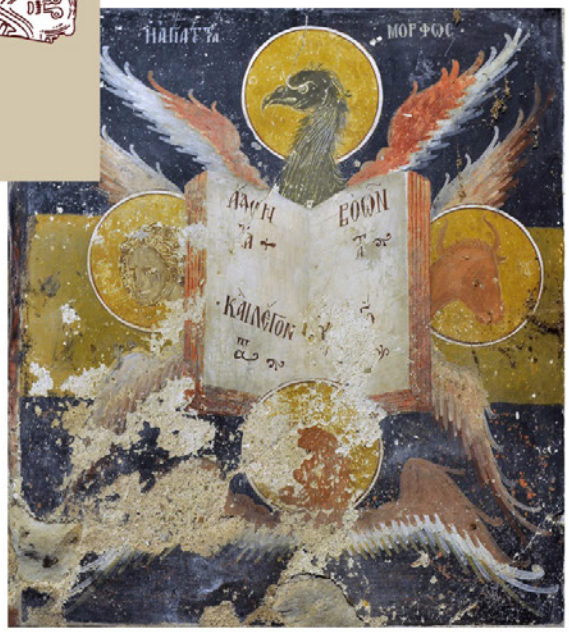
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stretch North Black Sea Region – Middle East – Central Europe. No less important in this process could have been the **Sarmatians** who on the one hand continued the traditions of the Scythians, while on the other hand, in geographical and chronological terms were closer to the mentioned medieval core, given their existence in Central and Eastern Europe until the early Middle Ages. A small but quite important indicator of this process is the presence in the Iron Age Balkan cultures of **glass beads** with multiple faces, which are considered to be Eastern (Phoenician) products that spread to the west through the mediation of Scythian culture (G38: 8, 9).[294]

We think that the **phallic top of the many-headed idols** can be taken as an element for historical tracing of the genesis and transformations of these motifs. Its presence in the Luristan (G1 – G3; G7), Indian (G37: 3, 5, 8) and Slavic examples (G38: 6, 7; G40: 4; G42: 1, 2) suggests some kind of mutual genetic relations, which would be logical from the aspect of the geographical (terrestrial) connection of the three regions. On the other hand, the absence of this component in the examples from Western Europe (western part of Germany, France and the British Isles – G31; G38: 1, 10) could be due to their distance from this "eastern line" and, as a consequence of that, the loss of certain of its original and essential components, perhaps at the expense of others, specific to this "western region" (such as, for example, the cult of the head). Maybe precisely for these reasons, in the eastern half of Europe the multi-headed idols are often columnar and phallic, while in the western part - they are spherical, reduced only to the head, often even without a neck.

In tracing the routes of movement of the indicated pictorial motifs through time and space, the medieval **"crippled" bronze figurines from Eastern Europe** imposed themselves as particularly interesting because they combine some of the key components of the Luristan standards and of their iconographic analogies presented in this and in previous chapters (G26; G42: 7, 8). In the following paragraphs, we will dedicate attention to some of them.

Within the frames of this group of objects, with relatively homogeneous iconography, occurs the **alternation of figures with two and with four faces**, which we have seen is also present on the Luristan bronzes (G1 – G5; G13; G15).

In several cases, the **different sexual affiliation** of the two sides of the figure is represented explicitly, together with the appropriate face that completes their personality (G26: 4, 5). This corresponds to the double-sexed nature of the central character from the Luristan standards, although it, in this case, is represented differently - as the parallel presence of the features of both sexes on one same figure or on both of its sides (the combination of a beard and breasts, phallus and vulva) (C24; C25). By the way, such a solution is also present on the "crippled" figurines (G26: 9).

As we have seen, the hermaphroditism of these figurines, in relation to the corresponding traditions of the Turkic peoples, gives the depicted characters the symbolic meaning of **mythical ancestors** (represented as a married couple or as one double-sexed character) **from which all other beings are descended**. This corresponds to the proposed identifications of the bifacial characters from the Luristan standards with the **primordial double-sexed mythical character of gigantic proportions from which the cosmos with all its elements is created** (see pp. 285, 335).

The presence of **heads in inappropriate places of these figures** (G26: 1, 6, 7) can be understood as a visual manifestation of the action in which other mythical characters are born from the body of this character. We suggest that the head shown in the place of one of its breasts (G26: 6, 7) be interpreted as an act of its **birth realized by the armpit**, as a symbolic substitute of the vulva, which is indicated by the specimen where the head is transformed into a whole figure of a child (G26: 2). For this element we can reference parallels present on the Luristan bronzes (E9: 2) and on similar objects from the surrounding regions of Iran (E9: 4). It is especially interesting that the motif of a human head depicted on the breasts can also be found on medieval objects from Europe. The first such example is the Iron Age figurine from **Alböke** (Öland, Sweden) where one head is represented on each breast (F14: 6),[295] while the next one - the hybrid diabolical character in the

[294] A. Stipčević, *Kultni*, 135, 136, T.XXXIV: 4, 5.
[295] J. P. Lamm, *On the Cult*, 229 (Fig. 26).

medieval manuscript from **France** (F14: 9). It is especially interesting that this motif, multiplicated several times, is present on the small Slavic four-faced idol from **Kouřim** (Czech Republic) (G41: 7 – 9). The same element interferes with the descriptions of the idol of the Slavic god Porenutius, located in **Charenza** on the island of Rügen, which had four faces on the head and one face on the chest. On some of the "crippled" figurines from Eastern Europe, present in the chest area is a bull's head (G26: 10),[296] which corresponds to the statue of another Slavic god, this time **Radegast** (among the Obotrites from Mecklenburg), on whose chest there was a shield with a black bull's head (F25: 2), as well as some other medieval pictorial representations from Europe (F24: 2, 3; F25: 5). This motif interferes with the analogous Mithraic representations (F13: 3, 5 a leonine head on the chest of **Aeon**) and the myth of **Zurvān** in which Ahriman (often depicted in a zoomorphic form) emerges first from his father's body by rupturing his chest (F13: 1). The presence of additional heads on the body of the main character and especially on his limbs, can be put in relation with the Luristan pendants in the form of feet combined with two or four human heads (G15), but also with the Nordic **Ymir** whose son, literally, was born "from his legs".

One of the features of the "crippled figurines" is that **one of their arms ends in the form of a human head** (G26: 7). This coincides with numerous Luristan standards where the arms of the central character, instead of palms, end in the form of animal protomes (E16; E17), and in some cases also in the form of human heads i.e. whole figures (F26).

The presence in these figurines of **one hat, common to both characters** (G26), interferes with the same feature in most Luristan standards (for example E16: 2, 3), as well as in the idol from Zbruch where the heads of the four gods of the upper zone are also placed under one hat (G40: 4).

6. Excurse: Zoomorphic or anthropomorphic head at the bottom

We have seen that on several of the Luristan "idols", the heads of the upper end (usually anthropomorphic or zoo-anthropomorphic) are combined with one or more heads formed at the lower end. Thus, in the specimen from the Metropolitan Museum, the double horned head at the top is accompanied by a zoomorphic one at the bottom (probably leonine) (G4: 2).[297] In another specimen (one of the rare Luristan standards discovered in situ), the similar head at the bottom is combined with three bovine heads at the top, probably as zoomorphic equivalents to the anthropomorphic or zooanthropomorphic heads usual to that part (G4: 5).

We will take these examples as an occasion to discuss the analogous iconographic arrangements present also on other types of Luristan bronzes, some of which have already been mentioned. It represents a separate head depicted frontally, often with zoomorphic and zooanthropomorphic features, placed in the lower part of the composition or the object:

- On the **"idols with protomes"** (occasionally), at the very bottom of the object, at the feet of the there-depicted figure (G11).[298]

- On the **bottle-shaped supports of the "standards"**, considering that they were also located at the bottom of the set they formed together with them (G12).

- On the **circular openwork pins**, at the junction of the two protomes (G46: 1, 2, 4, 5) and in other similar types (G46: 3, 7) corresponding to the location of the second or third head on the **"idols with protomes"** (G46: 8; D29).

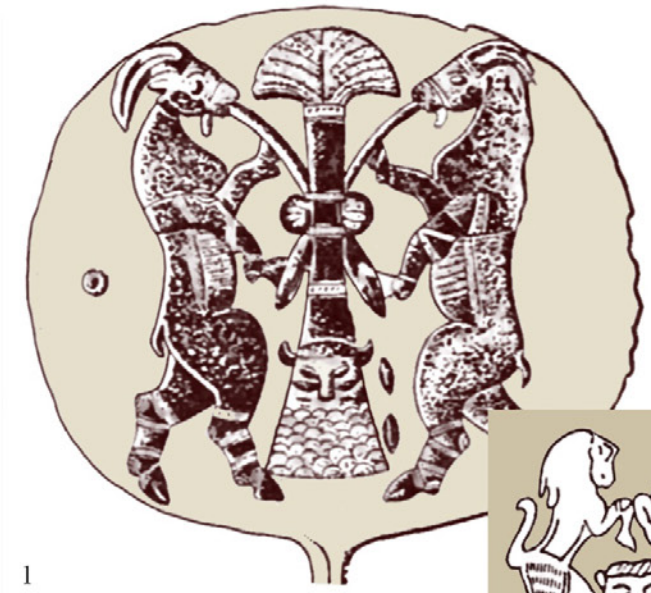
- On the **square openwork pins**, in the lower part of the composition (G46: 6).

[296] В. В. Давыденко, В. К. Гриб, *Многоликие*, 190, 202 – Рис. 6: 6; В. К. Гриб, В. В. Давыденко, *Новые*, 369, 371 – Рис. 10: в.
[297] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 152 (No. 242).
[298] E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 99 (Fig. 80: No. 120), 102, 103.

G46



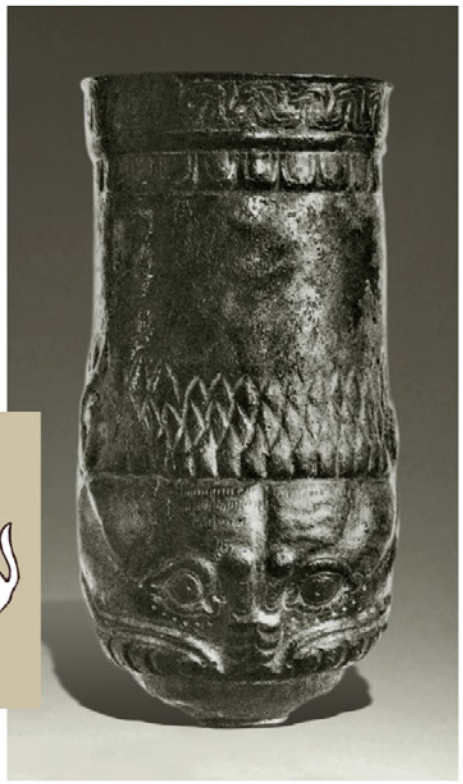
G47



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- On relief compositions from **discoid pins**, at the base of the central tree flanked by the pair of animals (G47: 1) or analogous compositions without a tree (G47: 2, 4 – 7).

- On a special type of **pins that end with the head of such a character, but oriented oppositely**, which indicates that they were inserted upside down - with the tip of the pin facing up, which would again indicate the bottom position of the face (G48: 1 – 5).[299]

- A similar face ("leonine mask") appears on the square pedestal for a barsom or some other kind of object (an idol, altar?) depicted on the **quiver from the Metropolitan Museum** (G48: 6; F5: 3).[300]

- An impressive face (a lion with certain anthropomorphic features) is depicted at the bottom of the Luristan bronze situlae with a cultic purpose (example G47: 3).

If we percieve the mentioned objects in a cosmological context, the bottom position of the indicated heads points to their chthonic meaning, specifically as a depiction of the **mythical character, i.e. deity - representative and patron of the nether regions** (earth, underworld, earthly waters, world of the dead). This is also supported by the zoomorphic features of the characters of this type, which are also considered as **equivalents of the chthonic dragon**, whereby the separated presence of its head could be understood in several ways. According to the first, the visibility of only the head would be due to the fact that the rest of its body is **fused, interwoven i.e. equated with the earth** i.e. the earthly waters. According to the second option, it would be the result of the **beheading** of this character, which is an important action in myths, in terms of the **victory** of the progressive cosmic forces i.e. forces of light over the regressive i.e. forces of darkness. It can also be interpreted as a result of the **act of sacrificing** the chthonic character and the inclusion of his body in cosmogony, whereby it, and in some cases only his head, will be used as a base i.e. **foundation to support** the other cosmic elements, primarily the Cosmic Pillar i.e. Cosmic Tree.[301] These meanings would not have to be in contradiction with the possible **solar meaning of the head located at the bottom** because in myths, the sun, during its stay in the nether cosmic zones, acquires strong chthonic symbolism, equating itself even with chthonic mythical characters and deities (see Chapter V - p. 175).

a) Head of the chthonic god as a base for the Cosmic Axis

As an ideal paradigm of the indicated iconographic arrangements, we can take the already mentioned Tibetan cult objects called **kīla** i.e. **phurba**, on the hilt of which, in the upper part, is a depicted deity with multiple (usually three) heads, while in the lower part - the chthonic dragon (**Makara**) from whose mouth their blade comes out (G16: 4, 8, 10). The ritual thrusting of the kīla into the ground is associated with the **"nailing" i.e. fixing of the chthonic dragon's head** i.e. turning it into a **stable base** on which, for example, a building can be built. Thereby, the blade acquires the meaning of the Cosmic Axis i.e. the Cosmic Pillar by which the mythical mountain Mandara **is fastened to the bottom of the Ocean** in order to ensure the stability of the Earth's plate.[302]

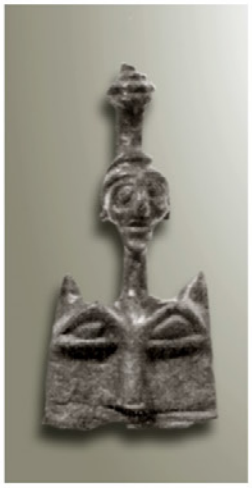
As in the previous cases, we find especially close iconographic analogies for some of the presented "idols" among the **European medieval finds**. The most interesting is the already mentioned wooden columnar object from **Riga** (Latvia) at the upper end of which are shaped four anthropomorphic faces, while at the lower - one large zoomorphic or zooanthropomorphic head (G42: 5; G49: 6).[303] In our previous studies, we have interpreted this object as a representation of the **Cosmic Axis that rests on the head of the chthonic dragon** (zoomorphic epiphany of the chthonic deity), at the top of which are depicted the four faces of the

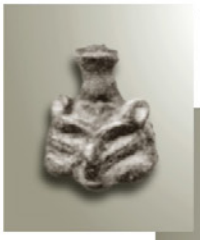
[299] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 194-196 (Fig. 319-323); S. Ayazi, *Luristan*, 23.
[300] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 194.
[301] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 222-272; mythical actions involving chthonic characters (snake, dragon, three-headed dragon) taking place at the roots of the Cosmic Tree: L. Trkanjec, *Chthonic*, 10-14; В. Иванов, В. Н. Топоров, *Исследования*, 31-39.
[302] R. Beer, *The Encyclopedia*, 245-247.
[303] А. В. Цауне, *Антропоморфные*, 131, 132 (Рис. 32: 3); K. Kajkowski, P. Szczepanik, *The multi-faced*, 58.

G48


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supreme celestial god. We also found the indicated cosmological meaning of this object on a type of **early medieval fibulae** attributed to the Germanic peoples (G49: 1 – 4). At the lower end of these objects is the depicted head of an analogous zoomorphic character (in our opinion also a dragon), while formed at the top is a semicircular plate on the edge of which are arranged several rounded segments. We have already mentioned that this is a type of jewelry with cosmological iconography, within the frames of which the **semicircular plate** represents the **phases of the movement of the sun along the celestial vault**, which in its meaning would be equivalent to the image of the four-faced celestial god.[304] For example, in Mesopotamian traditions, this relationship is represented by Anshar/Ashur as "whole heaven" and Kishur/Kishar as "whole earth".[305] An analogous spatial organization can be identified on the relief motif (shield) from the Etruscan bronze chariot from **Monteleone di Spoleto** (Italy, 6th century BCE), where the upper head may denote the sky i.e. the celestial deity, while the lower one - the zooanthropomorphic chthonic god as a representative of the earth i.e. the underworld (G49: 10 compare with the rest). As an ideal paradigm, in this sense we can take the Zbruch idol with the four-faced deity at the upper end and the three-faced deity at the bottom (G40: 4).

b) Head of the chthonic god under the Cosmic Tree

As the most explicit Luristan manifestation of this mythical image, we can take the representation from a **Luristan discoid pin** depicting a tree, stylized in a way typical of the Luristan bronzes, in the lower part of whose trunk is a formed anthropomorphic or zooanthropomorphic head with animal ears, and probably also with a beard and mustache (G47: 1; detail G49: 9 compare with the rest).[306]

A parallel to these images can be found in the medieval sources that relate to the pagan religion of the **Pomeranian Slavs**. It is the episode recorded by **Ebo** which tells how, after the destruction of their idols by Otto, the pagan priests saved the **golden visual representation of the god Triglav** and handed it over for safekeeping to a widow in some remote village. Thereby, the statuette was **placed in the hollowed-out trunk of some large tree**. Several elements of this account show that this is not just an act of some kind of improvised concealment of the idol, but the transfer of its cult to a new, safer place. First of all, it is the fact that during the insertion of the statuette into the trunk, a small opening was left intended for offering sacrifices. When a man was sent there to steal the statue, he falsely presented himself as a believer who allegedly came to thank the god because he had been rescued from a seastorm. It is then said that he "entered the sanctuary" and that he could not take the statue because it was so carefully implanted in the chest formed inside the trunk that it was not possible to take it out or even move it. At the end it is said that the sanctuary also housed the ancient saddle of Triglav mounted on a wall.[307] These details clearly show that the newly founded sanctuary of Triglav was not an improvisation, but on the contrary, all the indicated elements were adapted to the character and functions of the god. We thereby believe that chosen were some more archaic forms of worship of Triglav in the sacralized parts of nature, which preceded the phase of his veneration in temples that were built in cities. At the base of this archaic system stood the here-presented image of the **god placed in the trunk of the Cosmic Tree**, or perhaps more specifically - of **his head placed in its lower part or at its roots** (compare with G47: 1; G40: 4). This arrangement shows additional correspondence to the chthonic aspects of Triglav, if we take into account that in certain cultures, the dead were buried in an analogous way - by placing their bodies in the hollowed-out trunks of living trees.

[304] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 295, wider context 287-295; not having insight into this interpretation of ours, the same result is also reached by K. Kaykowsky and P. Szczepanik (K. Kaykowsky, P. Szczepanik, *The multy-faced*, 58; P. Szczepanik, *Wczesnośredniowieczne*, 57).
[305] T. van Bakel, *The magical*, NO. 10.
[306] Drawing: A. Godard, *The Art*, 53, 54 (Fig. 30). Usually these motifs are treated as "masks" - human or leonine: D. de Clercq-Fobe, *Epingles*, 49-52.
[307] Detailed analysis of the source and the action: L. Trkanjec, *Chthonic*, 9-16.

G49



The image of the chthonic (mustached and bearded) mythical figure incorporated at the bottom of the sacred tree is encoded in the South Slavic ritual actions related to the New Year's holiday of **Badnik**. Basically, they consist of cutting the Badnik tree (oak) in the forest, bringing it home and its ritual burning in the fireplace. In some regions, during the first of the indicated activities, it was recommended to place tassels called a "beard" at the point of cutting. Elsewhere, the badnik was a tree stump, whereby the meaning of a beard was borne by its roots. The relations with the mythical image discussed here are also indicated by the name of the ritual (**Badnik**), which some researchers connect with the names of two mythical characters from the Indo-European complex that bear the features of a **mythical dragon**. These are the Vedic **Ahi Budhnya** and the ancient Greek Python (*Πυθων*).[308]

We are informed about an older example of the same mythical representation by the ancient sources that mention a place in **Gadeira** (Iberia) where supposedly the remains of the mythical character **Geryon** were located. According to some, they were marked by a **tree** showing different shapes, while according to others - by a heaped mound on which grew **two trees** (named after him) from whose bark dripped blood.[309] The correspondence of these legends with the Luristan representations and the Slavic examples becomes more direct if we take into account the eminent chthonic character of Geryon and his triple appearance (a body with three heads, three busts or composed of three joined figures) (G30: 7). The **sacrificial aspect of the indicated god** is encoded through the location of his **grave** under the tree and the **blood** dripping from its bark.

We find an analogous arrangement also within the frames of Christianity. This time it is the image of the **Golgotha cross** with the crucified Christ, at the base of which is depicted a **human skull** (example G50: 2 – 4). It is the **skull of Adam** which, according to legend, was found on the hill of Golgotha.[310] The relations become even more direct if we take into account that behind this cross actually stands the **mythical tree** (Cosmic Tree, Tree of Life) which is sacred in itself. Such its character is explicitly emphasized in some Manichaean writings, and even depicted in some later pictorial representations in which **Christ is crucified on a living tree with branches and leaves** (G50: 1).[311]

The **cosmic tree can also grow from the vertex or mouth of the chthonic god**, for which one could present numerous pictorial examples (G50: 6 – 8; D36). Such an image is reflected in a **tale from Macedonian folklore** which obviously received its own Christian layer, precisely within the frames of the mentioned **legend about Adam**. It tells how Eve, before Adam's death, put three apple seeds in his mouth, from which, after his burial, grew three resistant but barren trees. God, with his wind, will flip them over, so that they will grow with their roots upward, and the water around them will become healing. In the end, made from them will be the cross on which Christ will be crucified, in order for him to be healed from the sufferings he will experience.[312]

We also find medieval parallels for another variant present on the Luristan "idols", with a depiction of two i.e. four heads at one end (two zoomorphic and two zooanthropomorphic), and three anthropomorphic ones at the other (G3: 4; G4: 1). This time, once again, we have in mind the Slavic **idol from Zbruch** in whose clearly defined cosmological iconography the four faces at the top belong to the figures of the four anthropomorphic gods located in the celestial zone, while the three faces at the lower end are part of the figure of the **three-headed chthonic god who holds the Earth's plate on his shoulders** (G33: 10; G40: 4). The

[308] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 263-265, 272, with presented bibliography.

[309] (Pausanius. 1.35.7-8; Philostratus, Life of Apollonius of Tyana 5. 4 – 5); *Gerion* 2019; P. F. Bober, *Cernunnos*, 41; J. M. Blázquez Martínez, *Gerión*; pictorial representations and bibliography: V. Karageorghis, *A New Geryon*.

[310] "According to Jewish traditions, the skull of Adam was found there (*i.e.* on Golgotha), and this, they say, Solomon knew by his great wisdom. And because it was the place of Adam's skull, therefore the hill was called Golgotha, or Calvary." (S. Basil Seleuc, Orat. XXXVIII).

[311] It is represented by the tree Jesus Patibilis from which the cross for the Crucifixion of Christ was made, and which in itself is full of vital force (M. Elijade, *Istorija*. II, 307; L. Koenen, *Augustine*, 176-187).

[312] Е. Лафазановски, *Македонските*, 84, 85; Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 272; another medieval variant of the folktale: G. Lechler, *The Tree of Life*, 370.

G50



acceptance of this parallel would mean that the two or four heads on the standard denote its upper part, while the three anthropomorphic ones - its lower part. We have an analogous combination (this time of a character with two and with three faces) on the coins of Cilicia (G20: 8; G30: 5).

On this occasion, the bifora of the cathedral in **Tuscania** (Italy), built and decorated in the Romanesque and Gothic styles, deserves special attention (G50: 5). In its relief decoration one can recognize the same cosmological structure with almost all the indicated key elements. The character with three mutually fused bearded faces under the bifora bears the features of the **three-headed chthonic god**: in his hands he holds a snake as the most common zoomorphic symbol of the nether regions; he has three faces, which corresponds to three-headedness as a dominant feature of the chthonic mythical characters; from the mouths of his lateral faces come out floral motifs that rise upwards (compare G50: 5 with 7), which reflects the functions of the chthonic god as an entity that creates, but also re-devours vegetation; on his vertex rests the central pillar of the bifora, which corresponds to the mythologem of the **head of the chthonic god as the foundation of the Cosmic Axis**. Above the bifora is another analogous figure, this time depicted without a neck and bust, with a pair of horns above the forehead, from whose lateral mouths also grow floral motifs. Observed in relation to the previously elaborated examples, including the Luristan ones, he, according to his upper position and placement **above the central pillar**, should represent the **many-headed celestial god**, to which, this time, his three-headedness, horns and the sprouting of herbs from the mouth would not correspond. The first element could be justified by the invisibility of his fourth (rear) face, while the third element - by the application of the concept of symmetry in relation to the lower head. As for the horns, they would be more appropriate for the lower character, although in this case they correspond well with the upper heads from the Luristan "idols" (G50: 5 compare with G2: 2, 3). Their comparison with the **spiked locks of hair of the lower character**, which allude to **rays**, indicates his possible solar and celestial character, which could also point to an inversion of the heads. There are two ways to justify the complex and fairly well-preserved iconography of this relief. According to the first, the artisan during its execution used and reinterpreted some older pagan template. According to the second, he merely combined the set of fantastic motifs present as part of the ecclesiastical plastics of his time, whereby the consistent cosmological iconography appeared "on its own", accidentally or as the result of some kind of internal principle.

c) A character with two or four heads as symbols of the categories *up* and *celestial*, as opposed to a character with three heads as *down* and *chthonic*

In the archaic mythical-religious systems there were not always firm canons, due to which inconsistencies often occur i.e. certain elements bear different or even opposite meanings. Such is the case with the number of heads of mythical characters or deities described in texts or depicted in pictorial representations. On this occasion, a proposal can be made regarding the issue of the **four-headed** and **three-headed** representations that appear on Luristan bronzes and on their analogies. Despite the frequent inconsistencies, in their case one can notice a tendency to depict the **supreme celestial god with two or four heads or faces**, oriented according to the cardinal directions, and the **chthonic one with three faces**. Regardless of the various specific justifications for their such numerical representation, we think that at the basis of this relation is the **opposition of even and odd numbers**, especially the numbers 4 and 3. Thereby, the **number 4** is taken as an **even** number that reflects **completeness**, **perfection**, **stability**, **comprehensiveness** and **omnipresence**, while the **number 3** - as its **potential**, which represents **oddity**, **incompleteness** and **imperfection**. Such meaning of these numbers is also reflected in the lexis. Thus, in Latin, the lexeme *trivium* denotes an **intersection of three roads**, but also a name for a **lower level of education** (hence the meaning of *trivial* - ordinary, simple), while *quadrivium* denotes an **intersection of four roads**, but also a **higher level of education** (*quaternitas* - quantitative and qualitative overcoming of triad

structures).[313] As a conclusion, we can draw the following oppositional paradigm: *threefold - chthonic - material - lower* : *fourfold - celestial - spiritual - higher*, although in practice its consistent application cannot always be expected.

We have seen that in some "idols with protomes", four faces are formed at the bottom as well, at the feet of the character depicted there (G11: 1, 4), and are also multiplicated on the bottle-shaped supports, which, too, are located at the bottom of the set (G12: 3 – 6).[314] Observed together with the two or implicit four faces at the top, they form a composition consisting of multiplicated characters in pair, depicted at both the upper and lower end of the columnar object.

We find such an arrangement on the medieval **scepter from Sutton Hoo** in England where, at both ends, is a group of four human faces, whereby at one of them (probably the upper one), formed above the heads is a rotating ring with a deer on top, while at the lower - a piece in the form of a bowl (G43: 1, 2).[315] **Three of the depicted anthropomorphic faces are bearded**, while **five are beardless**. On one of the faces there are indications of intentional damage done to the eye, which, together with the rotated orientation of the lower four faces, is linked to **Odin**. Thereby, taken into account is the mythical action in which he sacrifices one of his eyes and then hangs himself on the sacred tree Yggdrasil. Several hypotheses have been put forward regarding the purpose of the object. According to some, it was used as a **scepter** (weighing just over 3 kg), which some important person (probably a king) held in its hand. According to the second, it was a **ceremonial model of a whetstone** for sharpening or a **tool for obtaining fire**, which, judging by the degree of preservation, was not used at all. Modern replicas have shown that the object could have also stood alone placed on a flat surface, resting on the bronze element formed at the lower faces in the form of a small bowl. It could have also been an altar in some kind of cultic space.[316] The absence of significant differences between these faces may indicate that they belong to **one and the same all-encompassing and omnipresent mythical character i.e. deity**, whereby the upper heads reflect his **luminous, creative and progressive aspects**, while the lower ones - his **chthonic, destructive and regressive aspects**. Their structuring into two groups of four could represent the **omnipresence of the supreme (and only?) deity in both the celestial and the chthonic realms of the universe**.

d) Identification of the chthonic god on the standards and other Luristan bronzes

On some of the Luristan objects, such as the **"idols with protomes"** (G11) and the **openwork pins** (G46: 1 – 6), the above-elaborated "lower head" is also duplicated i.e. depicted on both front sides of the objects. If we accept that it is an iconographic element with a certain meaning, then it would be a representation of some kind of bifacial i.e. dual mythical character of a chthonic nature. It could be the reduced representation of a character that on the standards of the same type appears once again, but this time with his whole figure. Here we have in mind the figure from their lower half, with arms curved in a semicircle, legs with spread knees that form a rhombus, and fins instead of feet that are at the same time bound together (D34; D35; D37). We could also treat him as dual because he is depicted on both front sides of the standards.

These heads or whole figures located below correspond well to **Ahriman** who is connected to the lower zones of the universe and the elements associated with them (**earth and water**). The most common

[313] J. Dynda, *The Three-Headed*, 68-71; on the chthonic symbolism of the magical actions performed at crossroads and their connection with the triple Hecate: S. I. Johnston, *Crossroads*; the adjective *quadrilateral* (τετράγωνος) in the ancient Greek language bore the metaphorical meaning of "perfect" (H. G. Liddell et al, *A Greek-English*).
[314] E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 99 (Fig. 80: No. 120), 102, 103; P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 164.
[315] M. J. Enright, *The Sutton Hoo*; P. Mortimer, *Michael*.
[316] P. Mortimer, S. Pollington, *Remaking*; P. Mortimer, *Michael*; we think that the critical attitude of the previous authors regarding the observations of M. J. Enright is justified (M. J. Enright, *The Sutton Hoo*; M. J. Enright, *The Sutton Hoo sceptre*); T. K. Ruffin, *Sutton Hoo*, 27-30.

leonine appearance of these heads fits in well with this identification, given that the lion is a creation of Ahriman, who was even portrayed with the head of this animal.[317] Various texts refer to his emergence from the mentioned two elements that Zurvān created even before the birth of his sons. But, thereby, it should not be forgotten that in some texts the **earth**, **water**, and **plants** are defined as **domains of action of Zurvān**, and even as **elements created by him**.[318]

In previous chapters (Chapter VI) we also compared these images with the two complementary hypostases of the Iranian god **Vāy** or **Vayu**, specifically on the one hand with **Vāy i vēh** (The Good Vāy) - **guardian and stimulator of life**, and on the other with **Vāy i vattar** (The Evil Vāy) - **demon of death and extractor of the human soul**.

We identified the Evil Vāy with the **double figure from the lower part of the "idols with protomes"**, depicted with **bound legs** (D34 – D37), specifically in relation to his function of "carrying off those who are bound".[319] In this case (as in other cultures as well), the epithet **"bound"** refers to the **dead**, as a metaphor for their **immobility**, but also to the **experience of death as "capturing" and "dragging" man from this world**. In our case, at first glance, the figure with bound legs should not depicted Vāy because he is not the "bound", but the "binder". However, a justification for this could be sought in the **equation of the god of death with the dead themselves** i.e. his portrayal as **their paradigm** i.e. as the **first deceased** (see p. 307).

If we take into account the hypotheses that **Vāy** once had the status of a **supreme god**, **indifferent to good and evil**, and that he figured as a **hypostasis of Zurvān – Spihr**,[320] then he could also be the one who stands behind the **central two-faced god represented through the pillar and top of the standards**. The ancientness of this god i.e. his belonging to the Indo-Iranian traditions is best indicated by the **Hindu Vayu** who is similar to the Iranian one not only in name, but also in his functions. In this case it should be noted that both characters are related to the **wind** and that they were portrayed with a **thousand eyes**, which makes them close to **Argos** (with a thousand eyes on his body), **Boreas** (the two-faced god of the winds), but also to some other bifacial mythical characters from the Mediterranean.[321]

7. Comparison of the features of Janus and his equivalents with the central character from the Luristan standards

At the beginning of this chapter we noted the overlappings between the Italic Janus and the central character from the Luristan standards, and not only at the pictorial level, but also at the level of meaning and functions of both characters. Within the frames of our comparative analysis, we saw that the two-headed characters from other ancient cultures also interfere with this character from the standards. According to these indications, we have also conceptualized this sub-chapter, in which we will first determine the functions of Janus, then we will trace each function among his equivalents and, finally, we will look for it in the iconography of the Luristan standards.

a) Two-facedness

The two-facedness of the main deity from the Luristan standards should be considered a very important feature of his, because it appears on the majority of these objects (illustrations of "idols with protomes" showing both heads: G11: 4; C13: 4 – 6; C24: 6, 7; on the "idols": G2: 5 – 7; G3: 1 – 3, 6; G5: 1 –

[317] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, VIII, IX; R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 129, 130, Fig. 25, 26; И. Л. Крупник, *Зурванизм*, 53, 55; J. Duchesne-Guillemin, *Ahriman*, 192.
[318] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 70-75.
[319] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 84.
[320] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 82, 125-127; R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 201, 203, 237.
[321] On the Hindu Vayu: В. Н. Топоров, *Ваю*, 220.

3). The closeness of this deity to the **Italic god Janus** is evident and can be argued through his bifacial pictorial representations (G51; G52: 4, 5, 8; G53: 1), through the epithet *Geminus* (meaning double, paired, twin), and through other characteristics of his cult. In scholarly papers concerning Janus (and the other Italic two-faced gods) the prevailing belief is that his two-facedness is due to **relations with the door** i.e. **doors** and their **guarding**. E. Simon supports this view with other two-headed or three-headed mythical characters (from the Middle East, Egypt and Greece), which bore an analogous function (Cerberus, Orthrus, Geryon).[322] We think that his two faces should not be reduced to a single domain, but should be treated as a product of various processes of semiotization that had occurred in the given and also in other cultures where characters with such a feature are present. The conclusions of previous researchers show that they symbolized various categories related to **space**, **time** or some other aspects and domains of this deity.

We have seen that among the **Eastern Mediterranean cult statues** of the type of **hermai**, outside the circle of the Roman Janus, there are combinations of faces of **various male deities** i.e. **mythical characters**: Zeus and Dionysus, Hermes and Heracles, Dionysus and Satyr or Silenus and Apollo. Of the **two-sexed variants**, particularly stand out the bifacial representations on coins and Attic aryballoi from the end of the 6th and the first decades of the 5th century BCE. In the ancient period, such representations with Dionysus and Ariadne will be frequent, but also with other pairs: Hermes and Hestia, Priapus, Pan or Satyr with Maenad, Triton and Libya,[323] Attis and Cybele, Priapus or Hermes and Aphrodite, Dionysus and some of his consorts, the Eleusinian Theos and Thea and others (G20: 5 – 9; G21).[324] Of the bifacial mythical characters depicted with their **entire anthropomorphic body**, the giant **Argos** and the north wind **Boreas** stand out (G20: 1 – 4). C. N. Deedes puts the bifacial mythical characters at the basis of the ancient **theatrical masks** – associating the comic one with the demons of fertility, while the tragic one with the slain god.[325]

Among the Eastern Mediterranean examples, the **complementary relation** between these characters is common, and not only at the level of **sex** (G20: 7; G21:8, 11), but also of **age** (young man, beardless, with black hair and/or beard, and old man with gray hair and beard) (G20: 8, 9; G21: 7), as well as racial characteristics ("Negroid" man and a young woman of the white race) (G21: 11).[326] According to some interpretations, the two-facedness of these representations **does not always have to reflect some kind of duality**, i.e. certain **two aspects** of the depicted character. Thus, in the case of the single-sexed representations, it may be a case of repetition of the face of the same deity due to duplication of its power or the directioning of that power in two different spheres (G20: 5, 6; G21: 6, 9).[327]

Twofoldness also occurs among some other gods from the Hellenic circle, but represented not only through their face and head, but also through the duplication of other parts of their body. Such is the already mentioned Apollo Tetracheir from Laconia who, according to the sources, in addition to the four hands, was also *tetraotos* (with four ears), which may also indicate his former two-facedness i.e. two-headedness.[328] Such is also Heracles from Baris (Isparta) in Pisidia (G22: 2, 3).

- Watching, overseeing

The orientation of the two faces in opposite directions points to another function present in Janus and his equivalents, and that is the power of **oversight** and **control** within cosmological frames i.e. to **monitor** and **manage** the climatic and other processes in the universe, from which the corresponding functions of these

[322] „Ianus ist doppelköpfig, weil er als Türgott die Funktion eines Wächters hat." (E. Simon, *Ianus*, 622).
[323] A. B. Cook, *Zeus*. II, 388-391; C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*, 208-210, 216-223.
[324] J. Marcadé, *Hermès*, 608-611; A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 338-340; C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*, 217, 223.
[325] C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*, 223-226.
[326] J. Marcadé, *Hermès*; C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*, 216, 218, 222.
[327] J. Marcadé, *Hermès*, 615, 616.
[328] J. Marcadé, *Hermès*, 614; B. C. Dietrich, *Some Evidence*, 12.



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gods would also derive. The temple of **Janus Geminus** in the Forum near the Argiletum **was opened in times of war**, and **closed during peace**, due to the apotropaic function of this god **to protect the city** from military attacks of the surrounding peoples, and probably from other troubles as well (G52: 1 – 3, 6). It represents the focus of this mystical system of protection from which its apotropaic power spread radially in all directions.[329] There are indications that this function was also borne by the Etruscan god **Culsans**, as suggested by the discovery of his statuette buried at the northern gate of the city of Cortona (G22: 7), as well as his theonym which supposedly contains the meaning of *door*.[330]

The function of **guardian** and **overseer** is also present among the Eastern Mediterranean bifacial mythical characters. Thus, in the case of **Argos Panoptes** it is further emphasized through the eyes **scattered over his body** and the role of **Io's guardian** (G20: 1 – 3). Such a character was also present in **Sardinia**, as evidenced by the armed figurine with two pairs of eyes and two pairs of hands on which additional eyes are scattered (G22: 6). An analogous function is also projected upon the unidentified character to whom belonged the two pairs of eyes from the **Hellenic kylixes**, which are believed to have been intended to preserve and protect the drink poured in them and the symposiast that was drinking it (G21: 1 – 3).

The role of overseer is particularly clearly emphasized in the case of the Nordic **Heimdallr**, portrayed as an **eternally awake guardian of the gods** who never sleeps.[331] A similar function is reflected in the myth of the Hindu goddess **Devi**, who with her eyes constantly watches over the existence of the cosmos (compare with Tridevi - G34: 6). It was believed that if she blinked at least once, the whole world would disappear at once, along with all the other gods.[332]

The function of *oversight* ideally corresponds to the examples with four faces or heads due to their orientation towards the four corners of the world i.e. the four directions of space. This function is most explicitly represented in the case of the Slavic supreme god **Svantovit**, not only through his **four-faced idols**, but also the **theonym** which contains the meaning of *seeing everything* or *seeing everywhere* (G40 – G43). It is also present in the four-headed Baltic **Perkūnas**, but also among the indicated Hindu gods whose faces (and obviously their actions) are put in relation to the **cardinal points of the world** (G37). The same function is also reflected in the **four-headed hermai** which, standing at crossroads, had the role of **protecting the four road routes** that branched out from there (G39: 3, 4, 7, 8).

In the Avesta, a character with multiplicated eyes is **Mithra**, portrayed as a helper of Time who has a **thousand ears** and **ten thousand eyes**.[333] Watching as a function is also emphasized in the case of **Zurvān**, which can be concluded based on the *Persian Rivâyat*, where he is portrayed with **seven faces**, whereby **each of them has three eyes**.[334] The accentuation of the eyes in these two characters coincides with the Christian **cherubim** and **seraphim** whose bodies are also **covered with eyes**. This feature, together with the multiplicated wings, as well as some other shared components, indicates some original closeness of them to the winged representations of Zurvān (F14: 1 – 5).

This function, projected upon the central two-faced (and in some cases also four-faced) god from the Luristan standards (C13: 4 – 6; G5: 5, 6) would correspond well to his status of a supreme god, the identification with the Cosmic Axis, as well as to the hypotheses about the **apotropaic function** of these objects (see pp. 577, 664).

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[329] R. Taylor, *Watching*, 7, 8; A. Audin, *Janus*, 71-74; E. Simon, *Ianus*, 623; on the temple: V. Müller, *The Shrine*; on its depictions on coins: F. Barenghi, *The temple*; A. B. Cook, *Zeus*. II, 354-358.

[330] *Culsans* 2019.

[331] G. Dumézil, *Gods*, 127.

[332] У. Норман Браун, *Индийская*, 320, 321.

[333] “We sacrifice unto Mithra, the lord of wide pastures, who is truth-speaking, a chief in assemblies, with a thousand ears, well-shapen, with ten thousand eyes, high, with full knowledge, 10 strong, sleepless, and ever awake.” (Yasht 10. 7); R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 239.

[334] “God said to Zoroaster, ‘Zurvan has seven faces, and on each face three eyes; ...`.” (Hormazyar, ii, p. 53, 1. 10), according to R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 29, 408, 409.

G52



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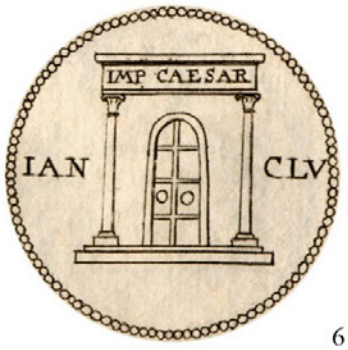
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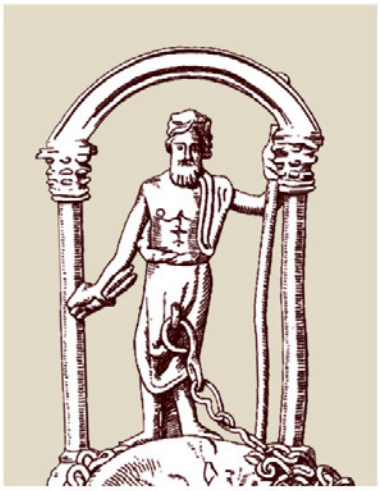
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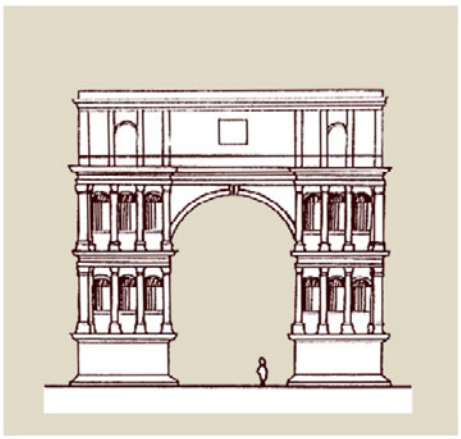
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- Twins

Although the Roman **Janus** has no direct symbolic and narrative connection to **Romulus and Remus**, their relation is quite probable, given the status of Janus as the main mythical patron and protector of the city of Rome, and the twins as its mythical founders. Ultimately, it could be a case of two different epiphanies of one and the same mythical character, whereby the two faces of Janus would actually be the faces of Romulus and Remus. In addition to other evidence, this relation would also be indicated by the fact that in the city of **Tusculum**, Janus was identified with the divine **twins**, **the Dioscuri**.[335] On some Roman **republican denarii** from the 2nd century BCE, the Dioscuri are depicted in the form of a head with two youthful beardless faces (G51: 5) which are difficult to distinguish from some similar beardless variants of Janus (G51: 6, 9).[336]

On some **medallions** from the time of Commodus, Janus is depicted with **four legs**.[337] This could be understood as a remnant of some older pictorial template of his in which the three-dimensional cult representation of Janus (similarly to Hecate G29: 8) was consisted of two human figures joined with their backs, which would imply the participation in it of **two separate characters**.

According to the Zoroastrian religion, the pair of twins stands at the very base of the universe. These are the **Spirit of Good/Holy Spirit** i.e. **Ohrmazd** and the **Spirit of Evil/Destructive Spirit** i.e. **Ahriman**. This is explicitly presented in the following statements by Zoroaster: "In the beginning the two Spirits who are the well-endowed (?) twins were known as the one good, the other evil, in thought, word, and deed. Between them the wise chose the good, not so the fools. And when these Spirits met, they established in the beginning life and the absence of life that in the end the evil should meet with the worst existence, but the just with the Best Mind." The oldest written source in regards to these contents is Eudemus of Rhodes (4th century BCE).[338]

As we have seen, the creator i.e. parent of these twins is **Zurvān** i.e. **Time**. This could mean that **precisely he is the one standing behind the columnar character with two faces from the standards**, as an entity in which the **two spirits** i.e. **two principles** are entwined, united, and perhaps even still undivided and unmanifested (compare with F12: 1 – 3).

b) Ram

The ram is present in the cult of **Janus** as a **sacrificial animal**. On a coin from Palermo, a representation of a bifrons is combined with a ram, probably referring to the animal that was annually sacrificed to this god.[339] In various ways, this animal is also associated with the Nordic **Heimdallr**, specifically based on some myths, but also the etymology of his name.[340] We have seen that it also appears on some of the many-headed Celtic monuments (G32: 9).

This component cannot be directly put in relation to the Luristan standards where the ram is not present. But, such a relation can potentially be projected in regards to the **ibex** i.e. **mouflon** which is quite common on these objects, especially on the basis of the similar impressive and spirally curved horns. Such a difference can be justified by the great geographical and chronological distance between the compared cultures and the specific local ecological environments in which they developed, within the frames of which, of course, existed different species of animals as well. The ibex i.e. mouflon most often appears on the

[335] A. Audin, *Janus*, 79-82.
[336] Some kind of relations between Romulus and Remus and the Dioscuri are indicated by the studies of A. B. Cook (A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 436-444).
[337] E. Simon, *Ianus*, 621.
[338] (Yasna 30. 3-4), translation according to R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 3, 4; R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 181, 182, 198; *Zurvanism* 2019, (The “twin brother” doctrine).
[339] A. Audin, *Janus*, 86; *Janus* 2019, 5.1.
[340] G. Dumézil, *Gods*, 131-138.

"zoomorphic standards" in a symmetrical pair formed to the left and right of some kind of central element (B1; B2; B5 – B10). It is particularly important that this animal is also present on the "idols" that are the topic of this chapter, as an alternation of the multiplicated anthropomorphic faces depicted at their top (G4: 1, the same combination on the "idols with protomes" G10: 2).

c) Hermaphroditism

Although in the material, the hermaphroditism of Janus is not explicitly expressed, it could be found in numerous aspects of his connection to the goddesses **Juno** (even the epithet *Junonius*), **Diana** and **Vesta**.[341] These goddesses perhaps are not only his **female counterparts** (for example within the frames of their hierogamy), but also reflect the **female aspects of Janus himself** i.e. the female component that participated in his former hermaphroditism. According to some interpretations, at the basis of the name of the goddess **Diana** actually lays **Iana - a female form of Ianus** (pairs *Dianus - Diana*, *Ianus - Iana*). We have seen that among the Eastern Mediterranean bifacial representations, two-sexed variants are not uncommon in which the different sexual characteristics of the two faces are clearly emphasized (G20: 7; G21: 8, 11).[342] A. B. Cook thinks that the two different faces in these representations could also reflect "**diverse manifestations of the same power**, whether divine or human".[343] Analogously to Janus, the Etruscan bifacial god **Culsans** also had his own **female counterpart - Culsu**.[344]

Multiple sources clearly indicate the **hermaphroditism of Zurvān**, mainly through the mythical action of the conception and birth by him of his sons - Ohrmazd and Ahriman, at a time when, apart from him, there was no one else in the universe who could bear the function of his wife i.e. mother of his sons. Based on such a logical perception of this myth, **Eznik of Kolb** concludes that Zurvān was a hermaphrodite. This issue was also discussed by **Theodore Abū Qurra**, favoring the view that he nevertheless had a wife. It is also mentioned in the **Acts of Anāhīδ**, whereby, within frames of the discussions about the origin of fire and the stars, it is said that the position of the Magians is that Ohrmazd, like his father Zurvān, is hermaphroditic, "as the Manichaeans say".[345] In the **Dēnkart**, an analogous character is given to Ohrmazd in relation to the conception and birth of the firmament.[346] The hermaphroditism of Ohrmazd is also present in the **Greater Bundahishn** where he is portrayed as **"both father and mother to creation"**. R. C. Zaehner thinks that "... this is another Mazdean attempt to monopolize a myth which springs from a Zervanite source".[347]

The **hermaphroditism of the main character from the standards** has been pointed out by multiple researchers, mainly on the "columnar figurines" where, in the case of the main figure, occurs the combination of male and female body features, such as breasts and a pubis combined with a beard, or even a stylized phallus combined with breasts and hands directed towards them (F19; F29; C25). In previous chapters we have also indicated its presence in the "idols with protomes" and "standards - statuettes" (D9; D11).

d) Opposition in relation to a deity with a complementary character

There are indications for certain oppositional i.e. complementary relations between Janus and other gods such as **Mars** and **Saturn**,[348] whereby the opposition that imposes itself in the first case would be **peace – war**, while in the second - probably **celestial – chthonic**. In these relations one could also include **Cacus**,

[341] *Janus* 2019, 4.2.6; 4.2.9; 5.6; 8.1; Ž. Dimezil, *Drevna*, 259; E. Simon, *Ianus*, 618.
[342] J. Marcadé, *Hermès*, 608-611; A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 338-340; C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*, 232.
[343] A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 387, 388.
[344] E. Simon, *Ianus*, 618; I. Krauskopf, *Culsans*.
[345] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 63-65, 73, 155.
[346] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 128,129, 369-371.
[347] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 128, 318.
[348] *Janus* 2019, 6; 7 (on Saturn); 5.5 (on Mars); C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*, 24.

given his chthonic nature and the connection with two different gates of the city of Rome (see below). **Argos** could also appear as an opponent of Janus, regardless of the fact that according to his two-facedness he is actually his equivalent (G20: 1 – 3).

On the Luristan standards, these relations can be identified on several "idols" where the **upper end** is modeled in the form of a **head with two faces**, while the **lower one** is shaped in the form of a **single or triplicated zoomorphic or zooanthropomorphic head** which, according to the above presented interpretations, could have belonged to some chthonic opponent of the "Luristan Janus" (G3: 4; G4: 1, 2, 5). We think that such an oppositional relation between the two-headed mythical figure as a representative of the position **up** (as **celestial**) and the three-headed one as a representative of the position **down** (as **chthonic**), was well represented in the topography of Rome. Its first constituent would be represented by **Janus**, who resided in **Argiletum**, at the **Porta Janualis**, whose bifacial appearance is present through the name **Porta Gemina**. The second constituent is **Cacus** who resided in the locality of **Saline**, at the **Porta Trigemina**, whose name refers to his **triple i.e. three-headed appearance**, among other things in relation to the monstrous **three-headed Geryon** (G30: 7) and the presence of swamps and caves. This opposition would also be indicated by the etymology of Cacus, with the meaning of **blind**, specifically in opposition to the **many-facedness of Janus**, particularly pronounced through the **many-eyedness of Argos Panoptes** (G20: 1 – 3) and his equivalent from Sardinia (G22: 6).[349] We have seen that a similar combination, this time with a very clear cosmological aspect, is present on the Zbruch idol where the three-headed chthonic character located at the bottom is combined not with a bifacial, but with a tetrafacial composition depicted at the top (G40: 4).

This oppositional relation can be also evidenced in some **Eastern Mediterranean bifrons** where one of the two characters with the features of an **old man** (with white i.e. gray hair and beard) could bear a **chthonic meaning**, denoting **decline and death**, while the **young character** (with black hair and beard) would bear a **celestial meaning**, as a symbol and personification of **birth, growth and life** (G21: 7, 10). As we have noted, C. N. Deedes places such representations at the basis of the rituals of annual sacrifice of the deified king, whereby one of his characters (or one face of his bifacial mask) encodes the **death of the old king**, while the other - **the birth of the new one**.[350] In the case of Greek ceramic vases modeled in such a way, one character is **male and bearded**, often with a **chthonic meaning** (Silenus, Dionysos Chtonios, or a character with a Negroid head, perhaps of Pluto), while the other - **male and beardless** or **female**, perhaps of a **celestial nature** (G21: 11).[351] In some cases it is a representation of **Boreas** (personification of the north wind) depicted as a winged demon with two heads (G20: 4), one of which has a **blond beard**, while the other a **brown** one.[352] The oppositional relation is clearly expressed in the mentioned **Hellenic kylixes** where two pairs of **giant eyes** are represented, one **dark** or on a **dark background**, whiles the other - **light** or on a **light background** (G21: 1 – 3).

It is quite important that the Scandinavian **Heimdallr** is also characterized by the epithet **"white god"**, which, given his nature of **first god**, should refer to his **white hairs** as a symbol of **old age** i.e. **primordiality**.[353] But, it is not excluded that this epithet also reflects his connection with **light** and the **sky**, which may imply the existence of an **opponent of his**, perhaps with the epithet of **"black god"**, as is the case of the Slavic pair **Belobog** and **Chernobog**.[354] The chthonic opponent of Heimdallr can be recognized in the character of the god **Loki**, who he fights during the eschatological event of **Ragnarök**, eventually killing each

[349] For these information, with somewhat different interpretations: A. Audin, *Janus*, 66-69, 71.
[350] C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*.
[351] J. Marcadé, *Hermès*, 617, 618.
[352] J. Gagé, *Sur les origines*, 27, 28 (double-headedness probably reflects the positive and negative aspects of this "personalized wind" whose breath brings cold, but also fertility).
[353] G. Dumézil, *Gods*, 131 (although the character of "first god" indicated by Dumézil is somewhat debatable).
[354] On the Slavic pair: Н. Чаусидис, *Дуалистички*, 141, 142.

other. The chthonic nature of Loki is also indicated by his etymology, associated by some with the meaning of **"flame/fire"**, while according to others - with **knots** and **tangling** i.e. **binding**.[355]

The two-faced god from the **Middle Eastern seals** (**Usmi** and his variants) at the same time represented the old god who was symbolically sacrificed, but also the newborn one, incarnated in the figure of the new deified king (G17: 1 – 6; G18: 1, 2).[356]

e) Fourfacedness

Besides the dominant two-facedness, Janus is also characterized by four-facedness. It is reflected through the placement of a representation of **Janus Quadrifrons** or **Quadriformis** at the **Forum Transitorium** in Rome, in **a temple with four doors**, according to the traditions (probably Etruscan) of the city of **Falerii**.[357] It is thought that three such hermai originally stood on the **Pons Fabricius** or at the **temple of Asclepius** located on the nearby Tiber Island (G39: 7, 8). Also dedicated to Janus was the **four-sided triumphal arch** (**ianus Quadrifrons**) at the crossroads near the **Velabrum – Forum Boarium** in Rome, with four passageways oriented in the four cardinal directions of the world (G52: 10, 11).[358] The four-faced representations of Janus were also present on some **Roman coins**, in the form of a statue of the god depicted with a stick in his hand, three visible faces, and apparently another one on the rear side (G39: 2).[359] Interesting and still enigmatic are the examples where the front head is not human but zoomorphic (probably bovine - G39: 1), which would correspond to the examples from the Middle East (G36: 3, 5, 6), including some Luristan examples (G4: 1, 6; G6: 1; G10). There are also assumptions about the existence of **four-faced representation of the Etruscan Culsans**, who could have stood behind the three-faced head from an Etruscan scarab (G29: 3 the fourth one invisible because it is at the rear).[360]

A fragmented stone herma with a pair of bearded and a pair of beardless heads was discovered in Kreuzwegstein, Niederkerschen (Luxembourg) (G39: 4)[361] and a similar monument, this time with four bearded heads, is housed in the National Museum in Sofia (G39: 3). The latter is identified with **Hermes Tetracephalus**, although its Hellenic (or even Classical Antique) affiliation is not entirely certain.[362] One such four-headed herma was located at the locality of Kerameikos in Athens. Here we should also mention the fourfold variants of the Hekataion - multiplicated statues or hermai of the goddess Hecate. They are much rarer than the threefold ones and are more typical to Asia Minor (**Meter Tetraprosopos**) (G39: 11). The same deity also appears in the form of reliefs where the four heads are placed next to each other, oriented in the same direction (G39: 12).[363]

Based on numerous historical sources, modern scholars emphasize the great importance of the **quadriform god** in the **religious system of Zurvanism**. This epithet is given to **Zurvān**, whereby in specific sources and in modern interpretations his four components or aspects (tetrads) are identified with various categories. In some Zoroastrian examples it is the tetrad **Ohrmazd, Light (Space), Religion and Time**. In

[355] On the events of Ragnarök: (Prose Edda, Gylfaginning. 51), according to S. Sturluson, *The Prose Edda*, 77-81. On the etymology of Loki: E. Heide, *Loki*.
[356] C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*, 196.
[357] *Janus* 2019, 4.2.2; 9; A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 373 (such a representation on the coins of Hadrian: Fig. 280); E. Simon, *Ianus*, 620.
[358] (Servius, *Commentarius in Vergilii Aeneida* 7.607; Isidorus, *Origines* 8.11; Augustinus, *De Civitate Dei* 7.4); according to *Quadrifrons* 2014; A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 360; R. Taylor, *Watching*; Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 559, Д44: 9.
[359] E. Simon, *Ianus*, 621, 622.
[360] I. Krauskopf, *Culsans*, 161.
[361] F. Hettner, *Provinzialmuseum*, 33 (No. 42).
[362] Г. И. Кацаров, *Антични*, 53, 54 – Обр. 38, 39; Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 459.
[363] *Monumenta (Vol. X)* 1993, no. 53 (from Beskaris Hüyük, Turkey); N. Eda Akyürek Şahin, *Eskişehir'den*.

Manichaeism, in the Father of Greatness, this tetrad consists of "**God himself/Zurvān, Light, Power and Wisdom**", in some translations alternated with the categories **Omniscience and Goodness**. The differences between the two examples are reconciled in the fact that both are based on the general Zurvanite paradigm where this tetrad was composed of the categories **Time, Space, Wisdom and Power** i.e. the last one alternated with the **personality of the Creator**. All together they constitute **one God with four persons** with fairly denoted mutual differences.[364] The indicated, but also some other sources show that within the frames of Zurvanism and Manichaeism, Zurvān is the four-faced Father of Greatness (*τετραπροσωπος πατηρ του μεγεθους*). There are indications that some of the Zoroastrians (with a semi-Zurvanite character) also represented Zurvān as a **tetramorph** constituted by the four categories noted above.[365] Thereby, the question remains open whether this epithet was also appropriately manifested (imagined and depicted) in the **visual media** - as a **character i.e. figure with four faces**.

In some texts, the four faces of Zurvān as personalized Time are associated also with certain **temporal categories** such as: Infinite Time, Finite Time, The course of Fate and The "ideal" year.[366]

Based on **Theodore bar Konai** and other non-Iranian sources, it can be concluded that the categories participating in this tetrad are **Ašōqar**, **Frašōqar** and **Zarōoqar**, as well as **Zurvān** himself. Thereby, various interpretations of these terms are proposed in relation to certain cosmic elements (**fire, water, earth and atmosphere**) or to the hypostases and functions of this deity (**conception, birth, decline, infinity**) related to the stages of the existence of the universe and of man. The relationship of Zurvān with the other three elements is interpreted by analogy with the Christian Holy Trinity i.e. as **four persons in one God**, whereby **Zurvān is the eternal source** from which the other three perpetually derive. Other elements have also been proposed as participants in Zurvān's tetrads: The Tetrad of Being; The Tetrad of Becoming; The Tetrad of Matter; The Tetrad of Time (uncertain); The Tetrad of Order (justice); The Tetrad of Fate; The Tetrad of the Castes and others.[367] Presented in the **"Song of the Magians"**, preserved by Dio Chrysostom, is a variant of the Zurvanite tetrads formed in relation to the Mediterranean cultures. It is an image of **Zeus** portrayed as a **rider of a quadriga** with **four harnessed horses** whose specific characters and color, placed in relation to a certain ancient deity (Zeus, Hera, Poseidon, Hestia), show that they are representatives of the elements of the above-mentioned tetrads. **Zeus** is in this case portrayed as the **equivalent of Zurvān** in the role of **controller of the Universe** (the material world) represented through the chariot with mediation of the four horses as symbols of the **four cosmic elements and principles**.[368]

The **Greater Bundahishn** also contains paradigms that could be applied in the **spatial interpretation** of the four-faced representations from the Luristan bronzes, corresponding to the presented Indian, Baltic and Slavic examples. The function of a central character located in the **center of the universe**, equated with the Cosmic Axis, would be borne by the personalized **Polar Star** ("The Nail in the Sky") in relation to the four constellations oriented according to the cardinal points of the world.[369]

The four-faced Zurvanite supreme god was also introduced to Orthodox Mazdaism in order to reconcile the two otherwise irreconcilable religions. He is present in the **Indian Bundahishn**, portrayed as the supreme and primordial deity who personifies **Time**, according to his status **positioned above Ohrmazd and**

[364] C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 205-210, 214, 219.
[365] C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 214.
[366] C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 111, on the last category 134.
[367] C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 228-231.
[368] C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 226-228.
[369] "For it is said that Tištar is the commander of the East, Satvēs commander of the South, Vanand commander of the West, and Haptōring commander of the North. The Pole Star, which is called the 'Nail in the middle of the sky', is the commander of the commanders." (Greater Bundahishn 26. 11); C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 147, 148, 163.

Ahriman. He is presented as being **tetramorphous**, whereby his faces represent the four already mentioned categories: **time, space, wisdom and power**, which are contained within him.[370]

We have already noted that Byzantine sources call the Manichaean Zurvān **"the four-faced Father of Greatness"** (*τετραπροςωπος πατηρ του μεγεθους*).[371]

The fourfold Zurvān, although being supertemporal and supermaterial, subjects himself to limitation in order to shape and direct the Cosmos.[372] Hence he is not only the **god of the sky** and the **spiritual** and **progressive aspects**, but also the **god of the earth**, **animals** and **plants**, the god of **regression** and of **death**.[373] In this context we could interpret the examples present on the Luristan bronzes and the referenced analogies where the motif of **four faces** is **duplicated on both the upper and lower part of the elongated objects**, whereby the upper ones would symbolize the celestial and spiritual aspects and functions of the god, while the lower ones - those related to the earthly and material spheres (G11: 1, 4; G12; G43: 1, 2).

According to the **Persian Rivâyat**, Zurvān has **seven faces** (with three eyes each) and **seven names**, which is considered to be an isolated fact from a relatively later time. Based on the sources, they represent the individual **aspects** and **functions** of the god i.e. the principles from which they derive.[374] Coincidentally or not, this image coincides with one of the idols of the Western Slavs who also had seven faces, but also with some Luristan standards where depicted at the upper part are two or implicitly four faces, while at the lower one - three more.

f) Supreme deity

Janus was the most important deity in the archaic Roman pantheon, which is indicated, among other things, by his frequent invoking (along with **Jupiter**) through the epithet **father of the gods** and **god of the gods** (*diuum deus*).[375] Some epithets common to Janus and Jupiter (and Zeus), in some cases, indicate the mixing and **convergence** of their cults and the **fusion of the two gods**.[376] The **two-faced god** of the Etruscan metropolis of **Volsinii** also had a supreme character, as evidenced by his epithet "deus Etruriae princeps".[377]

The Scandinavian **Heimdallr**, like Janus, is supreme not in his greatness and strength (summus), but in his primacy (primus). He is inferior to Odin, much like Janus is inferior to Jupiter.[378]

This corresponds to the analogous status of the **two-faced and four-faced deity on the Luristan standards**. Although accompanied by other anthropomorphic and zoomorphic characters, he occupies the **central place** in them, which also reflects such a status of his in the religious life of the Luristanians. He appears on most such objects, which can be taken as a second piece of evidence of his **primacy** within the frames of their iconography, and probably in terms of their religious purpose as well. It is evident that he was not only the material i.e. visual, but also the **symbolic and theological pillar of the standards**, without which their iconographic and symbolic system could not function.

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[370] C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 91-93.
[371] C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 54.
[372] "Thus the fourfold God suffered limitation in order to form and direct the Cosmos." (C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 235).
[373] C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 241, 242.
[374] "God said to Zoroaster, 'Zurvan has seven faces, and on each face three eyes; and he has seven names: the name of the one is 'Godly' (bestowing); the second 'Zurvan'; the third 'He who makes old'; the fourth 'Fate'; the fifth 'the Cherisher (?)'; the sixth 'the Adversary'; the seventh *yo-framnana* ('he who has two commands')." (Hormazyar, ii, p. 53, 1. 10), according to R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 29, 408, 409.
[375] *Janus* 2019, 2.3; 4.1; A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 337.
[376] A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 327, 328.
[377] A. Audin, *Janus*, 86.
[378] G. Dumézil, *Gods*, 126, 127.

g) Proto-deity, elder-god

Janus is a proto-deity, **the oldest god of the Romans** (older even than Jupiter), and supposedly the first king of Latium, as a consequence of which also derives his function as a **representative and patron of beginnings** i.e. **transitions** from one state to another.[379] In the case of the "Eastern Mediterranean Janus" the meaning of proto-deity (primordial deity?) should be sought in the naming of the two-faced participant in the procession in Philadelphia as **Kronos**, given such a character of this god.[380] The same meaning could have also been borne by the other two-faced representations from the Eastern Mediterranean, in which one of the two characters is often depicted as an old man (G20: 3, 8, 9; G21: 7, 10).

Analogous to Janus, the Scandinavian **Heimdallr** is also a first god, born in the beginning of time, the ancestor of some of the gods (and somewhere of all of them), the procreator of classes and the founder of social order.[381] Given this, the epithet **"white god"** could refer to his **white hair** as a sign of **old age** i.e. **primordiality**.[382] Dimezil thinks that the Vedic and pre-Vedic equivalent of these gods is ***Dyaus**.[383] The function of proto-deity (primordial deity?) is also borne by the Sumerian **Anshar/Ashur** who created Anu, and he - the god Ea.[384]

This interferes with our interpretations of the **primordial nature of the central anthropomorphic character from the Luristan standards**, who is denoted by the features of a mythical character or primordial god that appears at the beginning of the creation of the world (as a proto-human, macrocosmic proto-giant or proto-phallus) who with his body even participates in its creation (D2).

The presented interpretations and parallels completely coincide with the main features of **Zurvān** who is portrayed as a **proto-deity** i.e. **primordial god** that existed **before the creation of the universe**. According to some interpretations, such a character is also reflected in his **theonym** which is associated with the Avestan lexeme *zrvan-* or *zruuan-* (Pahlavi *zurwan*), related to the Avestan *zauruuan-* (old age, senility), *zaurura-* (decrepit, senile) derived from the Proto-Indo-European root **ǵerh2* (to become old). It is thought that even the identification of Zurvān with time, in its abstract sense, is actually of a later date and is based on the original much more specific meaning that referred to the "lifespan of man" and aging as the **most obvious manifestations of the existence of time and its actualizing power**. This is also reflected in the name of the Avestan demon **Zaurva** (Pahlavi Zarman, Zarvan) which represents a kind of **personification of old age**.[385]

Within the frames of **Manichaeism**, Zurvān bears the status of **"first man"**, consubstantial with the **Father of Greatness**,[386] which places him in the same group with Purusha, Ymir and Gayomard.

Because of the mentioned characteristics, **Janus** bears the status of a god from the category of **deus otiosus** (present in other Indo-European pantheons as well), which denotes the former Uranian god who has withdrawn from this world, leaving such a status of his to other gods.[387] It is evident that an analogous character is also borne by Zurvān, at least in general terms, who, giving birth to his sons, withdraws from the universe, leaving it to them to rule.[388] Such a character is also indicated by the next component - "father - creator".

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[379] *Janus* 2019, 4.2.1; A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 335; Ž. Dimezil, *Drevna*, 258-260.
[380] A. B. Cook thinks that the reason for that is the January date of the ritual and the mixing of the terms Chronos and Kronos (A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 374). On these aspects also see C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*, 230.
[381] G. Dumézil, *Gods*, 126-129.
[382] G. Dumézil, *Gods*, 131.
[383] G. Dumézil, *Gods*, 128-130.
[384] C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*, 194.
[385] A. Lubotsky, *Avestan*, 73-78; И. Л. Крупник, *Зурванизм*, 48, 93.
[386] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 21, 22, 112, 113.
[387] *Janus* 2019, 2.3.1; M. Eliade, *Aspects*, chapter: *Deus otiosus*.
[388] И. Л. Крупник, *Зурванизм*, §4 (72), whereby the author nonetheless does not agree with such a character of Zurvān.

h) Father, creator

The primordial character of **Janus** is also reflected in his treatment as a **forefather** and **creator of humans**. Although the epithets *diuum patrem (partem) Ianuspater*, *father of the gods* (or part of the gods) refer to other Roman gods as well, in relation to Janus they have an exclusive status. Today they are considered to be not only a sign of respect towards him, but also a reflection of his primordial character. Such a character also derives from the epithet *Duonus Cerus* (God - Creator).[389] The immediate **male-fertilizing character of Janus** is reflected in his epithet *Condivus* - sower, initiator of human life, factor in charge of fertilization.[390]

Among the **Eastern Mediterranean dual characters**, this feature is expressed through the **phallic nature of the hermai** (and within those frames also of the two-headed ones) i.e. the equalization of the glans penis with the human head. This feature fits well with the strong Dionysian characteristics of these representations given the important place of the male sexual organ in the cults and rituals of Dionysus and the connection of the attributions of **Hermes** and of **Dionysus Chthonius** (G21: 6).[391]

As we have already mentioned, **Heimdallr** is the ancestor of the gods and of mankind, but also the procreator of classes and the founder of social order.[392] We have seen that this function is also borne by the Sumerian **Anshar/Ashur** who created Anu, and he - the god Ea.[393]

On the standards, this function is reflected by the **phallus** from the sexual-reproductive iconographic layer (as a **primordial macrocosmic phallus**) which, by entering into hierogamy with the vulva depicted below it, will participate in the creation of the universe. This function is also indicated by the **macrocosmic character whose body parts interfere with the cosmic elements** (body - axis mundi, arms - zoomorphic sky, legs - earth). It is especially important that integrated within the contours of the phallus and of this macrocosmic character, is the bifacial representation of the central anthropomorphic character from the standards. In its purest form, closest to the representations of Janus, and at the same time free from other iconographic elements, it is depicted on the "idols" (G1 – G3). We think that the survival in these standards of only the faces and phallic form, followed by the loss of all other iconographic elements, may be due to the importance of this function of the main Luristan god.

i) Time

Janus is directly related to the time cycles, especially with their **starting points**, the **transitions** to a new cycle or to some of its next stages, such as: **the first day of the year, the first day of the month and morning as the beginning of a new day**. Such a character is reflected in the **12 sacrificial altars of Janus**, intended for the beginning of each month of the year.[394] The **two heads of Janus** are symbols of the **past** that he has the power to know and the **future** that he can predict.[395]

On the standards, this temporal aspect is clearly reflected through the **ring of zoomorphic protomes** that surrounds the central bifacial character and which he most commonly holds in his hands. If we agree that this **double-zoomorphized ring** represents the **celestial circle** - within which time takes place, then its holding in hands reflects the function of this character as the **driver and manager of time** (E10; G10; G11; G53: 8).

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[389] *Janus* 2019, 4.1; 4.2.1; J. Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, Ch. XVI.

[390] "In fact Janus himself first, when pregnancy is conceived, ... opens the way to receiving the semen" (*Janus* 2019, 2.1; 4.2.7; Ž. Dimezil, *Drevna*, 260). On these functions of Janus: C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*, 230.

[391] J. Marcadé, *Hermès*, 606, 607 – Fig. 11; C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*, 218, 219, 221, 222.

[392] G. Dumézil, *Gods*, 126-130.

[393] C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*, 194.

[394] *Janus* 2019, 2.1; 2.2; 5.1; 5.2.; 5.3; Ž. Dimezil, *Drevna*, 259, 262; C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*, 229.

[395] R. Taylor, *Watching*, 11, 12.

These relations are even more explicitly reflected in another category of Luristan bronzes - the **openwork rings** and **cheekpieces** in the form of a wheel (B28). We have seen that this group of objects contains all the mentioned elements, but organized in a somewhat different composition. The **circle** (sky and time) is represented here by the clearly depicted ring or wheel (the latter also equipped with several spokes and a shaft opening), whereby, in some cases, the anthropomorphic character is not placed **inside the circle** (as in the standards), but is **equated i.e. fused with it**, that is, **he himself builds the ring or wheel with his own body**. If these two objects represent the **sky** and **time**, then, in this case, the anthropomorphization of the wheel can be understood as an image of the **God-Sky** and the **God-Time**.

The direct corporeal **equation of the Italic Janus with time** is reflected through the old statue (perhaps xoanon) that was located in one of his temples, which **with the fingers of the right hand showed the number 300, and with those of the left - 65** (the sum of the two numbers = days in the solar year).[396] Such an evocation of the year through the hands also points to their identification with the two halves of the sky according to which it is monitored and measured. This is a reason to include in these relations the **mythical character with hands in the form of zoomorphic protomes**, present on some types of standards (E17). According to our analyses, he represents the **two tendencies** of the sky and of the celestial cycles and the **two aspects** of the god of the sky and of time. One of his hands represents and leads the **progressive half of the temporal cycle** (from morning to noon and from spring to summer), while the other - the **regressive** one (from evening to night and from autumn to winter). On the openwork rings shown, this dual zoomorphic component is present through the **two animals** that make up the wheel with their bodies (B28: 1, 4) or are laying or standing on it (B28: 2, 3, 6 – 10). As in the standards, they are again placed symmetrically, to the left and right of the central character and, it seems, are still under his control.

The two faces of Janus and his patronage of time, reduced to the level of human life, take on the character of **personifications of youth and old age, growth and aging**, and ultimately also of **birth and death**.[397] In the "Eastern Mediterranean Janus" this aspect can be percieved through the character masked with a bifacial mask from the procession in Philadelphia which was being held at the same time as the one in honor of the Roman Janus - at the beginning of the month (January), but also of the year.[398] In the other Eastern Mediterranean examples, these complementary aspects of time could have been encoded through the combining in the bifacial representations of the **young and old male face** (G20: 8, 9; G21: 7).[399] These indicated aspects correspond to the iconography of the plaque from Cincinnati and the several standards where **two busts (of young people) emerge from the shoulders of the main character (an old man with a beard)** within the frames of compositions that probably represent Zurvān with his two sons (F2; F26; F28).

The Nordic **Heimdallr**, who is associated with the edges of time, corresponds quite well to these aspects.[400] The situation is similar with the Mesopotamian two-faced **Usmu**, who occupied a prominent place in the New Year rituals connected to the death and rebirth of the deity with whom the king was equated (G17; G18).[401] The characters with two faces are associated with the New Year rituals in which an important place was occupied by the sacrifices aimed at the **rebirth of the king**, which, in turn, was a precondition for the prosperity of the community. According to some interpretations, in some cases it was a ritual mask that the king wore during these rituals which was supposed to symbolize both the old and the new reborn god with

[396] *Janus* 2019, 2.1; 3; Ž. Dimezil, *Drevna*, 262 (ancient poets and thinkers turned this god into the "god of the year"); R. Taylor, *Watching*, 36; assumptions about the analogous position of the hands and fingers on the statuette of the Etruscan Culsans from Cortona: *Culsans* 2019.
[397] *Janus* 2019, 2.2.
[398] A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 374.
[399] C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*.
[400] G. Dumézil, *Gods*, 126, 127.
[401] C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*, 194-197, analogous Middle Eastern examples 200, 202, 204, 243.

whom he identified.[402] Of the Slavic examples, such a character is best reflected by the tubular **bone object from Wolin**, which depicts 12 human heads (G42: 9). Their number certainly alludes to the calendrical i.e. annual aspect of the supreme god, who on such objects was usually depicted with 4 faces, which would correspond to the indicated calendrical aspects of Janus.

Janus also bears the characteristics of the **eternal god**, portrayed as "the **father of Aion** or **Aion's very self**".[403] According to this feature, he comes close to the god Zurvān.

Within the frames of ancient Iranian culture, **Zurvān is the eminent personalization of time**, a deity who embodies almost all its aspects. First, his very name means *Time*, whereby the following two epithets defining his key forms: *zrvan-akarana* as boundless (beginningless and infinite) Time and *zrvan - darəγōö-χuaδāta* as "Zurvān of the long Dominion" (Time whose autonomous sway lasts for a long time).[404] The second aspect is manifested through the **personalized categories Spihr** and **Vāy**, which can be considered as epiphanies i.e. identities of Zurvān.[405] In the **Dēnkart** it is said that the **name of the Spirit Vāy** is "the **Wheel**, that is the **firmament**, and it is also called Spahr".[406] One of the above mentioned tetrads of Zurvān also includes categories related to time - Infinite Zurvān, Zurvān of the long Dominion, the Course of Fate, and the Ideal Year, whereby the last one appears to "be the ‘manifestation’ of Zurvân of the long Dominion, just as the material creation is the ‘manifestation’ of finite Space".[407]

In the **Dēnkart**, the **Wheel** i.e. the **firmament**, evidently understood in their dynamic i.e. temporal dimension, are placed at the **very beginning of the creation of all other cosmic elements**, obviously as their inevitable precondition: "From the Wheel (the firmament), through the Creator’s fashioning, is derived becoming, the hot and the moist, the first origin of material creatures. From becoming, the hot and the moist, (comes) the movement of becoming, the four elements which are wind (air), fire, water, and earth. From the movement of becoming (comes) the settling of becoming, mixed forms. From the forms of the elements bodies are derived."[408] Before the attack of Ahriman, they were static - in a constant noon position.[409]

If we take into account the **identification of the Firmament i.e. the Wheel with Zurvān and his body**, then this relation can be taken as a paradigm in the interpretation of the iconography of the indicated **Luristan openwork rings and cheekpieces** (B28). In that context, the wheel would represent not only the sky or only time, but also the **entire material Cosmos**. Analogous to the referenced texts, the main character with an anthropomorphic or goat head could represent one of the two epiphanies of Zurvān. On the one hand it could be **Zurvān of the long Dominion** or even **Spihr** or **Vāy** as his specific epiphanies, because the body of this character is equated with the wheel itself.[410] On the other hand, it could also be **Zrvān akarana** because the head as his key part is nonetheless **outside of the wheel** i.e. **outside of the finite time** that it symbolizes. If we accept the latter interpretation, then the **character placed inside the wheel** would represent **Zurvān of the long Dominion**, **Spihr**, **Vāy** or even **Ohrmazd** and **Ahriman** because they, like him, are inserted within i.e. limited by the hoops of the wheel. The **paired and symmetrical zoomorphic and anthropomorphic elements** embedded into the hoop or placed above it could represent the **dual principles** (good – evil, progress – regress, light – darkness) personalized in the characters of Ohrmazd and Ahriman or some of their equivalents (for example, **Wisdom** as a positive and **Āz** as a negative principle). Also, they

[402] C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*, 194-200.
[403] A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 336, 337.
[404] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 57.
[405] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 126, 127.
[406] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 127, 146, 148, 378.
[407] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 134.
[408] (*Dēnkart*, Madan. 120. 22); according to R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 146.
[409] "Till the Aggressor came the Moon and Sun and stars stood still and did not move, and time ever passed in purity and it was always midday." (Greater Bundahishn. 29.12) according to R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 148.
[410] On Spihr as *ras* – "The Wheel"; “the Spirit Vāy whose name is the Wheel, that is the firmament (Spihr), and it is also called spahr”: (*Dēnkart*, Madan. 207.17; 205.18) according to R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 111, 112, 126, 127.

could be the "**goodly Spihr**" and the "**evil Spihr**".[411] In Zoroastrian traditions, the **firmament is divided into two aspects** i.e. into a good and evil half, represented through the **two garments of Spihr**, one as a symbol of the day and the other - of the night sky. Manifestations of this dichotomy are, on the one hand, the **constellations i.e. the zodiac**, whose predictable dynamics is a manifestation of **order and of the positive principle**, and on the other hand - the **planets** whose irregular motion was considered a manifestation of the **negative principle**.[412] The inside of some of the indicated Luristan objects is modeled in the form of a wheel which is divided into **6 sections** by spokes (B28: 1, 4). Such a division could be put in relation to the analogous **division of the sky into 6 sections** or with the **six creations realized in 6 seasons** ("six gāsānbār seasons").[413]

The same concept can also be identified on the Luristan **"idols with protomes"**, in the arrangement formed in their upper half composed of **one central anthropomorphic character (with two faces) and a pair of symmetrical animal protomes that he holds in his hands, and which form a circle around him** (G10; G11).

According to R. C. Zaehner, the **concept of Zurvān as time**, finite and infinite, from which all other things in the Universe originate, in Iranian religions (primarily Zurvanism) came from outside, perhaps specifically from the **Hellenistic world** or, even more likely, **from India**, whereby for the latter as evidence he presents citations from the Upanishads dating from about 500 BCE.[414] The above presented interpretations of the anthropomorphic symbols of time on the Luristan bronzes would not go in favor of this concept, but would indicate its older age. Putting these facts in a broader global historical context imposes a completely different approach in the explanation of these traditions. According to him, the source of these traditions could be traced to some **common Indo-Aryan core** that existed before or during the differentiation of the ancient Indian and the ancient Iranian ethnocultural complex. It could be dated to the **second half of the 2nd millennium BCE**, or more precisely to the last centuries of the millennium, which would correspond to the oldest Luristan bronzes. After the split, each of the two cultures continued to develop this concept independently of each other, which in Iran will result in Zurvanism, while in India - in the mentioned Upanishads. Of course, it is not excluded that in later times this common core could have also motivated **secondary mutual influences between these cultures**. In this circle one may even include the Balkan manifestations of the same system represented by Greek philosophy and some still under-studied Balkan religious traditions (Pythagoras, Orphism), by the presence of Indo-Aryans in the Balkans or even of the Cimmerians in Asia Minor and the eastern Greek islands.

The greatest obstacle in accepting this hypothesis is the stereotype that *it is not possible, in such an early period, to have existed such a developed and sophisticated concept of time.*

j) Cosmos

According to the older sources and material finds, cosmological aspects are not explicitly expressed in the case of Janus. But, their existence, perhaps in the earlier (more esoteric and mystical) stages of veneration of this god, can nevertheless be sensed through some written sources. When the idea of the category of **chaos** arrived from Greece to Italy, the local intellectuals, who obviously had insight into the indicated archaic aspects of Janus, recognized this term precisely in his character (evidently due to his primordial status), and even in the **etymology of his theonym**.[415] In the writings of some ancient authors, this god is treated as

[411] "Spihr bestows (good things) on the material world. He who gives in abundance is callcd the goodly Spihr; and he who gives them sparingly is called the evil Spihr. The things bestowed reach (men) through Time who is Väy of the long Dominion, whether it be the instrument of Zurvān or of Ohrmazd" (R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 127, also see 244).
[412] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 123,124.
[413] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 135, 144.
[414] R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn*, 197, 198.
[415] *Janus* 2019, 1, footnotes 5 and 6; A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 336.

cosmos (**"Mundus"**),[416] and his emergence as a god (with the function of **patron of order in the cosmos and "the one who turns its axis"**), is described as a **transformation from some kind of amorphous sphere**.[417] This image too interferes best with the aforementioned Luristan objects in the form of an anthropomorphized wheel or ring (B28).

As an Iranian equivalent of the mentioned aspects of Janus, we can take the term **Spihr**, which does not simply denote the **starry sky**, but also the **finite space - the material Cosmos**.[418] R. C. Zaehner proposes an interpretation according to which "… Spihr, the body of Zurvān of the long Dominion, that is the Cosmos, is begotten by the Infinite Zurvän and born of his Fortune …".[419] Also included in these relations is **Vāy** as an equivalent of Zurvān and Spihr.[420]

If Janus was at some point the **embodiment of chaos**, that is, the **shapeless and undivided cosmos**, it means that he could have also participated in myths about the **creation of the world from the body of the first god i.e. the first man** (of the type of Purusha, Gayomard and Ymir). However, in the case of this Italic god, the **celestial aspects** are more pronounced (as we have seen related to time), placed **in opposition to the earth and the chthonic spheres**. This relation is present in a myth about his **agreement with Saturn** for some kind of division of domains in which, given the chthonic nature of Saturn, the celestial ones surely came to belong to Janus. This mythologem could be identified on the **Luristan "idols"** where, as opposed to the **two faces in the upper part** (the Luristan equivalent of Janus), **formed in the lower part is a head with zoomorphic features** (the Luristan equivalent of the chthonic Saturn) (G4: 2, 5; G11).

k) Sky

Some ancient sources, such as Varro, point to **Janus as a celestial god**.[421] The celestial aspect of Janus survived in the notions of him as *caelestis ianitor aulae* - "**gatekeeper of the heavenly mansion**", who has the ability **to watch both gates of the sky - the east and west one**. This is also supported by some analyses of his name which, in relation to Diana, could indicate the relation **Ianus – Dianus – Divianus**. A. B. Cook concludes that Janus (and his Old Balkan equivalent **Zan**) "was *ab origine* the divine Sky and nothing more". This would be in relation to **Dian** - the accusative form of the **deified sky of the Persians**.[422] There are indications that the **archways dedicated to Janus** are not his emblems and attributes but a **real copy (simulacrum) of the shining sky** with which he was in direct relation (G52: 4, 5, 8, 10, 11). There have been opinions that **he himself denotes the sky as a celestial vault**, which, among other things, is indicated by the fact that the Romans used the same word to denote the god (*Ianus*) and his arches (*ianus*). The construction of the **double gate of Janus** (*ianus Geminus*) and its covering with bronze was actually aimed at consistently completing the archaic mythical notions about the celestial vault made of bronze and supported by four pillars (G52: 10, 11).[423] Placed under the arch of Janus (ianus Geminus) was a **bronze statue** of him five cubits high, which looked east and west.[424]

A. Audin thinks that the arches of Janus and Vertumnus are the **gate of heaven** ("porte du ciel") through which the god of the Sun passes into the world of humans.[425] We think that it, at least in the

[416] (Serv. Verg. Aen. VII, 610; Macrob. Sat. I, 7, 18 - 28); A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 335, 336;
[417] (Ovid. Fast. I, 104).
[418] "Spihr, then, thus conceived, is not merely the starry firmament, but finite Space, in other words the material Cosmos" (R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 112).
[419] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 129.
[420] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 125-127.
[421] J. Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, Ch. XVI.
[422] *Janus* 2019, 2.2, footnote 41; A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 335-353; J. Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, Ch. XVI.
[423] A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 354-361, relations and identification of Janus with the "celestial roof": 364, 365.
[424] A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 365, 366; on the function of "gatekeeper": Ph. Ackerman, *The Oriental*, 223, 224.
[425] A. Audin, *Janus*, 88, 89.

beginning, represented the **celestial vault itself**, along which the movement of the sun and other dynamic processes in the sky take place. As an indirect argument in favor of this we can take some **coins** and **medallions from the time of Commodus** on which the figure i.e. the statue of the two-faced Janus is covered with a baldachin (with two, and in some places with 4 visible pillars), which would be an appropriate symbol of the celestial calotte (G52: 4, 5, 8).[426] E. Simon thinks that the presence of the baldachin is a consequence of the trend of its introduction in cultic representations, especially specific to the time of the Antonines. According to her, it does not have to refer to Janus as the god of doors, because on the depicted baldachin there are no doors that could be locked or unlocked.[427] This contradiction can be explained by the various interpretations of the arches above the Italic two-faced gods, as far back as the ancient period, which could differ in the various places of worship of these gods or the various phases of their cult. In any case, the comparative material does not exclude the celestial character of these elements.

Such a **dual celestial nature** and the role of overseer **(and controller) of the movement of the sun** (sunrise in the east and sunset in the west), could be represented on the standards not only through the **two faces of the central character** that occupies their pillar, but also through the **two protomes that he holds in his hands** - one as a symbol of the progressive half of the celestial circle, responsible for the birth and progression of the solar cycles, and the other - of the regressive half, responsible for their decline and regression (E1: 2, 4; E10; C16 – C18).

A passage by **Valerius Mesaala** that researchers of Janus include in their analyses fits well into these controlling aspects of the Luristan god: "He who makes and rules everything, keeping together with the force of the allcovering heaven the heavy nature of earth and water...".[428] The celestial nature of Janus is implicitly delineated in his relations to **time that takes place and is mirrored according to the sky** (in fact, the sky is materialized time).[429] A reflection of this function is **Iupiter Tigillus** who "like a Beam, he kept the world together and supported it", whereby the connection with Janus is established if we take into account that in many cases we are talking about two forms of one same god.[430]

On a **medallion of Commodus**, the emperor is depicted in the form of Janus (with two faces) who **holds in his hand an arch**, whereby personifications of the four seasons pass through it, moving towards the boy that symbolizes the new year (G53: 1, a variant with Jupiter, with one head – 2).[431] In this image, Janus is clearly depicted as "**the one who holds the sky**" and as "**the one who controls it**".[432] As we have seen, this mythical image can be identified on a type of bronze figurines from the "Villanova" culture (G53: 3, 4; E12: 6; see p. 337). Given their explicitness and belonging to the Iron Age cultures of the Apennine Peninsula, we can treat them as a **paradigm of the later Italic traditions** presented in the previous paragraphs.

Some of the mentioned functions can also be identified in **Heimdallr**, who we have seen is associated with the edges of space and time, standing **at the limits of the Earth, at the end of the Sky, at the bottom**

[426] A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 365 (Fig. 261-263).

[427] E. Simon, *Ianus*, 621.

[428] "He who makes and rules everything, keeping together with the force of the allcovering heaven the heavy nature of earth and water collapsing into the deep with the light nature of fire and wind escaping into the boundless high." (Valerius Messala augur's definition, apud Macrobius *Saturnalia* I, 9, 14, according to: *Janus* 2019, footnote 6). Taken from A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 335: "He who fashions all things and rules them too has linked together, on the one hand water and earth, heavy elements slipping downwards into the abyss, on the other hand fire and air, light elements escaping upwards into space, by means of the sky put round about them: thus the great potency of the sky has bound together two unlike forces".

[429] On the transformation of Janus from a sky god to a god of time: A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 336.

[430] A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 363-365.

[431] A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 371-373 (Fig. 276), a similar type of medallions of Antoninus Pius and of Commodus, depicting Jupiter with a thunderbolt – Fig. 277-279.

[432] On the deity who with his hands holds the sky and controls it: L. Parmly Brown, *The Cosmic Hands*.



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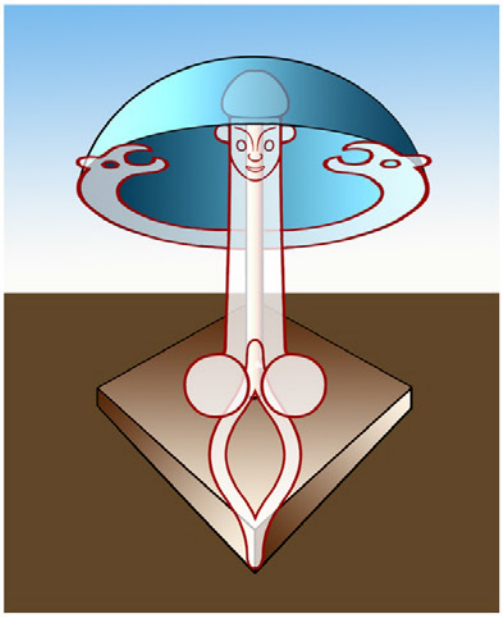
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end of the bridge that leads to the sky. In comparison to other Nordic gods, he is most directly associated with the sky.[433] Consistent with such a celestial character would be Dumézil's connection of this god with the **pre-Indian Dyauh**.[434]

With Heimdallr, and more specifically with the act of **his birth**, we can connect an iconographic arrangement from the Luristan standards. We are talking about the motif of a **human head depicted between the spread zoomorphic legs of some mythical birth-giving woman** (D29; D30: 6 – 11). On one specimen the head is depicted with **two mutually fused faces**, giving us the occasion to identify the newborn character it represents with the main two-faced god from the standards (G54: 1, 2). Based on other Luristan scenes, this birth-giving woman can be placed in relation with water or with the earth (G54: 3, 4; D23; see p. 275). The indicated composition coincides with G. Dumézil's reconstruction of the **myth of the birth of Heimdallr** (and of his pre-Vedic equivalent Dyauh) by some similar **aquatic goddess equated with the sea** and its **foamy waves represented as animals (horses, sheep, rams)**.[435] The latter element can be identified with the **zoomorphic legs of the birth-giving woman** which are in fact the most immediate causal agents of birth. Although on the Luristan standards the affiliation of these legs-protomes is not clearly defined, there are known examples (mainly Scythian and Early Slavic) where they are modeled in the form of similar horned or some other kind of animals (G54: 5, 10, 11). Closest to the indicated reconstruction would be the golden plaque from **Vettersfeld** (most probably Scythian in origin), depicting a **giant fish** (= water) **whose tail ends in the form of a pair of arched ram protomes**, which are evidently equivalent to the **spread zoomorphic legs of the mythical birth-giving woman** and perhaps to the **zoomorphized foamy waves of the Heimdallr myth** (G54: 6, 7).[436]

The most appropriate Iranian parallel for the celestial god is **Zurvān**, specifically through the category of **Spihr**, which is directly related to him. Although within the frames of the Zoroastrian and Zurvanite religious systems this term and character has a broader meaning, it **primarily denoted the firmament**, and then **secondarily the Cosmos** and some other categories. As R. C. Zaehner points out: "it [the firmament] is the seat of the stars and therefore controls the fate of man".[437] Spihr actually represents the body of Zurvān (Time) who, although in his essence is infinite and immaterial, through this hypostasis acquires embodiment which is limited i.e. defined in a spatial and temporal sense. Therefore, Spihr also bears meaning as the **embodiment of Infinite Time (Zurvān) into Finite Time understood as a form (Firmament)**. But, in some cases, it is also called **ras (Wheel)**, which expands the previous meaning of the sky also in its horizontal and more dynamic projection - as a **Celestial Circle** or **Celestial Wheel**. In the Greater Bundahishn it is said that "From Time the firmament was fashioned, the body of Zurvān of the long Dominion, the good destiny of the gods".[438]

l) Cosmic Axis

Janus' connection with the **Cosmic Axis** is present in some scholarly interpretations that point to his relations with the **oak** and some **other sacred tree**.[439] This aspect, and at the same time some kinds of relations with the Luristan standards, could be indicated by the representations of **priests from the collegium of the Salii** who are known to have venerated this god. We are talking about scenes from Roman coins where

[433] G. Dumézil, *Gods*, 126, 127, 130.
[434] G. Dumézil, *Gods*, 128.
[435] G. Dumézil, *Gods*, 129-140; J. Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, Ch. XVI.
[436] A more detailed interpretation of the object: Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 174, 175
[437] R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 88, 89.
[438] (Greater Bundahishn, 3.6); R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 111-113, citation: 333; И. Л. Крупник, *Зурванизм*, II.2 (56-62).
[439] J. Gagé, *Sur les origines*, 13, 17-24.

G54


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their representatives are accompanied by symbolic objects identified as **caducei**. In one case it is indeed a caduceus that the depicted character holds in his hand (H25: 2), but in the second case it is a different object (according to the interpretations a candelabrum) with a conical pedestal (somewhat similar to the Luristan standards) placed in front of him on the floor (H25: 3).[440] It is not superfluous to mention that Janus himself carried a support stick, which is indicated by Ovid,[441] and also by his representations on coins (G52: 4, 5, 8 compare with 9 - a gemstone).[442]

However, the most apparent piece of evidence for this relation are the **cult statues of Janus** and his Eastern Mediterranean, Balkan, Celtic and Slavic equivalents that are shaped in the form of a **pillar**, which in itself suggests the **Cosmic Pillar** as one of the variants of the Cosmic Axis. According to A. Audin, the genesis of the two-faced pillars in Mesopotamia can be traced through the pair of **cult pillars used as markers of sunrise and sunset**, which would first transform into **one pillar with two torsos** and then eventually merge into **one pillar with two faces looking in opposite directions**.[443]

On the **Luristan standards** this aspect is represented quite transparently - through their **central pillar with duplicated and, in some cases, multiplicated faces at the top**. In the "columnar figurines", despite the still clearly visible columnar shape, it is metamorphosed into a human figure which, due to its elongation, may actually represent the **anthropomorphized Cosmic Axis** embodied as a **macrocosmic giant** or some variant of **Atlas** (C26 – C28). In the "idols", the columnar shape is present in its purest form (G1 – G5), while in the "idols with protomes" it is supplemented by the pair of **arched protomes** which most probably symbolized the **celestial circle that rests on the Cosmic Axis** (depicted in human form) **and rotates around it** (G53: 6, 8; E10). In some variants of the latter type, brought to the fore is the **phallicity of the pillar** of the standards, which can also be understood as an image of the macrocosmic phallus, and at the same time, one of the epiphanies of the Cosmic Axis (D2; D3).

m) Solar aspects

The solar aspects of **Janus** are not particularly emphasized, despite the fact that, as we have seen, his character was directly related to the initial stages of temporal cycles. In this case the most relevant would be the **morning** (as the beginning of the day), the **first day of the year** (as the birth of the Sun God) and the key **transitional moments of the annual cycle** (summer and winter solstice when the increase or decline of the power of the sun begins).

This component is also appropriately represented on the standards. In our analyses we have identified several scenes in which the sun appears through several symbolic representations. In the "zoomorphic standards", we identified the presence of the **solar cycle** depicted through **various circular elements arranged on the body of the pair of animals standing upright on their hind legs**, starting from the tips of their tails, up to their horns (B19 – B22). We assumed that at the highest point of these standards, between the heads of the two animals, was also denoted the **culmination of the solar cycle** (noon, summer solstice) represented by the **anthropomorphized solar disk** i.e. the head of the Sun God. It was present through the discoid or openwork supplement of the pin that was inserted into the hollow pillar or through the rings formed between the legs of the animals (B45 – B47). In the "zoomorphic standards with a human head", the indicated element was integrated in these objects also on a material level, so that it was cast as their integral part (C1 – C5). The presence of the human head in the last two types of standards represents one of the two key scenes

[440] A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 377 – Fig. 283, 284.
[441] (*Qv.fast.* i. 177); according to A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 385.
[442] On the stick as a common feature of Janus and the Eastern double-faced gods: F. Kinal, *Der Ursprung*, 9.
[443] A. Audin, *Dianus*; *Janus* 2019, 2.3.2.

that evoke the myth of the cyclical existence of the divine Sun. The first one, which shows it **in the front paws** of the pair of animals and **between their wide-open muzzles**, can be interpreted in several ways: as an **apotheosis i.e. glorification** of the solar god; as an **attack** on him i.e. his **devourment**; as a moment in which he **passes** from the dominion of one animal, which realizes the progressive phase of the solar cycle, to the other one in charge of the regressive phase (C1: 2, 5). We identified the second scene on the "idols with protomes", as a portrayal of the **birth of the solar god** i.e. the emergence of his head between the spread legs of the birth-giving woman, depicted realistically (D17) or shaped in the form of zoomorphic protomes (D29 compare with D30), as a representation of the rising sun or the new beginning of the annual solar cycle.

Two arguments point to the relation between the **head depicted amid the paws and muzzles of the two animals** and the **bifacial character from the pillar of the standards**. One refers to the genesis of the latter of these characters, which appeared on these objects through the transformation of the former, so that the head from the "zoomorphic standards" and the "zoomorphic standards with a human head", in the "idols with protomes" was turned into a columnar figure with two faces. Thereby, its neck and body were formed from the front paws of the animals above which it was depicted, but under the influence of the "idols" or some other phallic objects (C1; C15). The second argument consists in the fact that both heads, the one between the paws of the animals and the one between the legs of the birth-giving woman, are **with two faces** i.e. are depicted on both sides of the standards.

n) Hat

We have seen that the central character from the standards is depicted almost regularly with a hat, **hemispherical** (in relation to the glans penis G2; G7), **with a sharp tip and a surrounding brim** (E21: 5 – 7) or in the form of a **cylinder** (E10; E16; E17). Although this attribute is not typical of Janus, it is common to his Eastern Mediterranean equivalents, specifically in the form of a **petasos** - also a wide-brimmed hat (G20: 3; G21: 4; G51: 9). According to I. Krauskopf, such a hat was also worn by the Etruscan Culsans (G29: 3).[444] A. B. Cook, referring to R. Eisler, points to the **celestial character of this element**, especially widespread in the Middle East, such as the **tiara of Zeus Oromasdes** or the **starry helmet of Men, Attis** or **Mithras**. Based on this, he concludes that the same meaning was also borne by the petasos of **ancient Greco-Roman mythical characters with two faces** such as **Hermes**, **Argos** or **Janus**.[445] F. Kinal treats the hat of the bifacial characters as one of the few components common to Janus and the two-faced gods from the Middle East.[446]

Such a cosmic character of the hat is represented in a most accentuated manner in the **Late Bronze Age ritual hats from Central Europe** made of gold sheets (E21: 2 – 4). Thereby, their **calotte** represents the **celestial dome** divided into several heavenly levels, indicated by the iconography of these objects organized in concentric circles, while the raised **pointed tip** interferes with the **Cosmic Axis** that extends through its center. These hats, according to their shape, interfere with three Luristan standards of the "columnar figurines" type, modeled in the form of a human figure that on its head wears an almost identical hat of such type (E21: 5 – 7; see p. 357). It is structured analogously - in concentric zones that extend gradually from its lower and peripheral part towards the center that at the same time also represents the highest point. This is another argument in favor of the **cosmological symbolism of the central character from the standards** and the identification of the upper part of his figure with the high zones of the universe.

[444] I. Krauskopf, *Culsans*, 156.
[445] R. Eisler, *Weltenmantel*; A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 382-386.
[446] F. Kinal, *Der Ursprung*, 9.

8. Cultural-historical interpretation of the similarities between Janus and the other mythical characters and deities included in the comparative study

M. Grimal was convinced that the origin of Janus, and more broadly - of the Italic bifrons, should be sought in the **East**, primarily in some very old cults from the territory of Syria. According to him, sometime between the 23rd and 13th centuries BCE, the Sumerian variants of these characters were restored through the Cappadocian and Hittite cylindrical seals, in which one could recognize some features of the later Eastern Mediterranean **Argos**. Then, with the mediation of the Etruscans, these traditions would reach the Apennine Peninsula. Other scholars also believe that Janus came to the Romans through the **mediation of the Etruscans**, specifically through their god **Anu**.[447] Yet, according to some ancient sources, Janus was brought to Italy by the **Perrhebians**, from across the Ionian Sea.[448] C. N. Deedes, accepting the theories of W. Ridgeway, in the genetic line of the Italic and of the Eastern Mediterranean Janus, also includes **Asia Minor**. Thereby, he gives the **Hittites** and **Phrygians** the role of **transmitters of the Babylonian templates of this god**, through the mediation of which he would cross to European soil. He also gives such a role to the **Pelasgians**, this time as transmitters of the **Cretan-Egyptian components of this character**. Then, through the Aegean, **with the mediation of the Pelasgians of Thessaly and Argolis, the Etruscans of Lydia, and the Mycenaeans**, this god would have reached Italy.[449]

It is indicative that the toponym **Argiletum**, as was named one of the places of worship of Janus in Rome, contains the name of **Argos** - one of his Eastern Mediterranean bifacial equivalents. Some kind of archaic relations between these two characters are also indicated by the ancient legends regarding this location. They tell us about the **murder of Argos**, after which, his tomb, sanctuary and sacred forest were built here, which is why the place was named after him.[450] Some kind of eastern relations are also pointed to by the similarity of this toponym with the lexeme *ἄργιλος*, which is associated with the Old Balkan and even Cimmerian traditions, whereby its religious meaning is indicated by the sacred caves along Lake Avernus at Cumae, whose inhabitants (supposedly Cimmerians) used this word to refer to their underground dwellings.[451]

The genesis of the two-faced Italic gods is sought by **E. Simon** in some motifs from **bronze cauldrons imported from the Orient**. As a rationale for this, she takes the handle from one such cauldron from **Vetulonia**, shaped in the form of a double bearded head, which in the early 7th century BCE could have inspired the imagination of the Etruscans (G22: 8).[452] Two elements do not go much in favor of this hypothesis. First of all, it is the fact (also apostrophized by the author herself) that the oldest known representations of the two-headed Etruscan Culsans are **not older than the 3rd century BCE** i.e. they are much later than these cauldrons. The second relates to her belief that a pictorial element present on an object imported from another distant culture, stimulating the "imagination" of its new users, **could evolve into a deity with a supreme status and cult**. Such a process would be more probable if, together with the object, also imported were the mythical-religious contents related to it, or, yet, if within the culture in which it found itself, there was already a mythical character i.e. deity with a similar appearance.

P. F. Bober thinks that the Celts formed their many-headed (in this case three-headed) god as a chthonic companion or equivalent of Cernunnos, based on the pictorial representations and legends of Geryon

[447] J. Gagé, *Sur les origines*, 4, 5, 31; A. Audin, *Janus*, 85.
[448] J. Gagé, *Sur les origines*, 6, 31.
[449] C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*, 220, 221, 227, 228, 242, 243; an analogous concept is also proposed by F. Kinal (F. Kinal, *Der Ursprung*).
[450] A. Audin, *Janus*, 63-66.
[451] In more detail about this: Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 885-888.
[452] E. Simon, *Ianus*, 619, 620.

that they gathered from Italic culture during their stay in Northern Italy. Thereby, he leaves open the question regarding the share in this process of the corresponding Greek templates.[453]

Although previous studies on the genesis of Janus and the other bifacial mythical characters from the Mediterranean have not included the Luristan standards, we think that it is precisely these objects that can make a significant contribution to the elucidation of this issue, especially if we also take into account the other iconographic relations between the Middle East and the Mediterranean, and even specifically the Apennine Peninsula, apostrophized in the previous chapters of this book. Of particular importance in this context is the presence of several specimens of Luristan standards deposited in sanctuaries in the Aegean region, which, by the way, depict the bifacial mythical character elaborated here (H14: 2, 3; see p. 618).

[453] P. F. Bober, *Cernunnos*, 42.

Chapter X

CHARACTER AND PURPOSE OF THE LURISTAN STANDARDS



X. CHARACTER AND PURPOSE OF THE LURISTAN STANDARDS

1. Previous theories on the character and purpose of the Luristan standards

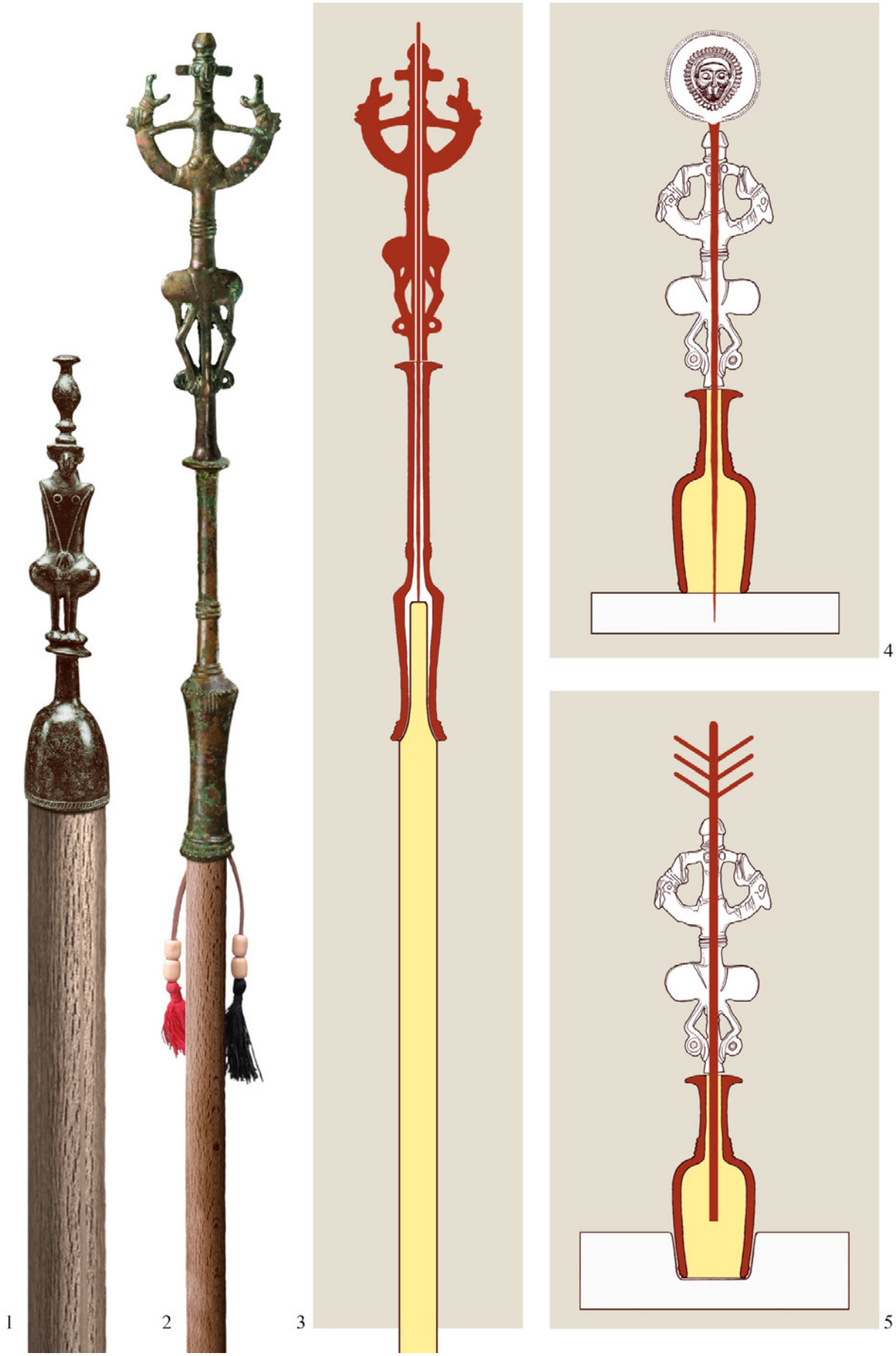
Among the previous researchers of the Luristan standards there is no disagreement about their general cultic i.e. symbolic character. But, despite this, various hypotheses have so far been put forward regarding the more specific purpose of these items. Part of them are somewhat elaborated in more detail and supported by certain arguments, while others are reduced to ordinary witty remarks or associations presented by one or two sentences or manifested only through the naming of these objects.[1]

The shape of the Luristan standards led **M. Rostovtzeff** to the conclusion that they stood vertically, as the **tops of some kind of objects** ("tops of implements"). As most probable to him seems the idea that they were standards, for which he cites as examples parallels from Egypt and Babylon, where, according to him, each deity had its own standard, the top of which was modeled in the form of its totem animal or symbol. He also points to specific Babylonian examples on which are present compositions that are broadly similar to those from the Luristan standards, with the heads of two heraldically oriented animals and a disc between them. He references similar Scythian standards as well, which depict an animal or a goddess who has dominion over two animals. Based on these observations, he concludes that the Luristan standards **followed the deceased during the funeral procession**, and then were **left in the grave** for his **protection from evil demons**. In the same context, he proposes another assumption according to which they might have belonged to **funeral chariots**. This author does not agree with the interpretation by R. Dussaud (see below) that they represented amulets, although he at the same time believes that their **apotropaic** i.e. protective character is obvious.[2]

[1] A summarized overview of these theories, with presented literature, but without more extensive explanations or citations: O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 139.

[2] "We may therefore suggest that the aigrette-like ornaments were tops of standards which accompanied the deceased during the funeral procession and were afterwards placed in the grave. The standards with their figures protected the deceased against the evil demons. However, another explantation may be suggested also. They might have belonged to funeral chariots." (M. Rostovtzeff, *Some Remarks*, 49).

H1



1 2 3 4 5

A similar interpretation is proposed by **S. Przeworski** who, based on the shape of the standards and the garniture that they consisted together with the other elements (the bottle-shaped support and the pin that connected them), assumes that they, with the help of the indicated pin inserted through them, were **fastened to some kind of wooden base**. He thinks that it is possible that such garnitures were affixed to the **sides of chariots**, with the purpose of winding around them the straps of the reins. Unlike the hypothesis of M. Rostovtzeff, in this one the character i.e. purpose of the chariots is not specified.[3] It seems that a similar interpretation was later proposed by **R. M. Carless**,[4] but also by **H. Frankfort**. The view of the latter author regarding the purpose of the Luristan standards (which he calls "pole tops") can be seen from the following sentences: "The group, like the pairs of antithetical animals, was, for instance, highly effective **as the finial of the four poles of the funerary car** on which a chief was buried. The composition of such splendid pieces need not be questioned too closely". Thereby, he supports such a view with analogous examples from the valley of the Kuban River, north of the Caucasus.[5]

R. Dussaud expresses criticism in regards to the above-presented hypotheses of M. Rostovtzeff.[6] He thinks that the introduction of chariots into them is not justified because it is based on chariots discovered in Cappadocia that differ from the finds from Luristan and Persia.[7] They are also not supported by the shape and dimensions of the elements that made up these garnitures.[8] He thinks that the Luristan standards are in fact **idols that were deposited in graves**,[9] whereby each deceased in the grave was accompanied by such an object placed behind his head, parallel to the axis of his body.[10]

C. Lancaster, within the frames of his mythological-astrological interpretations of the iconography of the Luristan standards, seems to give them a **talismanic character**, whereby he even calls them "talismans".[11] **Ph. Ackerman** also referred to these objects as **"talismans"**, believing that their function was **"to assure the favor of the gods"**. Thereby, she offers two possibilities for their use. When placed on the supports, they had to **stand vertically on some kind of flat surface**, while according to the second possibility - they would have been **carried in the hands for ritual purposes**, as an argument for which she mentions "some bronzes" ("as some of the bronzes actually show") which in the text are not precisely specified.[12]

In his overview of the theories related to the purpose of Luristan standards, **O. W. Muscarella** also cites the academic names of these objects, which in a certain way indicate the attitude of the researchers regarding their character and function. Among others, he also mentions **A. Godard**, who allegedly called them **"protectors of troops"**, which would literally mean **"protectors of armies"**.[13] But, in the works of A.

[3] "Therefore I presume that the fittings were affixed to the wooden base by means of a pin which passed through both the central trunk and the support. It is possible that they were affixed to the sides of the chariots, and served to wind the reins round." (S. Przeworski, *Luristan Bronzes*, 234, 259).

[4] R. M. Carless, Notes on Luristan Bronzes, *Apollo* 82/No 41. 1965, 31 (according to: O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 139).

[5] H. Frankfort, *The Art*, 344-348, citation 345.

[6] R. Dussaud, The Bronzes of Luristan. A: Types and History // A. U. Pope, *A Survey of Persian Art* I, 1938/1964, 258 (according to: O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 139); R. Dussaud, *Haches*, 258.

[7] "On a essayé souvent d'expliquer ces figures comme des ornements de chars, trouvés en Cappadoce. (...) Nous nous sommes laissé entraîner à dépasser le cadre des haches à douilles parce que les trouvailles du Louristan ou des autres régions de la Perse devaient être distinguées de celles de la région de Nihavand." (R. Dussaud, *Haches*, 258).

[8] "Cette pièce, complète avec son support en forme de bouteille, apporte la démonstration, grâce aux dimensions de ce dernier, que de tels objets n'étaient pas fixés, comme on l'a cru, sur un timon de char." (R. Dussaud, *Haches*, 268).

[9] "En réalité, ce sont des idoles qu'on déposait dans les tombes." (R. Dussaud, *Haches*, 258).

[10] "Chaque mort est accompagné dans la tombe par un de ces symboles, placé debout, dans l'axe du corps, derrière la tête." (R. Dussaud, *Haches*, 268). O. W. Muscarella classifies the interpretations of this author into the category "apotropaic talismans" (O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 139).

[11] C. Lancaster, *Luristan*, 94-98.

[12] Ph. Ackerman, *The Luristan*, 12; Ph. Ackerman, *A Luristan*, 3.

[13] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 139.

Godard, the standards are actually called **"protecteur de troupeaux"**, which in English should be translated as **"protector of the flocks"**.[14] Anyway, in the works of A. Godard we did not find some more articulate explication that would argue the proposed name and the corresponding function it would reflect.

In the works of some authors one may sense the connection of these objects with "**totem symbols**". One of them is **W. Nagel**,[15] while in the works of **H. Frankfort**, this term is more a reflection of his mental associations ("… and the effect recalls totem poles") than an articulated thesis aimed at the real function of these objects.[16]

H. Potratz thinks that the dimensions of the Luristan standards (whose height ranges from 10 to 20 cm) do not go in favor of their use as standards in the true sense of the word. He thinks that the bottle-shaped supports (which he calls „kleine Untersetzer in der Form von umgekehrten Süssweingläsem"), although hollow, provided some stability to these objects due to the thickness and weight of their walls.[17] According to him, one could imagine the presence of such a garniture in the **corners or niches of living spaces**, whose walls would thereby provide them with additional stability.[18] The high frequency of standards on the one hand and their small dimensions on the other, has led him to suggest that they fall into the category of **"small cult symbols"** ("kleine Kultsymbole"). According to him, these objects represented the main part of the **domestic altars present in every house** in the Luristan region, similar to the ones in which, later in Russia and other areas of the "Eastern Church", would stand domestic icons.[19]

P. R. S. Moorey uses the term "finial" only as a neutral name that does not imply in advance a specific function of the Luristan standards. Whatever their purpose, according to him, they certainly did not represent structural elements of some kind of more complex objects, but **items that, together with the supports, functioned separately** ("self-suficient"). He accepts the observations and assumptions of H. Potratz that the small scale of these artifacts did not allow for them to be used as „battle or processional standards". In support of this, he references Assyrian examples known based on depictions on reliefs, but also according to rare finds (some even discovered in Luristan) which, in their form and chronology, do not correspond to the Luristan standards. He considers plausible the thesis of H. Potratz that they were **"cult symbols, comparable to the icons of Christian Europe"**. He tries to get closer to the cultic character of these objects by comparing them with the similar in form small cult objects in the shape of zoomorphic heraldic representations found on the cylindrical seals of the "Mitannian style" from around 1500-1200 BCE. In these comparisons he also includes "household gods" such as the ***teraphim*** from the Old Testament, which, in addition to their religious character, also functioned as status symbols. He thinks that the last parallel could explain the presence of Luristan standards **as part of "grave furnishings"**.[20] P. R. S. Moorey has no doubt that the standards were combined with supports in the shape of a bottle or a cone and that they were mutually connected by bronze pins that passed through both objects. But, unlike H. Potratz, he thinks that the high proportions of these objects and their weight **did not allow for stable standing in a vertical position** of these garnitures, even if the pin were longer, so that its tip would be driven into the substrate i.e. the ground on which the standard stood. In order to ensure this stability, the **support**, according to him, had to be **partially dug into the ground** or **fitted onto some kind of peg or block**. The question is whether this stability could have been significantly enhanced by the two small rings formed at the bottom of some standards (at the tips of the tails

[14] A. Godard, *Bronzes*, 82-88; A. Godard, *The Art*, 49 (Fig. 19).

[15] W. Nagel, *Altorientalisches Kunsthandwerk*. Berlin, 1963, 56 (according to: O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 139).

[16] H. Frankfort, *The Art*, 345.

[17] H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 39.

[18] "Vielleicht darf man sich die Aufstellung solcher Ständerlinge zudem in Ecken oder Nischen von Wohnräumen vorstellen, wo eine zusätzliche Standfestigkeit durch die Wände gewährleistet war." (H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 39).

[19] "Die Stangenaufsätze sind also kleine Kultsymbole, deren Häufigkeit es nahe legt, sie als von Hausaltären Alt-Luristans stammend anzuschcn, so wie bei uns Mutter-Gottes-Bilder oder in Russland Ikonen entsprechend verwendet werden." (H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, 20); H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 39; H. Potratz, *Die Luristanbronzen*, 208.

[20] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 140-142; P. R. S. Moorey, *Ancient*, 29.

of the two animals) which were more likely intended for the **hanging of some kind of pendants or "streamers"**.[21]

E. de Waele considers the Luristan standards to be composite objects that are unique within the frames of the Middle East. Although their symbolic, votive and funerary character seems probable to him, he still thinks that their function continues to remain unresolved. He also agrees with the indicated opinion of H. Potratz that their small dimensions do not go in favor of the thesis on the use of these objects as standards intended for battles, military parades or religious processions. It seems more plausible to him that they were used as **individual, familial or tribal totems**,[22] and perhaps even as **insignia of the upper social classes**.[23] Analyzing the shape and proportions of the bronze supports of these objects, he indirectly also touches upon some aspects of their purpose as part of more complex garnitures. He, too, notes that some of these supports are so narrow and high that they could have not held stably the standards fitted onto them. Thereby, he evidently agrees with the assumptions of previous researchers that **with their lower part they were driven into the ground**. He also complements this conclusion by the assumption that, losing their original function, these objects may have later not been placed vertically at all, but were **deposited within graves in a lying position**.[24]

E. Haerinck and **B. Overlaet** think that the Luristan standards functioned as **"personal emblems" of the deceased**.[25] Because they derive such a character from the fact that the objects are supposedly discovered in the graves of warriors, it can be assumed that they also propose this interpretation in a military context - as **personal emblems of warriors**. We assume that, in turn, they base the military character of the graves on the fact that within them, in addition to the standards, there were also discovered weapons. The latter of the authors, prompted by such a combination with weapons, suggests the possibility that the standards were left **only in male graves**.[26] In the same study he emphasizes that "The shape of the supports indicates that they **were placed on top of something**. Their symmetry indicates that they were to be seen from front and back."[27] In another article, this author expresses the view that "… the idols that were found in tombs must be regarded as **personal emblems or sacred items of the deceased**. They were not votives, in the sense that votives are given to obtain a favour from the gods or spirits or to indicate the gratitude of the donor."[28]

L. vanden Berghe names the standards with the term **"funerary idol"**,[29] and treats them as "*Totenkult* objects",[30] which within the frames of German academic terminology means **"cult of the dead"**. Thereby, he considers these objects as **"an important part in the funerary cult"**.[31] He bases such a character on the discovery of the grave in Tattulban (and probably some other graves as well) in which,

[21] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 142.

[22] "Ces objets démontables du Luristan sont uniques et sans parallèles dans les arts du Moyen- Orient ancien. Ils avaient sans doute un caractère symbolique, votif ou funéraire, mais leur fonction exacte reste débattue. Ils sont bien trop petits pour avoir été utilisés comme étendards de batailles, de parades militaires ou de processions religieuses. L'hypothèse la plus vraisemblable est qu'il s'agissait de totems individuels, familiaux ou tribaux." (E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 109, 114).

[23] "D'autre part, les étendards et les idoles tubulaires peuvent être interprétés comme des totems ou des insignes d'appartenance à une classe sociale élevée." (E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 276).

[24] E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 120.

[25] "Comme on a découvert ces idoles dans des tombes de guerriers, on imagine qu'elles correspondaient à des sortes d'emblèmes personnels." (E. Haerinck, B. Overlaet, *Les montagnards*, 151).

[26] "The association in tombs of idols with armament, suggesting that they were only placed in male burials, could support his view." (B. Overlaet, *Luristan Bronzes*).

[27] B. Overlaet, *Luristan Bronzes*.

[28] B. Overlaet, *Čale Ğār*, 119.

[29] L. Vanden Berghe, *Excavations*, 265, 266.

[30] L. Vanden Berghe, *Luristan: Vorgeschichtliche Bronzekunst aus Iran.* Exhib. cat., Museum fur Vor- und Fruhgeschichte, Munich, 1981, 60 (according to: O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*,139).

[31] L. Vanden Berghe, *Excavations*, 268.

among other bronze objects and ceramic vessels, a standard of the type "idols with protomes" was found in situ, together with its bronze support. The object was placed next to the skeleton of the inhumed deceased who was laid on his left side, in a semi-crouched position (H10: 3, 7, 8).[32]

In determining the character and purpose of the Luristan standards, **O. W. Muscarella** starts from the fact that all five specimens of such objects, discovered during archeological excavations up to his time, originated from graves. Based on that, he gives the following conclusion: "Thus, pending future excavated evidence to the contrary, we may tentatively conclude (based on incomplete information) that finials and standards were deposited in tombs, but not necessarily in shrines."[33] From this statement one can sense a certain **preference for the funerary character** of these objects, although in the following paragraph he does not exclude the assumption "that horse bits and master-of-animal standards, inter alia, **were deposited in temples as well as tombs**", although it, according to him, is still not based on empirical facts but on eyewitness accounts.[34] However, the discovery of standards i.e. their supports, in a non-funerary context (Tang-i-Hamamlan canyon) leads him to the possibility that these object could have also been used as **functional items within settlements**, which is supported by the damages that were done to them even at the time of their use.[35]

2. Appearance and construction of the Luristan standards

The shape, appearance and iconography of the Luristan standards as well as the presence of two front sides clearly show that, regardless of their purpose, these objects were intended to stand **vertically, fitted on some kind of pole and to be seen from both sides (conditionally fom the front and back)**.[36] This is also indicated by their construction and the **vertical tunnel** that extends along their corpus (H1: 2, 3), while in the case of the "zoomorphic standards" - the two **small rings** and/or **tubular appendage** formed between the two symmetrical animals (H2: 3, 4, 7, 8). There are indications, in some cases also supported by specific examples, that most types of standards were **combined with bronze supports in the shape of a bottle** (H3: 1; H10: 8; H11: 2; H12: 1, 2) **or a cone** (the latter much rarer – H3: 6; E17: 6; B44: 6, 8). As exceptions to some extent one can consider the "idols" (G1 – G3) and the "columnar figurines" (C26 – C28) whose combination with such supports, at least according to our observations, has not yet been confirmed by examples. This coincides with the fact that these two types have a pronounced tubular and less profiled i.e. branched out form, which combined with a support **would be overshadowed by its much more complex contour**. In this context it is indicative that the "columnar figurines" are the only type of standards (perhaps part of the "standards - statuettes" as well) that do not have two front sides, but a real front and back side (C26 – C28; C33).

The joining of the standard with the support was executed with the help of some kind of **thin and elongated element** that was passed through the two objects (thin bar, stick, thicker pin). In the case of the "idols with protomes", "columnar figurines", "standards - statuettes", and some other types, this shaft was inserted through **the tunnel formed along the entire length of their corpus**, and then continued through the **hollow neck and corpus of the support** (H1: 1 – 4; H3: 5). In the older types of standards ("zoomorphic standards" and some "zoomorphic standards with a human head") this element was passed **through the two rings** formed at the front and hind legs of the two animals (H2: 3, 4, 8). It seems that in most of these standards the indicated shaft was concealed in a **thin tube formed of bent sheet metal** which had previously

[32] L. Vanden Berghe, *Excavations*, 265-268.
[33] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 138.
[34] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 138.
[35] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 138, 139; P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 21, 22.
[36] B. Overlaet, *Luristan Bronzes*.

been inserted into the support and, passing through the said rings, extended vertically to the upper edge of the standard (H2: 7). Several examples are known where the mentioned tube is preserved as an authentic part of the support (H2: 1, 2, 5, 6) and/or the standard (H2: 3, 4, 8).[37] The reasons for the existence of this tube can be sought on three levels - mechanical, visual and iconographical. The **mechanical** one would be motivated by the need to provide firmness, which implies that the shaft itself was not firm enough (bronze but thin, or made of organic material, most likely wood). The **visual level** would imply that it, according to its volume, material and color, did not fit into the global composition of the garniture, so it had to be covered i.e. concealed by a thicker bronze element. The **iconographical aspect**, in turn, would have been motivated by the need to emphasize the vertical pillar of the garniture, which we saw had an appropriate iconographic meaning as well, denoting the "Cosmic Axis" or the "Tree of Life". It seems that these bent tubes of sheet metal at some point of time began to be also made in the technique of casting, whereby their top was shaped in the form of a human head - an iconographic element that previously was present through the pins with a "decorative" head (H2: 11 compare with 3 and with G8; G9; B45; B46). We have put forward the assumption that precisely from these elements, in time, the standards of the type "idols" were formed (see pp. 457, 459).

The presence of the indicate tubes (of sheet metal, or cast) can be considered as *differentia specifica* for the "zoomorphic standards" and some "zoomorphic standards with a human head" because in the case of the "idols with protomes" and other types this element already exists cast as their integral part, hence its presence would not make any sense (H2: 9, 10). In fact, it derives that the hollow corpus of the latter standards was created so that this tube began to be cast monolithically, together with the standard, which would be another indication that the first two mentioned types are older than the others. According to the already mentioned assumptions, the function of the indicated **shaft** could have been performed by various **bronze pins with a "decorative" head** (H1: 4; H2: 7; H3: 1, 4, 5) whose tip could have even be driven into the substrate or some other carrier on which the garniture stood, which would ensure its greater stability (H1: 3 – 5).

However, the lack of a sufficient number of examples of such combinations and the questionable authenticity of some of the existing ones, have raised **doubts among some researchers**. The absence of such internal shafts in most standards is explained by some researchers by the reluctance of illegal diggers or antique dealers (the main suppliers of these objects) to collect these unattractive elements. Such a situation and the discovery of several standards *in situ*, without such shafts (H10: 3, 7, 8; H11: 1, 2, 7; H12: 1, 2), have led other researchers to assume that in the larger number of cases this function was performed by an **element made of organic materials** which over the course of centuries disintegrated into the earth. It was probably a **wooden stick** or **branch** which, judging by the iconographic analyzes of E. Porada, **could have ended in the form of some kind of floral motif** that would symbolize the "Tree of Life" (H1: 5; bronze versions of the same motif: B30: 5, 6 compare with B47: 8). According to our analyzes, this position would also correspond well to the pins whose upper part featured a depicted human head (H1: 4; H3: 5). This would particularly apply to the "zoomorphic standards" (H2: 7), which would have then served as a template for the casting of this head in later types (the "zoomorphic standards with a human head" and the "idols with protomes") together with the standard - as an integral part of it (H2: 9, 10).

As we have already noted, the **combining of standards with a support** is difficult to accept in regards to the **"idols"** (G1 – G3) and the **"columnar figurines"** (C26 – C28) because their small volume and insufficiently subdivided tubular contour would be completely overshadowed by the much more striking silhouette of the supports. But, on the other hand, the shape of these types, the tunnel-like opening along their corpus and the iconography close or identical to some of the other standards is a sufficient indicator that they were also combined with the same supports. A solution to this incompatibility can be found in the insertion

[37] Examples: E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 118 (Fig. 95), 119, 121 (Fig. 97); P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 167 (No. 209).


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into these types of standards of pins whose decorative head with its striking volume and iconography **would compensate for their marginality** (H3: 4; H12: 6). In fact, in such a garniture, these standards would in a sense function as an **"auxiliary element"** on which rests the dominant one, represented by the head of the decorative pin. At the iconographic level, these standards would bear the meaning of the **"Cosmic Axis"** (in the case of the "idols" in the form of a **pillar** or **personalized phallus**; H12: 6) or of an **"atlant"** (in the case of the "columnar figurines" and the "idols with protomes"; H3: 4, 5) on which rests the **sky** represented in the form of a **disk** (in the case of pins with a discoid head; H3: 4, 5) or in the form of a **zoomorphized ring** (in the case of pins with an openwork head composed of two arched protomes; H12: 6).

One specimen from the Louvre shows that the function of these garnitures could have been performed entirely by the **"decorative pins"** with an openwork, discoid or other head (often with iconography similar to the standards) by being implanted directly onto the bottle-shaped support, without the presence of a standard (H3: 2).[38] The reason for such a combination can be sought in the greater mobility, lesser weight or lower price of such garnitures.

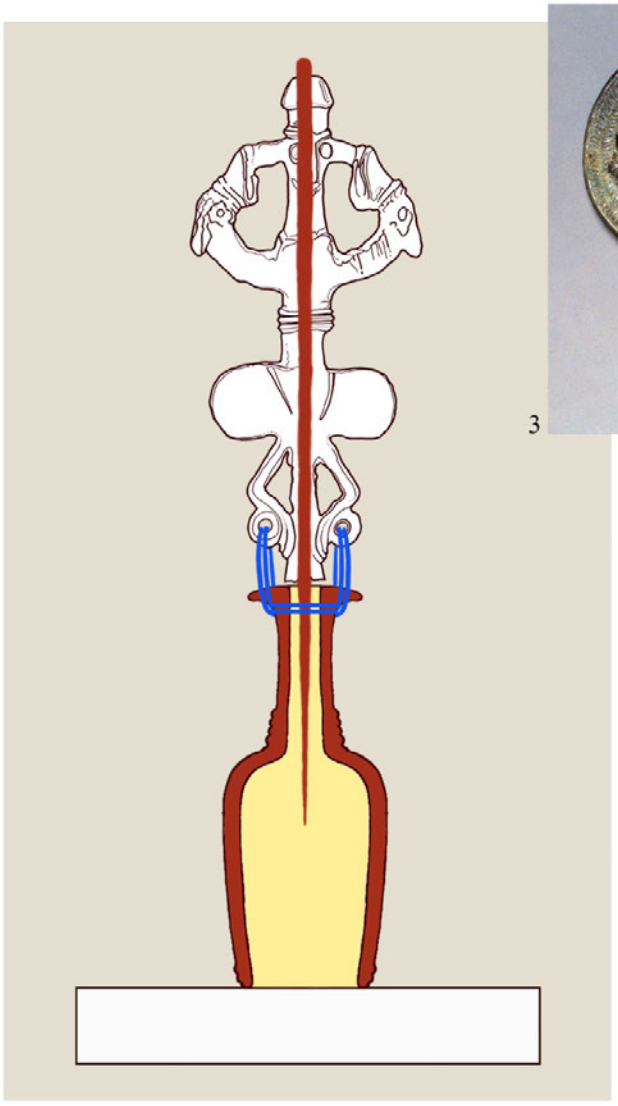
In many standards, of almost all types, there are **two small rings** at the bottom, usually formed by the **curved tips of the tails of the two animals** or their underdeveloped remnants (H1: 2 – 5; H2: 7, 9, 10; H3: 1). We have seen that, according to some researchers, they could have been used to **tie** (with some kind of string or band) **the standard to the support** (H4: 1) or to the substrate on which it or the whole garniture was placed (H4: 2). According to others, they were used for the **hanging of some kind of pendants or dangling elements** which, given the absence of such examples in specific finds, were probably made of organic materials (H4: 5). Indicative is the presence of analogous rings in **"decorative" pins** as well, especially in those with an openwork head (this time more often with one such ring than with two; H4: 3, 4), the purpose of which could be explained in the same two ways - for hanging of the mentioned dangling element or for fastening of the pin (to the standard, to the support or independently of them - to the clothes or the hair to which it was attached). The specimen that we present here certainly speaks in favor of such solutions (H12: 3).

The shape of the supports in the form of a bottle i.e their lower end, give the possibility for **two forms of fixation of these garnitures**. The straight line of the lower edge enables their **stable standing on a flat surface** (compacted earth, floor, platform, pedestal, table, altar, shelf, niche) even without the need for additional fixation to it (H2: 7). This is ensured by the width of the base of these objects and the thickness i.e. the weight of their walls, at the expense of the upper part which is thinner and lighter. But this cannot be also said for the **thinner supports** due to their significantly narrower base and higher proportions (H2: 6; H3: 5). These two shapes are perhaps an indicator of two different ways of fixation of the garnitures with standards - some intended for simple **placement on a flat surface** (without additional fixation; H2: 7), while others for **fitting on a wooden staff** whose upper end could be inserted quite successfully into the cavity of the support (H1: 2, 3). In support of this assumption we present a randomly selected example of a standard with a similar shape, but from the Roman period, for which there is no doubt that it was fitted on a pole (H3: 3). From a technical aspect, one cannot rule out the **insertion of some kind of elongated shaft into the wider supports as well**, with the condition that the diameter of their inner cavity would also require a significant increase in their thickness, and thus probably also in height (H1: 1). This would not correspond very well to the proportions of the standard itself as one would get a combination of a thick and high pole with a small or almost imperceptible standard at its top (H1: 1 compare with H5: 1), unless fitted above it was some kind of more impressive "decorative pin".

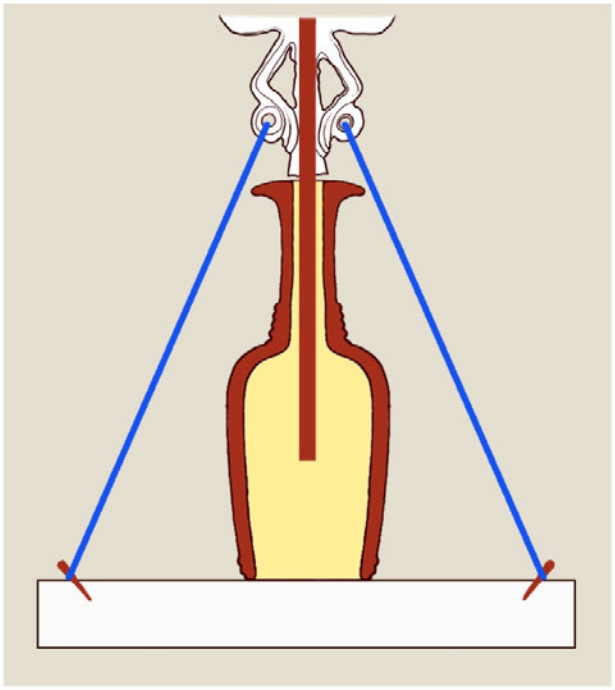
[38] A. Godard, *Bronzes*, 84, Pl. LI: 194.


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H4



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3. Archaeological contexts of the Luristan standards

a) Luristan standards and chariots

To date, no suitable archaeological evidence has been found in support of the mentioned assumptions about the use of Luristan standards as **chariot appendages**. Such hypotheses emerged in the early stages of the study of these objects when they were even thought to have originated in Asia Minor where, among other things, similar objects have been found that were thought to be parts of chariots.[39] As a possible indicator in support of this hypothesis one can take the **later ancient chariots from the Mediterranean** which were often decorated with bronze appendages of similar form, composed of a central anthropomorphic character and two symmetrical zoomorphic protomes (H5: 6, 7, 8).

However, in the meantime, a find has emerged which, while not in itself an argument in favor of this theory, nevertheless suggests caution in regards to its complete rejection. This represents a standard that belongs to a specific subtype of the group "idols with protomes" kept in the collection of the **Reza Abbasi Museum in Tehran** (H5: 9; H6: 5; standards with an analogous form E17). Through a low circular support it is fixed to the central carrier of a miniature bronze chariot, also attached to which is an element adapted for its pulling. The chariot has four wheels arranged on two axles, whereby above each of them is fixed a bronze vessel with a small body and a narrow and long neck.[40] This object shows that it was not unfamiliar for the Luristan standards to be used in **procedures involving movement**, which could have been realized or evoked in various ways - through their carrying in the hands of people who would move (perhaps in some kind of processions), including **on foot, mounted on horses** or **on chariots**.

b) Luristan standards and containers

There are examples where Luristan standards, or rather elements of them, are **incorporated into containers made of bronze sheet metal, used as handles** for which are animals standing upright on their hind legs, which are a common part of the "zoomorphic standards" and the "zoomorphic standards with a human head" (H7: 1 – 4, 6 compare with H2: 3, 4, 7, 8; H12: 1, 2; B1 – B3; B5 – B10). In the case of some containers it is evident that such a combination was performed in the past - at the time of their production, but there are also those for which there is suspicion of modern compilation realized by contemporary antiquities dealers, in order to increase the attractiveness of the object, and thus its price (H7: 3).[41] These arrangement have so far not been used in the process of determining the character i.e. purpose of the standards because it was thought that the indicated zoomorphic elements in them are not present in their authentic i.e. integral context. Disagreeing with this opinion, in the following paragraphs we will try to show the opposite.

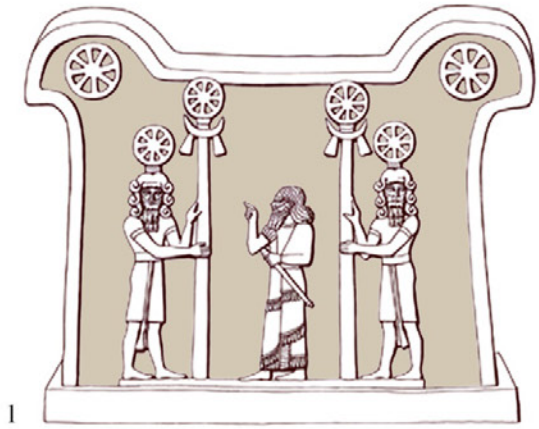
The reason for such combination can be sought at the **profane i.e. mechanical** or at the **sacral i.e. iconographic level**. Thereby, the first option could be due to a simple compilation performed by the maker of the container who joined the animals from the existing standard with the recipient **due to pragmatic or aesthetic reasons** i.e. because such a combination had seemed to him appropriate i.e. attractive or beautiful. This could have been accomplished by taking the two animals from an existing standard or by using such animals deliberately cast according to models that were normally used to cast "zoomorphic standards". According to the second option, the compilation could have also had an **iconographic i.e. mythical-symbolic**

[39] M. Rostovtzeff, *Some Remarks*, 49; S. Przeworski, *Luristan Bronzes*, 234, 259.

[40] We were unable to find any other information about the object, apart from its photograph and the location where it is being kept (*Bronze Votive* 2020).

[41] Examples: P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 144, 218, 276, 277 (Fig. 27: 522), 280, Pl. 82: No. 522; P. R. S. Moorey, *Towards*, 114; E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 98 (No. 114, Fig. 79, footnote 5); with two handles: P. R. S. Moorey (et al), *Ancient Bronzes*, 84 (No. 416); O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 141 – footnote 4; B. Overlaet, *L'histoire*, 30 (Fig. 5); R. Ghirshman, *The Art*, 78 (Fig. 103).

H5



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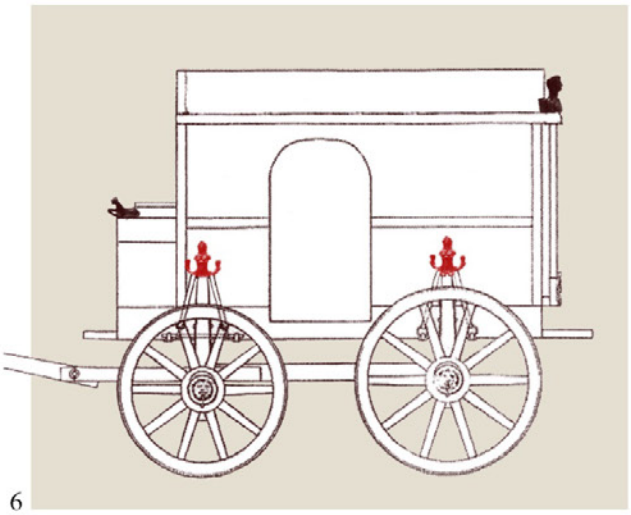
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reasoning, whereby the same two animals from the standards would have been placed on the container **in order to protect or magically ennoble the liquid that was kept therein**. Thereby, it could have been the **sacred drink** (for example, **soma** or **haoma**) which, according to Vedic and Iranian mythology, was created from the **juice of the plant of the same name**. It, in turn, according to the myths, grew on the **mythical mountain** (in the Rigvedic hymns - "the highest mountain", while in the Avesta - the mythical mountain Harā) which symbolizes the Cosmic Axis i.e. the "pillar of the sky" and the "navel of the earth".[42] In later Pahlavi texts, haoma is represented by **Hōm - the "tree of immortality"**, which was accompanied by various animals as classifiers of the three zones of the universe.[43]

In support of the second option speaks one of the few archaeologically documented contexts in which a **Luristan standard was discovered *in situ***. It represents a collective find composed of multiple bronze objects (swords, daggers, an axe, various bronze containers) that were deposited in the sanctuary of **Sangtarashan**, so that they were most likely buried together in a shared pit (for more details on the sanctuary see below) (H8: 4, 5, location of the find within the sanctuary: 2, 3). In the middle of this collective find, labeled as "Lot 6", also found was a "zoomorphic standard" (H9: 1) whose tubular pillar was inserted into a bronze situla (H7: 5) and together with it into another bronze container (H9: 10 – 12), all of them discovered in a lying position (H8: 4).[44]

We think that this arrangement indicates a ritual procedure in which the **standard, together with the bronze tube** on which it was fitted, was **inserted into the situla** in which, before or after, certain content was placed. Given the small height of the tubular pillar, it seems logical to us that it was inserted into the situla **fitted on a wooden stick**, because without it, the object would have fallen into the neck of the container and would have not been fully visible (H7: 5; H9: 10, 11). Based on the shape of the containers (especially those with long spouts - H9: 6, 7, 9, 12) there is a high probability that the content placed within them was a liquid, probably some kind of **sacred drink**, perhaps precisely the Iranian haoma or some equivalent of it. Taking into account the identification of the **pillar of the standards** with the **"Cosmic Tree"** or the **"Tree of Life"**, this procedure can be understood as an act of **consecration of the sacred drink** through its symbolic contextualization with the "Center of the Universe", where, according to mythical notions, the holy forces that had to consecrate the drink were most intensively present.[45] It is especially interesting that among the international collections of Luristan bronzes there are **bronze containers** (with handles in the form of such animals) whose shape is almost identical to the one from Sangtarashan (H7: 3, 4 compare with 5). In the first specimen, the animals are placed laterally from the neck and mouth of the container (H7: 3), while in the second one, they are above them, complementing the single arched handle - a position that is even closer to the container from Sangtarashan (H7: 4).[46] Looking at them together, it can be concluded that they represent two executions of the same symbolic arrangement, whereby in the first two cases the pair of animals from the standard, instead of being inserted into the neck of the container, were attached to its corpus i.e. integrated into its body and its iconography.

[42] Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 395, 397, with presented bibliography.

[43] Г. М. Бонгард-Левин, Э. А. Грантовский, *От Скифии*, 124; М. А. Васильев, *Язычество*, 121-124; Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 397.

[44] M. Malekzadeh et al, *Fouilles 2005-2006*, 101 (Lot 6), Pl. 13 – Pl. 19, Pl. 22a; Z. Hashemi, *The Bronze*; M. Malekzadeh et al, *Bronzes*; B. Overlaet, *Čale Ǧār*, 121; an almost identical situla: P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 53 (No. 85); an attempt for interpretation of the cultic i.e. ritual and symbolic context of the objects (the standard perhaps used in ritual processions): А. В. Мельченко, *Луристанская*, 195-197, 199, 200.

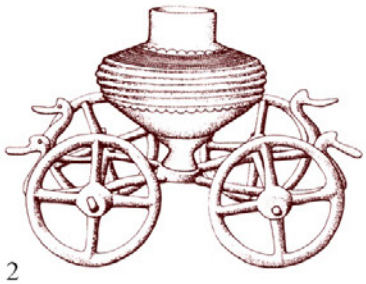
[45] M. Eliade, *The Sacred*, Chapter 1.

[46] The first object was on display in the "Exhibition of Persian Art at Burlington House London", in the year 1931 (*Persian* 1931, 14 – No. 21Z); the second one is collected in Cincinnati (R. Ghirshman, *The Art*, 78 – Fig. 103).

H6



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We think that we have put forward significant arguments to reconsider the view that the first container (H7: 3) is the result of a modern compilation in which a pair of animals taken from an authentic "zoomorphic standard" were attached as "handles" to an equally authentic Luristan bronze container.[47]

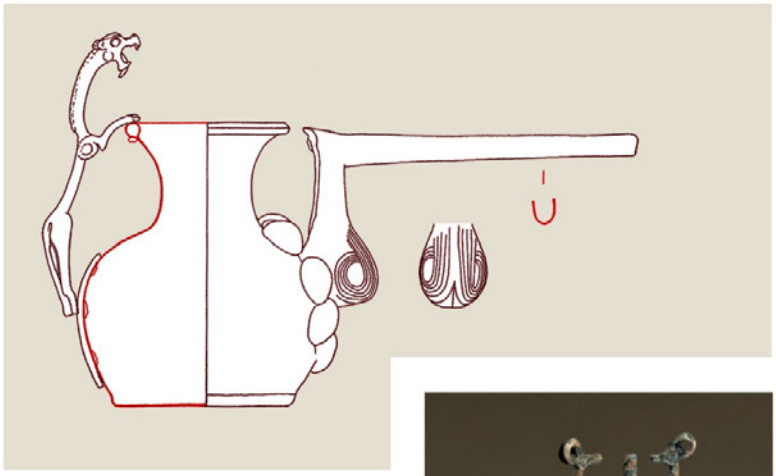
The acceptance of our proposals would indicate that the two animals from the above-mentioned Luristan containers with handles in the form of animals (H7: 1 – 4, 6), as well as the standard inserted into the situla from Sangtarashan (H7: 5), could be associated with the pair of **mythical animals - guardians of the "Cosmic Tree"**,[48] which in this case would also be **guardians of the sacred drink**. In the Rigvedic hymns this function is performed by **Gandharva** (later multiplied in the form of a special category of mythical characters), while in Iranian mythology it is **Gandarewa**. They represent hybrid zooanthropomorphic creatures which with a similar name (**Centaur** - *κένταυρος*) are also present in Greek mythology, and even later - in medieval apocryphal traditions (**Kitovras**), and, in the latter case, with a completely analogous function - as **guardian of the medicinal plant in Eden**.[49] Here it is important to remember that on the "zoomorphic standards", as well as on other Luristan bronzes (especially pins with a discoid head), the same animals are flanking a vertical pillar or phytomorphic motif for which we have seen symbolized precisely the "Tree of Life" or the "Cosmic Tree" (H7: 7, 8), whereby the latter with its axial symbolism is equivalent to the mythical mountain (see p. 129).

As iconographic parallels for the **combination of a container and a vertical pillar** we could mention numerous Iron Age pendants from the **Central Balkans** in which a jug with one handle is placed on top of a stylized plant (H7: 9, 10). They represent a variant of the so-called **"cluster pendants"**, at the basis of which stand the mythical notions about the sacred drink that is poured into a container and placed on top of the "Cosmic Tree" in order to, finding itself in the "Center of the Universe" and close to the sky, be ennobled by the holy powers that are present there.[50] A similar mythical image is also present among the Luristan bronzes, in this instance shaped as **pins with a head in the form of a vegatative fruit** (poppy pepper, pomegranate) which at the same time resembles a bowl (H7: 11, 12).[51] In this case, the undivided shaft of the pin can be associated more with the "Cosmic Pillar" with a container at the top.

How to explain the presence of the remaining items from the collective find from Sangtarashan? It is noteworthy that in the center of the pit, next to the standard placed in the two containers, were found **several more bronze vessels**, while all of them were **surrounded on four sides by weapons**, primarily several **swords** and **daggers**, but also an **axe** and a **pickaxe**. In addition, one sword was deposited under the containers with the standard, while another one was touching the large container (perhaps originally placed above it) (H8: 4, 5).[52] Such a positioning indicates that **in the focus of the ritual procedure were the containers** (H9: 6 – 9), **especially those with the standard** (H9: 11, 12), while the weapons were placed around them in order to **magically protect them from some kind of negative factors** - from all four sides, from below, and probably from above. This protection, ultimately, should have been aimed at the **liquid for which they were intended**, but in an indirect way because, given the lying position of the containers, it could have not been inside them during their burying. It seems quite probable that the **weapons encircled the containers also during the ritual** of preparation, libation or ritual consumption of the drink. It may have been carried by people in charge of "guarding" over the ritual, or it may have been just arranged around the space in which it took place, which is indicated by the discovery, at another location in the sanctuary, of two swords in

[47] B. Overlaet, *L'histoire*, 30 – Fig. 5; D. Delfino, *Um conjunto*, 124 – Fig. 4.
[48] On the guardians of the Cosmic Tree: А. В. Подосинов, *Символы*; К. А. Щедрина, *Две змеи*, 319, 325, 326.
[49] Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 406, 408, 409 (Г9: 1), 904 (Ж17: 1, 2), 905.
[50] Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 165 (Б8: 1-7, 12), 168 (Б10: 1-6), 188, 189, 389-401.
[51] On the examples: P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 188 (No. 299), 189, 190 (No. 302), Pl. 48: 299, 302.
[52] M. Malekzadeh et al, *Fouilles 2005-2006*, 101 – Lot 6, Pl. 13 – Pl. 19, Pl. 22a; Z. Hashemi, *The Bronze*; B. Overlaet, *Čale Ğār*, 121.

H7


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such a context - **with blades driven into the ground** (H8: 6).[53] The analogous magical function could have stood behind another combination found within the same ensemble ("Lot 6") - **a dagger discovered with its blade inserted inside a "goblet" type container** (H9: 4, 5).[54] The paradigms of such an aspiration for protection (with weapons) of the sacred drink can be sought in the mentioned mythical guardians of the sacred drink.[55]

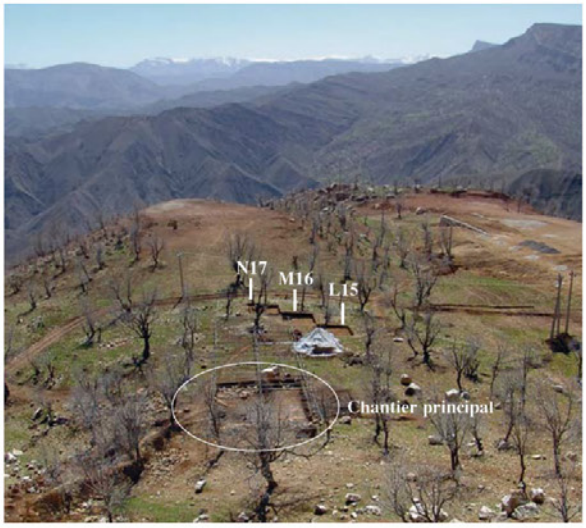
Soma was prepared from **the juice of some still debatable plant** (most likely *Ephedra*), which in turn was obtained by crushing and squeezing, and then also mixing with water, some kind of alcoholic beverage or other liquid.[56] As a potential indicator for the realization of the first of the mentioned procedures, we can take the discovery within the circle of the Sangtarashan sanctuary of a **miniature mortar and pestle**.[57] The presence within the same collective find of **four bronze contaners with a long spout** ("pitcher", also called "teapots with long spout and base pouch"; H9: 6, 7, 9, 12), and in the whole sanctuary of as many as 17 such vessels, may indicate a strong emphasis on the **rite of libation**, taking into account the view that these containers were used for such ritual procedures.[58] It seems possible that the **situla in which the standard was placed** (H7: 5; H9: 11) was probably intended for **acommodation of the juice from the sacred plant**, while the other vessels - for its mixing i.e. dilution with other liquids, libation and for pouring into cups from which the people present at the ritual would drink.

How to explain the burying of these objects together in a shared pit? The indicated ritual was probably performed once a year, and perhaps even less frequently, so in that context it would not be unlikely that after its completion, all the equipment would have been "sent" to the "other world" - the native place of the sacred drink. Behind the act of burying the equipment did not have to be just the aspiration to **distance** the drink and all the equipment related to it **from the world of people**, but also to **present it as a gift i.e. sacrifice to the gods** - an act often mentioned in the Rigvedic hymns in relation to soma. In this context, the **weapons** that accompanied the containers also acquire a specific purpose - **to protect the drink during its passage between the worlds**, which was considered particularly dangerous. The objects within the frames of "Lot 6", especially the swords, form a relatively regular quadrangular contour (H8: 4), which indicates the possibility that all objects, before their burying, were **placed in a wooden chest** with dimensions of about 50 cm.[59]

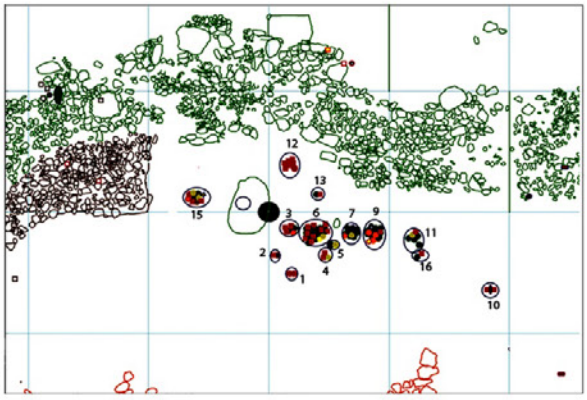
As a paradigm for the indicated cultic i.e. magical use of swords in this sanctuary, one can present the **Tibetan cult blades of the type kīla** i.e. **phurba**, which we discussed in one of the previous chapters (G16: 4, 6, 8 – 10; p. 477). Their blades (which in various cases are defined as a sword, dagger, spear or peg) during ritual procedures are driven into the ground due to specific cultic-magical goals: **stabilization** i.e. **fixation** of some element or phenomenon in a given place (for example laying the foundations of a building); **consecration** of certain land; **protection** of a certain plot i.e. space or process from supernatural negative factors through its **surrounding** by several kīlas (usually 10) driven into the ground and connected by a thread i.e. rope in a certain color.[60] These examples give very convincing paradigms for the presence of such a

[53] M. Malekzadeh et al, *Fouilles 2005-2006*, 127 (Pl. 5); B. Overlaet, *Čale Ğār*, 119 (Fig. 7).
[54] M. Malekzadeh et al, *Fouilles 2005-2006*, 101, 138 (Pl. 16: 169, 170).
[55] On the ritual driving of tools and weapons into the ground (including swords and knives) due to apotropaic and other ritual-magical reasons: Ю. И. Ожередов, *Ритуальное*.
[56] In more detail about this phase of crushing, squeezing and filtering of the sacred drink, with appropriate examples: Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 386-389.
[57] B. Overlaet, *Čale Ğār*, 121.
[58] M. Malekzadeh et al, *Fouilles 2005-2006*, 80, 81, 101; as vessels for libation: B. Overlaet, *Čale Ğār*, 121, 127; R. Ghirshman, *Invasions*, 3, 4; B. Goldman, *Luristan Pitchers*.
[59] There is information about a similar find discovered in Tang-i-Hamamlan, consisting of a wooden box with various Luristan bronzes, including "some of the so-called `Gilgamesh` finials, standards, …" (according to: P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 16, 21, 53, 84, 108, 291; O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 138, 139, 152, 156, 159, 189, 289, 290).
[60] R. Beer, *The Encyclopedia*, 246, 247; *Kīla* 2020.

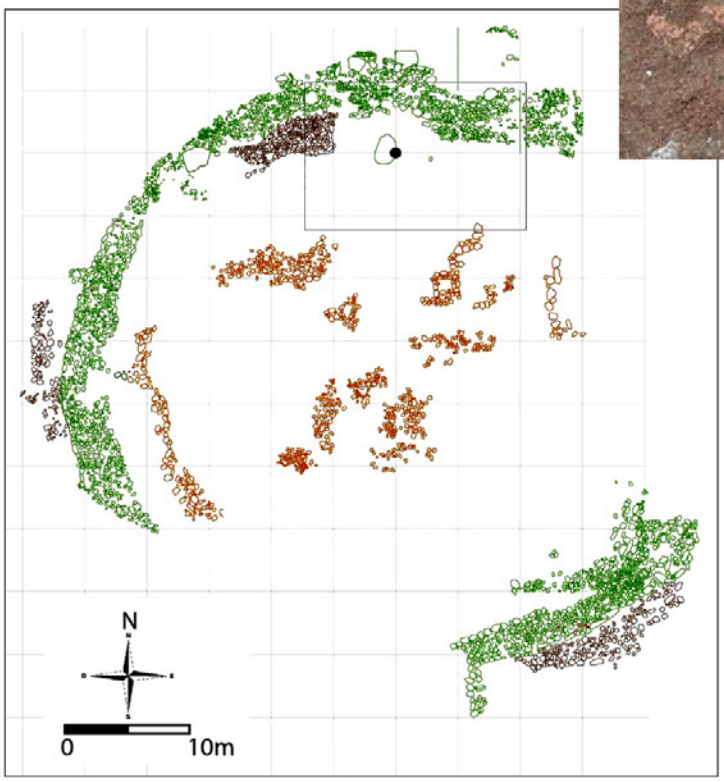
H8


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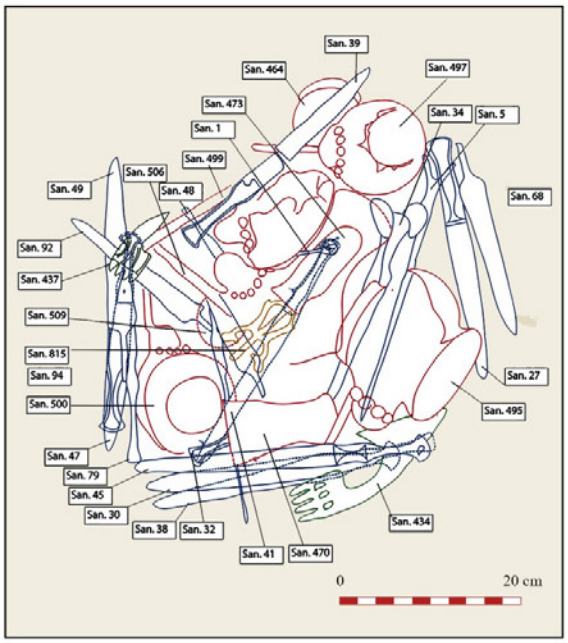
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San. 39
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San. 497
San. 473
San. 34
San. 5
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San. 49
San. 48
San. 68
San. 92
San. 437
San. 509
San. 815
San. 94
San. 27
San. 500
San. 495
San. 47
San. 79
San. 45
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San. 32
San. 434
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6

number of swords in the indicated "Lot 6", which during the performance of the ritual of consecration of the sacred drink, perhaps accompanied by an act of some kind of sacrifice, were probably **driven into the ground around the place where it was performed** (H8: 4 – 6). One of the ways of magical use of the kīla consisted in its **insertion in containers** filled with rice or other grains, or in containers with water, followed by its drinking for healing purposes.[61] This procedure coincides with the presence in the Sangtarashan sanctuary of a dagger placed inside a container (H9: 4, 5).

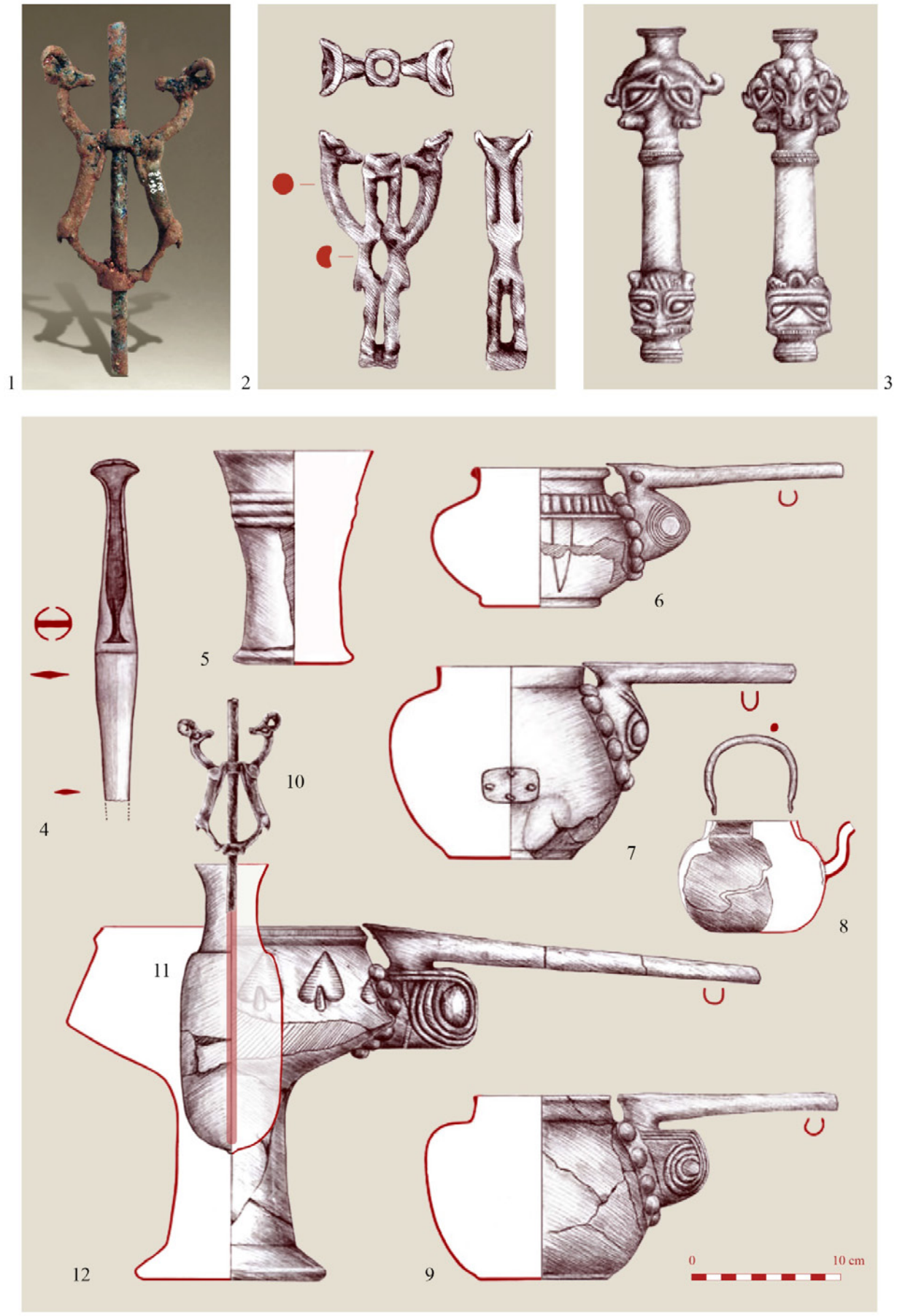
The connection between these objects and the swords from Sangtarashan is also indicated by some of their indirect iconographic relations. Here we have in mind the depiction of a **multi-headed deity** (Vajrakilaya) at the upper end of the hilt of the kīla and a **demonic creature** at the bottom (the dragon Makara), from whose wide-open mouth comes out the blade (G16: 4, 8, 10). In the previous chapters we pointed out the presence of an analogous arrangement on some **Luristan swords** as well (G16: 3, 5, 7; see p. 475). Quite indicative is the frequent presence of **two intertwined snakes** (nāgas) on the blade of the Tibetan kīlas (G16: 6, 9), especially considering the importance of this iconographic element in the tracing through time and space of cult objects similar to the Luristan standards (H23 – H30; see p. 624 and further).

The presented find from Sangtarashan is not the only indicator for the combination of Luristan standards with containers. The second such example is the already referenced **miniature chariot from the Reza Abbasi Museum in Tehran**, where the centrally placed standard is accompanied by a pair of bronze containers that with their elongated proportions even look a bit like the situla from Sangtarashan (H5: 9 compare with H7: 5).[62] As parallels for this find we can present numerous examples of **miniature bronze and ceramic chariots**, on the corpus of which there is a modeled container i.e. recipient (often in the form of a bird). The bronze specimens are particularly characteristic of the **Late Bronze Age and Iron Age cultures of Central Europe** (H6: 2, 3), the **Balkans** (H6: 7 – 9) and the **Apennine Peninsula** (H6: 1 – a ceramic specimen, 10), while more common in the **Aegean region** and the **Middle East** are the **ceramic versions** (H6: 4, 6).[63] As an example closest to the Luristan one (in a geographical, chronological and cultural sense) we can take the ceramic chariot with four containers from the Milwaukee Public Museum, which is associated with the **"Amlash" culture** and dates back to about 1000 years BCE (H6: 4). However, the Luristan chariot differs from all of them in that its central place is not occupied by the containers but by the standard which, in relation to the find from Sangtarashan (H9: 10 – 12), once again indicates the aspiration through it to place the containers and their contents in relationship to the "Center of the Universe".

This complex ritual object can also be associated with the **rituals of consecration of the sacred drink**. Namely, amidst the Vedic notions about the transport of soma between the cosmic zones, the carriage i.e. chariot appears as well. It is assumed that the "**pitcher full of honey" loaded in the chariot of the Ashvins** actually represented soma. According to some authors, the word *camasa* denotes the vehicle-container by which it was transported.[64] As part of the rules for performing the **soma sacrificial rite** it was required that the plant used for its preparation be brought to the place of sacrifice **in two carts** (*havirdhana*) which in the hymns are given a female character. They are presented as "two sisters", which can be justified by the fact that they had to **receive and carry the soma on and within themselves** (*cart = female womb*). These carts were placed parallel to the altar (*mahavedi*) under the libation object, just as the sun and the new moon rise in parallel in the sky at dawn. These guidelines seem to indicate the opposite direction of transport of the sacred drink - its **ascension by means of the "solar" and "lunar chariot"** from the earth and the world of people (the place of sacrifice) towards the sky and the gods. Judging by the mention of the rising of

[61] *Kīla* 2020; R. Beer, *The Encyclopedia*, 246, 247.
[62] *Bronze Votive* 2020.
[63] On these objects with presented bibliography: Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 24-26, 409, 411.
[64] P. V. Sharma, *Original*, 113 (rain as a "vessel" by which the soma descends from the sky), 114 (on the honey in the chariot of the Ashvins), 119 (camasa).

H9



the

sun and the new moon, one can detect the equation of the path of movement of the sacred drink with the trajectory of these celestial bodies.[65]

In one of the opening chapters of this monograph we presented **finds from the Apennine Peninsula**, synchronous to the Luristan bronzes, which by their character and context closely correspond to the find from Sangtarashan and the other above-presented Luristan containers with **handles resembling "zoomorphic standards"**. We are speaking about the category of **ceramic and bronze containers for liquid** ("Villanova culture" , 8th - 7th century BCE), above whose mouth theres is a fixed **openwork apendage supported by a pillar** (made of ceramic or bronze; A12: 1 – 7, 12, 13) which according to its iconography is quite close to the Luristan standards, especially to the "idols with protomes" (C16 – C19), but also to some Luristan pins with a circular openwork head (C20; A5: 5). Based on the shape of these containers and the fact that they are mainly discovered deposited in women's graves, it is thought that they were involved in some kind of rituals of libation (in our opinion perhaps also for sanctification of the liquid in them) performed by priestesses or women with a higher social status (see pp. 68, 69).[66] In addition to the several others, this is a further indicator of the existence of some kind of relations between Luristan and Italy.

c) Luristan standards and burials

This context of the Luristan standards is in fact the best evidenced one, and according to some scholars, the only one to which the facts point. It has been clearly confirmed and properly documented during the archaeological excavations of several burials. In grave number 4 in **Tattulban** it was found that such an object was deposited in the grave pit, in a lying position, in front of the skeleton of the deceased, specifically in the upper zone of his semi-crouched body (H10: 2 – 5, appearance of the standard: 7, 8, other finds: 1, 6, 9).[67] A similar arrangement was discovered in grave no. 6 in **Khatunban** (H12: 1, 2).[68] "Zoomorphic standards" were also found in the **Bard-i Bal** necropolis (near Pusht-i-Kuh), more precisely in graves number 17 and 68. The context of the standard, found together with a support, from grave number 17 (H11: 2, dating to Iron Age IB – IIA) is not so clearly defined because discovered in the interior (deeper than usual, with a stepped entrance) were the remains of at least 6 individuals, of which three men, one woman and two children (H11: 1 – 6).[69] The second standard from grave number 68 is similar but smaller than the previous one, also with a support that is partially preserved (H11: 7).[70]

The funerary context was actually sensed even before the discovery of the graves presented here, based on indirect information received from illegal excavators. During the inspection by **Y. Maleki** of an illegally excavated grave in **Chashmeh Mahi near Hulailan**, she found the following situation (the staging of which before her arrival cannot be ruled out): "In this grave a `master-of-animals` finial on its support had been placed near the head with a baked-clay tripod bowl. Another such vessel, but broken, lay at the feet. Near the waist was a bronze flange-hilted dagger and another tripod vessel".[71]

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[65] (*Rigveda* X.13); commentary: Т. Я. Елизаренкова, *Ригведа IX – X*, 422, 423; Т. Я. Елизаренкова, *О Соме*, 327, 333, 336. 337; M. Ježić, *R'gvedski*, 131, 172, 173, 182, 259; Ф. Б. Я. Кёйпер, *Труды*, 68, 69; Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 409, 411.

[66] B. Bagnasco Gianni, *Presenza*, 437; A. Rathje, *The Ambiguous*, 115, 116; S. Haynes, *Etruscan*, 22-24; T. Trocchi, *Ritual*, 789, 790; P. von Eles, *Le ore*, 153-155.

[67] E. Haerinck, B. Overlaet, *The Chr. of the Pusht-i Kuh*, 131 (Fig. 6: 23), 134; L. Vanden Berghe, *Excavations*, 264-268; B. Overlaet, *The Early*, 189, Fig. 156.

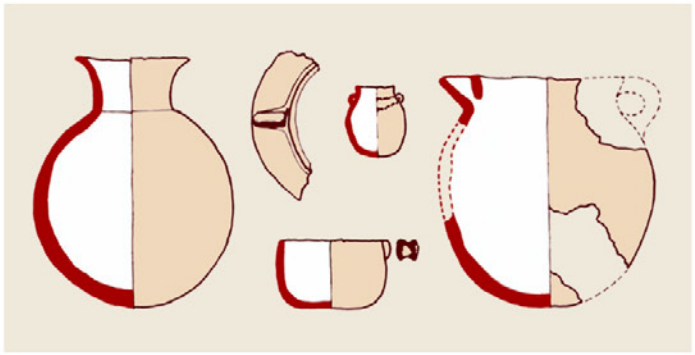
[68] E. Haerinck et al, *Finds*, 114, 115, 148 (Pl. 8).

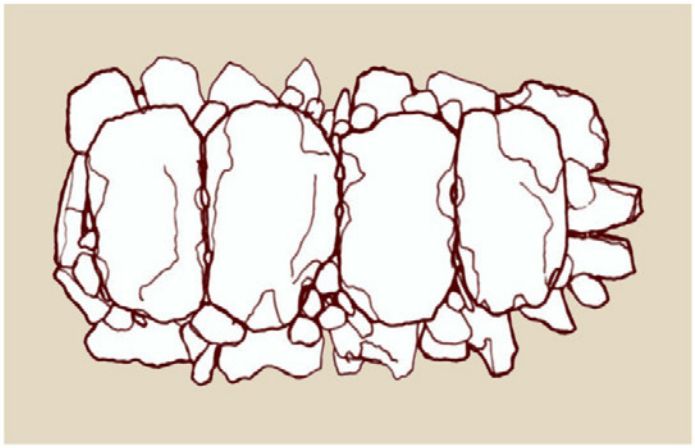
[69] B. Overlaet, *The Early*, 69 (Fig. 48), 70, 185 (Fig. 153: BB 17-50/51), 187, fig. 133-154, pl. 184; B. Overlaet, *The Chronology*, 12, 24 (Pl. 5), 25 (Pl. 6).

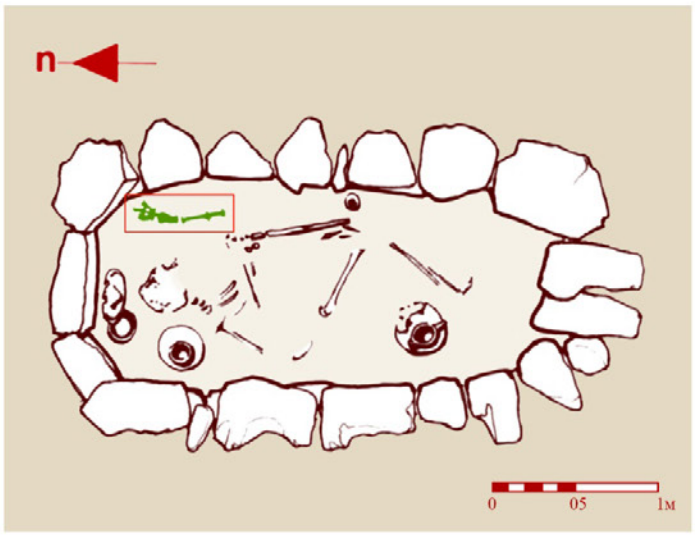
[70] B. Overlaet, *The Early*, 185 (Fig. 153: BB 68-19); B. Overlaet, The *Chronology*, 25 (Pl. 6: 11).

[71] Y. Maleki, Une fouille en Luristan, *Iranica Antiqua* vol. IV, 1964, pp. 1 ff., pl. III. 1-4. (cited according to: P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 143).

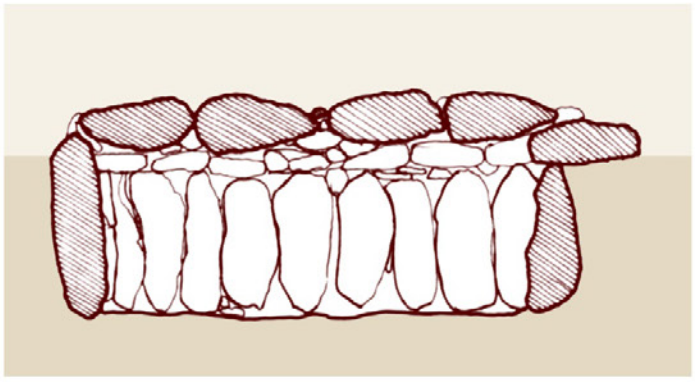
H10

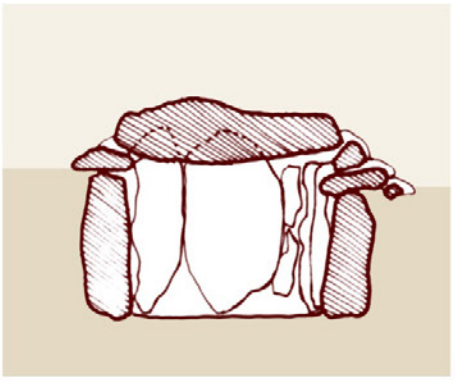

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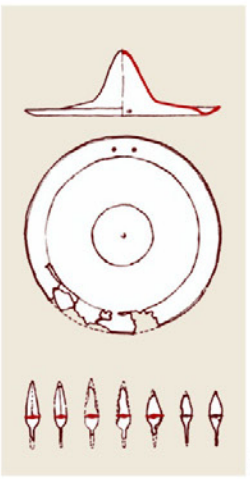

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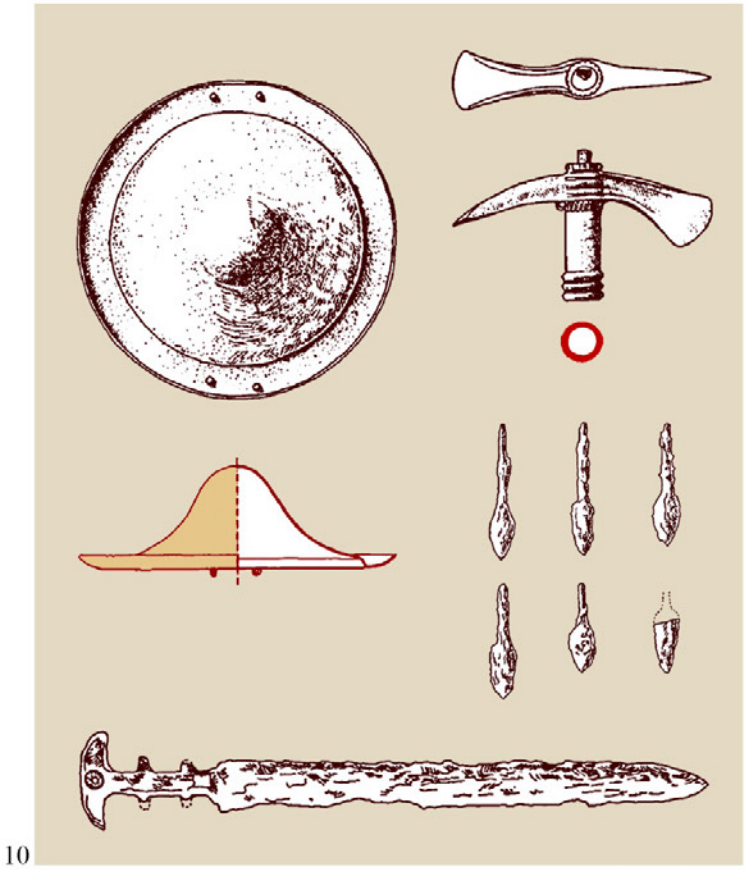

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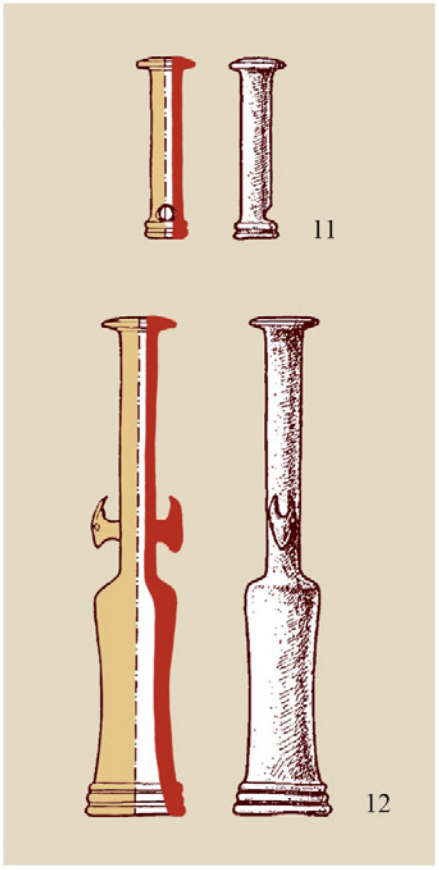

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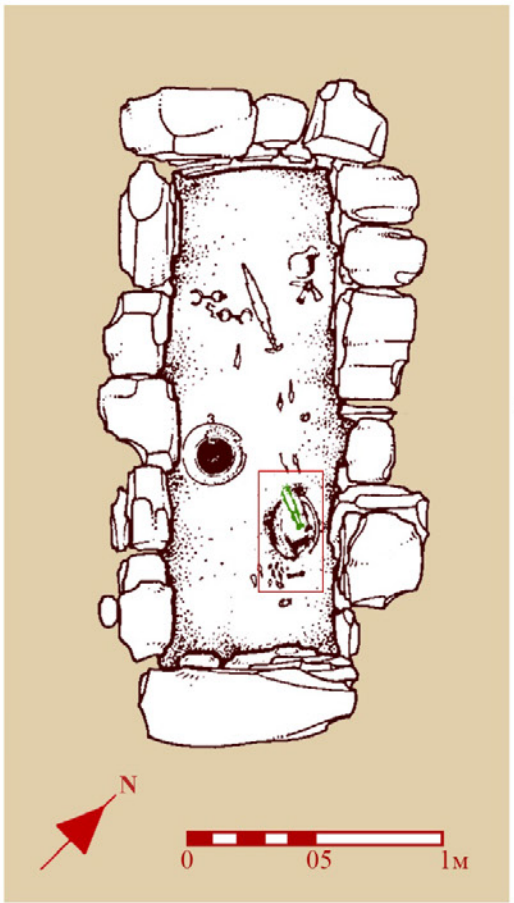


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If one accepts the view that the bronze bottle-shaped supports were combined with standards, then in this overview we can mention two more burials in which such objects had been found.

The first support was discovered in grave no. 80 from the necropolis at **Gul Khanan Murdah**, but without any traces of a standard (H10: 12 – 15). The absence of a standard in this intact grave is justified by its possible combination with a standard or some other kind of object made of non-durable material. Discovered in the same grave was also a short tubular support with an opening in the lower end, which, judging by its shape, was probably part of another support that seems to have been secondary adapted for some other purpose (H10: 11, 16).[72]

A bronze support of a somewhat different shape was also discovered in grave no. 53 from the **Chamahzi Mumah** necropolis (H11: 9 – 11). In this case it was combined with an iron statuette (found in a highly corroded condition) which appears to have depicted a human figure in a standing position, with a large head, one arm extended along the body and the other placed transversely. Although the statuette was found separately from the support, it is thought to have been attached to it, which is indicated by the presence of a corroded iron segment inside the latter, although not in the thin part where the standards are usually placed, but in the wide one which functions as a base (H11: 9, 11 compare with H2; H3). Such a combination of the support and the statuette leaves the impression of improvisation, specifically due to the disproportionality of the arrangement and especially due to its instability i.e. the inability to stand on a flat surface by itself (unless it was planted in it or even held in hand).[73]

In contrast to the find in **Tattulban**, the absence in these last two graves of skeletal remains in situ and the recorded position of the indicated objects within the grave do not allow for the drawing of conclusions regarding the character and purpose of the described supports and the profile of the deceased. Despite the inability of determination based on the osteological material, the biological and social status of the deceased, such an opportunity is offered by the deposition in both graves of the same objects that also coincide with the deposits from the grave in Tattulban. Namely, in addition to the several ceramic vessels, here we primarily have in mind the weapons which in the three graves are represented by a sword, shield and multiple arrows, and in Gul Khanan Murdah and Chamahzi Mumah by the bronze tool or weapon in the form of an axe-adze combination (H10: 6, 9 compare with 10 and with H11: 8).

Unfortunately, in the literature that was available to us we did not find exact facts regarding the sex and age of the deceased in whose graves these objects were placed. Based on the indicated deposits found in the grave from Tattulban (primarily the weapons H10: 6, 9), it is presumed that it was a deceased adult of male sex. If we accept that the aforementioned supports from Gul Khanan Murdah and Chamahzi Mumah were also an integral part of Luristan standards, then the ensembles in these two graves point to quite similar burial arrangements behind which there could have been a custom of placing standards in the graves of adult men with a pronounced status of warriors. However, the observation of these three finds in relation to Lot 6 from Santarashan i.e. the combination of a standard with vessels, swords and a similar axe (H8) may point to another possibility according to which the presence of standards and weapons in graves also had a cultic-magical purpose aimed at protecting the deceased (who was not necessarily a man or a warrior) and/or denoting his priestly rather than military status.

Summarizing the indicated facts and assumptions, we can conclude that the presence of these objects in the graves could have been motivated by **sociological reasons** i.e. the intention to denote the social status of the deceased (ruler, warrior, priest) or by **religious reasons** aimed at ensuring the **positive outcome of his posthumous fate**. In the latter case we have in mind the **successful journey to the other world**; **protection during that transition** from various negative factors; **separation of the soul from the body**; **rebirth** i.e. **reincarnation** of the soul into another body; **immortality** and so on (see further). If we accept the interpretations regarding the finds of Lot 6 from Santarashan, then it would not be excluded that the main component of these imagined actions was realized through the sacred drink deposited in the grave.

[72] E. Haerinck, B. Overlaet, *Djub-i Gauhar*, 154, 156, 168-170, Pl. 107, Pl. 126; B. Overlaet, The *Chronology*, 16.
[73] E. Haerinck, B. Overlaet, *Chamahzi Mumah*, 30, 31, Fig. 48, Fig. 49, Pl. 66.

The models we propose coincide with the assumptions of **R. Ghirshman**, which also point to the funerary purpose of the Luristan standards. According to him, the bifacial character from the "idols with protomes" depicted **Sraosha** - the god of justice who, together with **Mithra** and the goddess **Rashnu**, participated in the **trial of souls** as they crossed the **Chinvat Bridge**. This would be good justification for the depositing of such objects in Luristan graves.[74]

d) Domestic or public character of the Luristan standards

The question remains open whether the Luristan standards were primarily used **for funerary purposes** or were they objects with a symbolic, cultic, signifying or sacral-utilitarian nature used **outside the funerary spheres**, which in some cases were also deposited in graves. In support of the second option speaks the fact that certain standards show **fractures** or **other types of damage** that occurred even in the ancient past, indicating that, at least some of them, had a more specific purpose i.e. that they participated in some longer lasting i.e. constantly repeated dynamic actions.

We have to agree with the conclusion of previous researchers that the **small dimensions** of the Luristan standards (height mainly between 10 and 20 cm[75]) on the one hand, and their **high frequency** on the other, do not support the idea that they represented **exclusive objects** intended for some kind of **public events** of a **military** (parades, triumphs, battles), **social** and **religious character** (mass processions, rituals or other ceremonies) or even for their **placement in public buildings** (monumental palaces, temples or altars). The reason for this is that these objects with their small dimensions **would not have been well visible from a greater distance** i.e. they could not fulfill their signifying, symbolic and religious function within the frames of some event of a more massive character or in a space of larger dimensions. During some kind of battle or triumphant procession, based on them, it could not have been possible to easily and clearly perceive the affiliation of a given military unit, and within the frames of a ritual to identify the appropriate deity or religious meaning of the ceremony. The specific finds show that the Middle Eastern standards for public purposes (military, religious or other) had larger dimensions (H5: 1 – 4, an example associated with Luristan – 5).[76]

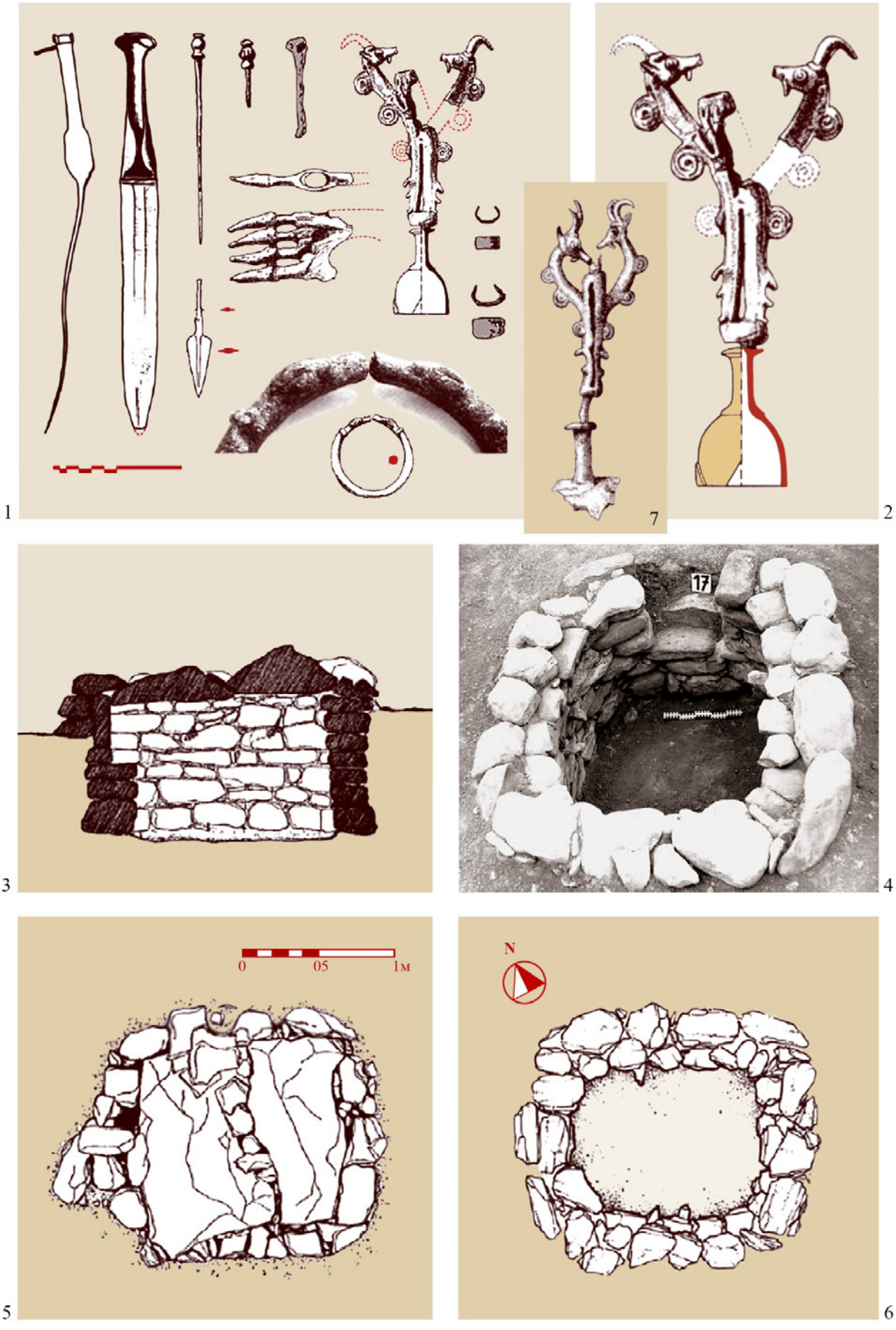
These facts significantly narrow the field for assumptions regarding the purpose of these objects to **spheres of a more intimate nature** that relate to the level of **family** and the **household**, specifically as personal items used by an **individual**, a particular **family** or **clan**. This is also supported by some archeological facts, although still in insufficient numbers and with an insufficient degree of accuracy.

Discovered at the site of **Baba Jan** were two standards of the type "idols", one of which is specific in that it has heads at both ends, while the other in its transversely channelled corpus (H12: 4, 5).[77] They were found in a building that probably had a residential character, which could eventually indicate the use of this type of objects as a kind of **"domestic idols"**. The discovery of Luristan standards i.e. supports for them, in the **Tang-i-Hamamlan canyon** (Tang-e Homāmlān), along with other bronze objects (some of them broken), although in the specific case indicates a depot for metal scrap, also goes in favor of the use of these object **in settlements**. The fact that part of the standards were damaged even at the time of their use shows that, at least some of them, had a more specific function[78] i.e. participated in some kind of dynamic activities.

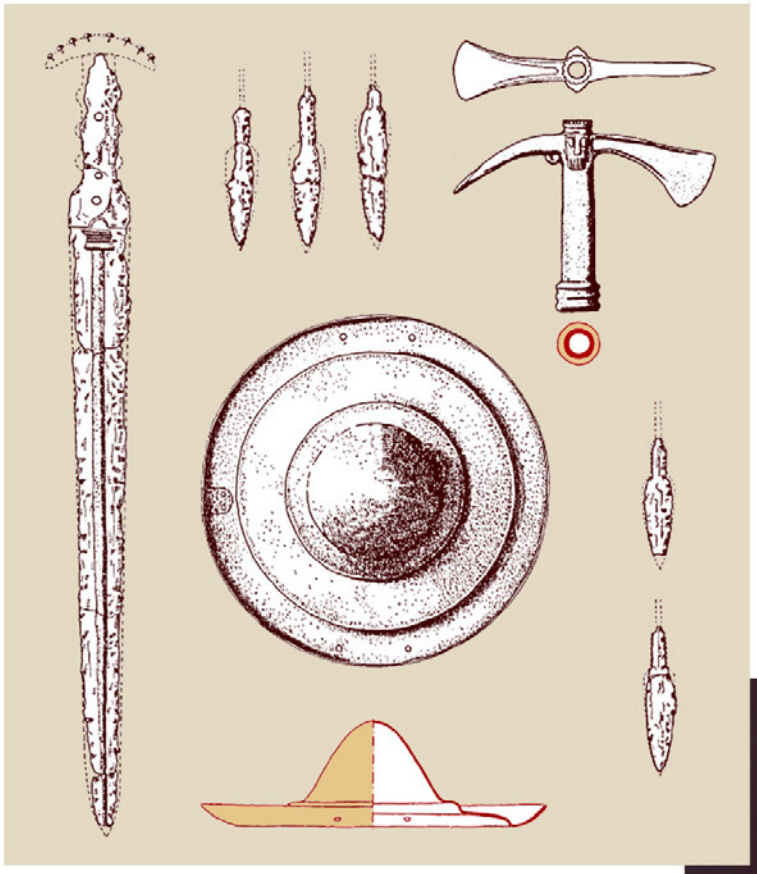
H. Thrane in one of his papers reports information obtained from illegal excavators about another collective find of various Luristan bronzes (including standards) **discovered in a non-funerary context**. It was discovered in 1957 in the already mentioned **Tang-i-Hamamlan** canyon where, during illegal

[74] R. Ghirshman, *The Art*, 44, 45.
[75] H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 39.
[76] T. Ornan, *Idols*, 95, 96 (Fig. 2), 107 (Fig. 13); Luristan examples: F. Sarre, *Altpersische*.
[77] C. Goff, *Excavations*, 38, 56 (Fig. 14: 26), 64; O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 137, 152; G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 118, 119 (No 244).
[78] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 138, 139.

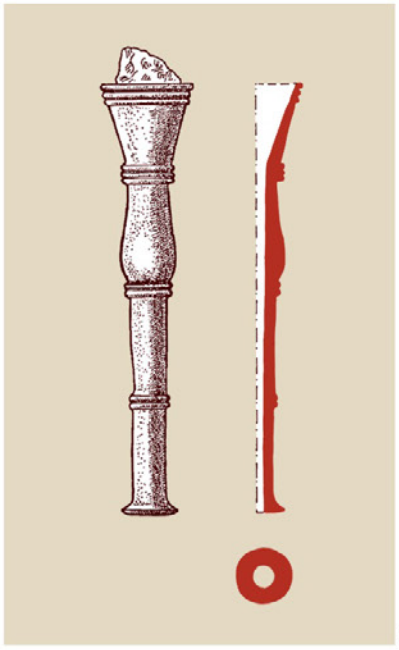
H11



H11



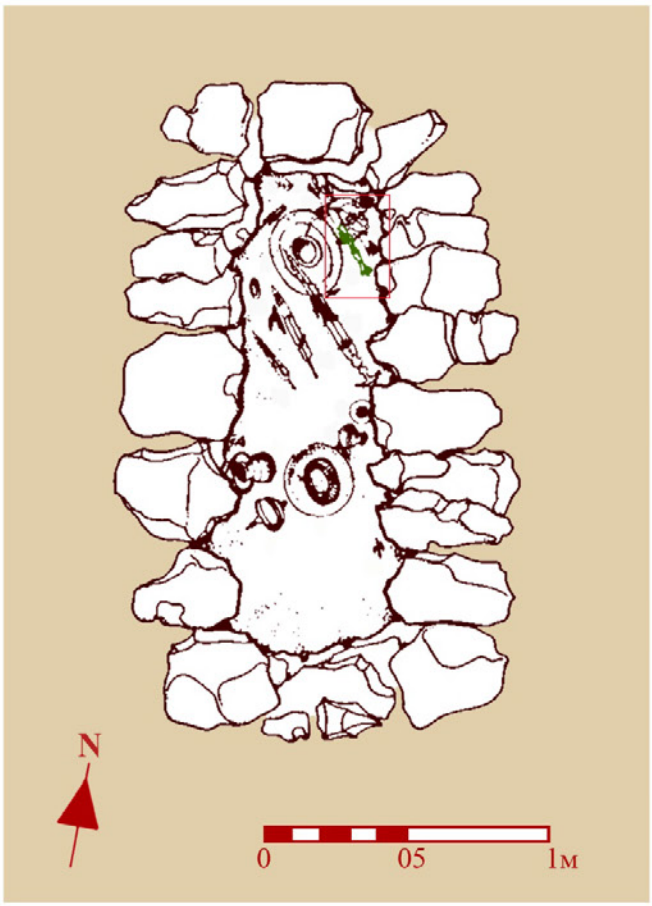
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H12



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excavations, a **stone building** was excavated in the corner of which was found a wooden box with various Luristan bronzes, among other things also "some of the so-called `Gilgamesh` finials, standards, …". Assumptions have been put forward that it could have been a **shrine** like the one in Surkh Dum.[79]

Mentioning the shrine of **Surkh Dum** (Sokhdom-i-Lori), it should be noted that although no standards have been found in it, they could be indirectly indicated by the presence of numerous **pins with a "decorative" head**, especially if one takes into account the hypothesis that these pins, together with the bottle-shaped supports, composed the garnitures whose main part was the standards (supposedly a real such garniture: H3: 1; hypothetical combinations: H1: 4; H2: 7; H3: 4, 5; H12: 6).[80] Acceptance of this opinion would lead to the assumption that, due to certain reasons (probably symbolic, cultic or magical), only the pins were left in the shrine, without the other two elements of these garnitures.

In one of the previous sub-chapters we presented in detail the archaeological context of a "zoomorphic standard" discovered at the site of **Sangtarashan** which, according to the results so far, functioned as a sanctuary with two phases of existence (H8; H9). During the first phase, dating to the Iron Age I - II, formed at the site was a circular structure of stones with a diameter of 55 meters (H8: 1, 3). Found within its frames were 16 compact deposits of finds, mainly composed of bronze weapons and vessels, probably buried in pits, which B. Overlaet interprets as *favissae* (H8: 2). Within the second phase, dating to the Iron Age II - III, atop the previous structure was formed a new one, with quadrangular contours, in which numerous deposits were also found, yet this time not concentrated in groups, but scattered throughout the entire surface.[81] Apart from the mentioned standard (H9: 1, 10), discovered at the site were also two more, one of which is of the type "zoomorphic standards", similar to the previous one (H9: 2), and the other of the type "idols", presented in more detail in the previous chapters, with three animal (probably bovine) heads at the upper end, and one or two at the bottom (probably leonine ones) (H9: 3).[82] Until the completion of our monograph, we did not have access to publications that would present the details and circumstances of discovery of the latter two standards.

e) Personal character of the Luristan standards (through the paradigm of the distaff)

We think that on this occasion we should explore the possibility that the Luristan standards also had the **status of personal items**, not only within the frames of the funerary ritual, but also as **part of the everyday equipment** i.e. **daily life of a particular individual**. The form and size of these items leave no room for assumptions about their eventual use as jewelry, even with an amuletic character. However, they give certain indications for their functioning as **personal utilitarian objects** which, in addition to their pragmatic function, also had a **symbolic and magical character**. We compensate the absence of specific archaeological facts that would lead in the direction of such a character with a hypothesis based on the comparative approach.

The dimensions and shape of the Luristan standards allow the assumption that they could have served as distaffs - **objects used by women in spinning**, specifically intended for the hanging of yarn (wool, flax, cotton, etc.) from which the fiber was then drawn out and twisted. Comparisons with such objects preserved in the modern folklore of various peoples in Europe and Asia, and above all from the Balkan Peninsula, show certain similarities with the standards at the level of form and dimensions. They represent elongated wooden objects whose top has two or three prongs (intended for the attachment of yarn), whereby the lateral ones are often curved in an arch or ring (H13: 1 – 5, 7, 9 – 11). Their corpus is shaped in the form of a staff,

[79] H. Thrane, Archaeological Investigations in Western Luristan: Preliminary Report o f the Second Danish Archaeological Expedition to Iran, *Acta Archaeologica* (Copenhagen) 35, 1964, 153, 156, 159 (according to: P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 16, 21; O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 138); B. Overlaet, *Čale Ğār*, 129.
[80] E. F. Schmidt et al, *The Holmes, 488, 489*; B. Overlaet, *Čale Ğār*, 129-135.
[81] M. Malekzadeh et al, *Fouilles 2005-2006*; Z. Hashemi, *The Bronze*; B. Overlaet, *Čale Ğār*, 119-123.
[82] M. Malekzadeh et al, *Fouilles 2005-2006*, 85, 86.

specifically in two variants - a longer one, intended for holding under the armpit or fastened to a belt (H13: 16), and a shorter one suitable for holding in the hand (H13: 14, 15). In some of our previous studies we have tried to look for evidence for such a character of some bronze objects from the group of "Macedonian bronzes" that belonged to the Iron Age cultures of the Central Balkans, synchronous with the Luristan bronzes (H13: 12, 13).[83] Thereby, we pointed out the possibility that hidden behind the distaff was the real paradigm of the **ancient thyrsus** (H13: 6, 8).[84]

In relation to these objects, three possible variants for the use of Luristan standards as distaffs can be distinguished. In the first one, intended primarily for **spinning outside the house**, the standard would have been combined with a **high support fitted on a long staff** which, analogous to the folkloric examples, would have been held under the armpit or fastened to a belt (H1: 2, 3 compare with H13: 16). According to the second variant, intended for **work at home**, the standard would have rested on a shorter support that would stand next to the spinner, placed on the floor or on some kind of table (H2: 7). In the third variant, the standard, instead of a bronze support, **would have been combined with a shorter wooden handle** designed for holding in the hand.

Based on the ancient written sources and especially the ethnographic material, primarily within the frames of Slavic and Balkan folklore, one can clearly follow the **emphasized symbolic and magical function of the distaff** which exists in parallel and inseparable from the utilitarian one. This object had always functioned as a symbol of the **gender, social and personal identity of the woman**, and even as her equivalent. In parallel with its practical function, it was considered a **sacred object** that had a very strong **magical power** aimed at ennobling the yarn that was attached to it and its protection from various negative factors. It was thought that these magical properties acted even outside the process of spinning so that the presence of the distaff, alongside some individual or within a certain space and event, meant their sacralization i.e. **infilling with some kind of sacred component** (general grace, fertility, prosperity, happiness). The belief was that these qualities were directly **transmitted to the woman** as well, while she spins or holds i.e. carries the distaff, whereby this object functioned as an **apotropaion** i.e. a means that protects her from any kind of evil, whether it comes from a real human or animal, from nature or from some higher power. The woman holding a distaff was considered a **sacred creature** that must not be endangered or harmed in any way, whereby such an eventual act would have corresponded to an attack on a deity or a priestly person.[85]

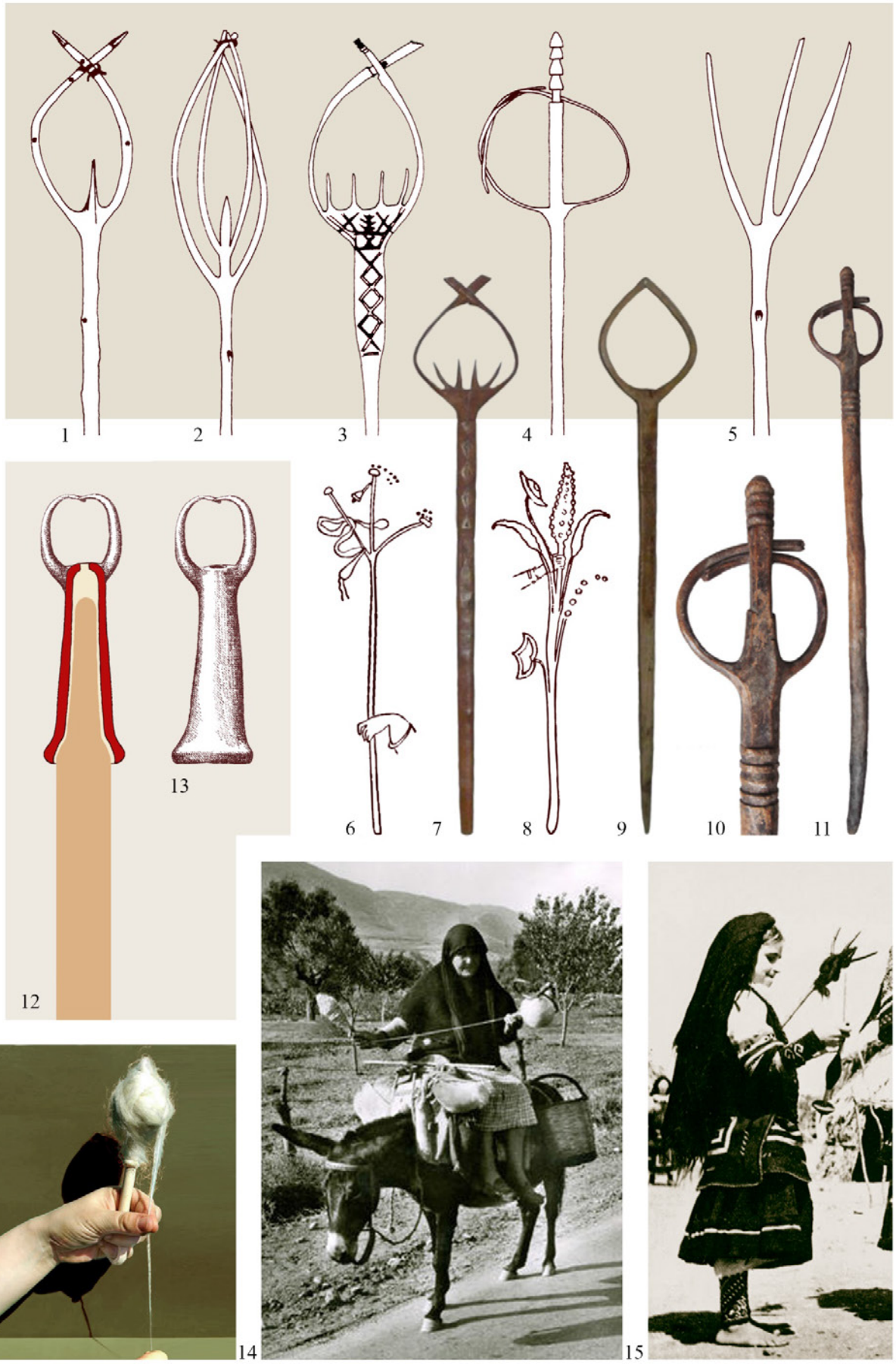
Within these folkloric traditions there are facts that provide an opportunity for the most direct connection of the distaff with the dominantly evidenced archaeological context of the Luristan standards - their presence in graves. Namely, in Slavic and Balkan traditions, there was a tendency for a woman to be accompanied by her distaff to the "other world" as well, due to which it was **implanted atop her grave**, next to the grave cross or instead of it, as a kind of grave marker. It is thought that behind this act there was an aspiration to denote the gender and status of the deceased, and given the strong apotropaic character of this object, also the belief that **it would protect the grave from theft and desecratation**, but also **her soul** during the dangerous passage between "this" and the "other world".[86]

At this stage of research, the proposed interpretation can only be considered as a hypothetical model because on the one hand it cannot be argued with sufficient evidence, and on the other hand it contradicts the dominant views (also insufficiently proven) of the **eminently masculine** and even **military character** of the Luristan standards.

The rare grave finds of **standards combined with armaments**, such as the one from Tattulban (with a sword, shield and arrows - H10: 6 – 9), which substantially refute our assumption, could be relativized in

[83] Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 357-368.
[84] In more detail, with presented bibliography: Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 368-373.
[85] In more detail, with presented bibliography: Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 358-362.
[86] Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 377; Ц. Ђ. Поповић, *Босанско-херцеговачке*, 167.

H13



two ways. According to the first, it would have been a case of **transformation of the original female character** of these objects towards the **male** or **gender-neutral spheres**, followed by the loss of their utilitarian function (as a distaff) at the expense of the sacral one (as a symbolic object). This would yet again be supported by the folkloric traditions in which the distaff, on a symbolic level, bears the status of a **"weapon" by which a woman can defend herself physically and magically**, whereby it was believed that the strike with a distaff, regardless of its actual force, could even be deadly. This relation would be indicated by the similar combination of the female and military character of the ancient thyrsus, which, among other things, is not so different from the distaff (H13: 6, 8 compare with 1 – 5, 7, 9 – 11).[87] There are several reasons why **a weapon could have found its way in a female grave**. One of them is the **ritual killing of the widow**, on the grave of her husband, during the act of his burial, followed by the leaving inside her grave of the weapon by which it was realized. Such a custom existed among the Iron Age communities of the Central Balkans (synchronous to the Luristan bronzes) which is clearly pointed out by the account of Herodotus.[88] It is also indicated by certain **archaeological finds**, specifically through the **presence of weapons** (sword, spear, battle axe) **in graves with deceased women**, some of them with clear traces of violent death. It is also confirmed in the Bronze Age cultures of Eastern Europe and Northwest Asia, and until recently existed within the frames of Hindu culture as well.[89]

The character of Luristan standards as personal objects is also indicated by their **presence in sanctuaries in the Aegean region** (H14: 1 – 3; see p. 618), if we take into account that, in the same period, deposited in them were primarily objects of exactly such character, mainly women's jewelry and probably clothes. In our case, these actions could be explained through the concept of fulfillment of the believer's plea (health, healing, provision of fertility, annulment of negative magic) by **leaving his/her personal items in the sanctuary** which, functioning as his/her equivalents (according to the concept of *pars pro toto*), would provide a more long lasting positive effect on him/her by the sacred powers present in that space.[90]

f) Apotropaic character of the Luristan standards

We have seen that several of the previous researchers have emphasized the apotropaic function of the Luristan standards, formulated through their **identification with talismans**. Even the presence of these objects in graves has been justified by the **protection of the deceased** from various negative factors. We think that such a character of the standards should not be treated in itself or tied to a specific narrow sphere, but within the frames of all the potential contexts presented in the previous sub-chapters - as an element for the protection of the eventual chariot (H5: 9), the drink that was found in the container (H7: 1 – 6), the yarn and the spinner (H13), the deceased and the grave in which he/she was buried (H10; H10a; H11; H11a), the household, the family and the clan, and eventually the entire settlement and the wider community.

Such a meaning would also be supported by some elements of the iconography of these objects, specifically related to the **bifacial character** from their central pillar. If we agree that this character has some global or more direct relations with the Italic **Janus**, and the other above-elaborated bifacial mythical characters, then in favor of the apotropaic function of the Luristan standards, we could present other arguments as well. The written sources clearly emphasize these functions of Janus who is presented as a **guardian and protector of house doors**, of **city** and even **heavenly gates**, as well as all objects and

[87] Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 372, 373.
[88] (Herodotus 5. 5).
[89] In more detail, with presented bibliography: Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 758-760, 875; Н. Чаусидис, *Свештеничка*.
[90] Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 15, 28, 59, 130, 131, 163, 307, 466, 569, 573, 579-582, 665, 673, 675, 858; I. Kilian-Dirlmeier, *Anhänger*; J. Bouzek, *Graeco-Macedonian*. More broadly about this concept: J. Whatmough, *Rehtia*, 224 - 226.

processes associated with **boundaries, limits and the crossing from one space or one status to another**.[91] Some scholars point out that **Janus** was venerated with the epithet **Conservator** (protector, guardian), which would later be redirected to **Iupiter Conservator**.[92] The function of protector of doorways was also borne by the bifacial Etruscan god **Culsans**.[93] Similar relations with respect to the entrances to some buildings and to limits and boundaries are also characteristic of the eastern Mediterranean **Hermes** depicted with two, three or four faces. As early as the 6th century BCE in Athens there was a three-headed and four-headed idol of this god which probably stood at some crossroads in order to protect the roads that intersected there. Not infrequent are the examples when it was placed by entrances and gates, sometimes in a pair next to the door frames, obviously as their guardian and protector.[94] The functions of guarding, overseeing and controlling can also be justified in the case of **Argos** through his character as a guardian of Io, his bifaciality, his multiplicated eyes and especially the epithet *panoptes* - the one who sees everything.[95] An analogous role was played by the Norse god **Heimdallr**, who in myths is represented as a guardian i.e. warden of the gods who constantly watches during both day and night, due to which he never sleeps.[96] In context of these functions of the Luristan standards, the most appropriate paradigm in a chronological and geographical sense would be the Iranian god **Mithra** who also performs his protective function through the myriad of eyes by which he observes everything around, protecting from both front and back.[97]

These relations coincide with the assumptions made by multiple scholars regarding the use of Luristan standards as domestic idols, which in this context would mean the directing of their apotropaic function towards the protection of the dwelling and its tenants.

g) Luristan standards in sanctuaries in the Aegean region

As incredible as it may seem, the presence of Luristan standards in cult buildings (with the exception of Sangtarashan) is most reliably confirmed in locations thousands of kilometers away from Luristan, precisely in **Samos**, in **Philia** in Thessaly, and **Axos** in Crete (H14: 1 – 3). They represent standards discovered in several sanctuaries in the Aegean region, which are at the same time some of the rare archaeologically documented finds of this kind in general.

In the **sanctuary of Hera** on the island of **Samos** there were found several bronze objects that with a greater or lesser degree of certainty can be classified in the category of Luristan bronzes (pendants, a container, bells, zoomorphic figurines - H14: 7, 8, 11), among which was also a fragmented standard of the type "idols with protomes" (H14: 2); a container identical to a specimen from the aforementioned sanctuary at Sangtarashan (H14: 7, 8 compare with 12, 13); and an openwork pendant (H14: 6 compare with B28).[98] Two more finds come from this island that could be indirectly included in this overview. They represent fragmented pin heads with two animals and a centrally stylized tree which, as we have seen, could have been part of garnitures with standards (H14: 4, 5 compare with B30: 5, 6).[99] In the sanctuary of Athena Itonia in **Philia**, Thessaly, there was discovered a specimen of the category "zoomorphic standards", which, based on

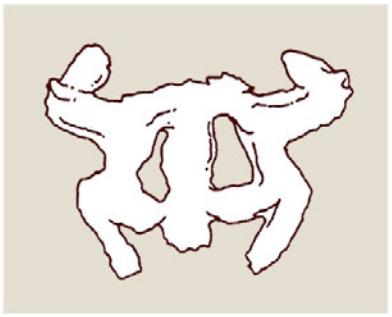
[91] Ž. Dimezil, *Drevna*, 258, 259; *Janus* 2019, 2.1, 5.4, 8.2.
[92] A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 327.
[93] *Culsans* 2019.
[94] S. Reinach, *Mercure Tricephale*, 65; J. Marcadé, *Hermès*, 613, 614, 616.
[95] C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*, 212-217.
[96] G. Dumézil, *Gods*, 126, 127.
[97] A. Nikolaev, *Ten Thousand Eyes*, 827, 828, "protecting behind, protecting in front,a watcher and observer all around" (Yt. 10.46).
[98] U. Jantzen, *Ägyptische*, Pl. 74; P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 25-27; P. R. S. Moorey, *Ancient Persian*, 191, 192 (Fig. 2: 1); O. W. Muscarella, *Archaeology*, 658, 678 (Fig. 3); B. Goldman, *Luristan Pitchers*.
[99] S. G. Schmid, *`Neue´ Luristanbronzen*, 18-22, Taf. 7; P. R. S. Moorey, expresses doubt regarding the belonging of the second specimen (H14: 4) to the Luristan bronzes, considering it somewhat later than them and produced in a region closer to Samos: P. R. S. Moorey, *Ancient Persian*, 191, 192 (Fig. 2: 2).

H14


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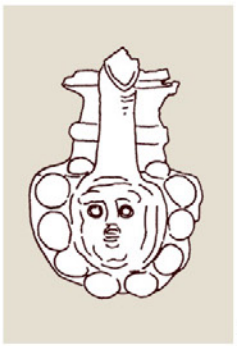

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the typology of the object and the chronology of the sanctuary, is dated to the 9th century BCE (H14: 1 compare with B2; B5; B6; B8).[100] There are indications of another Luristan standard discovered at a cult site in the Aegean. It is a specimen of the "idols with protomes" from the Museum in Heraklion on Crete (according to its form dating to the late 8th or 7th century BCE), for which it is thought to have come from **Axos**, located on the same island (H14: 3 compare with C13: 4 - 6; C16 – C20). Thereby, as more precise locations are indicated the acropolis of the site, where the shrine of some male deity was located, or, more likely, the temple located in the lower town, which seems to have been dedicated to some female deity.[101]

These finds have led S. G. Schmid to conclude that in the Aegean region, the Luristan bronzes gravitate towards **sanctuaries dedicated to female deities** (Hera, Athena, Aphrodite-Astarte and Artemis).[102] The presence of these and some other Middle Eastern objects in the same locations (H14: 6 – 8, 11) has led some researchers to treat them as indicators of the strong role of Oriental (within those frames also Luristan) objects in the formation of the Greek Geometric style and other features of ancient Greek culture.[103]

The mentioned Luristan standards are exceptionally important for our study because, in addition to the finds from Sangtarashan, these are the only archaeologically documented such objects that indicate their **cultic use outside the funerary spheres**. But, on the other hand, they are also problematic because this conclusion refers to a geographical area that is almost 5,000 kilometers away from Luristan - the native core of these objects. This contradictory situation is "resolved" by **O. W. Muscarella** with a single sentence by which he **completely eliminates these finds from his analyzes** regarding the purpose of the standards: "The deposition of the standard on Samos cannot inform us about customs in Luristan".[104] Regardless of some problematic aspects of these finds, we think that on this occasion we must explore the options which they imply, despite all their conditionality i.e. speculativeness.

How could have the mentioned standards, along with other Luristan objects, find their way to the Aegean sanctuaries which are so far away from their native region?

Of key importance in answering this question would be the **affiliation of the people** who left these objects in the indicated sanctuaries and the **motives for such an action of theirs**. According to one of the already proposed options, they could have been **Hellenes** (we would add: as well as **members of some other local ethnic groups from the Aegean region**).[105] Although this possibility seems most plausible at first glance, such its character could be diminished by answering the following two questions:

How could have a member of the Aegean cultures be supplied with objects from Luristan culture that also had a pronounced cultic meaning?

What would have been the motives for depositing exactly those objects, which are not part of his/her culture, to the sanctuary?

The first question can somehow be answered. He or she could have acquired the objects during a **trip to Luristan** or the neighboring regions, perhaps as the result of a **gift**, **exchange** or **loot**. He or she could have also obtained them in his/her **home environment**, somewhere in the Aegean region, through **intermediaries** who brought them from the native areas of these objects. Despite the probability of these answers, they do not give a satisfactory explanation in terms of the motivation - *why a member of the Aegean cultures would present as gifts in a sanctuary cult i.e. symbolic* ***objects belonging to a foreign and very distant culture?***

As one option, we could take the **vow of some high-ranking local warrior** to deposit in the sanctuary some of the loot acquired during his participation in some military action carried out in Luristan or

[100] S. G. Schmid, *`Neue´ Luristanbronzen*, 12-14 (Taf. 5); a somewhat earlier dating: S. G. Schmid, *Εισηγμένα*, 240, 241, 247 (Εικ. 2).
[101] S. G. Schmid, *`Neue´ Luristanbronzen*, 14-18, 23, Taf. 6.
[102] S. G. Schmid, *`Neue´ Luristanbronzen*, 25, 26, 28, 29.
[103] B. Segal, *Greece*; P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 26, 27; on this topic more generally: W. Burkert, *The Orientalizing*.
[104] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 139.
[105] S. G. Schmid, *`Neue´ Luristanbronzen*, 27.

its surroundings. But, based on the available written sources, we do not know of any military campaign towards this region in the first centuries of the 1st millennium BCE, in which members of the Aegean cultures would have participated. Much more plausible to us seem the hypotheses according to which these gifts were left by **native traders**, **sailors** or **mercenaries**, specifically as **gratitude for the successful return from one of their risky journeys**. The following observation would not support this thesis. According to it, the choice of the deposited objects, as well as the deity to which the mentioned sanctuaries were dedicated, indicate that their donors were **well aware of the character and meaning of the donated objects**, which would point to the belonging of both the donors and the donated objects to the same culture.[106]

Let us now explore the second model according to which the presence of the mentioned Luristan objects in the Aegean sanctuaries should be connected to the **members of some foreign populations**. This possibility has also been already considered by previous scholars, whereby the focus, of course, was put on the members of some of the Oriental ethnic groups. Referenced in support of this option is also the presence in the sanctuaries of jewelry, which, if it is accepted that it was part of the personal clothing of the donors, would go in favor of their immediate presence at the given place.[107] O. W. Muscarella considers the possibility that these objects were the result of offerings made by members of the **upper class (rulers)** of some Middle Eastern peoples i.e. states. In support of this he presents several such examples (related to **Phrygian** and **Assyrian** rulers) confirmed on the basis of written sources and archaeological finds discovered in sanctuaries in the Aegean region.[108] On this occasion, we should also not forget Herodotus' reports on the **offerings of the Hyperboreans to the sanctuary on Delos**, because in this case, too, they represent an ethnic group that existed in a location quite far from the Aegean, whereby the offering was made in person by pilgrims or through intermediaries.[109]

Regardless of the nature of the mentioned oriental finds and the motives for their presence in the Aegean sanctuaries, O. W. Muscarella prefers the following route of their arrival in the Aegean: ***Northwestern Iran – Assyria – Northern Syria – Eastern Mediterranean***, but not across mainland Anatolia (H15: 1).[110] P. R. S. Moorey also opts for a similar route: ***Mesopotamia – Syria – Phoenicia – Aegean***, specifically by sea, through **Cyprus** and **Rhodes** (H15: 1).[111] It seems that some authors, in their studies on the relations between Urartu and Etruria, do not exclude here the Black Sea route either (***Susa – Luristan – Azerbaijan – Urartu***), in which **Samos** is given a particularly important role. Within the frames of the route ***Al Mina (Syrian coast) – Cyprus – Etruria***, an important place is given to **Crete**, from where, as we saw, one of the mentioned standards originates (H14: 3).[112] Given that in the sanctuary at Philia in Thessaly, in addition to the Luristan standard, there have also been discovered numerous Iron Age finds characteristic of **Macedonia** and **Bulgaria**, S. G. Schmid points to the possibility according to which the standard (H14: 1) would have also reached this place through the indicated lands i.e. the Balkan mainland. Thereby, he supports this route by the alleged **relations between the Iron Age bronze objects from Luristan, the Caucasus, Bulgaria and Macedonia**.[113] Not excluding the existence of part of this route (*especially* ***Caucasus – North Black Sea Region – Bulgaria – Macedonia***; H15: 1), we think that the eventual Luristan components were not included in it at the level of specific objects but at some more global levels of culture (symbolic and mythical-religious system, iconography, style). No specific specimens of Luristan bronzes have so far been evidenced in the

[106] S. G. Schmid, *`Neue´ Luristanbronzen*, 27; O. W. Muscarella, *Archaeology*, 674.
[107] S. G. Schmid, *`Neue´ Luristanbronzen*, 27-29.
[108] O. W. Muscarella, *Archaeology*, 675.
[109] (Herodotus 4. 33-35); Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 892-894.
[110] O. W. Muscarella, *Archaeology*, 672-674.
[111] P. R. S. Moorey, *Ancient Persian*, 194, 195.
[112] K. R. Maxwell-Hyslop, *Urartian*, 151, 159-166; R. Ghirshman, *Invasions*, 5.
[113] S. G. Schmid, *`Neue´ Luristanbronzen*, 24.

H15


Novocherkassk c.
Hypothetical Balkan route of the Cimmerians
Movement of the Cymmerians to the south; Beginning of the 8th century BC
Sabatinovka c.
Belozerka c.
Chernogorovka c.
Coban c.
CAUCASUS
CRIMEA
URARTU
Attack of the Cymmerians on the Ionian and Eolian cities 644 BC
ASSYRIA
Antandros Cimmeris
PHRIGIA
Cymmerians in the Assyrian sources 714 BC
LIDIA
Philia
Ephesus
Samos
Al Mina
Rhodes
PHOENICIA
Axos

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mainland of the Balkan Peninsula, due to which the presence of such objects in the Aegean, at least for now, cannot be considered the result of this route.[114]

Unlike the previous model, in this case we have options for a more concrete solution. We are speaking about the **Cimmerians** who have been highlighted by several researchers as one of the potential bearers of the Luristan bronzes (see p. 683). Written information about this ethnic group is scarce and not always clear (Ancient Greek *Κιμμέριοι*, Akkadian *Ga-mir*), so that their oldest homeland, language and culture today are not sufficiently precisely defined and properly argued. Based on the historical events and local toponymy recorded in Greek written sources, it is assumed that they inhabited the northern Pontic steppes around the **Dniester**, **Maeotis** (coast of the **Sea of Azov**) and **Crimea** with its surroundings, while in the east they extended all the way to the **Volga** and the **northern Caspian coast**. In the past decades, archaeologists have tried to connect the presence of this ethnic group in the indicated regions with some archaeological cultures that would correspond to them chronologically and geographically (H15: 1). The Cimmerians could have found themselves in Luristan during their campaign from the mentioned regions towards Western Asia **in the first years of the 8th century BCE or somewhat before that**. The reason for this is sought in the pressure exerted on them by the Scythians, after which they would have migrated south and, **crossing the Caucasus, would have entered Western Asia, icluding Western Anatolia** (H15: 1). These events, starting from 714 BCE, were reported in Assyrian cuneiform records, whereby they mention several key facts, including the "land of Gamir" and the area in which it extended (according to some in the North Black Sea Region, according to others in present-day Georgia, while according to third - in Northern Armenia and Mannea). After the invasion and the **wars with Assyria and Urartu**, they headed towards **Asia Minor**, and after the **destruction of the Phrygians and Lydians**, this campaign ended on its west coast. During the year 644 BCE, the **Cimmerians conquered the Greek cities in Ionia and Aeolia**, as well as some of the **islands in the eastern part of the Aegean Sea** (H15: 1). These last events correspond globally to the indicated finds from the Aegean sanctuaries, both from a chronological and geographical aspect (for example, **Samos**, the findspot of the largest number of Luristan bronzes, is only **40 km away from Ephesus** - one of the cities conquered by the Cimmerians). The presence of Luristan objects in the sanctuary at **Philia** in Thessaly and on **Crete** would be an indicator of the free movement of the Cimmerians through the Aegean region during this period, as evidenced by the presence of their ethnonym in Aegean toponymy and homonymy (for example Kimmeris as one of the names of the town of Antandros in Troas; H15: 1). Towards the end of the 7th century BCE, they were **defeated by the Scythians** and then by the **Lydians**, after which in Asia Minor they probably began their gradual **assimilation** by the local ethnic groups, which is indicated by the absence of written information about them in the period that followed. In the 6th - 5th century BCE, the presence of this ethnos can be confirmed neither in Asia Minor nor in the North Black Sea Region, at least not under the ethnonym Cimmerians.[115]

In the sanctuaries on Samos, Crete, and at Philia, there are objects from several regions that coincide with the movement of the Cimmerians, specifically from the **Caucasus**,[116] **Urartu** (H14: 11 compare with 10),[117] and **Northwestern Iran** (H14: 9), including **Luristan** (H14: 1 – 8).

[114] On the relations between the Luristan bronzes and the synchronous bronze objects from the Central and Western Balkans, as well as on their character: Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 852-854, 876, 877, 880, 881, 895, 896, 905.
[115] Basic information: A. Ivantchik, *Cimmerians*; S. R. Tokhtas'ev, *Cimmerians*; J. Bouzek, *Cimmerians*; review and discussion on the current state of research: А. И. Иванчик, *Современное*; M. J. Olbrycht, *The Cimmerian*; В. Паркер, *О чем*; I. G. de Boer, *The Cimm. Invasion*; from older works deserves special attention: И. М. Дьяконов, *История*, 228-254; our review: Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 877-885.
[116] P. R. S. Moorey, *Ancient Persian*, 192, 194.
[117] O. W. Muscarella, *Archaeology*, 689-702; K. R. Maxwell-Hyslop, *Urartian*.

How, within the framework of this model, do we stand in regards to the question of motivation i.e. whether it is logical for foreigners, specifically members of the occupier, to offer gifts in the sanctuaries of the land i.e. peoples that they have occupied?

Numerous events recorded in historical sources show that in the past epochs such actions not only existed, but were also commonplace. For example, during the **Balkan campaign of Xerxes**, his magi sacrificed white horses in the **Strymon River** in order to appease it.[118] These actions are based on the belief that the gods of a geographical area retain their authority and power regardless of the change of the political master of that territory, which makes them even more powerful than the gods of the occupier. The new master therefore expressed veneration towards them, at least to ensure the success of his military action or his rule over that area.[119]

4. Iconographic and functional parallels of the Luristan standards

In this sub-chapter we will dedicate more attention to several categories of objects that do not belong to Luristan culture. The first reason for this is their form and character, which we consider to show certain relations with the standards, while the second - that they are surrounded by a significant number of written information refering to their original purpose and meaning. Then we will use these facts and observations as comparative material in the interpretation of the iconography, purpose and meaning of the Luristan standards for the character and purpose of which, on the other hand, we do not have any more specific facts except the archaeological ones.

a) "Caducei" from the Middle East

As the closest paradigms for the Luristan standards, in a geographical and chronological sense, we can take the so-called **"caducei"** present in **Babylonian and Hittite culture**, known primarily from their **depictions on cylinder seals** (H16 – H20).[120] They are most frequent on the **Babylonian seals** from the Middle Empire, as well as on the **Syro-Hittite** ones, while on the **Assyrian** specimens they are absent i.e. are replaced by the "Tree of Life". On these seals the "caducei" appear in quite diverse variants consisting of a vertical pillar, often divided into transverse segments, which in the upper part splits into two prongs formed symmetrically in the shape of stylized **protomes of animals** with their heads turned outwards. Among them is some kind of third appendage which in certain cases resembles a **container**, **fruit** or some other rounded element (H16: 1, 3, 5, 10; H17: 3, 6; H18: 2, 5, 6, 9; H19: 5, 7; H20: 1, 2), while in others it may be understood as an extension of the pillar supplemented by **twigs** or **leaves** (H16: 2, 9; H17: 4; H18: 1, 7, 8). Although the protomes are often identified as snakes, the high level of stylization (dictated by the technique of production of the seals) does not allow for an accurate determination of the types of animals to which they would belong. In some cases they are stylized to the point of complete unrecognizability (H16: 5; H17: 1, 5, 8; H18: 4). In numerous examples, the protomes are accompanied by a **rectangular segment** (H16: 1, 2, 8, 12; H17: 6; H18: 2, 5, 6, 9) which we consider to be a stylization of the joined front and rear legs of the depicted animals (H21: 1 – 4 compare with H16: 2, 8).

These objects appear on the seals in three basic variants:

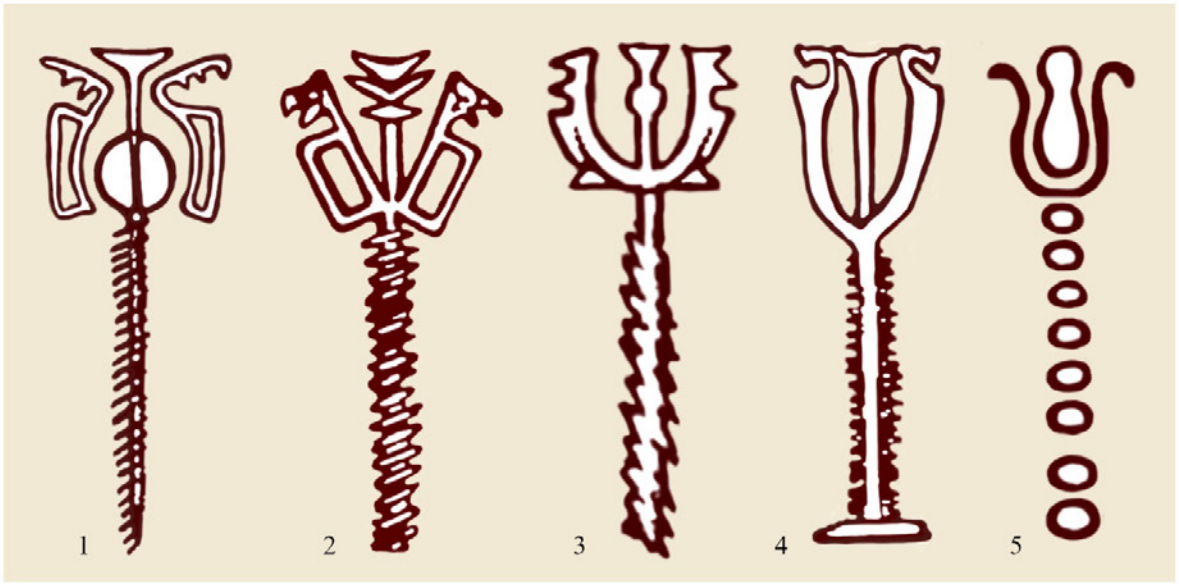
- As a large object standing on the ground and extending vertically throughout the composition (H16).

[118] (Herodotus 7. 113).

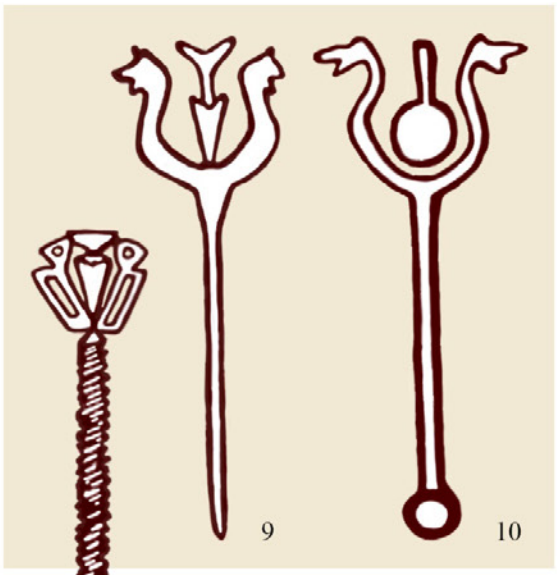
[119] On this practice, with other examples: Л. С. Клейн, *Миграция*, 59.

[120] These motifs are elaborated in more detail by A. L. Frothingham, while in a more general framework by W. H. Ward (A. L. Frothingham, *Babylonian*; W. H. Ward, *The Seal*). In absence of the authentic names for these objects, we accept the narrowly-professional term "caduceus" used by A. L. Frothingham on the basis of their resemblance to the Italo-Roman *caduceus* and its Hellenic predecessor, the kerykeion (*κηρύκειον*).

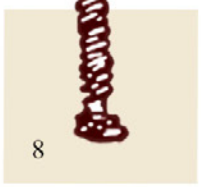
H16



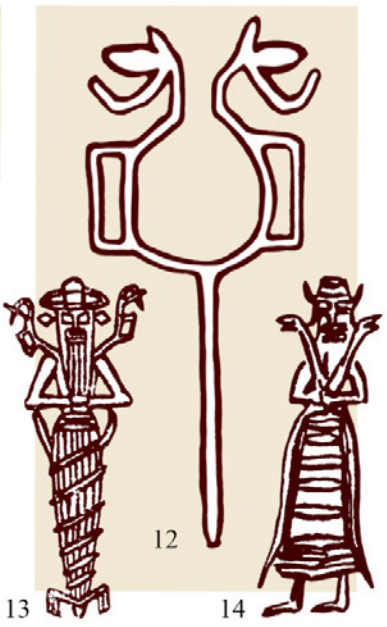












- As a smaller object held in one hand by anthropomorphic figures (H17; H18).
- As a shorter and more massive object shown on the back of zoomorphic figures (H19: 1, 2).

- Large "caducei"

These "caducei" are usually placed on the ground and rise vertically from the bottom of the seal composition to its upper edge (H16) or somewhat lower (H19: 7, 9; H20: 1, 2). Such a motif is usually accompanied by anthropomorphic and zoomorphic or hybrid figures, often on both sides, in some cases also symmetrical (H16: 7; H19: 4; H20: 1, 2). Based on the shape of the central pillar, one can list variants with completely flat and undivided examples (H16: 9, 10, 12; H19: 7, 9, 10; H20: 1, 2), and less frequently also those composed of stacked circular or other segments (H16: 5; H19: 4, 5). Especially common are the serrated or notched pillars, which A. L. Frothingham considers to actually represent a **stylization of the snakes that are densely wrapped around them** (H16: 1 – 4, 7, 8, 11).[121] We think that such a shape may be due to the use of a palm stem in the making of the pillar of these props or to the **binding with some kind of ribbons or strings** (compare with a more recent example from India H27: 9). At the bottom there can also be a broadening i.e. a pedestal (H16: 4, 7, 8), a pointed tip (H16: 1, 9, 11, 12; H19: 9, 10) or a triangular segment (H19: 7, 9) intended for stable standing of the pillar over the substrate, in the last two cases probably realized through its planting into the ground. These details show that they were **real cult objects**, probably made **of wood**, which were constructed to stand stably on an appropriate substrate. Judging by the height of the surrounding figures, their dimensions were **somewhat larger than the height of the people**, or **far higher**, if we take into account that on the seals, the figures of deities were depicted in supernatural dimensions (H16: 6, 7, 11; H19: 4, 9; H20: 2). Although their upper part is different, common to most examples are the two prongs which, to a greater or lesser degree, resemble animal protomes (H16; H19: 4, 5, 7). Numerous analogies can be found for the variants in which a container is recognizable at the top, for example in the already mentioned bronze cult objects from the circle of the Iron Age Balkan cultures (H7: 9, 10), but also among the Luristan bronzes (H7: 11, 12).

Based on the **libation vase of Gudea** from the Louvre Museum and the inscription that accompanies it, A. L. Frothingham defines this element as a symbolic representation of **Ningizzida** - a lower-ranking deity who mediates in the communication of this ruler with the solar god **Ningirsu** (H21: 10, 11). Thereby, it must be noted that on the indicated vase, the pillar is wrapped along its entire length with intertwined snakes, which cannot be explicitly identified on the "caducei" depicted on the seals.

- Smaller "caducei"

The "caducei" of this type are **held in the hand by anthropomorphic figures** that, according to interpretations, represent certain **deities**, **i.e. mythical characters** (H17; H18). A. L. Frothingham thinks that their primary and main bearer is the **Great Mother** because of the sphere of life and grace that they both symbolize (H17: 1 – 3, 6, 9; H18: 1, 2, 4 – 7), while the **male Sun God** is in this sense secondary (H17: 4, 5, 7, 8; H18: 8, 9).[122] A female figure with the same features also appears on ceramic reliefs (H18: 3). Such "hand-held caducei" do not essentially differ from the "monumental" ones. They can also have a divided or serrated stem, at the lower end a pedestal (H17: 4, 5; H18: 4, 8), but this time also a ball-like broadening (H17: 1, 3, 6; H18: 6), while at the upper end - two protomes and some kind of central motif. In the same group the mentioned author also classifies other similar motifs which we think do not belong to the same category, but functioned as symbols with a different character and meaning, for example as symbols of thunder, the "Tree of Life" etc. (H19: 3).

[121] A. L. Frothingham, *Babylonian*, 192.
[122] A. L. Frothingham, *Babylonian*, 194.

H17



H18


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H19


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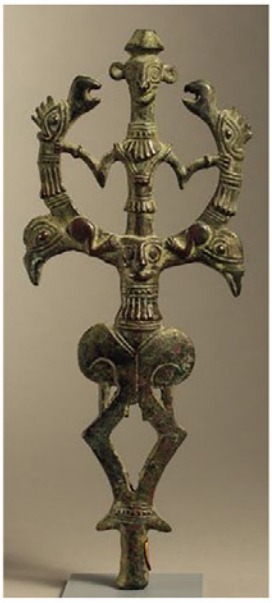

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- Short "caducei" with leonine protomes

This category can be included in our group only conditionally due to the different proportions, the small number of specimens and the specific combining, not with an anthropomorphic, but with a hybrid zoomorphic figure (H19: 1, 2). Although according to W. H. Ward they resemble the "Babylonian caducei", A. L. Frothingham does not include them in his study, probably due to the indicated differences.[123]

- Interpretation of the "caducei" from the seals and their relations with the Luristan standards

As already mentioned, on the seals one can notice a relation between the motif of "caduceus" (a pillar supplemented by a pair of intertwined snakes or a pair of other symmetrical animal protomes) and Ningizzida, given that the same motifs complement the body of this god as well (H16: 13, 14 compare with the rest). In support of this connection also speaks the columnarity of his figure, for which the best evidence is the mentioned sacrificial vase of Gudea in whose inscription it is explicitly stated that the pillar wrapped with snakes is the god Ningizzida himself (H30: 7, 8 compare with 6 and H21: 10, 11; F17).[124] These relations are rounded off with the proposed **etymology of the theonym of this god**, which literally means **"Right-hand Scepter God"**, indicating that he is **equivalent to the sacred scepter** (in the specific case supplemented by a pair of snakes). Based on this etymology and the inscriptions in which the indicated god is mentioned, it can be assumed that the scepter i.e. the "caduceus" was one of the **epiphanies** that reflected the **very essence of Ningizzida** - to be held in the right hand of the god Nin-girsu, in the role of **mediator and patron between him and the Sumerian rulers** (Gudea, and probably some others) as themselves or in the role of representatives of humanity.[125]

A. L. Frothingham considers as older the variants of "caducei" where the snakes are intertwined along the entire pillar, while those in which they are present only at the top - he treats as being later, and even as created under Greek influence. The replacement in the Assyrian period of this motif with the **"Tree of Life"** leads him to the conclusion that also in older such representations the central pillar denoted the trunk of the same symbol.[126]

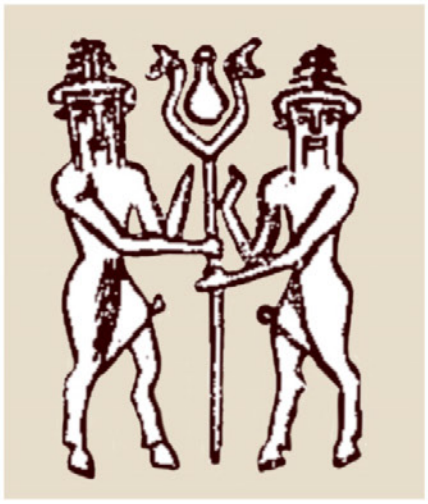
The same components (a vertical pillar accompanied by a pair of symmetrical animals) are also present on the Luristan standards which almost certainly functioned as a kind of scepter i.e. "caduceus" (H26: 5, 8 compare with 2, 6, 10, 11). In some of them, as well as in the seals, these elements **complete some kind of singular anthropomorphic mythical character i.e. deity**, whereby the indicated (and various other) elements participate in the constitution of his hybrid figure. Taking into account this relation, we can ask the following question which would refer to the essence of the mythical characters and compositions from both types of objects:

*Does the basic function of Ningizzida and of his anonymous Luristan counterpart correspond to the function of the **Cosmic Axis** i.e. **Cosmic Pillar**, that is, the **mediation** between the cosmic zones, between this and the other world, between gods and humans or between the two complementary principles (male and female)?*

In favor of the answer to this question, we can reference the mentioning of Ningizzida as the **mediator of Mother Earth**, precisely through the functions "Herald of the Earth" and "Throne-bearer of the Earth".[127] The indicated aspects of **movement between the cosmic zones** can be detected even in the

[123] W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 402, 403.
[124] A. L. Frothingham, *Babylonian*, 181, 182 (Fig. 3), 192.
[125] A. L. Frothingham, *Babylonian*, 181, 182; other etymologies: E. D. Van Buren, *The God Ningizzida*, 61, 62, 67.
[126] A. L. Frothingham, *Babylonian*, 192; on the connection of Ningizzida with the "Tree of Life" and the "Tree of Truth", even at the level of etymology of his theonym: E. D. Van Buren, *The God Ningizzida*, 67, 69.
[127] A. L. Frothingham, *Babylonian*, 189-191, 192; E. D. Van Buren, *The God Ningizzida*, 66.

H20



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following sentence from the ancient inscriptions in which this god bears a clear solar character: "The Sun which lifted itself up from the earth before thee, is thy god Ningizzida".[128] Also present in the written sources is the **ambivalent sexual nature** of this god which, according to the interpretations, is also represented by the different sexes of the two snakes from his depictions.[129] This is another component that brings this god and his depictions closer to the main character from the Luristan standards. Here we have in mind the specimens of some "zoomorphic standards" where one animal figure has a male, while the other - a female sexual organ (B6: 1). The next common element between the Luristan standards and the "caduceus" from the Middle Eastern seals is their **ithyphallic component** and meaning. According to A. L. Frothingham this meaning is most directly reflected in a seal where such a motif is **accompanied by two ithyphallic figures** (H20: 1, 2).[130] This arrangement closely coincides with the "zoomorphic standards" whose central part, apparently supplemented by some kind of pillar present through a decorative pin or other element, is flanked by zoomorphic figures with accentuated phalluses (H20: 4) or figures of unicorns (H20: 3; B6).

On one seal, the "caduceus" **rests on the head of a standing figure** whose hands are joined on the torso (H19: 4, 5). This image coincides with the basic scheme of the "idols with protomes" in the lower part of which is depicted an anthropomorphic or hybrid figure, from whose head upwards continues the pillar of the standard which is divided into a pair of protomes (compare H19: 6 with 5).

On another seal it **rests on two symmetrically placed animals** oriented towards each other with their rear parts. Judging by the elongated segment on the heads, they represent horned herbivorous animals or, even more likely, unicorns (H20: 5 compare with 3 and with B6). Given that the top of the pillar of such standards is not preserved, we compare this motif with a hypothetical garniture that we assembled from a standard and a pin with a decorative top (H20: 4 compare with 5). If we accept it as probable, the difference between them would consist only in the reverse orientation of the animals - facing inwards instead of outwards.

The relations between the Luristan bronzes and the Mesopotamian seals are also indicated by other examples that were elaborated in the previous chapters: the motif of **two animals with one head** (C11: 5 – 7 compare with the rest); some variants of the **"nude goddess"** in which the ends of the garment are transformed into symmetrical protomes that she holds in her hands (E15); the figure of "Etana" or another character **from whose shoulders grow snakes** (F15; F17).

Worth mentioning is another motif from the seals where in the big "caduceus" one can recognize a stylized human figure whose **arms**, raised in the orans posture, **end in the form of animal protomes** (H19: 7, 9). We have identified a figure with the same feature on a subcategory of "idols with protomes" (H19: 8; E16; E17).

Given the considerable **chronological distance** between most of the presented cylinder seals (end of 3rd - 2nd millennium BCE) and the Luristan standards (end of 2nd and beginning of 1st millennium BCE), the question remains open whether they nevertheless reflect some kind of **more direct relations** between the cultures to which they belonged? Or, instead, it is a matter of **indirect influences** that in Luristan took on a new meaning, different from what these mythical characters and depictions had within the older Middle Eastern cultures. As a potential indicator of this, we can take the **change of the serpentine or dragonesque protomes** on the shoulders of Ningizzida into **avian protomes** (roosters) in the Luristan standards (F17: 3, 8 compare with 1, 2, 7). But, this conclusion is also supported by the analogous depictions from other Luristan objects (pins, quivers) where the shoulders of a similar figure are also not supplemented by snake protomes, but by protomes of animals from the family of felines (F10).

In the period of Assyria and Persia, there was no continuation of the veneration of the Middle Eastern "caduceus" as a cult object, nor of Ningizzida as a god. However, in both forms, they were transferred from **Babylonia** to **Syria**, to the **Hittites**, and to **Cyprus**, whereby in the first region, they were integrated into the

[128] Citation: A. L. Frothingham, *Babylonian*, 189, on the solar and other characteristics of the god, 189-192.
[129] A. L. Frothingham, *Babylonian*, 191, 192; E. D. Van Buren, *The God Ningizzida*, 62.
[130] A. L. Frothingham, *Babylonian*, 176, 177, 179, Fig. 12; W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 178 (No. 481).

H21



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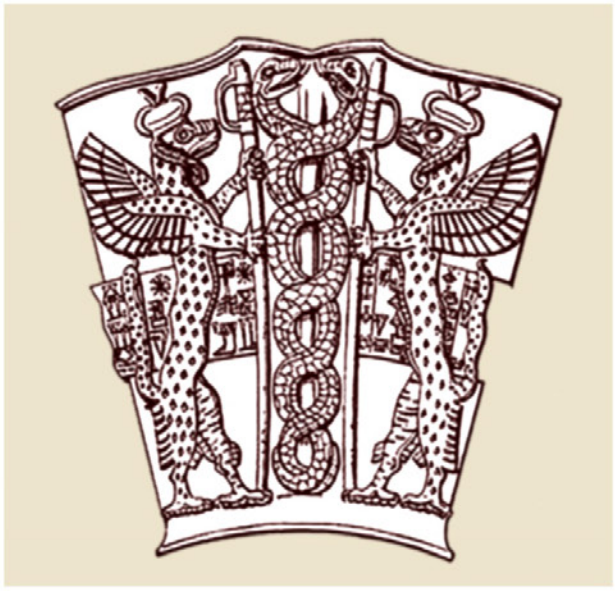
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image and cult of the young spring god **Tammuz** (H15: 1, 2).[131] According to the analyzes of A. L. Frothingham, these traditions were embodied in the Hittite **"Hierapolis triad of deities"**, in which participated a female and a male deity, in the Syrian sources called **Atargatis** and **Hadad**, while in the ancient Greek ones - **Hera** and **Zeus**. The third character - **Semeion**, enigmatic by his name and nature, was obviously not anthropomorphic, but was probably depicted in the form of a "caduceus". This is supported by some **coins of the city of Hierapolis** (also known as **Mabog**, in Syria) minted in the Roman period (3rd century CE), depicted on which are the so-called "deities of Hierapolis". This is also clearly evidenced by the accompanying inscription, as well as the pair of animals on which the gods sit, corresponding to those mentioned in the sources: the goddess sits on lions, while the god - on bulls (H21: 5 – 9). Between them, in a tabernacle topped by a pediment, is apparently located the third deity - the enigmatic Semeion who according to A. L. Frothingham **is equated with Hermes**. It has the form of vertically arranged circular motifs resting on a pillar in which he recognizes a stylized version of a **pillar wrapped with two intertwined spirals** (= snakes) bearing the main features of the early "caduceus" from the **sacrificial vase of Gudea** (H21: 5 – 9 compare with 10, 11).[132]

Although A. L. Frothingham does not elaborate on the next stages in the development of the "Middle Eastern caduceus", after its transfer from Babylon to Syria, to the Hittites and to Cyprus, the path of its further spread through Mediterranean cultures can be predicted. First were probably **western Anatolia** and **Ionia**, then the **Aegean** and **mainland Greece**, and finally **Italy**, from where in the following centuries it would spread throughout the **Roman Empire** (compare with H15: 2). Comparisons between the shape of the Middle Eastern and the ancient Mediterranean caduceus, observed in context of this geographical-chronological line, may indicate the role of the former in the constitution of the latter (H26). These relations should not surprise us at all now, given all the other iconographic parallels between these mutually distant regions that were presented in the previous chapters.

It is quite indicative that the Mediterranean caduceus shows a higher degree of resemblance to the oldest "Middle Eastern caducei" than the Luristan standards, regardless of the fact that from a geographical and chronological aspect the latter are much closer to them (H26). This tells us that, in spite of the indicated similarities, the relations between the seals and the Luristan standards have nevertheless some kind of indirect nature.

b) The kerykeion and caduceus in Greco-Roman culture

Starting from the 6th century BCE, until the domination of Christianity, used in the ancient cultures of the Mediterranean were objects with a pronounced symbolic and cultic character, in form close to the Luristan standards, as well as to the previously elaborated "caducei" from Western Asia (H22 – H24; H25: 2 – 10; H26: 1, 7, 9). Judging by the written sources and the pictorial depictions present on archaeological finds, the prevailing view in academia is that these objects appeared in their specific form **sometime before the 6th century BCE**, in the **ancient Hellenic cultural area**. With the expansion of Hellenic, Hellenistic, and later Roman culture, they were dispersed throughout the Mediterranean, the Middle East, and much of Europe.[133] The first of them was the Hellenic **kerykeion** (*κηρύκειον*) which in the earliest sources is mentioned as a **symbol i.e. insignia of messengers** which, in itself, means that it existed at least some time before that.[134] This is supported by its presence in the **Homeric epics** and in all cases in the hands of **Hermes** portrayed as a **messenger** i.e. **herald** (H24: 1, 4, 7). Their next core was **Italy**, where, according to current observations, this object came from Hellenic culture, most probably through the **Greek cities on Sicily and in Southern Italy**.

[131] A. L. Frothingham, *Babylonian*, 203, 204.
[132] A. L. Frothingham, *Babylonian*, 204-209.
[133] On these objects: F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 29-79; R. Bötzkes, *Kerykeion*; R. Boetzkes, *Das Kerykeion*; L. Preller, *Der Hermesstab*; A. L. Frothingham, *Babylonian*; F. Diez de Velasco, *Un aspecto*; C. Anghelina, *Rhabdos*.
[134] R. Boetzkes, *Das Kerykeion*, 14.

The Italic kerykeion, there called **caduceus** (*caduceus*), is similar to the Greek one, but also shows certain differences in relation to it. In its appearance, character and meaning is evident the fusion of the Greek and the newly acquired Italic components and meanings.[135] The kerykeion i.e. caduceus was also carried by **Hermanubis**, a syncretic deity created as a **fusion between Hermes and Anubis** during the Roman rule of Egypt (H24: 8 – 10; H32: 4). It is not clear whether the serpentine kerykeion in the hands of this character should be considered a purely Greco-Roman component or as a result of similar Egyptian templates.[136]

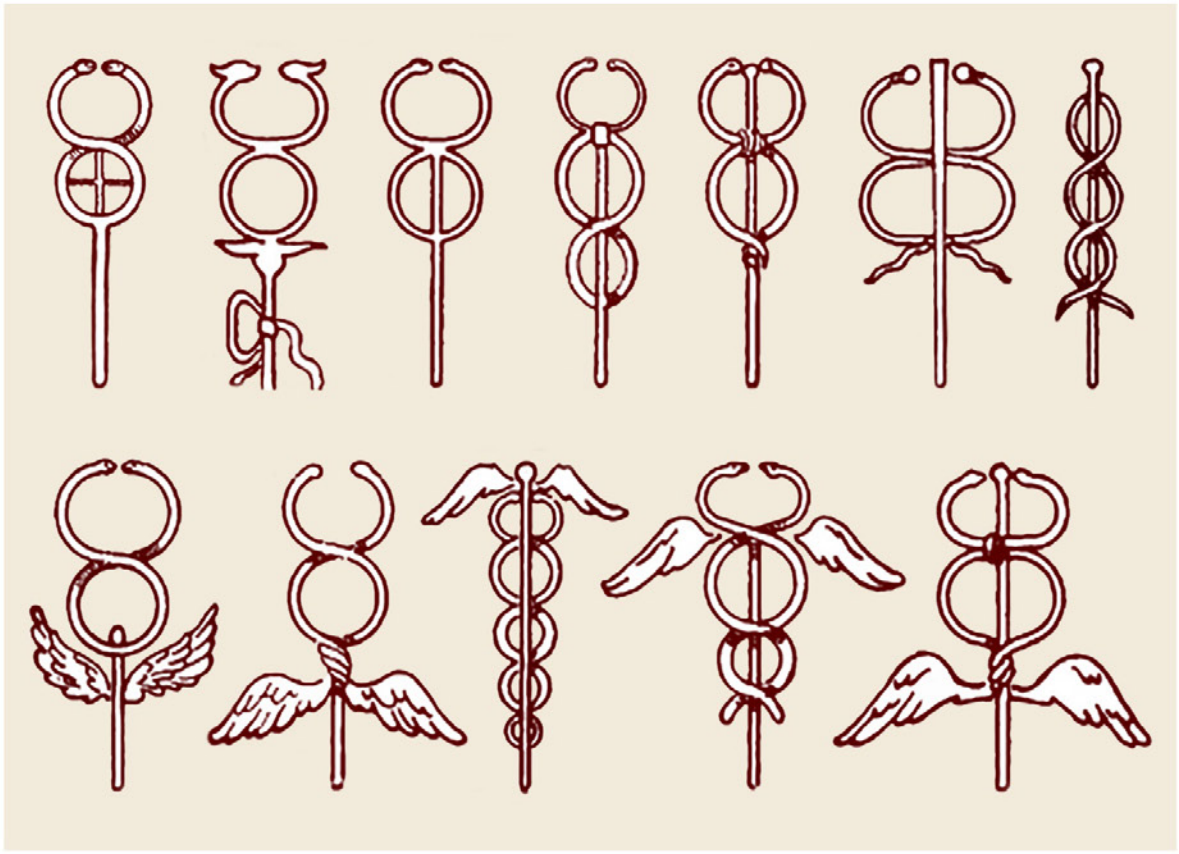
According to some observations, the kerykeion did in some way **survive even in Christianity**, specifically in the shape of the **scepter of the Orthodox bishops**, which, although considered a product of the *crux commissa* (a cross in the form of the letter "T"), at its top has a pair of symmetrical snakes facing each other (H25: 11 – 13). We cannot agree with the opinions that such a shape was motivated only by decorative purposes.[137] There are certain contents in the Christian sacred texts that could have served as a symbolic paradigm for the presence of the two snakes. The theories about the genesis of the indicated motif based on the similar Western i.e. European Christian scepters is not convincing because in their case the snake is present in singular form. It should not be ruled out that the ancient caduceus also had a role in their constitution, certainly not directly but through the medieval and Renaissance traditions, including those related to alchemy (H25: 1).[138]

The Mediterranean kerykeia and caducei, unlike the Middle Eastern "caducei", have a much more standardized shape and dimensions. They usually consist of a **straight pillar** whose upper part ends in the form of a **pair of intertwined wavy rods** shaped as the Arabic numeral eight, but with an open upper part (H23: 6, 7; H24: 3, 4, 8). Among scholars, this shape is considered the basic i.e. original of the kerykeion, although in time, in Greece and Italy, it would acquire some additional elements: transformation of the curved rods into **intertwined snakes** with heads oriented towards each other (H23: 15; H26: 1, 9; H27: 2); **extension of the pillar** through the entire "eight" up to the open rods i.e. snake heads (H23: 8 – 10, 13, 16); **multiplication of the interweavings** (H23: 5, 8, 13, 14); supplementation of the "eight" with **floral motifs** (three-leaf palmetes H23: 16; H24: 1, 2, 5 – 7, 9); supplementation of the object with a **pair of symmetrical wings** (H22: 1; H26: 7).[139] In contrast to the "Asian caducei", the Mediterranean ones are also characterized by rather **standardized dimensions** that usually do not exceed the length of the human arm. In textual and pictorial sources they are **always found in the hand** of some mythical character or real person, but **never placed on the ground or on some kind of object** (H24; H25: 2, 9). Exceptions are coins, weights and some other objects on which they are presented separately, as a symbol, emblem i.e. sign (H25: 4 – 8).

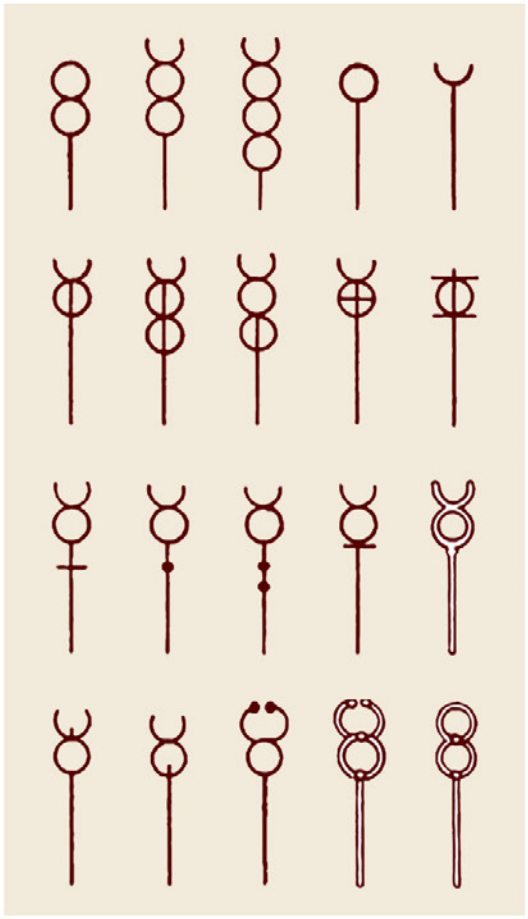
- Names and meaning

Within the frames of Hellenic culture, the above-described staff with an open "eight" at the top is called a **kerykeion** (*κηρύκειον*) - a name first mentioned in the 5th century BCE by Herodotus and Thucydides. It is an adjective derived from the ancient Greek word kēryx (*κῆρυξ*) with the meaning of **messenger** i.e. **herald**.[140] Certain facts indicate the presence of this object in the Homeric epics as well, under the term **rhabdos** (*ράβδος*) as a name for the **staff of Hermes**. Although according to some interpretations it could have been an ordinary staff/wand, without any additions (analogous to the ones of Kirke and Athena), most researchers nevertheless agree that these are the same objects, or that the **kerykeion is a kind of**

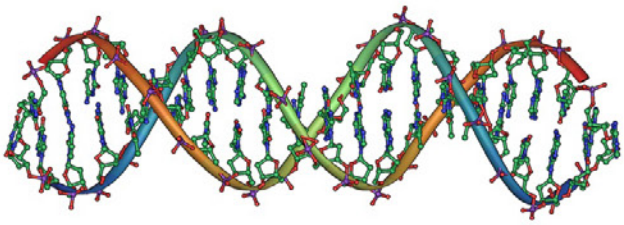
[135] R. Bötzkes, *Kerykeion*, 340; F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 78, 79.
[136] A. Benaissa, *The Onomastic*; J.-C. Grenier, *Hermanubis*.
[137] F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 53.
[138] Ю. В. Маслова, *Символика*; К. А. Щедрина, *Две змеи*; *Кадуцей* 2020.
[139] Overview of the variants: F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, unnumbered table at the end of the monograph.
[140] (Herodotus 9.100.1; Thucydides 1.53); R. Boetzkes, *Das Kerykeion*, 8, 9; F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 35; C. Anghelina, *Rhabdos*, 219.



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rhabdos.[141] In Hellenic sources, the staff of Hermes bears the epithet **tripetēlos** (*τριπέτηλος*), which is why it is believed that it also represents some kind of synonym for kerykeion.[142] The Latin equivalent of the lexeme kerykeion is **caduceus** and it functioned as its main name within the whole of Roman culture. It originated from the Greek κηρύκειον, specifically accepted in its Doric variant, most likely appropriated from the trading cities in Italy and Sicily.[143] The Latin **virga** is also considered a synonym for caduceus. Opinions have been expressed that rhabdos, kerykeion, caduceus and virga are in fact names for one and the same object.[144]

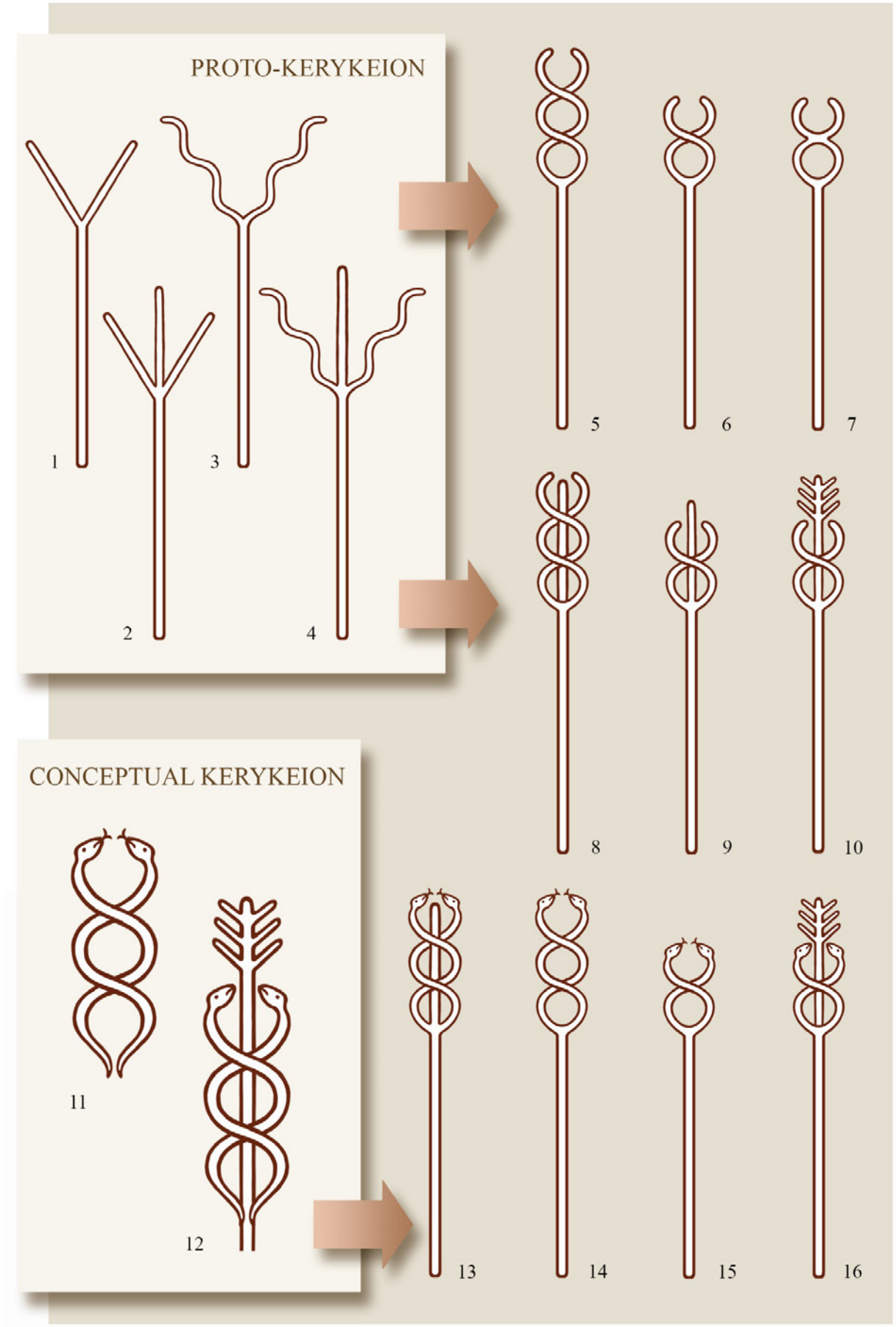
- Primacy of the abstract, serpentine or phytomorphic kerykeion

Most researchers think that the **oldest i.e. original kerykeion** had the form of a staff with its top shaped like an **open "eight"** (H23: 6; H24: 3, 4). Only later, in the middle of the 6th century BCE, did the curved and intertwined prongs that form it take on the **appearance of snakes** (H23: 15; H25: 10; H26: 9; H27: 2, a rare variant with swan heads – 1). They are led to this opinion by the material i.e the written sources, the pictorial representations, and the archaeologically discovered kerykeia.[145] Some of them go further, thinking that the kerykeion with an "open eight" had its predecessor in the **staff with a top split into two prongs** (forked staff), by the intertwining of which it was actually created (H23: 1, 3, 5).[146] R. Bötzkes and F. J. M. de Waele are convinced that the **snakes** were included in the shape of the kerykeion secondarily, as decorative motifs, without any essential symbolic or other meaning.[147] However, they do not rule out the possibility that, after their appearance, in certain environments ("namentlich in ungebildeten Kreisen") they did receive a **secondary symbolic i.e. apotropaic interpretation** which, ultimately, would have been in accordance with the analogous character of the primary kerykeion. They think that in time also followed the introduction of snakes as "a means of **strengthening the magic power** of the staff".[148]

We cannot completely agree with the views expressed about the secondary (decorative i.e. ornamental) character of the snakes in the kerykeion. Numerous arguments, presented in the following sub-chapters, point to the **essential i.e. organic connection of snakes with this object** since the initial stages of its constitution.[149] But, on the other hand, the presented facts do not speak in favor of the opposite point of view as well - on the absolute primacy of the "snake kerykeion" by the stylization of which the "open eight" would have been created. The key to resolving this contradiction can be found in the works of one of the followers of the proposed theories according to which "… it is hard to believe that a prehistoric, original serpent staff could temporarily vanish from the artistic repertoire and then inexplicably reemerge in later times".[150] We do not consider this option at all to be improbable, given the numerous similar examples when a

[141] R. Boetzkes, *Das Kerykeion*, 17-23; C. Anghelina, *Rhabdos*, 222, 223.
[142] C. Anghelina, *Rhabdos*, 223-225; F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 41, 47-49; R. Boetzkes, *Das Kerykeion*, 30-32.
[143] R. Bötzkes, *Kerykeion*, 340, 341; F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 35.
[144] R. Boetzkes, *Das Kerykeion*, 25-27; F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 35, 59, 60, 65, 66.
[145] R. Bötzkes, *Kerykeion*, 338; F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 35, 36, 77, 78; C. Anghelina, *Rhabdos*, 220.
[146] F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 36-39, 44, 47-50, 77.
[147] R. Bötzkes, *Kerykeion*, 339 ("Näher liegt es uns natürlich, die Schlangenköpfe und -leiber für rein ornamentale, belebende Umgestaltungen der toten Windungen der Bekrönung des Kerykeions anzusehen, eine Annahme, zu der sich Analogien aus allen Zeiten beibringen ließen."); F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 78 ("Most probably the serpent-staff is a conventionalized eight-staff, at any rate the development is a question of decoration"). C. Anghelina also agrees with these concepts (C. Anghelina, *Rhabdos*, 220).
[148] R. Bötzkes, *Kerykeion*, 339; F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 53, summarizing his observations on the development of the staff of Hermes, the author (on p. 77) lists the following three basic forms of this object: "the forked-staff, the eight-staff and the serpent-staff, as just without and later with wings."
[149] Criticism towards such an approach: A. L. Frothingham, *Babylonian*, 177-179.
[150] C. Anghelina, *Rhabdos,*220.

H23


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CONCEPTUAL KERYKEION
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particular archaeological object disappears from the historical scene and later suddenly reappears. We see the solution in exactly what the cited statement denies. In that case, in fact, it would not have been a matter of actual **disappearance and reappearance of the serpentine kerykeion**, but of its **continuous existence**, albeit in some spheres in which modern science has no insight. Here we mean the **lower (rural) classes of society**, some particular **marginal ethnic or religious groups** within the frames of ancient Hellenic culture or from its surroundings, which are not sufficiently represented in Hellenic written and pictorial documents and in archaeological finds. We also have in mind the quite probable modeling of such kerykeia primarily in **organic materials** that are invisible to archaeology.

Taking into account these elements, it seems more probable to us that the **"serpentine kerykeion" existed in parallel with the "abstract" one**, and not only within the frames of ancient Hellenic, but also in other cultures that at the same time existed in the territory of Greece and its surroundings. In the first decades of the 6th century BCE, only its "abstract variant" was recorded in Hellenic pictorial documents, probably because it was **dominant among the elite classes of that culture**, which were the focus of these documents (H23: 5 – 10). Somewhat later (towards the middle of the 6th century BCE) in the same social classes, perhaps as a general trend of archaization or return to old traditions, **the serpentine kerykeion had also gained popularity**, probably refreshed by the influence of the indicated marginal cultures (H23: 13 – 16). Therefore, with some delay, it also found its way in the pictorial representations and written documents of the elite Hellenic culture as well, precisely in variants that so easily and logically fit into its basic shape and mythical-symbolic meanings, which gives the impression that they were immanent to it i.e. that they had always been a part of it.

In this **dichotomy between the zoomorphic and the abstract level** enters a third option as well, which, based on certain pictorial and verbal facts, expresses the assumption that the original kerykeion could have also had a **"vegetal" paradigm** in the form of a stick with some kind of twigs, shoots or leaves at the top. From the pictorial ones, these are the representations in which in one or both openings of the "eight" there are depicted three-leaf motifs (H24: 1, 2, 6, 7), while from the verbal ones - **tripetēlos** (*τριπέτηλος*), one of its names i.e. epithets, whose root contains the meanings **(triple) twig, shoot, leaf (offspring)** (H23: 2, 4). In this case, too, there are discussions as to whether it is an original feature that reflects the primary floral essence of the kerykeion or it is a secondary addition to it. C. Anghelina thinks that the three-leaf additions to the kerykeion are the result of the secondary development of its form, whereby he also presents a new hypothesis according which the vegetal aspect is placed at the very basis of this object.[151] According to him, the paradigm of the "open eight" of the kerykeion is the **three leaves of the clover**, specifically as a symbol of prosperity and wealth. However, in support of this very radical theory are presented quite modest arguments. They refer to the indicated symbolism of the clover and the emphasized pastoral character of its main carrier Hermes, given that this plant in the past was one of the most important resources of pastoralism.[152] We think that the **phytomorphic aspect** of the kerykeion should be considered as **one of its primary symbolic components** because it is contained in its very pillar as an allusion to the tree trunk and the vertical stalk of other plants. However, the particular treatment of the clover leaf as the main paradigm for the "open eight" seems unconvincing to us, or, at the very least, insufficiently argued in the specific study. It is quite indicative that in one of the oldest pictorial representations of the kerykeion, it is supplemented precisely by two three-leaf motifs. This is the Corinthian pinax depicting Hermes, Poseidon and Amphitrite, from the second quarter of the 7th century BCE (H24: 6, 7).[153]

[151] F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 41, 48, 49; C. Anghelina, *Rhabdos*, 223-225.
[152] C. Anghelina, *Rhabdos*, 225, 226.
[153] J. Chittenden, *The Master*, 100, Pl. XX-a; F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 48.

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- Autochthonous or exotic origin of kerykeion

The theories on the origin of the kerykeion can be reduced to two groups, the first of which is focused on its **autochthonous origin**, understood in a narrower sense (specifically within the frames of the ancient Hellenes as an ethnic group) or in a broader one (of the Hellenes as members of the Indo-European group of peoples). The second one, in turn, prefers an origin from the **oriental cultures**, of which taken into account are **Phoenicia**, **Babylon**, **Egypt**, and in an indirect way - **India** as well.[154] The main and most convincing proponent of the "oriental theories" is **A. L. Frothingham** who thinks that the Greek kerykeion is a simplification of the oriental one, an integral part of which were also the snakes. **F. J. M. de Waele** presents this concept in detail but still does not accept it on the basis of two arguments - that the original Greek kerykeion was without snakes and that its alleged oriental analogies are also not supplemented by snakes, whereby their form is also different in relation to the Greek ones.[155]

R. Bötzkes thinks that Hittite culture cannot be considered the source of the kerykeia from the central and northern parts of Asia Minor, because at the time they originated, it had not existed for quite some long, while its former territory came under the influence of the Ionians. According to him, the kerykeion from Lycia and Cilicia traces its origin from the western regions of Asia Minor, where at the time the dominant culture was that of the Ionians.[156] Thereby, he does not take into account the depictions from the coins of the city of Hierapolis i.e. Mabog (in neighboring Syria), where a motif quite similar to the kerykeion appears in a pronounced religious context associated precisely with Hittite traditions (H21: 5 – 9). The motif, on the one hand, is close in form to both the Greek kerykeion and to its Middle Eastern analogies, but at the same time appears in a context that is completely different from the Hellenic one (H27: 6 compare with 1, 2).[157] We agree with A. L. Frothingham that these coins, despite being of a more recent date (3rd century CE), reflect some much older traditions, usually invisible to science, which could have had a significant influence on the genesis of the Hellenic kerykeion and of its quite probable predecessor from Asia Minor.[158] In favor of this speaks the fact that the Greek kerykeion is mentioned for the first time precisely in the **sources related to the Ionians of Asia Minor**, who seem to have played a special role in the development and spread of this object.[159]

The thesis of A. L. Frothingham about the oriental origin of the Hellenic kerykeion and its **arrival in Greece through the Eastern Mediterranean and Asia Minor** is quite probable, if we observe it at the level of the general commercial, cultural, demographic and even spiritual movements in the first centuries of the 1st millennium BCE, some of which were presented in the previous chapters of our monograph (H15: 2). However, for its solid argumentation, more evidence is needed, such as pictorial representations or factual objects, similar to the Hellenic kerykeion but older than it, which would originate from the space between Greece and Mesopotamia. The coins of Hierapolis are a very likely indicator of this line, which nevertheless has one significant drawback. From the depiction on the indicated coins it **cannot be proven that the sacred object in the tabernacle is composed of intertwined wavy rods or snakes** analogous as in the kerykeion, and not of ordinary rings or discs (H21: 5 – 9 compare with 10, 11; H27: 6 compare with 1 – 3, 10). We

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[154] R. Boetzkes, *Das Kerykeion*, 6; R. Bötzkes, *Kerykeion*, 332-334; F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 39-44.

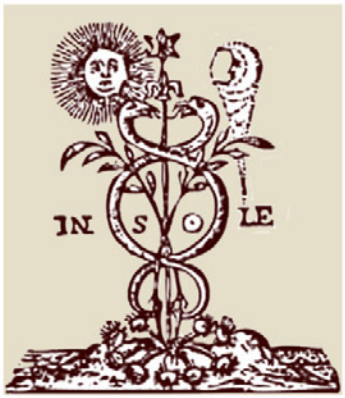
[155] A. L. Frothingham, *Babylonian*, 175-179 ff.; F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 42-44, 77, 78; these arguments are also accepted by other authors: R. Bötzkes, *Kerykeion*, 333; C. Anghelina, *Rhabdos*, 220.

[156] R. Bötzkes, *Kerykeion*, 333.

[157] A. L. Frothingham, *Babylonian*, 206-209, Fig. 40; A. B. Cook, *Zeus* I, 582-589; K. Butcher, *Two Syrian*, 280, 281, 284 (Fig. 11 – Fig. 13). Such a status is clearly presented in the account by Lucian: "Between these two figures stands another golden image (xoanon) in no way resembling the rest. It has no shape of its own, but bears the forms of the other deities. The Assyrians themselves call it a sign: they have given it no special name, indeed they do not even speak of its origin and form ..." (Lucian. *ib.* 31 ff.; according to: A. B. Cook, *Zeus. I*, 582, 583).

[158] A. L. Frothingham, *Babylonian*, 206-209.

[159] R. Bötzkes, *Kerykeion*, 336, 337.



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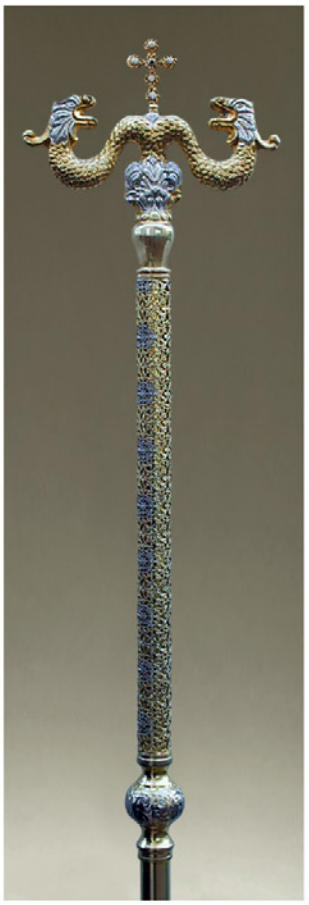

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personally believe in the first two possibilities, specifically due to the emphasized sacral status of the object, the "Assyrian origin" of its venerators, and the relations with the motif from the vase from Lagash (H21: 10, 11). If so, its indeterminate shape may be due to stylization performed by the engravers who prepared the matrices for minting of the coins. However, one cannot rule out the possibility that, at the time of their minting, the original form of this cult object and its original serpentine character had already been forgotten, especially considering that these were the the last centuries of antiquity, which would be chronologically quite distant from its eventual Middle Eastern and Hellenic paradigms.

We have already noted that the prevailing view in academia today is the one according to which the **Italic caduceus originated directly from the Hellenic one**. But it seems that A. L. Frothingham had a different opinion regarding this - of its **direct origin from the East**. He intended to present the arguments in support of it in the second part of his study on Hermes as a serpent god, which was not realized due to his death.[160] This theory does not seem improbable to us if we take into account the numerous examples of direct (though not entirely clear to date) relations between the Middle East and Italy and especially Etruria, several of which were presented in previous chapters of our monograph (H15: 1, 2). In any case, it would not rule out the Hellenic genesis of the Italic caduceus, but would indicate the participation of **two sources in its constitution**.

- Iconography and semiotics of the kerykeion: motif of a pair of snakes intertwined around a central pillar

Building upon some of the previous interpretations regarding the shape, iconography and meaning of the kerykeion i.e. caduceus, in this sub-chapter we will try to present our observations on that issue.[161]

We think that the real ancient Hellenic kerykeion is the product of two components. The first of them could be called **pre-kerykeion** or **proto-kerykeion** and it would mean some kind of specific object that served as a basis i.e. substrate for its creation (H23: 1 – 4). The second component would consist of the **conceptual** i.e. **archetypal kerykeion** that would denote some kind of **imaginary mythical-symbolic notion i.e. image** present in the consciousness (and subconsciousness) of people - members of the Hellenic culture or of certain unexposed (archaic, esoteric or elite) environments within the Hellenic geographical and cultural area or its surroundings (H23: 11, 12).

Many researchers have come to the conclusion that the basis of the real kerykeion was some specific object, in form similar to it, which had certain utilitarian (and symbolic) functions that the former retained to some extent. According to some of them it was the **shepherd's staff** or the **traveling stick** (although both are significantly longer than it), the **wand of judges**, **teachers** and **educators of the youth**, or the **regal** and **priestly scepter**. According to these assumptions, its association with Hermes would not have been original, but secondary.[162] Some researchers have assumed that the top of this stick was divided into **two or three prongs** (H23: 1 – 4) which, in some cases, were also intertwined, so that such an intertwinement later gave rise to the "open eight" of the kerykeion (H23: 5 – 7, 8, 9).[163] Accepting this approach, we suggest the possibility that the **distaff** should also be included in the circle of these paradigms, for which we present additional arguments in the following sub-chapters (H13).

Acceptance of this concept would mean that the mythical image of Hermes with a kerykeion in his hand could have also been based on a corresponding real paradigm: **messenger**, **shepherd or judge with a**

[160] "The next and concluding paper will take us to Italy at a very early dgte and will show the caduceus as the house-god of the early Latins and of primitive Rome; and the Etruscans as having brought to Italy the Hittite and Babylonian caduceus-god." (A. L. Frothingham, *Babylonian*, 211); F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 42.

[161] Overview of the older interpretations: F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 40-44.

[162] F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 38-41; C. Anghelina, *Rhabdos*, 221, 222.

[163] F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 38, 44-50; C. Anghelina, *Rhabdos*, 220, 221.

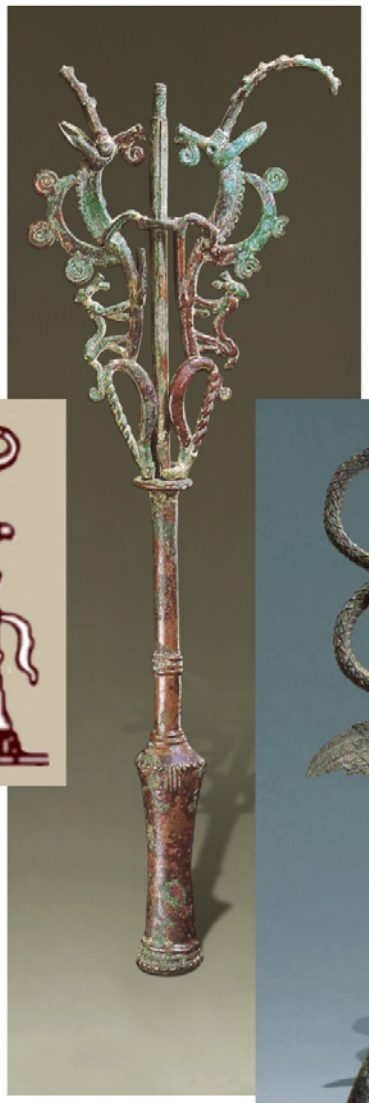
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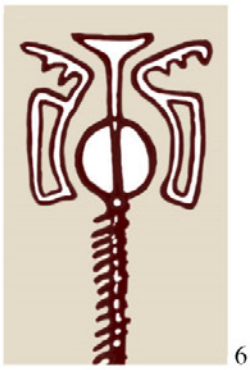

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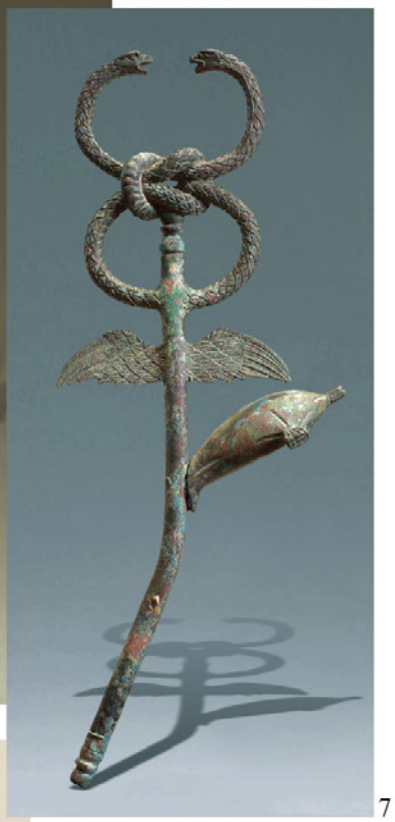

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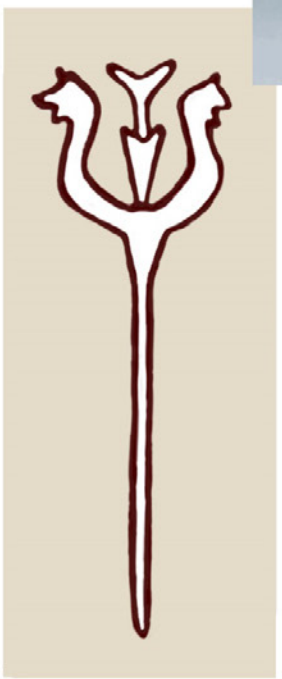

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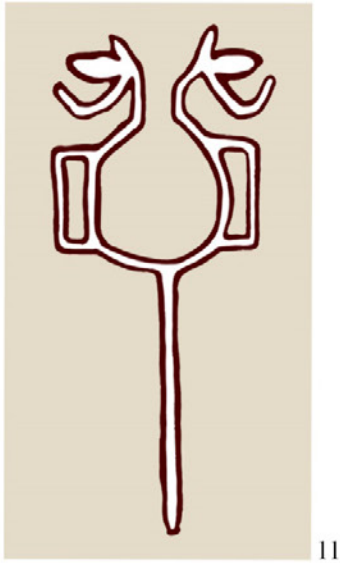

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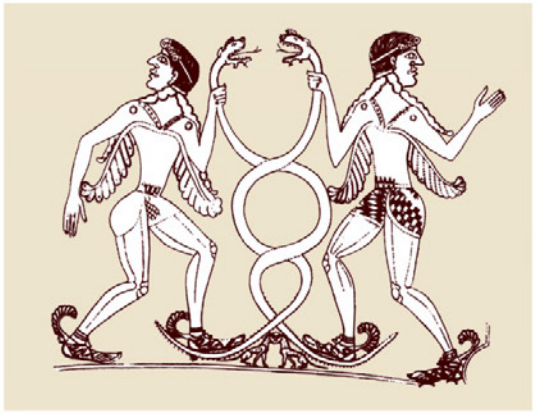

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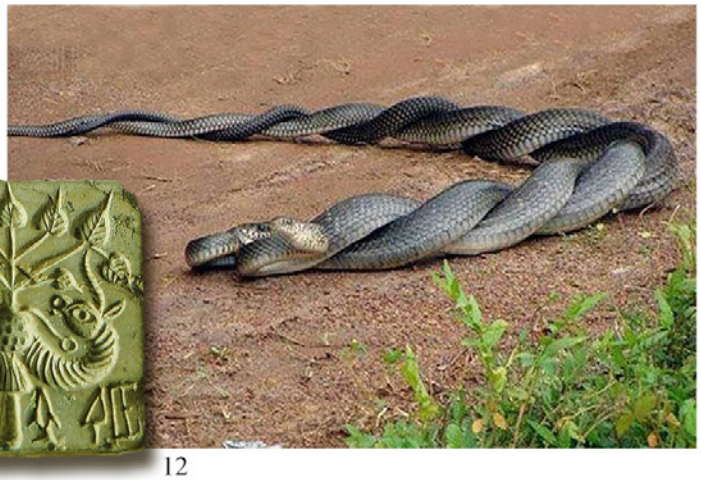

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similar stick in his hand (H24: 1, 4),[164] but also on a **woman with a distaff** who, as we saw, was also considered **invulnerable** such as the messenger accompanied by a kerykeion (H13: 15, 16 compare with H24: 3 – Iris with a kerykeion).

The conceptual (and at the same time ideal) image of a kerykeion consists of **three basic elements** that also constitute its semiotics. These are the **vertical axis** and the **two wavy lines** that intertwine with each other and sometimes also around it. If we accept the view that in the original kerykeion the wavy lines were shaped in the form of **two snakes** intertwined with each other and around a central pillar (or implicitly suggested these notions), we get the three elements around which its basic semiotics can be interpreted. Projected at the level of reality, the wavy lines coincide with a pair of snakes that coil together and around a vertical stick or pole (H23: 11, 12). The real i.e. natural paradigm of the intertwined snakes are **snakes during mating** (H27: 11) or in a mutual fight, which in itself implies the appropriate meanings within this image as well, specifically in terms of their **sexual or some other complementarity**. Such a character of the two lateral elements, in relation to the pillar, puts in the foreground their **dual meaning** which, placed in a more general context, reflects some kind of **triple structure** composed of **two elements with opposite meaning and a central one that is outside their oppositional relation**. Acceptance of these premises would point to an image that represents the **dynamic equilibrium** of two components with a complementary meaning.

Like other images of this type, this one also functions as a conceptual matrix for recognizing, perceiving and interpreting various elements and phenomena. Projected on a macrocosmic level, it coincides with the **structure of the universe** with the dual principles that rule it (progress and regress, life and death, male and female principle ...) and the Cosmic Axis as a symbol of the neutral factor that ensures their dynamic and balance. It can be manifested through various specific phenomena such as: sunrise and sunset, day and night, sun and moon, fire and water, summer and winter, etc. Observed in a **temporal context**, its structure suggests the **processuality that takes place along the line of time**, which in this case would be represented by the crawling of the snakes up the pillar. The last element also gives this image certain **axiological dimensions**, suggesting some kind of ascent (= progress) directed towards a given goal equated with the top of its vertical axis.

At the cosmological level, the intertwined snakes could reflect the **pre-cosmic chaos** caused by the collision of the two complementary forces i.e. tendencies, whereby the central vertical element would represent their **separation, control and balance** achieved through the Cosmic Axis as a symbol of some **higher divine principle**. That would give meaning and justification for the presence of the kerykeion i.e. the caduceus in the hands of **heralds and messengers** as a symbol of their function to ensure **balance and peace between warring sides**.[165] Despite the emphasized duality, this symbolic image represents the organization of primordial principles and forces that **go beyond moral schemes**, and can be interpreted not only from a physical i.e. cosmological and natural aspect, but also from a **psychological** one. In the latter case, it can represent the roots of the psyche, the archetype of the mother, and the process of raising the "I" towards transcendent actuality.[166] In that context, the principle of harmony contained in this image could refer to the **physical and spiritual health** of man as a consequence of the balancing of the dual forces and principles that rule him (life - death, female - male principle, creative - destructive).

The acceptance of the intertwined pair of snakes as an essential part of the iconography and semiotics of the kerykeion and caduceus imposes a search for corresponding analogies in other cultures, regardless of their geographical or chronological proximity or distance in relation to the Hellenic and Roman ones.

[164] F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 72.
[165] J. Chevalier, A. Gheerbrant, *Rječnik*, 238.
[166] F. Diez de Velasco, *Un aspecto*, 42; J. L. Henderson, *Drevni*, 154, 156.

- Comparative analysis

The motif of **intertwined snakes** or **intertwined serpentine creatures** falls into the category of images that are present in various cultures around the world and various epochs, whereby their such universal character can be justified in three ways that do not have to be mutually exclusive. According to the first, they would be based on the **presence of analogous visual structures in nature** that are accessible to humans from all over the planet, such as snakes intertwined during mating and fighting (H22: 4; H27: 11), or even **similarly intertwined stems, branches and shoots in the plant world** (H22: 5). According to the second, they could also be archetypal images present in humans as a biological species, perhaps **based on the structure of DNA** (H22: 3) or some other subcultural archetypal structures present in their subconscious.[167] According to the third concept, the presence of this motif within the borders of the Old World (Mediterranean, Europe, Middle East, India, Far East) may be also due to certain **specific interactions between the cultures** that existed in these regions.

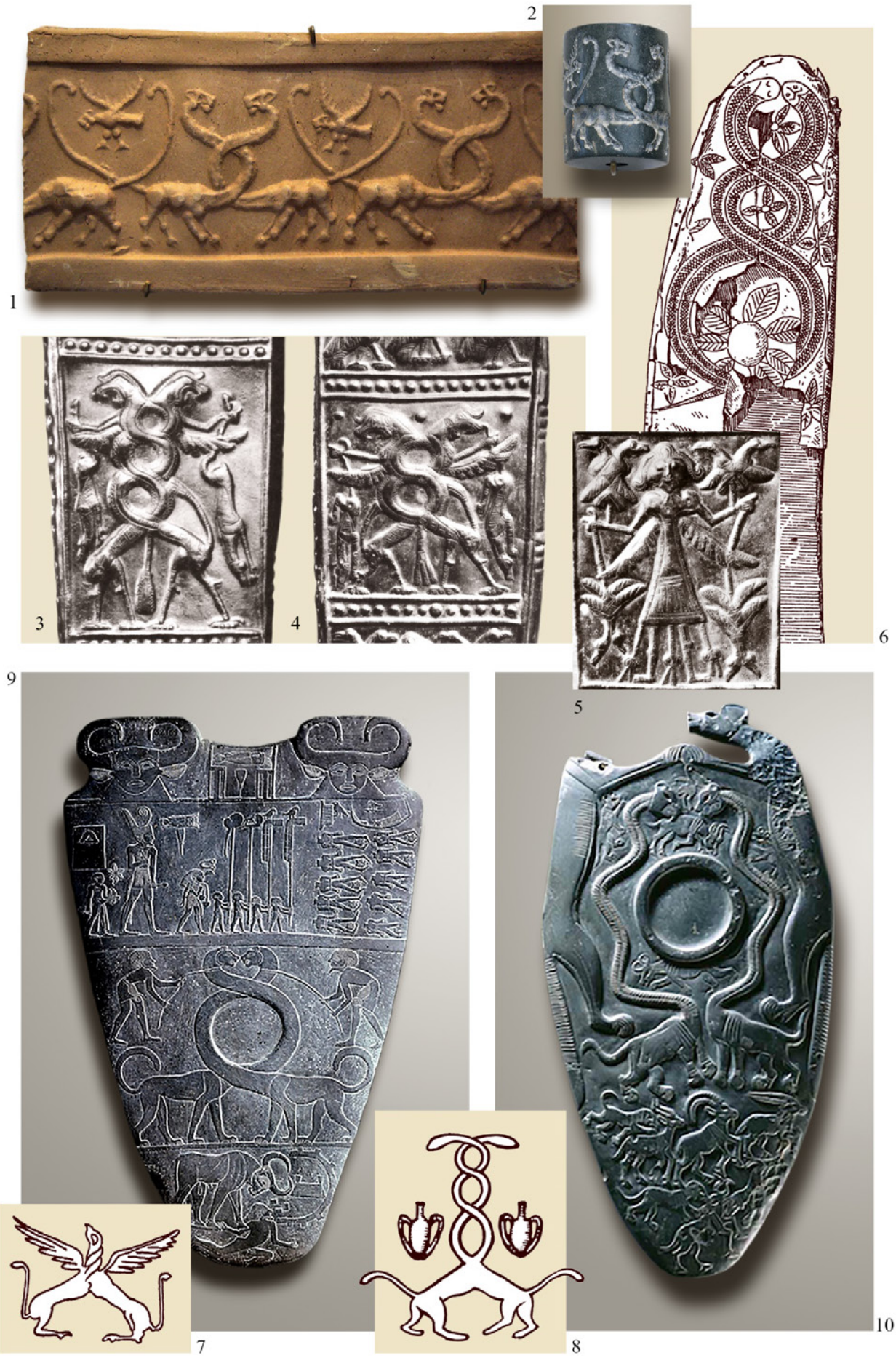
Middle East

The first examples that we mention here were already presented in more detail in the preceding sub-chapters. First comes the relief composition from the **sacrificial vase of Gudea of Lagash** - one of the oldest and most perfect examples of this image (H21: 10, 11). Let us recall once again that the inscription written on it explicitly states that the pillar wrapped by snakes is **Ningizzida** himself - a deity of lower rank who mediates in the communication between the said ruler and the solar god Ningirsu.[168] There are also the several depictions from the Babylonian seals in which two snakes, instead of around a pillar, wrap themselves around a standing anthropomorphic figure, probably representing the former of the named deities (H30: 7, 8 compare with 6).[169] We have seen that in the Roman period such anthropomorphic images would appear within the Mediterranean variants of the Mithraic cult, specifically as representations of **Mithras**, **Aeon**, **Zurvān**, or **Ahriman** (H27: 7 compare with 10; F13).

The presence of similar motifs should also be expected in other Middle Eastern regions, as indicated by the following examples. The first one is the decoration on the hilt of a flint knife from **Gebel-Tarif** from the period Naqada III (c. 3100 BCE), which depicts two intertwined snakes with rosettes between them (H28: 6).[170] The following finds actually form a special group in which, instead of intertwined snakes, appears a pair of mythical creatures, in academic circles known under the narrowly-professional term **"serpopard"** (a coinage of "serpent" and "leopard"). They represent hybrid characters with the body of a leopard or a lion and necks elongated in the form of snakes that intertwine with each other. They are found on some objects belonging to the Egyptian culture, of which the most famous is the **palette of King Narmer** (pre-dynastic period – H28: 9), another similar palette (H28: 10), but also some other objects. Assumptions have been put forward that within the indicated culture this motif symbolized the **chaos that reigns beyond the borders of Egypt**, which should be tamed by the king. There are also assumptions that the motif was taken from Mesopotamia.[171] There, in turn, it appears on **cylinder seals** from the Sumerian period (Uruk, Susa), but also from later stages, where, according to some interpretations, it functioned as "manifestations of the chthonic aspect of the god of natural vitality, who is manifest in all life breaking forth from the earth" (H28: 1, 2, 7,

[167] On the caduceus as an archetypal symbol of transcendence within the frames of analytical psychology: J. L. Henderson, *Drevni*, 154-156.
[168] A. L. Frothingham, *Babylonian*, 181, 182 (Fig. 3), 192.
[169] A. L. Frothingham, *Babylonian*, 184-186, Fig. 6 – Fig. 8.
[170] *Gebel el-Arak* 2020; T. Bunn, *Origin*, 615, 616 (Fig. 3), Jebel el-Arak is mentioned as the findspot of the object.
[171] M. Passanante, *Two Ivory*; T. Bunn, *Origin*, 615, 616 (Fig. 4); *Serpopard* 2020.

H28



8).[172] For us it is especially important that this motif also appears on the Luristan bronzes. Specifically, it is a bronze covering of a **quiver (from the Louvre)** in whose vertically arranged cassettes the motif is depicted twice (H28: 3, 4). Although they represent a pair of zoomorphic hybrid creatures, they are accompanied by a pair of human arms with hands holding the tails of two herbivorous animals whose bodies hang upside down. A similar composition is found in the cassette placed between them, the center of which this time is occupied by a human figure who in its hands, of arms outstretched in the same position as in the previous compositions, holds birds that are also hanging upside down (H28: 5).[173] The alternation of the central figures from these three compositions, together with the indicated similarities, lead us to the conclusion that the pair of intertwined animals from the first two compositions are in fact an **epiphany of the anthropomorphic character from the third one**. This supports the assumption that within Luristan culture as well, the intertwined animals (as a variant of the scene with intertwined snakes) functioned as a **zoomorphic symbol of some deity** with quite a high status.

Far East

An important place in Chinese mythology is occupied by the **primordial married couple**, at the same time **brother and sister**, **Fuxi/Paoxi** and **Nüwa/Nügua**. They are portrayed in the form of hybrid zooanthropomorphic creatures whose upper part is anthropomorphic (sometimes also with elements of other animals), while the lower part - in the form of the body and tail of a snake. Within the visual medium, these characters are depicted mutually intertwined with their lower serpentine part of the body. The oldest examples of such representations are **stone reliefs** in the composition of some tombs that date back to the first centuries of the Common Era. They also appear in the form of **wall paintings** from the same time or somewhat earlier, while later, during the 6th - 8th century CE, there are also examples executed on **silk fabric** (H29: 3, 4).[174] The absence of the pillar between the intertwined bodies of these characters is to some extent compensated by two elements. The first is the "High/Great Tree" (**Jianmu**) along which Fuxi descends from the sky, while the second - the mythical mountain Kunlun on which this mythical couple had united and lived. Both elements in the myth bear the meaning of the "Cosmic Center" and the "Cosmic Axis".[175]

This mythical married couple also incorporates **cosmogonic aspects**. Fuxi is a **giant** who, after waking up from the primordial egg, **divided heaven and earth**, while the elements of the universe were created from the parts of his body. Nüwa, in turn, is a paradigmatic goddess **representative of the female principle**, equated with the **earth** and its **fruit-bearing and creative functions**. The role of creators and fashioners of the universe is denoted by the compass (or scissors) and square and by the sun and moon that are often depicted in the hands of these characters (H29: 3, 4), as well as by the intertwinement of their tails which, in addition to marital relationship, also encodes the very act of cosmogony.[176]

Apart from the appearance i.e. iconographic relations with the kerykeion, in the traditions related to these characters, one can also identify certain functional components that refer to this object and to Hermes as its carrier. Fuxi, like Hermes, bears the role of a **"cultural hero"** who invents i.e. creates the skills that lie at the basis of human existence and culture, such as: the discovery of fire and its use to cook food, the taming of animals, the creation of the writing system, music, measures and measuring instruments, the skill of prophecy,

[172] M. Passanante, *Two Ivory*, 176-178; H. Frankfort, *The Art*, 14-17 (Fig. 7: B, D; foto: Fig. 8), citation: 17; *Serpopard* 2020.
[173] For the object: P. Amiet, *Un carquois*, Pl. XV; Pl. XVI; P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 103-104; P. R. S. Moorey, *Some Elaborately*, 24 (Fig. 5).
[174] Ю. Бай, *Иконография*; М. Кюнстлер, *Митология*, 79-102; *Фу Си* 2020.
[175] М. Кюнстлер, *Митология*, 79-85.
[176] Ю. Бай, *Иконография*, 335, 336; С. И. Блюмхен, *Три сюжета*.

the creation of people from fired clay.[177] The reasons for the frequent depiction of these characters in funerary structures are sought in their function as **companions and protectors of the souls of the dead** during the journey to the "other world", as well as their role in the **consecration** of tombs and funerary ceremonies.[178] These aspects most directly coincide with the funerary functions of Hermes and of his kerykeion (see further).

Nüwa and Fuxi are also brought closer to the kerykeion and caduceus by the interpretations according to which their unusual appearance and symmetrical combination are due to the treatment of these characters as **symbols of the female and male principles (yin and yang)** and their eternal striving for union, but also for separation, which is also the reason and precondition for all existence. Apart from the different sexes, the complementary relation between Fuxi and Nüwa is also reflected in their supplementation by the **Sun and Moon** and their location on the **opposite sides in tombs** - Fuxi in the west (in relation to yang and the sun), while Nüwa in the east (in relation to yin and the moon).[179] These two characters **constitute the perfect principle Tao** which, although does not find its visual manifestation in pictorial representations, can be implicitly identified with the mythical tree and the mythical mountain in the verbal forms of this myth. Taking into account the identification of this principle with the "Cosmic Center", the "Cosmic Axis" and the fixed polar star located in the center of the sky, we think that in our comparisons it could be put in relation with the **pillar of the kerykeion i.e. caduceus**.[180]

Characters similar to Fuxi and Nüwa are also present in **Japanese mythology**. It is the mythical married couple of **Izanagi** and **Izanami** who possess many of the cosmological features and cosmogonic functions of the previous mythical couple. They are also accompanied by the Cosmic Pillar, which they encircle twice before their union in marriage.[181] Nevertheless, in this case we cannot take them as direct visual analogies of the kerykeion i.e. caduceus due to the absence of a serpentine shape.

India

An image quite close to the Hellenic kerykeion and to the central motif from the vase from Lagash is also present in Hindu traditions. The first is represented by the **stone stelae** known as **nāgakal** ("snake-stone"), especially popular in southern India, which depict one, two or more snakes in relief. They represent cult objects that are still made to this day and placed in sacred locations, most often in nature and next to sacred trees (H29: 8, 9). There are also older examples present in medieval temples (H29: 6, 7). They are the subject of **various rituals**, most often performed by women, aimed at fertility, birth-giving, health and well-being in the family, but also as prophylaxis for various types of evil, including snake bites. The figures of snakes depicted on these objects are identified as **nāgas** - divine beings of **ambivalent nature** that have the power to bless, but also to curse. In some cases they are treated as **epiphanies of deities**, mainly female ones. The most interesting to us are the objects on which are depicted **two intertwined snakes** (*piṉṉal nāga*), whose meaning is most directly indicated by the purpose of this variant. Namely, according to the interpretations of the stone-carvers that make them, **one of the depicted snakes is female, while the other is male**, whereby their intertwining denotes that they are a **married couple** i.e. husband and wife. Hence, the purpose of this type of stones is primarily aimed at stimulating marital relationships. Sometimes depicted among the snakes is a small **lingam**, which suggests the additional blessings by Shiva regarding these spheres. We think that in this case one should also not exclude the other forms of complementarity between the two snakes (**one as a bearer of the positive, while the other of the negative principle**). We are led to this by the beliefs that nāgas can cause negative effects as well: infertility, disease, separation of spouses, and various

[177] М. Кюнстлер, *Митология*, 79-102; Б. Л. Рифтин, *Фу-си*, 573; Ю. Бай, *Иконография*, 334.
[178] Ю. Бай, *Иконография*, 335.
[179] Ю. Бай, *Иконография*, 336.
[180] Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, 375.
[181] Е. М. Пинус, *Идзанаки*; J. Chevalier, A. Gheerbrant, *Rječnik*, 238.

troubles in the family as revenge for the killing of snakes and other forms of disrespect towards them, as well as failure to fulfill religious duties in relation to their cult.[182] It is quite interesting that at cultic sites where the "snake-stones" are venerated, people also place **wooden cult objects** which are basically similar to the kerykeion and to the Luristan standards. They are shaped in the form of a vertical stick planted on an earthen pedestal, the upper part of which has three prongs - the central one being straight, while the lateral ones are curved. These objects are also considered **markers of the goddess** venerated at the sanctuary, which is why they are surrounded by various cultic actions that primarily consist of leaving various offerings beside them (H29: 5; H26: 3 compare with the rest).[183]

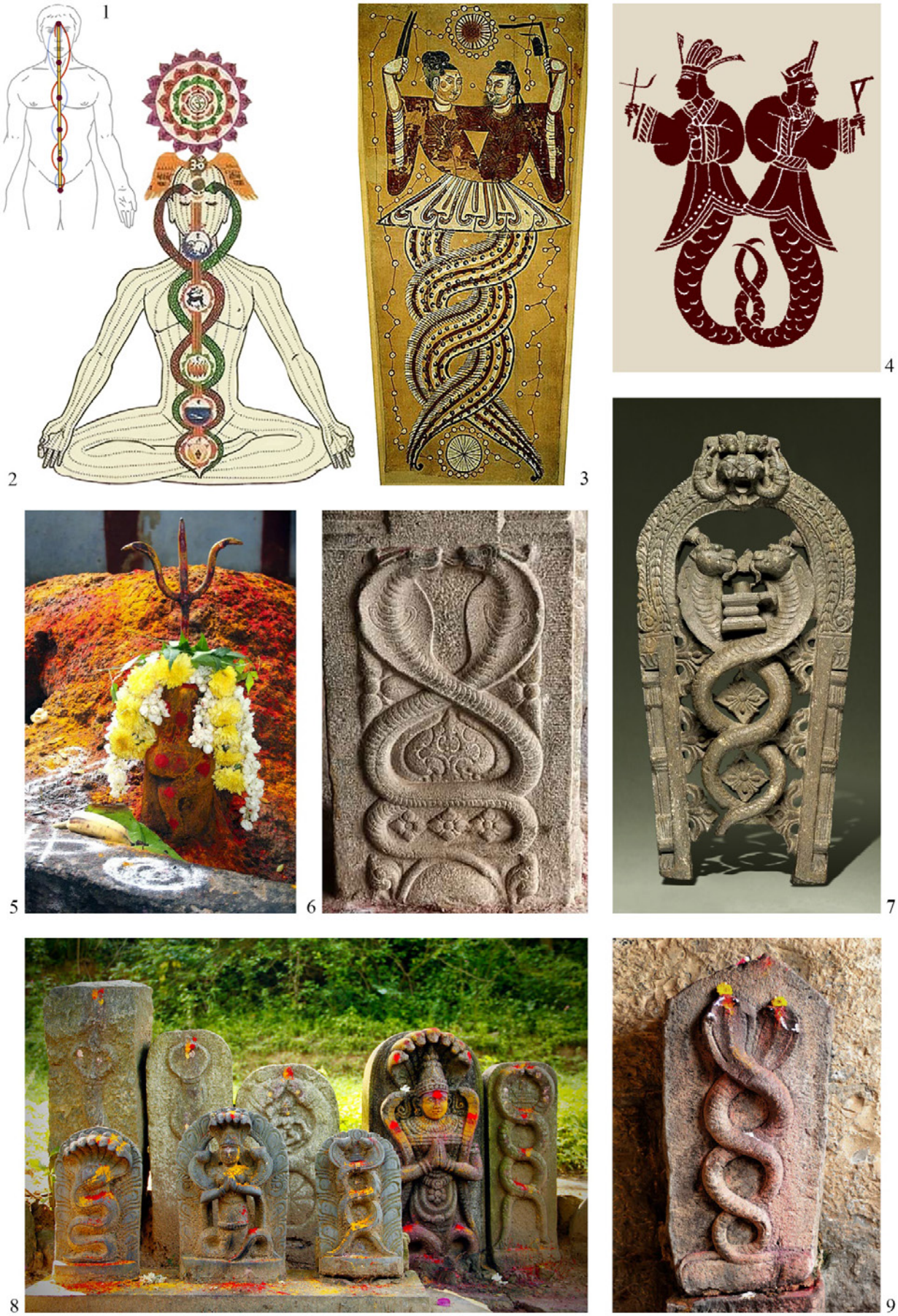
The motif of two intertwined snakes was often depicted in the lower part (point i.e. blade) of the cult objects of the type **kīla** i.e. **phurba**, specific to Tibetan Buddhism and Tantrism, and especially their wooden variants specific to Tibetan shamanism (G16: 6, 9). The presence of this motif is quite logical, if we take into account the pronounced axial character of this object that was equated with the Cosmic Pillar driven into the head of the chthonic dragon (Makara) often represented at the bottom of its hilt (G16: 4, 6, 8 – 10; see pp. 477, 478, 550).

The third Indian example has a completely different character. It is a **symbolic image** (more precisely, an abstract structure) which presents the doctrine of Tantrism in relation to the **organization and functioning of the human body** - the material and especially the subtle i.e. energetic one. At the basis of this structure and the Tantric doctrine in general, is the idea of the equality of man with the universe i.e. the treatment of his body, with all its organs and functions, as a microcosm and as a "divine body". According to this doctrine, in the human body there are a number of channels (**nāḍi**) through which vital energy flows, as well as centers (**chakras**) in which the cosmic and divine energy is present in a latent form. The most important are three such channels that are also key to our study. The first and main one is **Suṣumnā** and it extends in a straight line vertically along the spine, while next to it there are two **more wavy channels** of which the left one is **Iḍā** and represents the female principle and the lunar energy, while the right **Piṅgalā** is the representative of the male principle and the solar energy. The last two channels coil and intertwine around Suṣumnā, whereby the points at which they connect are called chakras, the most important of which are seven, arranged along the three nadis, starting from the first **Mūlādhāra**, located at the bottom of the spine, up to the seventh **Sahasrāra** at the top of the head (H29: 1). Within the frames of this system, the human physical energy **Kuṇḍalinī** is represented in the form of a **spirally coiled snake**. It resides (in latent form) at the base of the spine, in the genital organs and the Mūlādhāra chakra, whereby its first manifestation is sexual. With the help of yoga and other techniques, it can be awakened, after which it begins its **ascent along the central channel** all the way up to the seventh chakra, followed by the opening of the knots (*granthis*) of the chakras through which it passes. This process leads to the liberation of man from the various limitations imposed on him by his material, biological and psychological nature, which results in the spiritual perfectioning of the individual and his attainment of divine levels.[184]

Within the presented structure, the three nadis do not coincide directly with our "conceptual kerykeion" because the intertwined lateral channels (Iḍā and Piṅgalā) **are not themselves represented as snakes** (H29: 1). The serpentine appearance is given to Kuṇḍalinī - the energy that flows through them, which in turn is presented as singular and not as dual. Nevertheless, there are numerous known examples where **the lateral nadis are also represented as two snakes intertwined around the central Suṣumnā**, which leads to the assumption that the mythical image of two snakes intertwined around a central pillar had probably served as their paradigm (H29: 2).

[182] A. L. Allocco, *Fear*; A. L. Allocco, *Snakes*, 196-204, on the variants with a pair of intertwined snakes: 38, 219, 220; on these objects and their relations to the caduceus: P. Granziera, *The Indo-Mediterranean*, 615-620.
[183] A. L. Allocco, *Fear*, 235, 236 (Fig. 2).
[184] M. Elijade, *Joga*, 232-252; R. Beer, *The Encyclopedia*, 135-148; relations with the kerykeion i.e. caduceus: F. Diez De Velasco, *Serpentine*, 16, 19, 20.

H29



In Hindu culture there is also a fourth example that coincides with the form and character of the kerykeion. It is the **Brahmanic scepter** (brahmadanda), also entwined by snakes, which at the same time denotes the bamboo rod carried by ascetics. Its appearance and name obviously coincide with the previous system i.e. the spine and the three nadis that extend along it.[185]

Most of all the above mentioned Indian traditions are contained in the **trishula** - a cult object that occupies a place in various Hindu and Buddhist religious traditions. It has the shape of a **scepter consisting of a trident-like top** planted on a wooden stick whose lateral prongs are more or less curved, similar to the Luristan standards and all the other presented parallels. Although these lateral prongs generally do not have the form of animal protomes, the contours of some examples point to such a former shape of theirs. However, in some cases they are supplemented by some kind of animal protomes (H27: 4). In support of their former zoomorphic character speaks one of the oldest pictorial representations of these objects depicted on a seal from the "Harappa" culture, dating to the 3rd millennium BC (H27: 12).[186] It forms a composition that is much closer to the Luristan standards than the other Indian examples of intertwined snakes. It is composed of a pair of arched protomes of mammals, most likely bovines (sometimes interpreted as snakes or dragons), which flank a central vegetal motif shaped in the form of a tree with branches at the tips of which are depicted leaves or circular motifs. At the junction of the protomes and the branches there is a disk supplemented by several small circles.[187] It is especially important for us that this motif at the bottom ends in a short pillar that looks like a handle, which gives the whole image the meaning of some kind of cult object intended for planting or holding in hand.

Within Hinduism, the trishula is mainly associated with **Shiva**, symbolizing **various trinities** that are in some way related to him: will, knowledge and action; the three gunas (rajas, sattva, tamas); the three principles of existence (creation, preservation and destruction) personified by the characters of the gods Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva; the dominion of Shiva over the "three realms" (heaven, earth and underworld) and the three times (past, present, future); the three nadis (Iḍā, Piṅgalā, Suṣumnā). Iron trishulas are present in all temples of Shiva in India (H27: 8, 9). In early Buddhism, this symbol functioned as **one of the earliest aniconic symbols of the Buddha**.

An additional argument for introducing this symbol in our study is the **combination of a trishula with a pair of intertwined snakes** (Sanskrit: *sarpa-trishula*, Tibetan: *sbrul-gyi rtse-gsum*). In early Hinduism, this symbol functioned as an **emblem of Shiva Lokeshvara** ("Lord of the Worlds"), whereby one snake was red, while the other white, denoting, among other things, the solar and lunar channels of the two nadis. In Tibet, the three-pronged top was supplemented by a human skull and a "flag" made of a yak tail. This motif (but with one snake) was also accepted in **Mahayana Buddhism** as an emblem of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara in his form Simhanada.[188] Symbolic objects similar to the caduceus, and even more so to the Roman *signum*, were also present in the **culture of Kushan**, which are placed in relation to the sacred weapon *paṭṭiśa* i.e. *pseudo-vajra*.[189]

The Balkans

Finally, going back to the kerykeion and the caduceus, we will also present the examples of the "conceptual kerykeion" within the frames of its main geographical area. Directly or indirectly, intertwined snakes show relations with actions connected to three characters from **Hellenic mythology** who at first glance have no direct relationship to the kerykeion. The first action refers to the famous Theban seer **Teiresias**, who,

[185] A. Snodgrass, *The Symbolism*, 53, 54; J. Chevalier, A. Gheerbrant, *Rječnik*, 238.
[186] R. Beer, *The Handbook*, 130.
[187] P. Granziera, *The Indo-Mediterranean*, 615, 616, Fig. 7.
[188] R. Beer, *The Handbook*, 133, 134.
[189] H. Falk, *Kushan*, 19-28, 31.

walking through the forest, saw two large mutually intertwined snakes that were mating (compare H22: 4; H27: 11). He took a stick to separate them but in doing so he injured (or according to other versions he killed) the female one with it. The same moment he transformed from a boy into a girl so that he would retain the female sex in the next seven years. In the eighth year, he again encountered snakes that were mating, and by hitting one of them, he was once again transformed into a man.[190] Apart from the pair of intertwined snakes and the stick, there are no other elements in this myth that would directly indicate some kind of relations to the kerykeion and Hermes. But we find such relations in a text by **Hyginus** which, through a similar action, explains the origin of the kerykeion and its **peacemaking** and **mediating power**. The differences consist in that the bearer of this action is **Hermes**, while the product - his kerykeion that was created from an ordinary stick with which the god separated two snakes. The third difference is that these snakes were not intertwined **due to mating** but **due to mutual fight**, which is in full accordance with the role that this stick would later acquire i.e. the power (of the kerykeion) to ensure **reconciliation between two warring sides**.[191]

This one, as well as other myths about Tiresias that we do not mention here, are mainly aimed at describing the events that led to the emergence of his **prophetic power**. From their content it can be concluded that the main reason for this was the **sex change** of the main character. In that context, F. Diez De Velasco also examines the myth of **Branchus** - another character with a pronounced prophetic gift and mythical founder of the oracle at Didyma. In this case, too, the indicated gift was caused by the sexual ambivalence of the mentioned character, this time manifested through his homosexual intercourse with Apollo.[192] The referenced scholar in his analyzes also includes a third myth, which refers to another Hellenic prophet and healer. This time it is **Melampus**, who acquired **these abilities directly from the snakes that, while he slept, had cleaned his ears, enabling him to understand the speech of birds (and other animals)**, and thus **predict future events**. This last myth also contains other components that point to some kind of possible relations with the kerykeion and the mating of snakes. Namely, the snakes that cleaned Melampus' ears had their **lair in an old oak tree near his house**, which is a paradigmatic image of the "Cosmic Tree" whose roots are inhabited by snakes that in this context, among other things, also play the role of classifiers of the lower zones of the universe.[193]

These myths by themselves do not present a comprehensive symbolic system that would give explanation, conception i.e. justification for the obvious cause-and-effect relations between the indicated actions and the prophetic powers of the main characters. **F. Diez De Velasco** complements this shortcoming by comparing these myths with the above-mentioned **Hindu traditions** in which he identifies the same key elements and structures, but this time as parts of an elaborate and well-preserved esoteric mythical-religious system. Firstly, it is the **perfectioning of the main character** whose newly acquired prophetic (and healing) power coincides with the aforementioned Indian **techniques associated with Tantrism and the awakening of the Kuṇḍalinī**, the ultimate goal of which is the transformation of the common man into a superior superhuman being with divine characteristics which has the power to overcome the limitations imposed upon him by nature and to gain knowledge of the universe with all its secrets. The second component is the **snakes** which in both cases are symbols of the power that directly conditions the indicated transmutation. The third component consists of the **sexual spheres** that occupy a key place in the two traditions - in both environments denoted by the male sex of one, and the female sex of the other snake. Thereby, special importance in awakening the "serpentine power" of the Kuṇḍalinī is given to **heterosexual and homosexual techniques**

[190] In detail about the myth, the sources and the interpretations: F. Diez De Velasco, *Serpentine*, 13, 14; Д. Срејовић, А. Цермановић, *Речник*, 418; W. Burkert, *Structure*, 30.
[191] (Hyginus, *Astron.* 1I, 7, 2); F. Diez De Velasco, *Serpentine*, 15.
[192] In detail about the myth, the sources and the interpretations: F. Diez De Velasco, *Serpentine*, 15, 16; Д. Срејовић, А. Цермановић, *Речник*, 82, 83.
[193] In detail about the myth, the sources and the interpretations: Д. Срејовић, А. Цермановић, *Речник*, 251, 252; F. Diez De Velasco, *Serpentine*, 13.

raised to the level of **sacred activities**. Finally, there are also the **iconographic relations** i.e. the coinciding of the two snakes and the stick by which they are separated (= paradigm of the kerykeion) with the three nadis and the Kuṇḍalinī from Tantric traditions, as well as the **phalluses of Shiva** (in the "snake-stones" from southern India) **and of Hermes i.e. Mercury** (in the Greek kerykeion and the Roman caduceus) placed between them (compare with H20: 6).[194]

Some of the indicated relations are taken by F. Diez De Velasco as arguments in support of the assumption that **systems similar to the Hindu one also existed in Ancient Greece** (we would add in its Balkan, Aegean and Anatolian surroundings as well). But, according to him "In the Greek case the information is hidden in the mythical language (in the literary or iconographical transmission), re-elaborated and transmitted in most cases by authors who are unaware of the real dimension of the facts they are relating". The reasons for this, among other things, can be sought in the practice of these traditions within the ancient mystery cults in which there was a prohibition on sharing the essential components of the cult with those who were not initiated into it through appropriate ritual procedures. The author thinks that the nature of the mentioned similarities indicates "... the cultural adaptation produced in the social mentality in each country that seems to illustrate the archaism of the practices and permits us to refute a recent loan".[195]

To these **Hellenic-Indian relations** we can add a few more, connected to the sacred "snake stones" (nāgakal). First of all, these are the recommendations for **respect i.e. non-injury to snakes**, especially during their mating, which is punishable by eye illness, which coincides with Tiresias' sin and his blindness as punishment for it. The second relation refers to the **cutting of the trees** in which the snakes mated, present in Indian legends and in the myth of Melampus.[196]

The image of intertwined snakes is present not only in kerykeia, but also in other **pictorial examples** that belong to ancient Hellenic culture. A quite interesting such representation is hammered on a **bronze helmet from Crete** (7th century BCE, in the Metropolitan Museum) which depicts (twice) a scene with two male figures, with a pair of wings on their backs and a wing above each heel (H30: 3, 5). They both hold in hand a large snake that intertwines with the other in an analogous format as in the kerykeion and the other examples presented above (H27: 3 compare with the rest). F. Diez De Velasco compares this representation to another, painted on an **olpe from the National Museum in Athens** (early 6th century BCE) which depicts two different winged figures (in the form of sphinxes or seirenes) that this time flank the figure of Hermes with a kerykeion in his hand (H30: 1, another such representation 2). The author points to the possible symbolic equivalence of the central motifs of this and the previous object, whereby he puts forward the assumption that the **pair of intertwined snakes from the helmet actually symbolize Hermes himself i.e. his kerykeion**. In that context, he also finds the meaning of the pair of winged figures in these representations: "To control the serpentine power is the task of the god and the winged beings are a represention of the ascension included in the rite".[197] Acceptance of this interpretation would mean that the **direct identification of Hermes and the kerykeion was also present in Greece**, analogously as in Mesopotamia (**the vase from Lagash, in relation to the figure with intertwined snakes from the seals** – H30: 6 compare with 7, 8), and probably in the sanctuary of Hierapolis as well ("semeion" as the central entity of the divine triad H27: 6). For our study it is important that in the lower part of the compositions from the helmet, in the triangular field under the tails of the two snakes, there is a small figure that is well known to us from the Luristan bronzes (H30: 4 compare with 3, 5 and with C11; C12). It is the figure of two animals from the family of felines

[194] F. Diez De Velasco, *Serpentine*, 20-22; F. Diez de Velasco, *Un aspecto*, 43, 44; W. Burkert gives these myths an initiatory meaning (W. Burkert, *Structure*, 29, 30).
[195] F. Diez De Velasco, *Serpentine*, 24, citation: 27; F. Diez de Velasco, *Un aspecto*, 43-45.
[196] F. Diez De Velasco, *Serpentine*, 14; Д. Срејовић, А. Цермановић, *Речник*, 251, 252; A. L. Allocco, *Fear*, 231, 232, 245.
[197] F. Diez De Velasco, *Serpentine*, 23; basic information and a drawing of the object from Crete: W. Burkert, *Structure*, 32 (Fig. 2).

H30



oriented towards each other, but with a shared/common head - a motif whose symmetrical triple structure and chthonic symbolism perfectly correspond to its position in this scene (see p. 196).

The motif of two symmetrical snakes can be traced on the Balkan Peninsula also through other pictorial representations with a cultic character. Although we think that these were traditions that did not differ significantly from the ones presented above, on this occasion we will not touch upon them because they lack the intertwining - one of the key features of the kerykeion, due to which we actually took on these comparisons. The roots of this image in the Balkans can be traced back to the Minoan figurines in which the meaning of the central pillar is taken on by the female character that holds the two snakes in her hands, denoting the factor that controls the complementary categories they symbolize.[198]

In the Balkans these images (including the intertwining of snakes) appear also much later - in the late stages of the Middle Ages. The first group of such motifs is present on the **stećci** - medieval tombstones from Bosnia and Herzegovina. They are represented by several rather unified depictions that show two symmetrically intertwined snakes (supplemented by a pair of wings) (H31: 1, 3, 4, 6) and by several other more stylized or asymmetrical variants (H31: 7, 8, 11). In the same period, this image also appears among the relief decoration of several **wooden church doors from Macedonia** (H31: 2, 5, 9). Thereby, one of the examples is executed in a format similar to those from the stećci (H31: 2 compare with 1, 3, 4). The cultural and religious context of these representations is sought in three approaches. Within the first they are treated as ordinary **decorative motifs**, while according to the second - as **older elements secondarily incorporated into the Orthodox Christian symbolic system**. According to the third approach, their genesis is sought within the **medieval dualistic heresies** (Bogomilism and others) which in the given period, or somewhat before, were widespread in both regions.[199] Especially indicative to us are the relations of these motifs with those characteristic of the kerykeion i.e. the caduceus, specifically the winged nature of its snakes and the funerary character of the examples from Bosnia and Herzegovina (compare H31 with H22: 1; H26: 7).

The motif of intertwined snakes is also found on **medieval tombstones from Asia Minor** in a format that on the one hand is quite different from previous examples, but on the other is very close to the real appearance of snakes during mating (H31: 10 compare with H27: 11).[200] In the same region (Cappadocia) it is also present in church paintings, specifically from the **cave church Mavrucan 3**. It is a fresco-composition that depicts how the military saints St. George and St. Theodore, mounted on horses, pierce with their spears a pair of snakes symmetrically intertwined around a centrally placed tree. At the same time, they trample the tails of the snakes with the hooves of their horses (H30: 9).[201] Taking into account the considerable similarity of this central motif with the older examples presented above, the location of the find and its quite early dating (c. 600 CE) we do not exclude the possibility that they had a certain indirect role in its formation. Beginning in the Middle Ages, the motif of snakes intertwined around a central pillar entered the circle of the **most important symbols of European alchemy** (H25: 1). The indicated process probably took place with the mediation of the kerykeion of Hermes i.e. caduceus of Mercury, considering the important role of the mentioned gods in the constitution of these traditions. The two snakes of the caduceus were interpreted by the alchemists **as symbols of the complementary principles** (sulfur and mercury, male and female, dry and wet, hot and cold) that strive for mutual reconciliation by uniting into its golden pillar (*coincidentia oppositorum* i.e. *coniunctio oppositorum*).[202]

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[198] Examples, with an analysis of the compositions, identification of the meaning, with presented bibliography: Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 72, 83-85, 940, 941, on the goddess with a pair of snakes in her hands: 121, 942, 943; T. Bunn also points to these relations: T. Bunn, *Origin*, 616, 617, Fig. 7, Fig. 8.

[199] Analysis of the compositions, identification of the meaning and presented bibliography: Н. Чаусидис, *Дуалистички*, 342-348, T. L; examples from the stećci: M. Wenzel, *Ukrasni*, 258, T. LXXV; T. LXXVI.

[200] E. Esin, *The Conjectural*, Pl. VII: b; Н. Чаусидис, *Дуалистички*, 345 (T.L: 10).

[201] C. Walter, *Saint Theodore*, 99, 100, Fig. 12.8; C. Walter, *The Warrior*, XI, 56, 125, Pl. 27, a similar scene Pl. 28.

[202] J. Chevalier, A. Gheerbrant, *Rječnik*, 239.

H31



This image had survived in the Balkans until modern ethnographic traditions, such as, for example, the schematic **ornaments on ritual breads** (H27: 5). In Bulgaria, there have been recorded variants of such intertwined serpentine motifs that the female bakers from the 19th century defined as "man and woman, embraced", whereby the specific sign on the bread denoted (or had to contribute to) "harmony in the house, harmonious children and happiness from that harmony".[203]

* * *

After the conducted comparative analyzes, the question arises *why the "real kerykeion" does not completely coincide with the "conceptual" one?* As an answer to this question one can accept the theses of F. J. M. de Waele and R. Bötzkes according to which it developed from a stick with some other shape, character and function, which had two or three prongs at the top (H23: 1 – 4). Due to certain reasons, in some cases they would become intertwined with each other and around the pillar, so they gradually took on the form of an "open eight" (H23: 5 – 10). Including this view in our conception, we can round it off with the assumption according to which the Greek kerykeion would have actually been the result of the interaction and interferation of the "proto-kerykeion" and the "conceptual kerykeion" i.e. the mythical-symbolic image of a pair of snakes intertwined around a vertical pillar (H23: 11, 12). The product of this process would have been the recognition of this archetypal image in the existing object, which may not have had that specific meaning at the given moment. In this context, one can also explain the later appearance of snakes in the Greek kerykeion, as an additional step in bringing the given "proto-kerykeion" closer to the archetypal image (H23: 13 – 16). In these later variants, one can also note another element of convergence towards the ideal image. Namely, the pillar does not end at the tails of the snakes (H23: 14, 15), but continues to extend upwards between the intertwined bodies, ending in the area of their heads (H23: 13, 16).

5. Iconographic elements and functions of the Luristan standards in relation to the kerykeion, caduceus and other analogies

a) Iconographic elements

If the "Middle Eastern caducei" (from the seals and other examples) are compared with the Luristan standards and the Mediterranean kerykeion i.e. caduceus, it turns out that, regardless of the geographical, chronological and cultural distance, the latter are closer to them than the Luristan standards. In their simple shape, preserved in pure form, are the three elements that are present in the oldest representation on the vase of Gudea, consisting of a vertical pillar surrounded by a pair of symmetrical snakes that are entwined around it and among themselves. In comparison to the Luristan standards, it is evident that, although their basic structure is globally the same, in all other aspects they are quite different from the "Middle Eastern caducei". Their pillar is not simple, but transformed into a phallus, or an anthropomorphized column, while of the two snakes there is not a single trace, but instead there is a pair of other animals or their protomes. Contrary to some opinions, at least at first glance, **these conclusions do not support the emergence of the Luristan standards under the influence of these older Mesopotamian paradigms.**

However, this discrepancy can be mitigated to some extent if we take into account that on the Mesopotamian seals, the "caduceus" nevertheless does not appear in its "conceptual form". The pair of protomes in their case do not usually resemble the protomes of snakes but belong to other animals, probably four-legged ones, if we take into account the quadrangular appendages for which we proposed to be treated as stylizations of their bent legs (H21: 1 – 4). The pillar of these "caducei" is also not an ordinary stick, but its tip

[203] The material comes from the village of Byala Slatina and Dere-Mahle in Bulgaria (Д. Маринов, *Народна*, 376, Рис. 1к, 1м, 1н).

is often supplemented by some kind of rounded element that in some cases could have been based on the glans penis. There are examples where it rests on a pair of symmetrical animals (H20: 5 compare with 4) or on the head of a human figure - arrangements identical as in the standards (H19: 4, 5 compare with 6). These similarities point to some more complex relations between Luristan and the older Mesopotamian cultures. Although it is quite possible that the primary impetus for the emergence of the Luristan standards came from Mesopotamia, some representations on the seals indicate its reverse effect as well, specifically after it had been changed under the influence of local Luristan components. Thereby, the date of this **return Luristan wave** does not have to be strictly determined according to the specific standards. It might have also been somewhat older than them if we take into account that behind the iconography of these objects there are some conceptual iconographic paradigms that had to exist at least a little time before the emergence of these objects, perhaps in the media of organic materials or in some other medium that is invisible to modern science. The directions of these influences can be determined more precisely only by the exact dating of the specific motifs from the seals. By placing the proposed comparisons on an accurate chronological scale, one could answer whether the specific motif **arose within the Babylonian** or **some other Mesopotamian culture, whether and when it transferred to Luristan, whether it returned from there to its native environment and whether Luristan culture had a role in its changing.**

The visual similarity between the Luristan bronzes and the Mediterranean caduceus seems to be even smaller and less direct than the one with the Mesopotamian "caducei", although, as we shall see, their connection is indicated by numerous other indirect pieces of evidence.

- Two-faced god

An important shared component of the Luristan standards, and the older Middle Eastern seals, is the two-faced god who we have seen is the **central iconographic element of several types of standards**. On the seals, he appears in a rather **realistic format** as a **complete figure of a man with two faces on his head**, whereby his name is also known. The very fact that on to Luristan standards this component is fashioned differently in the form of a **pillar i.e. phallus supplemented by two human faces**, and that between them there is a hiatus of several centuries, indicates some more complex and in any case not direct Mesopotamian-Luristan relations.

The two-faced god is also an important shared component among the Luristan standards, the Greek kerykeion and the Italic caduceus. In the case of the Greek kerykeion, he is not represented on an iconographic level, but indirectly - through **Hermes** as the main bearer and creator of the kerykeion, which, according to some interpretations, even functioned as his **aniconic equivalent**. This relation is based on the double-faced columnar idols (hermai) which are considered to be one of the most archaic pictorial representations of this god (see p. 485). On Italic soil, this component is represented by **Janus**, but in a completely different way that does not directly involve the caduceus and the Greek Hermes with his kerykeion, which goes in favor of some **parallel genetic line that leads directly from the Middle East**. In our elaborations on the nature and functions of the Italic Janus in relation to the bifacial character from the Luristan standards, we mentioned the priests from the collegium of the Salii who worshiped this god.[204] Thereby, we presented coins on which they are accompanied by symbolic objects, identified as caducei which, coincidentally or not, correspond to the two basic forms of use of the Luristan standards. In the first case it is a typical caduceus that the depicted character **holds in his hand**, which would correspond to the variant in which the Luristan standards were carried in the hands so that their support (higher and with a narrower bottom) would have been fastened onto some kind of stick (H25: 2 compare with H1: 2, 3; H18). In the second case, a similar but more complex standard (according to the interpretations a candelabrum) is **placed**

[204] A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 377 – Fig. 283, 284; on the relations with Hermes: W. Burkert, *Greek*, 285, footnote 59.

on the floor in front of the priest, which would correspond to the variant in which the Luristan standards, planted onto a support with a wider bottom, stood on some kind of flat surface (H25: 3 compare with H1: 4).

Such Italic-Luristan relations were apostrophized several times in the previous chapters, and they are indicated by a number of other iconographic overlaps between Luristan and the synchronous Italic cultures (the "Villanova" culture and the Etruscan culture).

Whether Hermes, as the carrier of the kerykeion, can be considered the Mediterranean equivalent of the main bifacial god from the pillar of the Luristan standards? Luristan bronzes, including standards, were present in the Aegean, precisely at the time of the emergence of the first kerykeia. *Does this mean that they directly influenced their formation?* Certainly not, because their form is very different. We think that these influences were not realized **at the level of objects** (as archaeologists want to see it) but **at the level of the religious phenomena that stood behind those objects**. Hence behind these relations there could have been some cult (perhaps of oriental origin), at the basis of which was some god of a supreme character (**Proto-Hermes, with two or more faces**) depicted as a pillar and/or phallus, combined with a pair of snakes or serpentine animals. He was also represented aniconically, in the form of a **pillar or phallus intertwined by a pair of snakes**. We have him in Luristan, in India, probably in Syria, on the west coast of Asia Minor, and then in Italy.

- Pair of symmetrical animals

Snakes are not explicitly depicted on any of the Luristan standards. However, they are implicitly indicated by the **extremely elongated necks of both animals**, whereby such a feature appears even in the "zoomorphic standards" which are considered to be one of the oldest. If we treat these elongated necks not separately, but as an integral part of the animal torsos that complement them (especially those of the family of felines), we get animals that look a bit like the mythical creatures of the **serpopard** type - with the body of a mammal and necks of snakes, which are well known in the Middle East, including the Mesopotamian seals (B7 – B10 compare with H28). *Did this motif influence the Luristan standards?* On the standards we have another similar motif that can be understood as a product of the previous one. It is the motif of **two animals oriented towards each other**, whereby their **hindparts are separated, but their foreparts merge into one** (C11; C12). *Can we understand it as the intertwining of their foreparts that led to their fusion into one head?* (C12: 1 – 3; H28: 7, 8)

In all other geographical areas, the pair of intertwined snakes appears in quite explicit form: on the **vase of Gudea** and other **Middle Eastern examples**, in **India** on the stone reliefs, in the image of the nadis and the suṣumnā; in the kerykeion in **Greece** and the caduceus in **Italy**. It is indicative that in the **"caducei" from the Babylonian seals** the intertwined snakes do not appear explicitly, but in the form of some other animals (H16 – H18 compare with H21: 1 – 4), while on the other hand, they are wrapped around a human figure (H30: 7, 8). In **Hindu culture** there are also other categories of cult objects that by their structure come close to the Luristan standards, to the Babylonian and Hittite "caducei", as well as to the Mediterranean kerykeion and caduceus. Even today they function as very common cult objects that are depicted in the hands of some deities or placed in cult locations (H27: 4, 8, 9). Common to all of them is the central pillar that at the top branches out into three prongs, of which the lateral ones are curved and in some cases more or less resemble protomes. The oldest example from Harappa points to some kind of early relations with Mesopotamia (H27: 12 compare with A15: 7).

- Central pillar, tree or phallus

The central pillar of many Luristan standards has the form of an **erect phallus** on which, at the level of the contour, one can recognize the cylindrical body, glans penis and testicles. It is also supplemented by other elements, mainly a human head with two faces (D1 – D3). This element also coincides with **Hermes**, especially with the mentioned **hermai**, which are based on the shape of the erected phallus. In the Indian

traditions, on the relief stone stelae (nāgakal), the two snakes are sometimes intertwined around the **lingam of Shiva**.[205] On the vase of Gudea, the snakes intertwine around a centrally placed staff or pillar (H21: 10, 11).

- Human figure flanked by a pair of snakes or other animals

On the Babylonian seals appears a human figure around which two snakes intertwine. It is thought that it represents **Ningizzida** (F17: 3, 5, 6, 8). In the Mediterranean, in the Roman period, such a figure appeared within the frames of the Mithraic cult, whereby it is thought that it represents **Mithras**, **Aeon**, **Zurvān**, or **Ahriman** (F13; F17: 4). In Indian culture, the pair of snakes is in some cases intertwined **around the neck of Shiva**.[206] The relations of the Mediterranean kerykeion with **Hermes** and **the double-faced hermai** show that he was the ancient Greco-Roman equivalent of the mentioned deities, whereby it is thought that, as a deity, in earlier times he had far greater power.[207]

b) Functions

Based on numerous written and visual documents it can be concluded that in the ancient Mediterranean cultures the kerykeion i.e. caduceus was considered a **sacred object**, obviously compacted with a high capacity of **sacredness** i.e. **supernatural power**. Its sacredness and power can be explained in two ways. According to the first, they would **arise from the object itself**, because they are an essential part of it,[208] while according to the second, they would be based on **its identification with the Center** (of the universe) in which, according to the logic of mythical thinking, the **sacred forces are most intense**.[209] In that context, the sacredness and power of the kerykeion would not be due to the presence of those components in the object itself, but to its ability to **"bring them"** i.e. to ensure their presence at the place where it is located, specifically from some other space that is not accessible to earthly beings (the "other world", the world of the gods, heaven, the holy land ...). The iconography of the kerykeion suggests that such power is based on the fact that **its central pillar represents the "Cosmic Axis"** (perhaps conceived in more specific forms - as the "Cosmic Column" or "Cosmic Tree") which in archaic notions about the universe is the main element that **connects the zones** into which it is divided.

These powers, regardless of how they found themselves in the kerykeion, could be focused on several basic functions: the stimulative, apotropaic and mediative one.

- Stimulative function

This function is based on the belief that the kerykeion contains some **sacred component that radiates throughout the space in which it is placed, transmitting to the creatures and objects that are found in it** and that would make visual or tactile contact with this object. As a result, various positive states are brought into effect: grace, progress, fertility, happiness, success, wealth, etc. There is information or indications for the use of the kerykeion and caduceus as cult objects within certain **religious organizations**, as elements in **ritual-magical procedures**, as **props in dances** (probably of a ritual nature), and as **relics kept in the treasuries of sanctuaries**.[210]

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[205] A. L. Allocco, *Snakes*, 219; P. Granziera, *The Indo-Mediterranean*, 617.

[206] P. Granziera, *The Indo-Mediterranean, 617.*

[207] F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 31.

[208] F. J. M. de Waele thinks that, unlike the other scepters of Greek messengers, who derive their magical power directly or indirectly from Zeus, "The power of the kerukeion is inherent to its shape and is not granted by the deity." (F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 78).

[209] On this concept of inhomogeneous i.e. concentrically distributed sacredness of the universe: M. Eliade, *The Sacred*, 20-65.

[210] F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 74; R. Bötzkes, *Kerykeion*, 338, 341.

This function is evident in the Homeric Hymn to Hermes, in which Apollo offers a rhabdos to his brother Hermes with the words "I shall give you a beautiful staff of wealth and prosperity, a golden one with three branches (τριπέτηλον)".[211] Ancient sources inform us of the beliefs that **all material goods are produced** from Hermes' rhabdos, whereby it also appears as a **source of life force** which, among other things, can cause **rejuvenation**.[212] Some researchers think that the incorporation of **snakes** into the kerykeion and the intertwining of the two prongs that represented their bodies were intended **to enhance its magical power**.[213] The stimulative function would also be referred to by the **phallic meaning** of the kerykeion, although it is not presented explicitly, at the level of its form, but indirectly - through the ithyphallic aspects of Hermes as its carrier. This identification is quite clearly denoted in the scene from a Greek painted vase (H20: 6).[214] We can agree with the conclusions of F. J. M. de Waele, that the kerykeion functioned as an **"emblem of power"**, whereby such a nature was especially borne by **its top** ("the top of the kerykeion is also a concrete expression of power").[215]

The later introduction of the kerykeion in Roman culture as a **symbol of commerce** should not be considered as abandonment of its original i.e. primary essence, but as bringing to the forefront certain aspects of its **stimulative function**. As a result of this, in Italy the caduceus was present on the first **coins**, on **weights** and on **scales** because its carrier **Mercury** was primarily treated as the **god of commerce** (H25: 2 – 8). Some examples point to the use of certain gold and bronze kerykeia as **official city weights-etalons** that were kept in the temples with special **reverence worthy of relics**.[216] In that context, we should remind ourselves that the kerykeion, together with Hermes as its carrier, is also present in **scenes of the weighing of souls**, found on Hellenic containers, where they occupy the central place above the large scale which, among other things, is an immanent symbol of commerce (H32: 5, 6).

The **phytomorphic aspects of the kerykeion** can also be connected to the stimulative function, specifically the epithet *tripetēlos*, in relation to the three-leafed twig, the three-leafed palmette or the clover-leaf as **symbols of abundance**. In this context we could also understand the presence of three-leafed motifs in some pictorial representations of kerykeia, in which there are recognizable shoots, buds, sprouts, or laurel and clover leaves (H24: 1, 2, 5 – 7, 9). Among other things, this could be due to their character as **symbolic stimuli of fertility and abundance**.[217] As a consequence of this and the other mentioned aspects, the caduceus within the frames of Roman culture will grow into a **symbol of luck and fate** in the most general sense of the word.[218]

If we take into account that the two snakes of the kerykeion i.e. caduceus represent the male and female principle, then the identification of its pillar with the phallus would mean disruption of the primary function of this element as a factor of mediation and balancing of the two complementary principles in favor of the male one. Such favorization (of course directed towards all spheres of fertility) is quite expected within the patriarchal societies in which these objects were used.[219]

The indicated aspects of the stimulative function of the kerykeion i.e. caduceus can also be identified on the Luristan standards, represented by the same visually depicted symbols - the phallus and the various

[211] (*Hymn. Hom. Merc.* 528-532); commentary and interpretation: C. Anghelina, *Rhabdos*, 219. R. Boetzkes (R. Boetzkes, *Das Kerykeion*, 29, 30) expresses doubt that it was not a kerykeion (on this dilemma see further).
[212] (Epiktetos, diss. III. 20, 12; Lucian, *Dial.Mort*. 23. 3); F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 61, 62.
[213] F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 52-54.
[214] On the phallic aspects of Hermes: A. L. Frothingham, *Babylonian*, 176, 177, 179; F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 30; on the same meaning contained in the root of his theonym (*herm, germ*): Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 359-365, 446-453; Н. Чусидис, *Отаџ хлеба*, 99-101.
[215] F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 50.
[216] F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 74, 75; R. Bötzkes, *Kerykeion*, 341, 342.
[217] F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 41, 48; R. Boetzkes, *Das Kerykeion*, 30, 31.
[218] " ... ein Symbol des Glückes und allgemein des Schicksals, der Fortuna" (R. Bötzkes, *Kerykeion*, 341).
[219] On some aspects of the phallus within the frames of these objects: J. L. Henderson, *Drevni*, 154, 156.

vegetative elements (branch, tree) that are most often identified with the pillar of the standards. Both symbols were presented in detail in the previous chapters (see p. 239, and p. 129).

- Apotropaic function

This function is based on the belief that the powers possessed by the kerykeion i.e. caduceus can be used **by the people carrying it or the space in which it is located to protect against various negative components**. There are clear indications that they were carried as a kind of **amulets** i.e. **apotropaics** that provided their carrier with **protection** i.e. **invulnerability**. This is especially clearly expressed in the case of the messengers and heralds who even got their name from these objects (Latin *cadiceator*), which, according to analyzes, points to the appropriation of these traditions from Hellenic culture. Due to apotropaic reasons, these items were **placed at entrances and doorways**, and there are also indications for their use in **ritual cleansing of houses**. Based on comparative analyzes, assumptions have been put forward that the apotropaic (and stimulative) power of the kerykeion **is due**, among other things, **to the plaiting or knotting of its prongs**.[220] One ancient source indicates that similar procedures were performed **outside the house** as well, specifically at **crossroads** which, by the way, have pronounced axial and liminal symbolism.[221] The absence of such accounts in older sources should not mean that these were secondary traditions, but that in the older sources they were simply not recorded. In fact, this is indirectly indicated by the already mentioned verse from the Homeric Hymn, which also contains the apotropaic function of the three-pronged golden scepter that Apollo offers to Hermes: "... a golden one with three branches (τριπέτηλον), to protect you against harm".[222]

There is discussion among the scholars of the kerykeion and the caduceus about **how these objects performed their protective function in relation to the messengers** that carried them in their hands i.e. whether the messenger's invulnerability was due to his scepter. F. J. M. de Waele thinks that in the Homeric epics, messengers receive this protection **from some factor outside the scepter**, while in the case of the Greek messengers (starting from the 7th century BCE) it derives **from the scepter itself** i.e. its power, with its form, to ward off evil.[223] In the Greek cities it was believed in the protective role of the kerykeion in relation to its carrier, therefore the high reverence for the Athenian messengers (*kerykes*) should be sought in their kerykeion. On the other hand, the caduceus in Italic i.e. Roman society was never a sign of messengers, but an **emblem of commerce**, so consequenly the Roman messengers (*praecones*) were not surrounded by any special respect.[224]

- Mediative function

We have seen that the **sacredness** or **magical power** of the kerykeion i.e. caduceus does not have to be based on **their presence in the object itself**, but on the second of the above mentioned concepts. According to it, these objects, as symbols of the Cosmic Center i.e. Cosmic Axis, receive the indicated components from somewhere else, whereby their power comes down only to the **possibility to transfer them throughout the zones of the universe** or, in the specific case, from the "other world" i.e. the world of the

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[220] R. Bötzkes, *Kerykeion*, 338, 341; F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 52, 69.

[221] "`At the end of the month Maimakterion they perform ceremonies of sending, among which was the carrying of the magic fleece, and there take place then throwings out of purifications at the crossways, and they hold in their hands the pompos (i.e. conductor), which they say is the kerykeion, the attribute of Hermes.' The object of the whole ceremony is 'to send out polluted things`." (Eustathius ad Od. XXII. 481. 1934-1935); according to: J. E. Harrison, *Prolegomena:* 45, 46.

[222] (*Hymn. Hom. Merc.* 528-532); commentary and interpretation: C. Anghelina, *Rhabdos*, 219.

[223] "We now clearly see the striking antithesis between the rod of the Homeric herald, that receives its power from a being or a conception outside the object itself and the Greek herald, as we know him (i.e. since about the 7th century), who protects himself with the rod of evil-averting shape." (F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 70-72, citation: 71).

[224] F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 73, 74.

gods, to the earth i.e. the world of people. This concept could lay at the basis of the two previous functions of the kerykeion i.e. caduceus - the stimulative and the protective one. In that context, one should also understand the mentioned interpretation that, in some cases, the sacredness i.e. inviolability and reverence of the messengers did not come from their scepter, but directly from Zeus.[225] Thereby, the justification for the presence of this object in their hand can be sought only in the **denoting** or in the **ensuring** of this divine presence.

The mediatory function of the kerykeion and the caduceus is reflected in numerous aspects and forms of **transition** and **transference**, mainly contained in the functions i.e. domains of action of **Hermes**, but also of the Roman **Mercury** who would inherit many of the features and functions of the former. Under the patronage of these gods were: **travelers** who cross geographical and political boundaries; **traders** who realize the transfer of goods (objects) and money (value) from one owner to another; **messengers** and **heralds** who ensure the transmission of a message i.e. information between two subjects and reconciliation between two conflicting sides; **thieves** who change the owner of that what is stolen, whereby they themselves cross the boundaries set by the law. The mentioned gods do not represent these functions only as their **patrons**, but also as their **executors**. Thus, Hermes himself is a **god-traveler**, a **god-messenger** and a **god-mediator** who transmits messages between the gods or between the gods and humans and mediates in the resolution of their disputes and conflicts. He is the **thief** of Apollo's cattle. At the same time, he is also a **psychopomp** who transports the souls of the dead between "this" and the "other world", and through an eminently mercantile procedure such as the **weighing on a scale** (*psychostasia*), he determines their value, and thus their place of residence in the "other world" (H32: 5, 6). As a common component one can take the **ambivalence** i.e. the **liminal ("international") position** of the caduceus carriers, which is also characteristic of Hermes. In an explicit way, this aspect is represented by the hermai of Hermes - phallic stones that marked **boundaries** between properties and **borders** between countries. A child (= epiphany) of Hermes is **Hermaphroditus** - a paradigm of the **ambivalence i.e. unboundedness of sex and gender**.[226] The presence of these aspects of mediation and transition in the kerykeion is indicated by the myth of its **replacement with a lyre** that happens between **Apollo and Hermes**, which will be discussed in a following sub-chapter.

The dynamic aspects of the mentioned functions can also be encoded by the presence of **wings**, recorded in kerykeia starting from the 3rd century BCE, which are at the same time also one of the essential features of Hermes (H22: 1; H26: 7). In both contexts, they would correspond to all the mentioned aspects of **movement** and **transition**, but also to the **fast (= efficient, expeditious) course of the processes** to which they refer: the fast movement of heralds and messengers, the fast passage of the souls of the dead to the other world, the fast acquisition of profit by merchants.[227]

The indicated mediatory functions of the kerykeion and the caduceus on a visual level are represented by their **rod/pillar** which, observed in a cosmological context, acquires the meaning of the **"Cosmic Axis"**. In certain environments it could have also been envisioned in more specific forms - such as "Cosmic Pillar", "Cosmic Tree" i.e. "Tree of Life" and "Cosmic Phallus", specifically in their cosmogonic, productive, fruit-yielding and life-giving function.[228] However, the cosmological aspects of these objects can only be sensed in an implicit form. One of them is the epithet "tripetēlos", which L. Preller explain in the context of "drastic

[225] R. Hirzel, *Themis, Dike und Verwandtes. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Rechtsidee bei den Griechen*. 1907, 74 (according to: F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 70, 71).

[226] F. Diez de Velasco, *Un aspecto*, 42, 43; F. Diez De Velasco, *Serpentine*, 22, 23; M. Silver, *Taking*, 273; R. Bötzkes, *Kerykeion*, 341, 342. In the Iranian traditions, judges i.e. weighers of the good and bad deeds of the dead are Mihr, Srōš (Sraōša) and Rašn (R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan*, 103).

[227] F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 54.

[228] J. Chevalier, A. Gheerbrant, *Rječnik*, 238.

demiurgic power of Hermes that permeates the three realms of nature".[229] The same meaning could also be expressed by the **three colors of some caducei**: the top - golden, the middle - shimmering bright, while the handle - black.[230] Certain cosmological meaning could have also been borne by the **wings** of the caduceus, most often present as additions to the pair of snakes, perhaps as a symbol of the **synthesis of the chthonic (snake) and the uranic (wings)** (H22: 1; H26: 7).[231]

All the key **functions of the kerykeion** are also the **functions of Hermes himself**, hence their mutual interweaving and identification - **Hermes as an anthropomorphized kerykeion** and **the kerykeion as an aniconic deity**. This aspect brings us back to the Asian god **Ningizzida**, who **on the vase from Lagash is in fact equated with the pillar entwined by snakes** (H27: 10),[232] and conditionally to the **Hierapolis "sign"** ("Semeion") which contains the same combination of aniconicity and exceptional sacral value (H27: 6; H21: 5 – 11). We have seen that, in addition to A. L. Frothingham, this same conclusion is also reached by F. Diez De Velasco, by comparing two pictorial representations from Hellenic culture. They both depict **symmetrical winged figure**s, whereby in one of them they flank **Hermes with a kerykeion in hand** (H30: 1, 2), while in the other - **a pair of intertwined snakes** (H30: 3, 5 compare with 6). The author thinks that "Hermes in the first case fulfills the same role as the serpents in the second and the kerykeion in the centre of the image seems to emphasize this significance".[233]

The results of the analyzes presented in the previous sub-chapters show that most of the mentioned categories can be identified on the **central pillar of the Luristan standards** i.e. the specific symbols in which, in the various types, it is fashioned: **the tree, some other plant or branch** (as symbols of the Cosmic Tree which extends through the three cosmic levels) (see p. 129); **the centrally placed erect phallus** (equated with the Cosmic Pillar that connects the three zones of the universe) (see p. 239); **the columnar figure of a man** (in the meaning of a macrocosmic giant that supports the universe and from whose body it is actually created) (see p. 315).

- Funerary function

There are indications that at some earlier and more primary stage the kerykeion was considered an **object that has the power to give and take life**, which is pointed to by several facts. One of them is the scene of the **rejuvenation of Protesilaos** with the help of Hermes' rhabdos,[234] which also implies the power of this object to **completely control aging**, and ultimately, the **duration of life**, the **rewinding of the course of life** and even **resurrection**. In support of these functions we can also mention some pictorial representations: an Etruscan mirror depicts a scene in which Hermes touches the dead Kabeiros with his long stick **in order to bring him back to life** (H32: 3); on one gem the kerykeion is held **over the head of a soul that is being revived**; on another gem, it (turned upside down) is used for beating the ground, according to some assumptions **to awaken the spirits residing there** ("to awaken the spirits, by beating their dwelling, the earth").[235] If one accepts the symbolic relationship between **death** and **sleep**, then these arguments can be supplemented by the verse from the "Iliad" according to which Hermes' rhabdos has the power **to make**

[229] "die durch die drei Naturgebiete hindurchreichende drastische und demiurgische Kraft des Hermes. (Ähnlich deutet die dreisprossige Rute Welcker, *Griechische Götterlehre*. Göttingen 1857 – 63, II 443)" - cited according to: R. Boetzkes, *Das Kerykeion*, 32; F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 41.

[230] On this feature, without the specified interpretation: R. Bötzkes, *Kerykeion*, 340: "... die Spitze des Kerykeions golden, die Mitte hell schimmernd, der Griff pechschwarz gehalten ist (...). Denn damit stoßen wir entweder auf bloße Künstlerlaune oder geraten in das Gebiet eines abstrusen Symbolismus".

[231] J. Chevalier, A. Gheerbrant, *Rječnik*, 238.

[232] A. L. Frothingham, *Babylonian*, 181, 182.

[233] F. Diez De Velasco, *Serpentine*, 23, Fig. 2, Fig. 3.

[234] (Lucian, *Dial.Mort*. 23. 3); F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 62.

[235] F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 59, 60.

people fall asleep or wake up,[236] which in this context takes on the meaning of **power to kill and revive**.[237] The dichotomy of *life – death* is in a sense also contained in the **scenes of weighing souls** where Hermes necessarily appears, standing above and behind the scales with a kerykeion in his hand (H32: 5, 6). We agree with the view of F. J. M. de Waele that this element is not the result of arbitrariness, without deeper meaning, but of a certain magical intention.[238] We consider it to be an essential iconographic and symbolic element that **equates the kerykeion and Hermes as epiphanies of the "Cosmic Axis", implicitly encoded in the pivot of the pair of scales**. This pivot **demarcates life and death** (and other complementary processes in the universe) represented by the two pans/arms, enables **their alternation**, but also ensures the **balance between them**. The proposed functions and meanings correspond well to the shape of the kerykeion whose triple-symmetrical structure and iconography, by the way, is not so far from the pair of scales.

The indicated functions of the kerykeion fit well with the views that **Hermes** as its carrier has the characteristics of a **chthonic deity** and **ruler of the world of the dead**. Such a nature, among other things, is indicated by the fact that we find the same staff (rhabdos) **in the hands of Hades** as well, who, like Hermes, **leads the dead with it into the world of darkness** ("brings the shapes of the dead men adown the hollow roadway of the dark region").[239] In support of this function we present two examples. In the first one, Hermes i.e. Mercury with his kerykeion is in a group with the other chthonic gods (Hades, Demeter, and Persephone, whereby preserved of him is only the bust, without the head, but with the kerykeion as his specific symbol – H32: 7). In the second example, he (in his Greco-Egyptian epiphany Hermanubis) is depicted with serpentine legs - a feature typical of chthonic gods (H32: 4).

Judging by the sources, in the upper classes of Hellenic culture these functions of the kerykeion were later **significantly diminished** in parallel with the reduction of the rank of Hermes who, from a **deity with the highest (if not supreme) status**, was brought down to the rank of **mediator of the gods**. Accordingly, his **authority over life and death** was reduced to the role of a **psychopomp** i.e. **guide and carrier of the souls of the dead** from "this" to the "other world".[240] Nevertheless, we think that this was not a case of introduction of a new function, but of bringing to the forefront of one of his existing ones, which, by the way, has already been noted in the case of Ningizzida - the assumed Mesopotamian equivalent of Hermes. We cannot agree with the views that the kerykeion was never considered an instrument of psychopompy, especially in Italy where his equivalent Mercury was primarily a god of commerce.[241] This is also supported by some banal examples that do not refer to the spheres of magic and religion: a kerykeion was carried by the emperor Commodus, disguised as a psychopomp; it was also carried by the slaves who dragged out the dead gladiators; a wooden kerykeion was also held in the hands by a Hellenic physician who with it guided (in a figurative sense?) his patients into the underworld.[242] Virgil mentions three functions of the messenger of the gods (certainly Mercury) that are associated with the dead: guiding souls, summoning them, and restoring life.[243] It is assumed that **some kerykeia (with miniature dimensions) were deposited in the graves of messengers**, whereby their names were written on them.[244]

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[236] (Homeri, *Ilias* 24. 343, 344); F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 34; J. Chevalier, A. Gheerbrant, *Rječnik*, 239.

[237] On the staff that kills (made of silver) and the staff that revives (made of gold), as well as other similar examples: F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 65.

[238] F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 56 (" ... is an arbitrary movement, without deeper meaning; it may point to magic intention …").

[239] F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 31, 34, 59, 60, 64, citation: 63.

[240] F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 30-33; F. Diez De Velasco, *Serpentine*, 23.

[241] R. Bötzkes, *Kerykeion*, 341.

[242] F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 76.

[243] (Verg. *Aen*. 6. 748); F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 67-69.

[244] F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 73, 74.

Such a nature and functions are quite well suited to the kerykeion, especially taking into account its **axial iconography**, which in this context acquires the meaning of the **"Cosmic Axis"** as an **eminent symbol of transference and transition between worlds**.

Scene with Hermes on a lekythos from the Jena collection

In the archaeological collection of the University of Jena there is a lekythos (dating to 470 BCE) which depicts a scene that has provoked numerous discussions related to the funerary aspects of the kerykeion and of Hermes as its carrier (H32: 1, 2). This god is therein depicted standing in front of a large pithos, dug into the ground, holding an **ordinary short wand in his right hand and a kerykeion in his left one** (of which only his elbow is visible). Thereby, depicted above the pithos are four small winged human figures, two of which fly upwards, the third, turned upside down, falls towards the rim, while the upper part of the fourth one protrudes above the wreath of the vessel. According to common interpretations, Hermes is represented here as a **psychopomp who summons, guides, or sends the souls of the dead (= winged figures) out of the underworld represented by the pithos**. The biggest dilemmas arise from the presence of the **two sticks in his hands**, especially since, according to the first impression, he performs the indicated actions with the ordinary wand. Thereby, the kerykeion is in a way put in the background, contrary to the expectations that Hermes should be performing the actions precisely with it because it is his main and permanent attribute. Some researchers treat this image as evidence that the enigmatic rhabdos of Hermes did not actually have the form of a kerykeion but of an ordinary wand, analogous to the ones of Kirke and Athena. But, on the other hand, such a view is not justified by numerous other depictions (some of them mentioned above) in which Hermes performs similar actions precisely with the kerykeion.[245]

Although this scene is mainly related to Hermes' role as a psychopomp i.e. sender and guide of souls, there are opinions that he, in this case, has a far more important function. Observing this image in the context of Orphic beliefs suggests that the winged figures flying over the pithos actually signify the **souls of the dead** who are reawakened i.e. revived and resurrected,[246] and who apparently, in the given moment, **leave the underworld** for some other space, seemingly located in the upper regions of the universe.

The visibility of the elbow of Hermes's left hand clearly shows that at the depicted moment **his two forearms are raised** which means that **both his hands are active** (H32: 1, 2). The marginal position of the kerykeion within the frames of this scene should not necessarily indicate its passivity or lower status.[247] This could be due to certain rules and canons of painting, such as, for example, recommendations to depict this object in the god's left hand and the orientation of his figure towards the left.

The presented observations lead to the conclusion that **both sticks of Hermes had to have a certain effect on the souls of the dead**, the acceptance of which would imply that each of them had a **specific role related to the posthumous fate of the human soul**. Such a conclusion is also reached by F. J. M. de Waele, who tries to differentiate their functions by equating one with the Homeric rhabdos, intended to deter evil, while the other with the ordinary wand, to which he assigns functions related to the chthonic actions of Hermes, but also to prosperity, wealth and other positive things.[248] We must admit that this proposed specialization does not offer opportunities for a more convincing conceptualization of the scene from Jena, other than the possibility according to which one stick would serve to awaken the souls and guide them out of the underworld, and the other to protect them from some negative factors.

Having in mind the complementary meaning and functions of Hermes' staff, such nature of Hermes, as well as the dual structure of the kerykeion itself, we think that an analogous meaning is also borne by the

[245] J. E. Harrison, *Prolegomena*, 42-47; F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 58, 62, 63; C. Anghelina, *Rhabdos*, 222, 223.
[246] F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 56-60.
[247] J. E. Harrison thinks that only the ordinary wand and Hermes' right hand in which it is found are active in the scene (J. E. Harrison, *Prolegomena*, 44).
[248] F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 60, 61.

H32



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two sticks in the scene from Jena - **one as a symbol and initiator of life, and the other of death**. Such a meaning gives justification to the two remaining winged figures from the scene, of which one falls into the pithos, while the other protrudes half-length from inside it. The complementary character of the two sticks would follow the **concept of the scales** in the scene with the weighing of souls (H32: 5, 6), i.e. the **assessment of the righteousness of the souls** and, accordingly, their allocation to the eternal abode to which they correspond: **the virtuous to Elysium** (in the scene from Jena denoted by the flying figures), while **the unworthy ones to Hades and Tartarus** (represented by those who fall or are found inside the pithos) (H32: 1, 2). Taking into account the positive symbolism and the high sacredness of the kerykeion, we are convinced that in the Jena scene it **ensures the flight of the two souls upwards**, while the falling and sinking into the pithos of the two other ones is due to the action of the ordinary wand.

This latter function of Hermes and his staff can be argued through a similar action from the "Odyssey" in which he, with the help of his rhabdos, **will lead into Hades the unworthy souls of the murdered suitors of Penelope**.[249] In other cases this function is assigned to other deities. In the writings of Pindar it is **Hades with his scepter**.[250] It seems that in Italy this action was also performed by some local god, probably the Etruscan **Charun**. This is indicated by a vase from the Vatican Museums where, in the first of the scenes, he is depicted alongside Hermes, both with kerykeia in hand, while in the second - how he leads Hades and Persephone as they descend to the underworld.[251]

- The kerykeion of Hermes and the lyre of Apollo

Most studies on the kerykeion i.e. caduceus mention and analyze the **myth of the exchange of this object with a lyre, realized between Hermes and Apollo**.[252] This myth begins with Hermes stealing Apollo's cattle. After the latter learns about this and then finds the thief, Hermes plays to him with his lyre. Fascinated by the instrument and the music, Apollo decides to leave him the stolen cattle in exchange for the lyre and training to play on it. The mythical story of the owners of the kerykeion is complementary to the previous one. Before it became the property and attribute of Hermes, this object belonged to Apollo. He would later get rid of it and, as a kind of replacement, receive Hermes' lyre.[253]

"In myths and folk tales, the exchange of objects usually indicates their symbolic equivalence or, ultimately, the disclosed meaning of the traded objects".[254] In this case, the equivalence of the kerykeion and the lyre is indicated by the **analogies between their functions**, but also by the **similarities in the form** and **manner of their creation**.

In this and previous sub-chapters we presented numerous written sources, pictorial representations, interpretations and modern academic observations which show that the kerykeion and the caduceus symbolized, and in a magical way enabled, all forms of transition across various types of borders and liminal states. Thereby, expressed particularly strong was their role as a **key that opens the barriers between "this world"** (the world of light and of the living) **and the "other world"** (the world of the darkness and of the dead), as well as the **boundaries between life and death** and **between good and evil**. Analogous functions are possessed by Hermes' lyre, which, after the transfer of ownership to Apollo, was given to Orpheus, who would later use it as a magical means by which he succeded in **passing through the gates of the underworld alive and return from there unharmed.** Hence, the lyre in antiquity was considered the only instrument that

[249] (Homeri *Odyssea* 24. 1-9); J. E. Harrison, *Prolegomena*, 45); analogous to Hades who with his scepter leads the souls to the underworld (F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 64).
[250] (Pindarus. *Pythian* 4, 178); F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 64.
[251] F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 64.
[252] F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 34, 35; R. Boetzkes, *Das Kerykeion*, 29, 30; M. Silver, *Taking*, 264, 265.
[253] (*Hymn. Hom. in Herm.* 528 ff.); F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, 34, 35.
[254] К. Рахно, *Арфа*, 102 (citation); D. Jaillard, *Configurations*, 167; M. Silver, *Taking*, 264-266.

is able **to bring back the souls of the dead from the underworld to the world of the living**.[255] Numerous studies have discussed the **shamanic aspects** of Apollo's and Orpheus' lyre, at the basis of which lays the power of the **shamanic journey between the various levels of the universe**: between "this world" and the underworld, or between "this world" and the celestial regions.[256]

If we take into account the conclusions from the iconographic analyzes of the kerykeion according to which it is based on the "Cosmic Axis", "Cosmic Pillar" or "Cosmic Tree", then the mentioned elements can also be taken as an indicator of the **shamanic aspects of this object**. In this case, they would be in relation to the "shamanic pillar" or the "shamanic tree" by help of which the shaman leaves "this world" and transitions to the upper or lower regions of the universe. The **lyre of Apollo i.e. Orpheus also has cosmological symbolism**, denoted by the inclusion in its composition of the tortoise shell, as an eminent symbol of the earth, as well as the seven or twelve strings in relation to the number of planets and the signs of the zodiac. Some scholars consider it to be a symbol of cosmic harmony and a "symbolic altar that unites heaven and earth".[257]

Additional indications for the identification between Hermes' kerykeion and Apollo's lyre can be found in a much later source - **the cycle of epic poems about the legendary hero Digenes Akrites** composed in the 18th - 19th century, but whose genesis goes back to the Byzantine period (10th - 12th century). We find them in several poems related to the creation of his lyre (*ταμπουράς*). In one of them it is told **how the hero makes its strings from snakes (white for the thin ones, and black for the thick ones)**, which coincides with the snakes of the kerykeion, especially taking into account the interpretations of their complementary character.[258] The second element can be taken as an indicator of the symbolic identification between the corpus of the lyre and the rod of the kerykeion despite the complete morphological difference of these parts. Here we have in mind the songs in which Digenes **makes the corpus of his lyre from the trunk of an olive tree** whose macrocosmic nature is indicated by the presence on it of **animals characteristic of the different zones of the universe** (birds in the canopy, snakes at the base), which coincides with the rod of the kerykeion, understood as the "Cosmic Tree" or the "Tree of Life".[259]

Also present in these poems is the connection of Digenes' lyre with **transitioning**, manifested mainly through the obvious **relations with the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice**: the hero makes the instrument in order to abduct the daughter of King Levandis (= Eurydice in the underworld kingdom of Hades); he does so according to the advices of a robber (= Hermes); playing it amazes all the animals (= Orpheus' music awakens the animals). Digenes plays his lyre for the first time at a wedding, which is an event with accentuated liminal meaning based on the transition of the bride and groom from one crucial stage of their life to another, especially in relation to the bride because it is accompanied by her leaving i.e. change of family and home. Due to these reasons, **marriage and the wedding** in traditional cultures take on the meaning of **symbolic death and funeral**, which brings the indicated action even closer to the lyre of Orpheus that is involved in an action in which a boy tries to pull out his beloved girl from the world of the dead.

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[255] There are hypotheses that such power was also due to the fact that the lyre was made from a tortoise shell, because this animal in reality possesses a similar power: after staying in its shell (= grave) during the winter (winter sleep = death), it is able to be revived once again in the spring. (К. Рахно, *Арфа*, 101, 102).

[256] К. Рахно, *Арфа*, 99, 100, 109.

[257] D. Jaillard, *Configurations*, 170-172; J. Chevalier, A. Gheerbrant, *Rječnik*, 352.

[258] К. Рахно, *Арфа*, 108, 109, an analogous poem from Pontus, in honor of John Tzimiskes – 110; Н. Л. Ручкина, *Генетические*, 189, 213, 215.

[259] К. Рахно, *Арфа*, 108,109, an analogous poem from Pontus, in honor of John Tzimiskes, with a laurel tree instead of an olive tree – 110; Н. Л. Ручкина, *Генетические*, 189, 213, 215.

- The funerary character of the kerykeion and of the Luristan standards

We referred to the chthonic aspects of the iconography of the Luristan standards several times in the previous chapters, whereby we examined the chthonic, and within those frames also the funerary functions of the mythical characters and deities depicted on these objects. We have seen that their funerary character becomes even more pronounced if we take into account that most of the archaeologically discovered such objects have been found as grave goods (see p. 606).

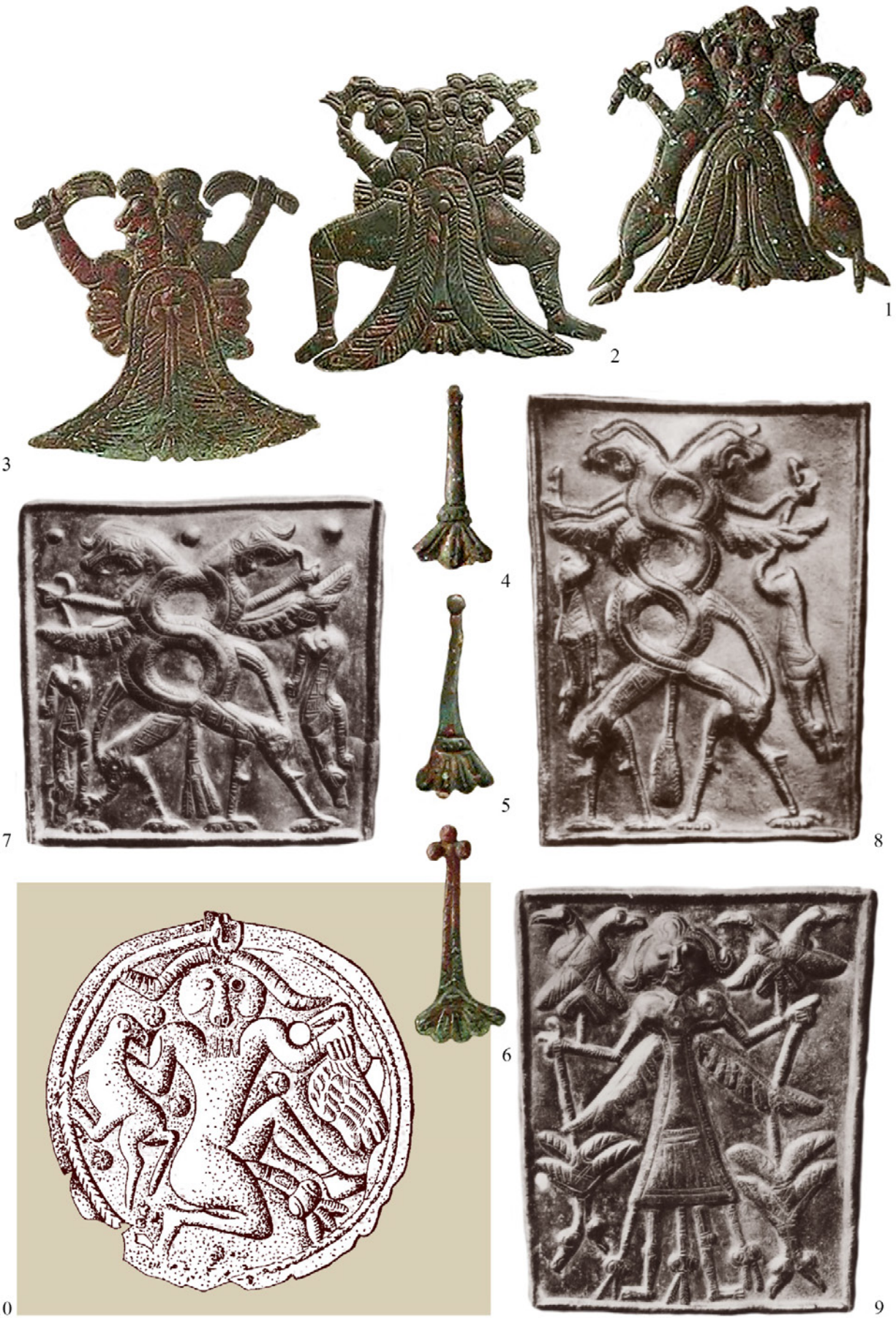
In the following lines, we will reference a few more interpretations on the iconography of the Luristan standards, this time related to those Iranian spiritual traditions that would strictly refer to their funerary aspects. They correspond well to the basic architectonics of these objects upon which their iconography is in fact built. Here we primarily have in mind the pillar equated with the Cosmic Axis, which, in addition to its other meanings, can also be understood as a **bridge** i.e. **path** along which the souls of the dead from "this world" pass on to the "other world". The observations presented in the previous sub-chapters show that a similar character was borne by the kerykeion, which, with its iconographic, symbolic and religious status, seems to have provided the deceased, according to their merits, with passage to one of the two "other worlds".

Several previous scholars apostrophize some elements of the iconography of the Luristan standards that, according to their interpretations, could have participated in the realization of the indicated actions. Thus, R. Ghirshman, identifying **Sraosha** on these objects, points out that he was a god of justice who, together with Mithra and Rashnu, participated in the **trial of the souls of the dead as they crossed the Chinvat Bridge that led to the "other world"**. Based on this and other interpretations, he puts forward an assumption that most (if not all) Luristan objects deposited in graves were conceptualized from the perspective of funerary symbolism.[260] According to him, this process also involved **Zurvān**, who (originally) was **the god of death and the controller of the paths that the souls of the dead had to pass on their journey to the Chinvat Bridge**. In this context, the depositing in graves of objects with a representation of this god would be aimed at **gaining his favor for the deceased who had to reach that bridge**.[261] Death is under the **complete patronage and control of Zurvān** who is at the same time its **causer** (hence his epithet **"destroyer of the elderly"**), but also the one who at the end of time **will ensure that all people become immortal forever**. The function of causer of death is also borne by the god **Vay**, who on the standards is probably represented by the hybrid characters of a chthonic nature. In some sense, he should not be considered different from Zurvān, but as **his epiphany** (regarding these aspects see p. 307).[262]

In this chapter we have opened many questions, but at the same time we have given many suggestions for their possible resolution. We believe that the presentation and analyzes of the extensive comparative material that includes items similar to the Luristan standards, in origin from almost all parts of the Old World, provided us with a clearer positioning of the character, meaning and purpose of these enigmatic Luristan objects. As a result of this, imposed upon us, and we believe also upon the readers, were numerous findings of which we think that at this stage it is still too early to fix them in the form of some kind of conclusions. The best evidence for the correctness of this position are the following observations that were imposed on us at the very end of the preparation of this monograph, when its final graphic editing was already fully completed, due to which we decided to indicate them only briefly.

[260] "We believe that the identification suggested here throws light on the true significance of the multifarious objects placed in the tombs as last offerings to the deceased, most, if not all, of which are conceived in terms of a funerary symbolism." (R. Ghirshman, *The Art*, 45); R. Ghirshman, *Notes VIII*, 41.
[261] R. Ghirshman, *Notes VIII*, 41.
[262] И. Л. Крупник, *Зурванизм*, 89-95.

H33



We are talking about a vertical appendage in the form of a twig with a pomegranate fruit that descends from the skirt of the central anthropomorphic character in a cassette of the Luristan quiver from the Louvre, accompanied by two more lateral ones (H33: 9).[263] A similar central motif, this time more in the form of a palmette, a twig or some piece of clothing, occupies the same place in the compositions from the other two cassettes of the quiver, but this time between the four legs of the intertwined pair of composite zoomorphic figures that we consider to be an epiphany of the same character (H33: 7, 8; see p. 649). The first scene, especially in relation to a figure from another Luristan pin (H33: 10), points to the quite probable phallic meaning of this element, which would not be in collision with the dominant fertile symbolism of this plant.[264] In this same context one could also interpret the similar motifs in the form of palmettes extending between the wings of the central character from the three compositions on the pin from LACMA (H33: 1 – 6; see p. 385). All their elements indicate the representations i.e. hypostases of some very important character, according to us from the mythical cycle of the god Zurvān and the birth of his sons, and perhaps precisely the triune and hermaphroditic Zurvān himself (compare the two intertwined animals H33: 7, 8 and the overemphasized breasts in Fig. 9 with F23 : 9). The emergence of this vegetal motif from the genital area i.e. the legs, also coincides with the mentioned myth of the flower that grows from the knees of the future ruler, perhaps as an earthly epiphany of the son-successor of Zurvān (see p. 154).

[263] For the object: P. Amiet, *Un carquois*, Pl. XV; Pl. XVI; P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 103-104; P. R. S. Moorey, *Some Elaborately*, 24 (Fig. 5).
[264] Drawing of the pin: A. Godard, *The Art*, 23, 51, 52 (Fig. 27); on the pomegranate and its meanings: E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 256; S. Ayazi, *Luristan*, 36; D. de Clercq-Fobe, *Epingles*, 97-99.

Chapter XI

HISTORICAL AND ETHNO-CULTURAL INTERPRETATIONS



XI. HISTORICAL AND ETHNO-CULTURAL INTERPRETATIONS

This chapter and its contents diverge from the basic goals of our monograph. We nevertheless decided to give it a place in it for two reasons that are related to the iconographic and semiotic aspects towards which it is focused. The first reason is our tendency to model some kind of, **more or less probable cultural-historical and ethnocultural basis** upon which all those specific analyzes and interpretations presented in the previous chapters could be based. The second reason is exactly the opposite - the findings and implications imposed by those same analyzes **to be used as additional arguments or indications in understanding the historical and ethnocultural ambient in which the Luristan bronzes and the Luristan standards as part of them were formed and developed.**

1. Existing theories on the ethno-cultural affiliation of the Luristan bronzes

In the past almost one hundred years of research on the Luristan bronzes, several theories have been proposed about the ethnic and cultural affiliation of these objects, and within those frames of the standards as well.[1] These theories can be divided into **three groups**, the first of which would include those that as bearers propose **communities** (peoples, cultures, ancient states) **that are considered autochthonous** i.e. present for a longer time in the area of Luristan and the wider region. The second group would classify those according to which the Luristan bronzes are a product of the communities that **settled in the indicated region shortly before the emergence of these objects**. The third one would encompass the theories according to which the Luristan bronzes are the result of some kind of **interaction between the culture of the newly settled and the autochthonous populations of the indicated region**. In fact, the theories that could be included in the second group are quite rare because they often also contain concepts inherent to the third.

[1] The most detailed overview of these theories is given by O. W. Muscarella (O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 116, 117; O. W. Muscarella, *Bronzes*), and in a somewhat more reduced form also by P. R. S. Moorey (P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 9-12; P. R. S. Moorey, *Ancient*, 19-21), and M. N. Pogrebova (М. Н. Погребова, *Закавказье*, 169-175); instead of linking these objects to a specific ethnicity, S. Ayazi gives a brief overview of the ancient populations that existed in the given period in the territory of Luristan (S. Ayazi, *Luristan*, 11, 12, 15, 16).

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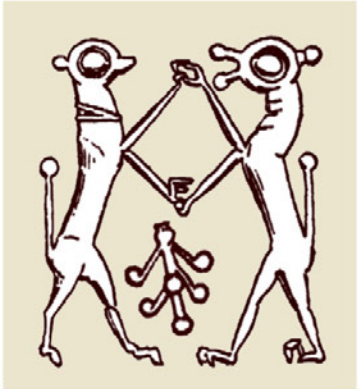

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A significant number of scholars, in the form, style and iconography of the Luristan bronzes recognize the influences of autochthonous cultures, manifested through their similarity to the **Mitanni, Elamite and other Western Asian cylinder seals and reliefs**, but also to some other objects from this area (I1).[2] We are convinced that our analyzes also go in favor of these relations (I2; I3). Commenting on the existing theories about the Kassite or Cimmerian character of the Luristan bronzes, **E. de Waele** puts forward an opinion that the iconographic repertoire of these finds reflects quite ancient and primarily **autochthonous traditions** that cannot be due to any kind of movements, aggressions and immigrations from abroad.[3] **R. N. Frye** is convinced that the Luristan bronzes were produced by a **"sedentary population of workers"**, but **for the needs of the nomads**.[4] According to **H. Frankfort**, there is no need for the repertoire of the Luristan bronzes to be considered a product of the newcomers in this region (Cimmerians, Scythians, Medes), but of the **local metallurgists** who had decided to meet the needs of their new Aryan masters. Despite this component, he is ready to treat the Luristan bronze industry as a separate local phenomenon (with characteristics of folk art) that developed in a provincial environment spread over a relatively large territory.[5] Some scholars (**O. W. Muscarella, P. R. S. Moorey, E. de Waele** and others) basically do not believe that on the basis of the facts known so far it is possible to make an accurate and argued determination of the bearers of the Luristan bronzes.[6]

In the following chapters we will present the existing theories about the ethnic and cultural affiliation of the Luristan bronzes, grouped according to the main ethnicity or culture that they take into account.

a) Kassites

A. Godard is the main proponent of the theory on the affiliation of the Luristan bronzes to the Cassites. As a basis for its introduction, he takes certain archaeological finds, as well as the account by Strabo according to which the inhabitants of Zagros are "migrating populations originating from the shores of the Caspian Sea".[7] He considers the presence of this people in Luristan as a result of a migration caused by the conquering of their native territory by some unknown occupiers, after which they had a failed attack on the Elamites who were able to suppress them to the mountainous periphery of their kingdom. In the following centuries there also followed several attacks of the Kassites on Babylon (starting from the Babylonian king Samsu-iluna - 18th century BCE) which in the 15th century BCE would result in the establishment of the **Babylonian-Kassite dynasty**, and then also their complete rule of this kingdom until the 12th century BCE. The absence of Luristan bronzes in Mesopotamia at the time when it was ruled by the Kassites is justified by A. Godard with the full acceptance of the Mesopotamian style in their art and material culture, specifically in place of the linear-geometric one, which, according to him, was characteristic of them before that. Hence, he links the relations between the Luristan bronzes and this people with the period of their **expulsion from the**

[2] For example: E. Porada, *Nomads*, 21; E. Herzfeld, *Iran*, 161-166; A. Parrot, *Assur*, 131 (Fig. 153, Fig. 154); A. Parrot, *Sumer*, XXXIII-A, 140 (Fig. 169-c, 14).

[3] "... le répertoire iconographique des bronzes reflète une tradition originale, très ancienne, foncièrement autochtone, qui ne permet pas de supposer un mouvement d'immigration ou une invasion étrangère." (E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 276); on the Luristan bronzes as a product of the autochthonous metallurgists and their traditions: H. Frankfort, *The Art*, 343, 346.

[4] R. N. Frye, *The Heritage of Persia*. Cleveland & New York, 1963, 59 f (according to: O. W. Muscarella, *Bronzes*, 120 – footnote 7).

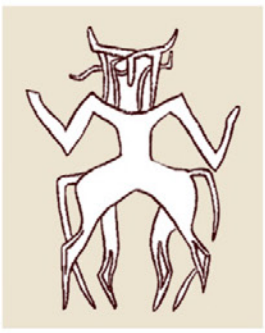
[5] "There is no need to assume that the newcomers in Luristan - be they Cimmerians, Scythians, or Medes - made these things themselves; in fact, the repertory of the Luristan bronzes, with its close affinities to Mesopotamian themes, suggests that the native metalworkers were set to supply the needs of their new masters. (...) The novelty of the bronzes would then represent the response of an established craft to the demands of the newly-arrived Aryan horsemen." (H. Frankfort, *The Art*, 343, 344, 348).

[6] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 117; P. R. S. Moorey, *Ancient*, 19-21; E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 276.

[7] A. Godard, *Bronzes*, 15, 16, 99.


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plain to the mountains, when the adopted Mesopotamian forms were supposedly abandoned under the influence of the **"northern spirit"** ("de l'esprit nordique"), which would once again become dominant in their culture. The northern features in these objects are interpreted by A. Godard as a product of the influence of the **new populations that arrived across the Caucasus** ("de nouvelles traces d'influence nordique"). He explains the large quantity of Luristan bronzes and their rapid development with the strong purchasing power of the Kassites based on the breeding and trading of horses and the regular supply of the Assyrian army with these animals. The high quality of the Luristan bronzes and some of their stylistic features he considers being results of the dispersion of the Hittite metallurgists throughout the Middle East caused by the fall of the Hittite empire. He believes that the language of the Kassites was **Semitic** but that, during their presence in the indicated regions, **they would mingle with the Aryans** who settled here in earlier periods.[8] A. Godard bases this last assumption, among other things, on the written sources that confirm the presence among the Kassites of **deities with Indo-Aryan theonyms**: ***Šuriaš*** (Surya), ***Marattaš*** (Maruts), ***Bugaš*** (Bhaga), and probably ***Buriaš*** (according to some interpretations in relation with Vay, while according to others with the Greek Boreas).[9] Attempts have been made, in the context of this Kassite-Aryan relation, to also interpret the iconography of some Luristan bronzes.[10]

In the same year when A. Godard's monograph dedicated to the Luristan bronzes appeared (1931), the Kassite theory was also promoted by **M. Rostovtzeff**. It is quite indicative that in doing so he does not mention the theory of his predecessor at all, although he states that he had insight into his new book. Instead, he refers to the analogous interpretation of **V. Minorsky** with whom he met the same year at the Congress of Persian Art in London, and which was subsequently published in a short article by the mentioned author.[11]

From its inception until the last decades of the last century, the Kassite theory was accepted and promoted by numerous scholars.[12] **E. Porada** accepts it partially, thinking that the Kassite (and Mitanni) influences dominated only in the early stage of the development of the Luristan bronzes.[13] In a similar way it is also accepted by **L. Vanden Berghe**, associating the Kassites only with the Luristan finds from the Middle and Late Bronze Ages.[14] But, a significant number of researchers reject it on the basis of several arguments. The first is the newer, younger dating of the Luristan bronzes and their chronological inconsistency with the historical events related to the Kassites, while the second one - the absence of these objects (or their stylistic features) in Mesopotamia at the time when it was ruled by the Kassites. The third argument is the general view that the Luristan bronzes are the result of continuous processes, not of some kind of sudden occupation.[15]

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[8] A. Godard, *Bronzes*, 13-18, 99-101; A. Godard, *The Art*, 45, 46, 74, 75, 78, 82; Y. Godard, A. Godard, *Bronzes*; general information on the Kassettes based on modern academic knowledge: R. Zadok, *Kassites*.

[9] И. М. Дьяконов, *Арийцы*, 44-46; И. М. Дьяконов, И. И. Соколова, *Касситская*; Л. С. Клейн, *Древн. миграции*, *3*; G. Dumézil, *Dieux*, 26, 27.

[10] G. Dumézil, *Dieux*, 24, 25.

[11] M. Rostovtzeff, *Some Remarks*, 45, 51, 52; V. Minorsky, *The Luristan*; Russian version of the article: Б. Ф. Минорский, *Луристанские*.

[12] For example: C. F. A. Schaeffer, *Stratigraphie*, 479, 494, 495; И. М. Дьяконов, *История (1950)*, 145-148; J. A. H. Potratz does also not consider it to be improbable (J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, 78); a list of other authors who approve it: O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 117; a summarized overview of the views of the other scholars: М. Н. Погребова, *Закавказье*, 169, 170.

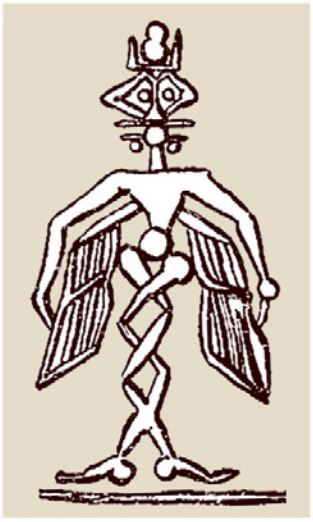
[13] E. Porada, *The Art*, 81.

[14] L. Vanden Berghe, *Le Luristan*, 36 (according to: М. Н. Погребова, *Закавказье*, 170); on certain relations between some Luristan grave goods from the Early Iron Age and Late Kassite pottery, but also other finds: B. Overlaet, *The Chronology*, 10, 11.

[15] E. Herzfeld, *Iran*, 166-167; P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 9, 10; P. R. S. Moorey, *Ancient*, 19, 20; P. R. S. Moorey, *Towards*, 117; O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 117; O. W. Muscarella, *Bronzes*; E. Porada, *Nomads,* 9, 10; М. Н. Погребова, *Закавказье*, 169, 170.

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b) Cimmerians

The strongest proponent and promoter of the theory on the Cimmerian character of the Luristan bronzes is **R. Ghirshman** who in fact accepts and develops the idea of several previous researchers.[16] He bases it on the assumptions about the **arrival of the Cimmerians in Luristan** in the first half of the 8th century BCE and their **symbiosis with the Medes**, close to them in origin, in an alliance with which they would then attack Assyria. He treats the Cimmerians as horsemen, warriors and herdsmen, in origin and culture quite **close to the Scythians**. According to him, this was in fact a continuation of a long series of migrations towards northwestern Iran, during the older waves of which in this region arrived the Medes and Persians. He thinks that the Cimmerians in this campaign moved together with the Scythians, forming with them a united confederation. Only subsequently to reaching the borders of the kingdom of Urartu they would be divided into two groups, after which the former would attack Urartu and Assyria, and following the failure of this action they would continue to Asia Minor. Despite the hostile attitude towards Assyria (entering into an alliance with the Medes against it), considerable units of Cimmerians would be included in its army as mercenaries. Participating in this capacity in the campaigns and plunders of the Assyrian army, they, according to this author, would get supplied with older **bronze objects with engraved cuneiform inscriptions** (from the end of the 2nd millennium BCE) which were deposited as **votive offerings** in the temples of Babylonia and Elam. In that way, these looted objects would then find themselves in several centuries younger Luristan graves.

R. Ghirshman thinks that the Luristan bronzes are a manifestation of the core of the **eastern branch of Cimmerians** that would be formed in this region. Nevertheless, according to him, they are products of a much broader **metallurgical "koiné"** («koine» metallurgique) in which, in addition to the Cimmerian, also participated the workshops of the **Medes** who created in the same artistic style, and especially those from the kingdom of **Urartu** whose products can be traced across a much wider region, all the way to the Syrian coast of the Mediterranean, the southeast coast of the Black Sea, the Aegean and Italy. The arrival of the Cimmerians in Luristan is linked by this author with the well-known historical facts about their movement **from Southern Russia** to the south **through the Caucasus and Transcaucasia towards Urartu** since the 8th century BCE. He argues the Cimmerian character of the Luristan bronzes, among other things, also through the objects from **Ziwiye** which, according to him, show indisputable closeness in relation to them, especially in terms of the "zoomorphic junctions" (jonction zoomorphe). The indicated relations are rounded off on the basis of R. Ghirshman's view that the objects from Ziwiye were made by Median and Urartian craftsmen, but according to the wishes of the Scythians, who, in turn, were close in origin and culture to the Cimmerians. From the works of this scholar one can perceive his tendency to consider the Luristan bronzes (and some other similar objects from the wider region) as **products of the symbiosis of the Cimmerians with the Medes** and, indirectly, also **with the Scythians**, specifically under the strong influence of the traditions of Elam, Babylon, Assyria, and primarily Urartu.[17]

Most authors express **criticism regarding the Cimmerian theory**. **C. Goff Meade** points to the absence of any historical facts about the stay of the Cimmerians (and Scythians) in Luristan, at least not at the time of flourishing of the Luristan bronzes. As more probable she considers their presence there in the **last phase** of the development of these objects, specifically as a factor in the decline of the culture that created

[16] A summary on this theory of R. Ghirshman and his predecessors (F. Hančar, Q. Cameron, K. Shefold): M. H. Погребова, *Закавказье*, 170, 171.

[17] R. Ghirshman, *Invasions*; R. Ghirshman, *Notes IV*; R. Ghirshman, *The Art*, 42, 57, 59, 76, 77, 81, 82; R. Ghirshman, *Iran*, 96-106; V. G. Lukonin considers these relations to be even more direct, treating them as Scythian borrowings from Luristan, but which relate only to iconography and not to style (В. Г. Луконин, *Искусство*, 25); the position of M. N. Pogrebova and D. S. Raevsky regarding this issue: M. H. Погребова, *Закавказье*, 192-196; M. H. Погребова, Д. С. Раевский, *Ранние*, 94-148.

them.[18] **P. R. S. Moorey** makes serious remarks not only regarding its archaeological basis (chronological discrepancy, absence of older prototypes), but also the historical one (lack of evidence on the presence of Cimmerians in Luristan).[19] It is also rejected by **O. W. Muscarella**, together with the "Kassite theory", through the following rather lapidary argument: "The chronology established by Vanden Berghe has ruled out a Cimmerian attribution; nor can any object in the corpus be identified as Median or Kassite."[20] It seems that **E. Porada** does not agree solely with R. Ghirshman's interpretation in relation to the **dagger inscriptions** that are linked to Luristan. Although she thinks that the meaning of these inscriptions is still unclear, it seems to her that they are present here to denote the given object as the property of the king, which may be given to someone for some special service.[21] **M. N. Pogrebova** considers the Cimmerian theory unlikely, among other things also due to the absence of similarities between the Luristan objects and the art of the Cimmerians from the North Black Sea region, which, according to her, has been already well defined. However, she leaves room for this connection if one accepts the possibility that the Cimmerians, after coming to Western Asia, fully accepted the products of the local craftsmanship, leaving behind at the same time the characteristics of their native material culture.[22]

c) Medes

We have seen that in his theory on the Cimmerian role in the creation of the Luristan bronzes, **R. Ghirshman** also introduces the Medes as a related people who settled before them in northwestern Iran. He emphasizes this **Cimmerian-Median closeness** not only with their alliances against Assyria, but also through the theses about the **Cimmerian-Median symbiosis**.[23] The mentioned author also includes in this part of his theory certain observations that some researchers deem suspicious or unacceptable.[24]

The Median character of the Luristan bronzes is also promoted by **C. Goff Meade**, but this time not in relation to the Cimmerians, but as a counterpart to the theory on the Scythian and Cimmerian origins of these objects. She thinks that the Luristan bronzes could have also been produced by the Medes, or by some Iranian groups close to them that in the 8th century (or at the turn of the 7th century) entered Luristan, which at that time was ruled by the Kassites and the Elamites.[25] In fact, she proposes to treat this ethnic group **as the bearer of the "Baba Jan II" and "Baba Jan III" cultures** to which a large portion of the Luristan bronzes gravitate.[26] **P. R. S. Moorey** evidently does not believe that the Medes were producers and users of the Luristan bronzes. On the contrary, he expresses the assumption that they i.e. the rise of political unity between the Medes and the Persians, is the **reason for the decline of Luristan metallurgy** in the late 7th century BCE.[27] We have seen that **O. W. Muscarella** does also not agree with such interpretations.[28]

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[18] C. Goff Meade, *Luristan*, 129-132.

[19] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 10-12; P. R. S. Moorey, *Ancient*, 19-21; P. R. S. Moorey, *Towards*, 117, 119.

[20] Citation: O. W. Muscarella, *Bronzes*; O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 117, where he also lists the other authors who express doubts regarding this theory.

[21] E. Porada, *Nomads*, 11, 12; also see: O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 120 – footnote 6.

[22] М. Н. Погребова, *Закавказье*, 171.

[23] R. Ghirshman, *The Art*, 42, 57, 76; R. Ghirshman, *Un Mède*, 38; R. Ghirshman, *Invasions*; R. Ghirshman, *Iran*, 98-106.

[24] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 117.

[25] "There is thus no need to postulate a Scythian or Cimmerian inspiration for the Luristan `horse graves` or elaborate bits. The Medes, or a related Iranian group, could equally well have produced them." (C. Goff Meade, *Luristan*, 132); M. Н. Погребова, *Закавказье*, 175; М. Н. Погребова, Д. С. Раевский, *Ранние*, 156, 157.

[26] C. Goff, *Excavations*, 41, 42; on the doubts regarding this interpretation: O. W. Muscarella, *Median*, 112; M. Dandamayev, I. Medvedskaya, *Media*.

[27] P. R. S. Moorey, *Ancient*, 21.

[28] O. W. Muscarella, *Bronzes*, 5.

The Medes as a people and Media as a country were constituted in northwestern Iran as a result of the movement of several Median tribes in this region at the end of the 2nd millennium BCE. Starting from the 9th century BCE, they were the target of constant military campaigns, and then strong control by Assyria so that they were forced to pay taxes. In the first decades of the 7th century BCE, the Medes would enter into an **alliance with the Mannaeans, Cimmerians and Scythians** against Assyria, followed by attacks and the capture of some of its cities, and the gradual **unification of the Median tribes**. They would soon break free from Assyrian rule and form their **own state** whose dynasty would last until the middle of the 6th century BCE with a probable interruption from 635 to 615, when they were ruled by the Scythians.[29]

To this day, many questions remain open about the language, literacy, art and religion of the Medes. R. Ghirshman thinks that their culture draws from three sources: the Mannaeans as the natives in whose land they settled, the Assyrians as their neighbors, and the Scythians as their masters for a quarter of a century.[30] We have already mentioned his position that they also participated in the large **metallurgical "koiné"** as part of which, among other things, were also created the luxury **objects from Ziwiye**, produced by Median and Urartian craftsmen, but according to the wishes of the Scythians. According to him, made within the frames of the same "koiné" were also the **Luristan bronzes**, specifically as a result of the **symbiosis between the Cimmerians and the Medes** whose workshops actually worked in the same style.[31]

If one accepts the theories about the role of the Medes in the creation of the Luristan bronzes, then the closeness of these objects with the finds from the North Caucasus region could be justified by the words of **Diodorus** that the Sauromatae settled at Tanais were migrants from Media, or of **Pliny**, that they were descendants of the Medes.[32]

d) Elamites

In the works of several researchers of the Luristan bronzes, a significant share in the formation of these objects is attributed to the craftsmen who worked within the Elamite state.[33] These proposals are elaborated and argued in most detail by **E. Porada**, who notes the indicated components within the **second phase of the development of the Luristan bronzes** (10th - 9th century BCE), following the early phase which, according to her, was dominated by Kassite and Mitanni influences.[34] She attributes great importance in inspiring and creating these objects to the **Elamite workshops** and **traveling craftsmen**.[35] Thereby, she does also not exclude the opposite influences - of Luristan geometricism on the Elamite artisans. According to her, this "northern" component may be due to the preferences of the newly settled northern nomads in Luristan.[36]

The comparative research of the iconography, style and chronology of the **Middle Eastern cylinder seals** and the **Luristan bronzes** led this authoress to the conclusion of their quite direct connection i.e. the significant influence of the former on the formation and development of the latter (I1, our examples I2; I3).

[29] General information: M. Dandamayev, I. Medvedskaya, *Media*.
[30] R. Ghirshman, *Notes IV*, 204.
[31] R. Ghirshman, *Invasions*, 4, 5.
[32] (Diodorus II, 43, 6; Plinius VI, 19); М. Н. Погребова, Д. С. Раевский, *Ранние*, 167.
[33] General information about Elam as a country, ethnicity, language, literacy, religion and history: *Elam* 2020.
[34] E. Porada, *The Art*, 81.
[35] "More likely the inspiration for the artistic activities, perhaps subsequently carried on by itinerant workers in Luristan, came from Elam, which was geographically the obvious goal and center for all exchanges involving goods of higher civilization desired by the chiefs of the different tribes …". "The three-dimensional bronze objects, however, such as the standards, were probably inspired by works of Elamite art, its mastery in metalworking from earlier centuries being evident in such works as the model of the sunrise ceremony of the time of Shilhak, Inshushinak (1165-1151 B.C.)." (E. Porada, *Nomads*, 28-29).
[36] E. Porada, *Nomads*, 31.

She thinks that these observations refute the theory according to which the Luristan bronzes owe their existence primarily to the influence of northern nomads.[37] Comparisons of some specific stylistic and technological details point to a **connection between the Luristan bronzes and Mitannian glyptics**, yet not a direct one (as postulated by **E. Herzfeld**, in accordance with his early dating of the bronzes), but somewhat later and indirect. The chronological (and stylistic) gap between it and the Luristan bronzes, which arises due to the generally accepted later dating of the latter, she bridges precisely with the Elamite cylinder seals and their derivatives.[38]

Regardless of her preference of the Elamite share, E. Porada **does also not exclude the Kassite and Middle Assyrian paradigms** in the formation of some Luristan bronzes. In the specific case, it is about the "zoomorphic standards" (which are usually considered the oldest) where the pair of confronted ibexes is depicted quite realistically and in detail (I1: 7, 8 compare with B2; B6).[39] Based on these analyzes, she concludes that the origin of the "goat standards" among the bronzes of Luristan should be sought in some earlier forms **developed by Elamite artists** within **seals** and **reliefs**, and not in the repertoire of the new peoples settled here about 1000 BCE.[40] She also thinks that the style of the Luristan bronzes shows certain relations with the Elamite products from the same period, while not excluding the local character of some of them.[41]

Based on her research, she derives a general opinion on the **key role of the Elamites in the formation of the Luristan bronzes**.[42] Thereby, she nevertheless allows the possibility that the Elamite artists were attracted by the "taut geometric shapes" of the bronzes, rather than that the influences for the development of these forms emanated from the artistic centers of Elam.[43] She is ready to link this reverse component to R. Ghirshman's theses on **northern influences**, but only in relation to the last phase of bronzes from the 8th century BCE. On that occasion, she gives the following conclusion: "Possibly a new and non-Elamite influence appeared in the florescent phase of Luristan bronzes in the eighth century B.C. to which this writer would assign most of the unframed cheek pieces, thereby agreeing with Ghirshman both in the dating of these objects and in the suggestion that this phase may reflect preferences of the northern Nomads who moved into Iran before and about this time."[44]

The Elamite theory is to some extent also advocated by other researchers (including those before E. Porada), in which the Elamites are most often represented as bearers of one aspect of the Luristan bronzes (for example, as their makers, inspirers of their iconography) or of one phase of their existence.[45]

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[37] E. Porada, *Nomads*, 12-17.

[38] "All this suggests a connection between the Mitannian glyptic style and the Luristan bronzes, but not a direct one as postulated by Ernst Herzfeld, who dated the bronzes between 1300 and 1000 B.C. Rather, the gap between the Mitannian stylistic prototypes of the fifteenth and fourteenth centuries B.C. and their reflections in the Luristan bronzes, which are later by several centuries, may be bridged by Elamite cylinders and their derivatives." (E. Porada, *Nomads*, 21).

[39] "Turning now to the goat standards in an effort to date them by comparison with works of glyptic art, we find that the rather naturalistic, solid modeling of the goats in the standard, makes one think of Kassite and Middle Assyrian examples." (E. Porada, *Nomads*, 21, 22, Pl. III: 1).

[40] "... the origin of the goat standards among the Luristan bronzes should be sought in forms developed earlier by Elamite artists from the ageold motif of seals and reliefs of horned animals, especially goats, flanking a tree, and not in the repertory of a new people coming into Luristan about 1000 B.C." (E. Porada, *Nomads*, 23, 30).

[41] "Even the style of the developed Luristan bronzes, however, may have had some relationship with Elamite works of art of the same time." "The subsequent development of the Luristan bronzes in the tenth and ninth centuries B.C., especially of the subject matter, may have been local." (E. Porada, *Nomads*, 30).

[42] E. Porada, *Nomads*, 28, 29.

[43] "Here the question might pose itself, however, in which direction the stylistic influence operated. It is conceivable that the Elamite artists were attracted to the taut geometric shapes of the Luristan bronzes as we are today, rather than that the influence for this development emanated again from the artistic centers of Elam." (E. Porada, *Nomads*, 31).

[44] E. Porada, *Nomads*, 31.

[45] P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 288, 289; P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 99-105; S. Przeworski, *Zagadnienia*.

P. R. S. Moorey has a completely opposite view on the relationship between Luristan metallurgy and the Elamite state. According to him, **there were no opportunities for the development of the former as long as the powerful and entrepreneurial Elamite metallurgy was active**. Such conditions were met in the time of Nebuchadnezzar I (1124-1103), with whom began the process of weakening of the political (and thus economic) power of Elam and its influence in Luristan. However, this view in some sense fits into the concepts of E. Porada, specifically in terms of the possible role of Elamite **artisans - refugees** in the development of Luristan metallurgy.[46]

e) Manneans

The Manneans are considered to be a people of the Hurrian group, with a minor admixture of Kassites, whose state of Mannea during the 10th - 7th century BCE extended southeast of Lake Urmia, around the modern city of Saqqez. They are associated with the Luristan bronzes **indirectly**, as an autochthonous culture that in some way accepted the potential bearers of these objects (the newly settled Medes, Cimmerians and Scythians) and gave the decisive **civilizational impulse** in the development of the society and material culture of these peoples. In alliance with the Scythians, Mannea was a strong threat to Assyria. It was the land (or one of the lands) on whose territory the Scythians formed their Western Asian state, but also the land in which the Medes experienced their own expansion, resulting in the formation of their own state as well.[47] In that context, R. Ghirshman derives the assumption that the metallurgists of Mannea could have also participated in the creation of the luxury items from the Ziwiye hoard, which he considers related to the Luristan bronzes, because the place where it was discovered is located on the former territory of this state.[48]

f) Mitanni

We have seen that some of the previous researchers have pointed to a certain role of Mitannia, its culture and especially craftsmanship and artistic style, in the development of the Luristan bronzes.

E. Herzfeld is convinced of the direct nature of this influence, according to his early dating of these objects. Analyzing the technical and stylistic details of the **seals from Karkuk**, created at the time when Mitannia was ruled by the **Aryan dynasty**, he finds in them numerous similarities with the Luristan bronzes, not only at the iconographic level, but also at level of technique and style of execution (our comparisons I1). The character of these similarities leads him to the conclusion that the **technical and stylistic elements of the seals are a direct paradigm for the corresponding features in the Luristan bronzes**, although the technology of casting according to which the latter are made does not require their presence at all.[49] Based on the inscriptions engraved on daggers and bronze containers (which he obviously considers to be Luristan), as well as according to some other facts, he dates the Luristan bronzes between 1300 and 1000 BCE, which for him means a definite confirmation of their **autochthonous origin** and a rejection of the theory that the art contained in these objects was brought by newcomers.[50]

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[46] P. R. S. Moorey, *Ancient*, 20, 21.

[47] R. Zadok, *Mannea*; R. Ghirshman, *Notes IV*, 199-201, 204.

[48] "Rien de plus naturel que d'y trouver des produits des artistes locaux, manneens vraisemblablementp, uisque nous sommes sur le territoire du royaume des Manna." (R. Ghirshman, *Notes IV*, 202).

[49] "In the glyptic style, each of these details is necessary, but not at all in cast bronze. The Luristan bronzes imitate, as meticulously as the different technique allows, the style of the Karkuk seals." (E. Herzfeld, *Iran*, 161, citation - 164, 165); monographic presentation of the seals: E. Porada, *Seal*.

[50] "At the same time it eliminates, once and for all, the current idea that the Luristan bronzes were an art brought from abroad by newcomers to the land. Strange as they are, they are inseparably tied to the arts o f the preceding periods of the same and neighbouring regions." (E. Herzfeld, *Iran*, 165, citation - 166).

We have already mentioned that in contrast to him, **E. Porada**, taking into account the younger dating of the Luristan bronzes, thinks that the Mitanni influences could have had a role **only within the first phase of development of these objects**. She also apostrophizes certain stylistic-technical relations between the Luristan bronzes and the Mitanni glyptics from the 15th - 14th century BCE, although this time not directly, but most probably through the **mediation of Elamite artisanship** from the 13th century BCE.[51] Like the previous author, she seeks the paradigm for the central pillar of the "zoomorphic standards" in the central tree of similar compositions engraved on Mitanni (and Kassite) cylinder seals (our comparisons I1: 7, 8 compare with 9 and with B47: 7, 8).[52]

G. N. Kurochkin accepts the view that the **seals of the Karkuk-style**, based on their dating (1600 - 1300/1200 BCE) and the territory of their extension, can be associated with the ancient Mitanni state. Their style and compositions, in addition to the traditions of glyptics characteristic of all surrounding regions, also contain numerous elements that represent a novelty for the western part of the Middle East, and are **close to the art of Luristan and of the Scythians**. According to him, these new elements, along with some innovations in Palestinian and Kassite glyptics, chronologically coincide with the appearance of Indo-Iranian names and terms in Mitanni, Palestinian and Kassite written documents. He thinks that the closeness of the indicated innovations in relation to Scythian art can be justified by the new **mythical-religious conceptions that the Western Asian Indo-Aryans brought to this region**.[53] As for the nature of their such early presence in Western Asia, he thinks that it is a result of the **movements of Indo-Aryans (i.e. Indo-Iranians)** during the Bronze Age from the area of eastern Iran, Afghanistan and the southern part of Central Asia. He justifies the relations between these Western Asian Aryans and the Scythians by the belonging of both ethnic groups to the same aforementioned Indo-Iranian core, while the great chronological hiatus between "Aryan-Mitanni" and Scythian art - by the different time of separation of these populations from it and the trajectory of their further movement. Thus, the separation and individuation of the Scythians from this core he dates to the end of the 2nd millennium BCE followed subsequently by their movement to Central Asia, and only then to Eastern Europe and thence to Western Asia.[54]

g) Scythians

In the study of the genesis of the Scythians as a culture and a people, there are **two main concepts** that stand out. According to the first, their emergence is dated to the end of the 2nd and the beginning of the 1st millennium BCE when in the triangle between the Volga, Don and the Caucasus, from the east arrived a conglomerate of various inhomogeneous and ununified tribes, in academia defined as Pre-Scythians. Archaeologically, these events are related to the interaction between the "Andronovo" culture and the "Srubnaya" culture. The process of **homogenization of these tribes into a single ethnic entity** would take place in the next two or three centuries, although not in the indicated region, but in the territory of **Transcaucasia**.[55] According to the second conception, the Scythians arrived in the indicated region as an **already formed people** with their own cultural features, whereby the process of this constitution, as we have already mentioned, occurred at the transition from the 2nd to the 1st millennium BCE, after their separation from the Indo-Aryan core in Central Asia.[56] The subsequent stages in the history of this people are somewhat clearer due to their mentioning in written historical sources.

[51] E. Porada, *The Art*, 81; E. Porada, *Nomads*, 21, 28.
[52] E. Porada, *Nomads*, 22, 23.
[53] Г. Н. Курочкин, *Ранние*, 102-105, 115.
[54] Г. Н. Курочкин, *Ранние*, 115, 116; on the archaeological identification of the Western Asian Indo-Aryans: Г. Н. Курочкин, *К археологической*; on their early presence in Western Asia: Т. В. Гамкрелидзе, В. В. Иванов, *Миграции*, 19.
[55] М. Н. Погребова, Д. С. Раевский, *Ранние*, 167-171.
[56] Г. Н. Курочкин, *Ранние*, 116.

In previous sub-chapters we have seen that the Scythians during the 7th century BCE were quite intensively present in the Iranian Plateau, and even more broadly in entire Western Asia, whereby they were involved in numerous events connected with almost all the above presented peoples and states. As we have already mentioned, after parting with the Cimmerians before the borders of Urartu, they **conquered the state of Mannea**, in which, in addition to the local Manneans, the Medes were already expanding at that time. They would later also defeat them, after which, judging by some sources, they would **establish their kingdom** in this South Caucasian region (south of Lake Urmiya), led by Partatua, which would unite the Scythians, Manneans and Medes, and as it seems established good relations with the Assyrians as well. After 28 years of rule, the Scythians were **defeated by the Medes** (led by Cyaxares) and expelled from their kingdom, after which they **attacked and destroyed Urartu**. But after the formation of the Median Kingdom, they would become allies and an integral part of their army. During their presence in Western Asia, they would undertake campaigns to Anatolia, Palestine and the borders of Egypt, ending with the last decade of the 7th century BCE. They are last mentioned as a compact group in Western Asia at the beginning of the 6th century BCE.[57]

The stay of the Scythians (together with the Cimmerians) in Transcaucasia in the first decades of the 7th and part of the 6th century BCE, is archaeologically associated with archaeological objects that are not characteristic of the previous cultures of this region, but of the **"Koban" and Colchian cultures** whose native areas were north of the Caucasus. These finds are mainly concentrated north of Lake Sevan, at a certain distance from the territory of Urartu.[58]

Rare are the researchers who are convinced in the direct connection of the Scythians with the Luristan bronzes, because at the time when they were most intensively present in Western Asia, this group of objects was already experiencing the final stage of its development. These people are included in the studies mainly for two reasons. Firstly because of relations with some other peoples (Cimmerians, Medes), who according to the given theory are considered to be the bearers of these objects, specifically on the basis of **related origin**, **similar culture** or due to the involvement of both peoples in the **same historical processes**. The second reason is the assumptions about **the role of Luristan bronzes in the formation of certain objects that are considered to have belonged to the Scythians**.

The Scythians occupy an important place in the theory of **R. Ghirshman** on the Cimmerian origin of the Luristan bronzes, according to which they were a **people related to the Cimmerians** who did not differ much from them in their cultural features. Such an opinion is also shared by other researchers according to whom there is no possibility to differentiate the archaeological remains of these two ethnic groups because they had a very similar, and perhaps even exactly the same material culture. In fact, some of them are convinced that it, in the case of the Cimmerians, bears features of the early Scythian material culture.[59] Based on a reference by **Strabo**, it is thought that Scythian society was divided into four functionally specified hereditary classes that correspond quite closely to the Indo-Iranian castes.[60] This would be another argument in favor of their kinship with the Cimmerians, if one takes into account the theses on the Indo-Aryan character of the latter. According to R. Ghirshman, this closeness between the Scythians and the Cimmerians, among other things, is also manifested through the **stylistic and iconographic relations between the Luristan bronzes and the luxury items from Ziwiye**, considering that the latter were made by local workshops, but according to the taste of the Scythians.[61]

[57] A. Ivantchik, *Scythians*; R. Ghirshman, *Notes IV*, 198-204; М. Н. Погребова, *Закавказье*, 14-19; М. Н. Погребова, Д. С. Раевский, *Ранние*.
[58] М. Н. Погребова, *Закавказье*, 31-40, 197-202.
[59] М. Н. Погребова, *Закавказье*, 24, 25; М. Н. Погребова, Д. С. Раевский, *Ранние*, 189; А. И. Иванчик, *Современное*, 91-97.
[60] М. Н. Погребова, *Закавказье*, 20-21.
[61] R. Ghirshman, *Invasions*.


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We have already mentioned that **C. Goff Meade** is not convinced that, at the time of flourishing of the Luristan bronzes, the Scythians (and Cimmerians) were in Luristan, but even if that happened, she does not rule out the possibility that precisely they were responsible for the end of the culture that created these objects.[62]

In the studies on the Luristan bronzes, the Scythians are often included as a **people who accepted the iconographic and stylistic features of these objects** (separately or as part of the cultural traditions of Western Asia), which they then further developed within the later stages of their own culture.[63] For example, in this sense, **H. Frankfort**, based on the Scythian examples from Kostromskaya, Kelermes and Ziwiye, gives the following conclusion: "Thus there appears to be a case for supposing that the Scythians derived the zoomorphic juncture from Luristan."[64] In an attempt to determine more precisely the character of the evident Luristan-Scythian relations, **V. G. Lukonin** concludes that these are **"Luristan references"** that are present at the level of iconography, but not of style. They are most noticeable in the oldest Scythian objects such as those from Ziwiye, whereby, as paradoxical as it may seem, these "references" move from south to north (**along the route Luristan – South Azerbaijan – Transcaucasia – North Caucasus**) i.e. **in the opposite direction of the movement of the Iranian tribes**. Thereby, in each of these areas, different stylistic features appear as a result of the "imprinting" of the Luristan components into the local motifs that are specific to each of these regions.[65] A certain impetus in clarifying this phenomenon is also offered by the hypothesis of **M. N. Pogrebova and D. S. Raevsky** according to which the Scythians, as warriors in spirit, constantly used the craftsmen - members of the "Koban" culture as their own **professional artisans-metallurgists**, due to which the features of this culture appear in their finds from Transcaucasia.[66] In the same way, one could also explain the **presence of Luristan components in the Scythian animal style** - through the possible engagement of "Luristan craftsmen" in the realization of objects executed in that style.

E. E. Kuzmina reduces the whole issue to the **level of art**, whereby she thinks that the role of "Luristan art" in the Scythian one is insignificant, despite the closeness of certain details and compositions. According to her, "Scythian art" cannot be reduced to the Luristan one, but that they represent two **perfectly independent styles** whose commonality is probably based on their **similar basis** („на сходной основе“). **S. S. Bessonova**, on the other hand, seeks the reason for the specific similarities between Scythian and Luristan pictorial compositions in the **ideologies of the two cultures**.[67]

M. N. Pogrebova and D. S. Raevsky initially had a negative view regarding the direct influences between the Luristan bronzes and the Scythian zoomorphic style, but the growing number of such examples has led them to change this opinion. They think that the newer datings of the Luristan bronzes are an indication that in the 7th century BCE - according to them the time of formation of the Scythian zoomorphic style in Transcaucasia (around Lake Urmia), these objects were already **in the phase of declination**. But, according to these authors, this does not necessarily mean eliminating their role in the formation the mentioned style because in the indicated period these bronzes still existed, perhaps even much more intensively than the Luristan burials show, seemingly because they were used more within the frames of sanctuaries rather than in the funerary spheres.[68] Some components of the Luristan bronze were integrated into the material culture and art of the Achaemenid period, which clearly shows their continuous existence throughout the 7th and part of the 6th century BCE. This at the same time means that the craftsmen who

[62] C. Goff Meade, *Luristan*, 131.
[63] M. Rostovtzeff, *Some Remarks*, 53-55; A. Godard, *The Art*, 86; E. D. Filips, *Isčezle*, 244, 245; for the other proponents of this thesis: Г. Н. Курочкин, *Скифское*, 103, 104.
[64] H. Frankfort, *The Art*, 346, 347.
[65] В. Г. Луконин, *Искусство*, 25.
[66] М. Н. Погребова, Д. С. Раевский, *Ранние*, 188.
[67] Е. Е. Кузьмина, *В стране*, 112; Г. Н. Курочкин, *Скифское*, 104; С. С. Бессонова, *Религиозные*, 82-96.
[68] М. Н. Погребова, Закавказье, 192-196, 206; М. Н. Погребова, Д. С. Раевский, *Ранние*, 156-159.


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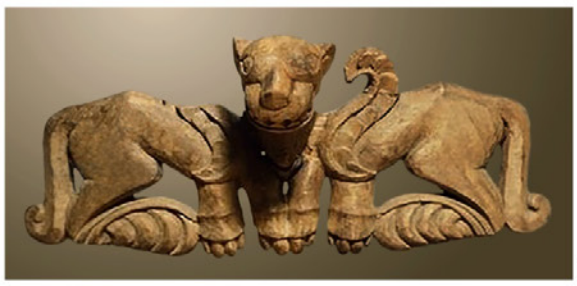

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worked in the early stages of the Scythian animal style, such as the makers of the objects from Ziwiye, could have also gotten acquainted with them.[69] Based on the indicated facts and observations, M. N. Pogrebova and D. S. Raevsky derive a conclusion that **"... a particularly significant share in the new Scythian art, created on the basis of borrowing, was introduced by the culture of Luristan."**[70] Thereby, they do not rule out the possibility that the beginning of these "Scythian-Luristan" or "Koban-Luristan" relations in Transcaucasia coincides not with the activities in this region of the Scythians, but of the Cimmerians, even during the 8th century BCE.[71]

We have seen that in some of the theories mentioned in the previous sub-chapters there is a tendency to treat the **Luristan bronzes as a product of the traditions of the northern nomadic peoples (Cimmerians, Indo-Aryans)**, and among them also of the **Scythians**. But most often, the specific motifs and stylistic features that are thereby apostrophized, are not confirmed in the native territories of these peoples with examples that would be **older than the Luristan ones**, but **younger** or, at best, **synchronous to them**. They mainly represent various components of the "animal style" and especially of the concept of fusion i.e. hybridization of various zoomorphic elements ("zoomorphic juncture").[72] Rightly so, this situation has led some researchers to a reverse interpretation i.e. that the similarity between Luristan and, for example, Scythian or Cimmerian motifs is due to the opposite - **their genesis in Luristan** (or more broadly in Western Asia) **and further transition to the later** (and according to some opinions also native) **Cimmerian and Scythian areas** in the North Black Sea region or the North Caspian steppes.[73]

However, some scholars of Scythian culture think that the indicated theories **overestimate the role of Luristan** in the formation of the material culture and art of the Scythians, or more broadly - of the early nomads in the Eurasian steppes. Thus, **N. G. Kurochkin** is convinced that Luristan bronzes have no direct connection to the constitution of Scythian art and that "not one pictorial representation of early Scythian art can be derived from the Luristan one". In fact, he brings into question the whole conception of the Western Asian genesis of the Scythian animal style, which he opposes with the view that the theoretical model for its emergence should not be based on **"the idea of borrowing, but the idea of the independent development of Scythian art"**. He supports this view with specific examples from Central Asia that are analogous and even more appropriate than the alleged "Luristan paradigms". He does not deny the existence of the Western Asian phase of Scythian culture, but only of its character as an **initial stage in their ethno-cultural constitution and the formation of the Scythian animal style**.[74] Such a view is also advocated by **G. M. Bongard-Levin and E. A. Grantovsky** who, like the previous author, in support of it reference finds executed in the "animal style" discovered in the eastern areas of the "Scythian world", far from the Caucasus and the Black Sea region, which are synchronous and even older than the earliest Western Asian examples of the Scythian animal style. According to them, such finds point to the **existence of the animal style in various parts of the Scythian area, independently of the campaigns of the European Scythians towards the Middle East and before their return to the steppes of Southern Russia**. They think that the objects from the Ziwiye hoard were also made (by Western Asian craftsmen) in these already, beforehand established traditions of Scythian art, at the order of the Scythian rulers, just as the Greek craftsmen would later do.[75]

Although the concept of the Western Asian genesis of the Scythian animal style cannot be completely rejected, nevertheless we could also not agree with some of its aspects, especially with the one relating to the

[69] М. Н. Погребова, *Закавказье*, 166; М. Н. Погребова, Д. С. Раевский, *Ранние*, 159.
[70] М. Н. Погребова, Д. С. Раевский, *Ранние*, 192, 193, specific examples: 91-96, 124, 125, 133, 134, 153, 154.
[71] М. Н. Погребова, *Закавказье*, 202, 206.
[72] For example: H. Frankfort, *The Art*, 346.
[73] In detail on this issue: М. Н. Погребова, *Закавказье*; М. Н. Погребова, Д. С. Раевский, *Ранние*.
[74] Г. Н. Курочкин, *Скифское*, 120; Г. Н. Курочкин, *Ранние*, 105-108.
[75] Г. М. Бонгард-Левин, Э. А. Грантовский, *От Скифии*, 18.

character and modes of introduction i.e. **"borrowing"** in it of foreign (and within those frames also of Luristan) components.

Based on the terminology used, it is clear that most researchers treat the Scythian animal style and the Luristan bronzes in the same way as they name them - primarily as **"art"** i.e. a set of pictorial motifs that compose some kind of **"repertoires"** and **"schemes"**, which could have been accepted or not by the Scythians on the basis of whether they seemed sufficiently "attractive" to them. We believe that our analyzes have shown that behind the Luristan bronzes lies a serious and complex **mythical-symbolic and religious system** of which one cannot accept only the pictoriality, extracted from its other layers, especially by a culture (of the Scythians or the Cimmerians) which originates from regions thousands of kilometres away from the native area of these objects.

We think it is of essential importance to ask why the Scythians would accept the style and iconography of a culture that is thousands of miles away from them?

We are convinced that such acceptances could not be based on some kind of "typological similarities" ("типологические схождения"), but had to be motivated by much more serious **organic closeness between the culture of the recipient and the culture of the giver**. One such serious element is the so-called **"zoomorphic transformations"** ("зооморфные превращения"/"zoomorphic junctures") highlighted by many researchers as a common component of the Luristan and Scythian animal style (our examples I4; I5; I6).[76] In our analyzes we have tried to show that this seemingly "chaotic" and seemingly "decorative-ornamental" style actually has a **deeply consequential symbolic, iconographic and religious basis**, because of which it would have been difficult for it to be accepted by the Scythians only as pure *art* and *style* and, in particular, to be developed further within the later stages of their culture. We are convinced that this could not have happened **without the acceptance of the mythical-symbolic system** that was the basis of that art, which actually generated it and gave it meaning.[77] As one of the most illustrative examples of this we could take the figure of the **birth-giving woman with zoomorphized legs**, which in both the Luristan and the Scythian context is present not as a "pictorial motif", but as a mythical character i.e. deity with an almost identical nature (D21: 1, 5 – 7 compare with 9 – 12; see p. 275).

One such systemic appropriation by the Scythians (or Cimmerians) of the Luristan mythical-symbolic and iconographic system could easily have occurred only if they were **cultures with a considerable degree of mutual similarity based, for example, on some kind of ancient genetic kinship of theirs**.[78] However, in that case, it would not actually be a **contact between two cultures**, but **between two versions of one same culture**. Hence, it would not be a case of **acceptance** by the Scythians of the whole "Luristan mythical-iconographic package", but of **supplementation** of their own traditions (fundamentally similar to the Luristan ones) with only some of its **formal features**, such as certain iconographic elements and compositions, style, different materials and technologies of execution.

*But where is, or where should it be sought, this **common code of the "animal style"** that seems to have been integrated into the culture of the Scythians, the Cimmerians, the bearers of the Luristan bronzes, as well as of the other Eurasian steppe peoples?* Although shyly and modestly, in the form of a question, G. M. Bongard-Levin and E. A. Grantovsky locate it in the **medium of organic materials**: "Maybe it existed even before in objects made of leather, wood, on fabrics, which, unfortunately, are not usually preserved in ancient burials."[79]

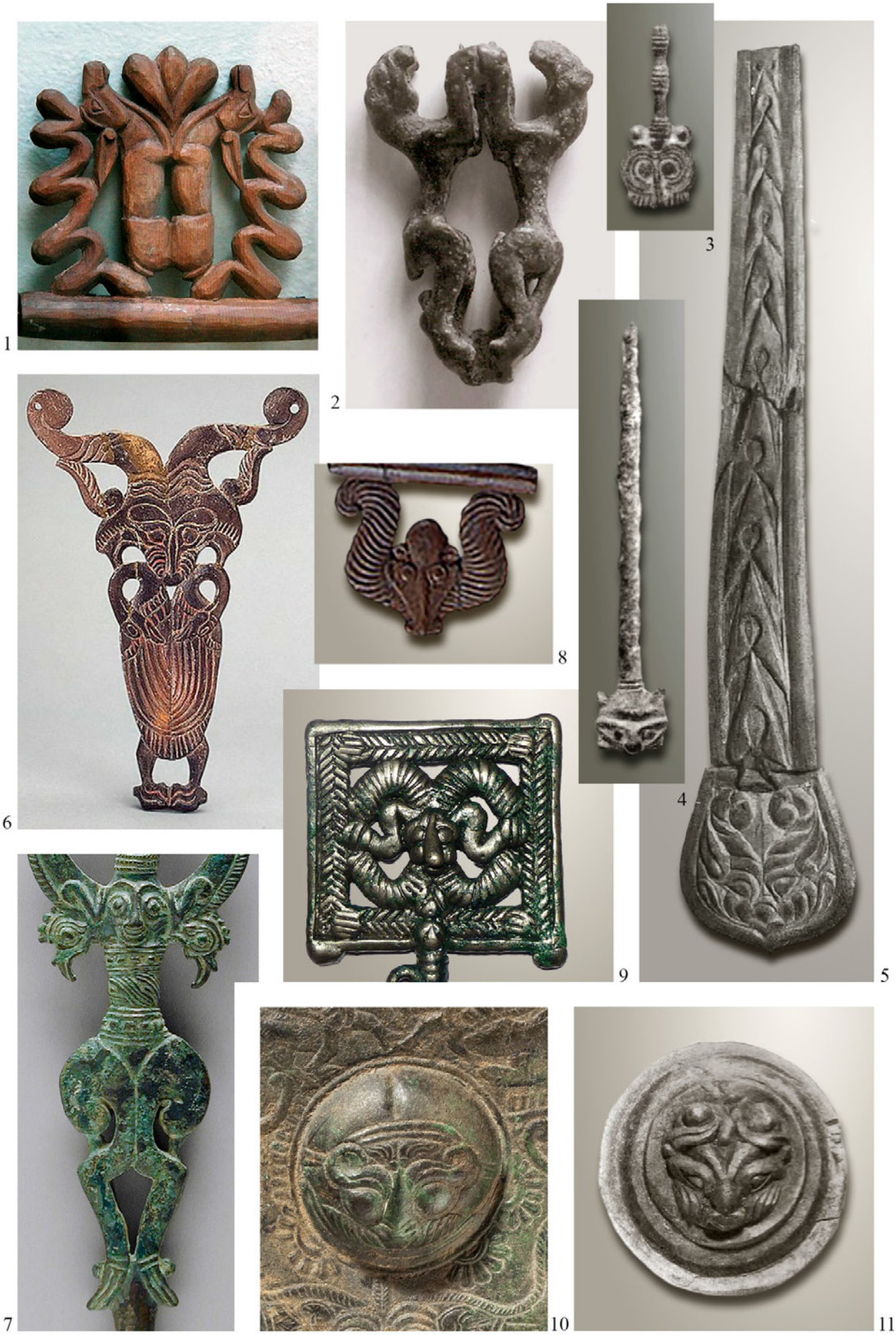
[76] М. Н. Погребова, Д. С. Раевский, *Ранние*, 192, 193.

[77] Some of these aspects have also been noted by the indicated authors, but in their theses they are nevertheless not given an appropriate place (М. Н. Погребова, Д. С. Раевский, *Ранние*, 193).

[78] On other factors responsible for the acceptance of certain pictorial elements between two cultures: В. А Кореняко, *Произхождение*, 133.

[79] Г. М. Бонгард-Левин, Э. А. Грантовский, *От Скифии*, 19.

I6



A large number of examples, synchronous or later than the Luristan ones, indicate the possibility that at least some of the Luristan iconographic and even stylistic paradigms were indeed formed in the regions north of Iran, the Caucasus and the Caspian Sea, specifically in forms that are usually **invisible to archaeology**. Here we have in mind the various objects made in the techniques of **carved wood, embroidered and woven ornaments in textiles, and contoured openwork appliqués cut from leather** in which one can follow an iconography based on the same motifs, style and composition as in the Scythian or Luristan metal finds. They are mainly represented within the frames of the **"Pazyryk" culture** of the central part of the Altai, which existed during the 7th - 3rd centuries BCE, whereby such objects constitute the dominant percentage of finds within these cultures (I4; I5: 2, 3, 6, 8, 10; I6: 1, 5, 6, 8, 11).[80] If we take into account that the indicated objects were discovered thanks to the **specific climatic conditions** i.e. the freezing of soil in burials covered by kurgans, which ensured the preservation of organic materials, then it follows that in the culture of the Scythians and other related peoples of the Eurasian steppes the **basic medium** of formation and development of the animal style **took place in the medium of those same organic materials**. We are convinced that this assumption could also apply to the culture that created the Luristan bronzes.

It would be the native medium whose invisibility led previous researchers to conclude that the Scythians and other steppe peoples of Eurasia **did not have their own (figural) pictorial art before coming to Western Asia**. Through the several waves of migration of the indicated "northern peoples" to the south, these invisible prototypes could have found their way to Western Asia and Iran, and even specifically to Luristan, to encourage the skilled local metallurgists **to transpose them into bronze, silver and gold** - materials worthy of the high status and power that the aristocracy of these peoples would gradually acquire upon the conquest and rule of these ancient Western Asian civilizations. In this way, one can explain the **sudden and enigmatic emergence of such "typically Scythian" and "typically Cimmerian" motifs in Luristan**, geographically thousands of kilometres away from the native territories of these peoples, but also chronologically - **several centuries before the supposed formation of their so recognizable "animal style"** (compare the comparative tables between the Luristan bronzes and the mentioned steppe wooden objects - I5; I6). The difference in materials between the compared examples becomes relative if we take into account that the numerous steppe wooden objects were **covered with gold foil**, which does not differ much from the somewhat more darkened golden luster of the polished bronze from which the Luristan objects were made (I4: 1, 3; I5: 3, 6).

Looking at the rich metal objects of the Scythians and of Luristan, **we do not actually see the main stream in which the iconography of these cultures developed**, but the individual relatively **rare and random excerpts** from this stream that were fortunate to be embodied in durable materials. Taking this into account, all the limitations and handicaps of modern researchers in regard to the reconstruction and understanding of this process come to the fore, if they do not take into account the **main stream i.e. main medium in which it existed and developed**.

h) Other peoples

The historical sources that refer to the Iron Age mention **Ellipi** - a confederate state that stretched across the territory of Piš-i-kuh – the westernmost region of Luristan, which some researchers associate with the "Baba Jan III - II" culture.[81] The Assyrian sources also mention **Parnakians** who could be associated with the populations of the Iron Age III in the same Luristan region.[82] Assumptions have been put forward that Luristan, or at least its eastern parts, belonged to the area of the **Shimashki** ethnic group which in the late 3rd

[80] С. И. Руденко, *Культура*; С. И. Руденко, *Искусство*; И. В. Тришина, *Многофигурные*; И. В. Рукавишникова, *Возможности*; З. Самашев (et al), *Конское*.

[81] B. Overlaet, *Luristan Bronzes*; I. N. Medvedskaya, *Media*; on the Ellipi also see: O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 120 (footnote 6); T. Cuyler Young, Jr., *The Iranian*, 13, 14, 20, 21; R. Zadok, *Iranian*, 135.

[82] B. Overlaet, *Luristan Bronzes*; on this people and the sources: R. Zadok, *Iranian*, 135, 136.

and 2nd millennium BCE was part of the Elamite confederation.[83] In her overview of the ancient populations that inhabited Luristan, S. Ayazi also mentions the **Lulubi** people, implying their status as potential bearers of the Luristan bronzes, perhaps based on existing assumptions that they are supposedly the ancestors of the modern Lurs people.[84] Their ethnonym can be traced from the 3rd to the 1st millennium BCE, among elsewhere also in central Zagros and its foothills, but it is assumed that their native territory was in South Kurdistan. There is no evidence that would go in favor of the assumption that they were indeed the ancestors of the Lurs.[85] S. Przeworski, based on some motifs from the Luristan bronzes, points to the presence of **Veddoids** ("Weddoiden") in Luristan, but only as one of the substrate components which during the existence of these objects would be layered with the traditions of some other populations that existed in this, from an ethnic and culturological aspect, quite diverse part of Asia, such as the Elamites, Medes and Persians.[86]

2. Our observations on the ethno-cultural affiliation of the Luristan bronzes

The iconographic and comparative analyzes we realized in the previous chapters of this monograph allow us to perceive not only the symbols, mythology and religion incorporated into the Luristan bronzes, but also the **ethno-cultural and economic profile of the societies to which they belonged**. These perceptions confirm what previous researchers have long since concluded - that these objects are the **product of two components**: **autochthonous**, related to the ancient civilizations of Western Asia, and **foreign**, which arrived in this region most likely from the north. The comparisons we carried out often pointed to the direct relations of the iconography of the standards and of other Luristan bronzes with some **Mesopotamian paradigms**: **Etana** (F15), **Ningizzida** (F16; F17), the **Snakes of Gudea** (H21; H28), the **Master i.e. Mistress of Animals** (C16 – C20; D18), the **two animals that flank a tree** (B29 – B36; B47), the **goddess who exposes herself in the nude** (E15) or **holds her breasts or abdomen** (C26 – C33; D19). But, on the other hand, no less often there were parallels that imposed themselves in relation to the contents and features of the **Iranian and Indian** i.e. **Indo-Aryan** mythical-religious traditions, noted by other authors as well (for example R. Ghirshman, G. Dumézil and others).

These relations offer us the opportunity to determine some kind of hypothetical global profile of the culture in which these objects were conceived. In fact, it would be a kind of **"photo robot"** from which we could extract several components that could help in the **search for the enigmatic culture responsible for their emergence**. According to this profile, the given culture:

– must immediately precede the emergence of the Luristan bronzes;

– in geographical terms should be located in or near the area of their distribution;

– should be built on the substrate of one of the autochthonous Middle Eastern cultures;

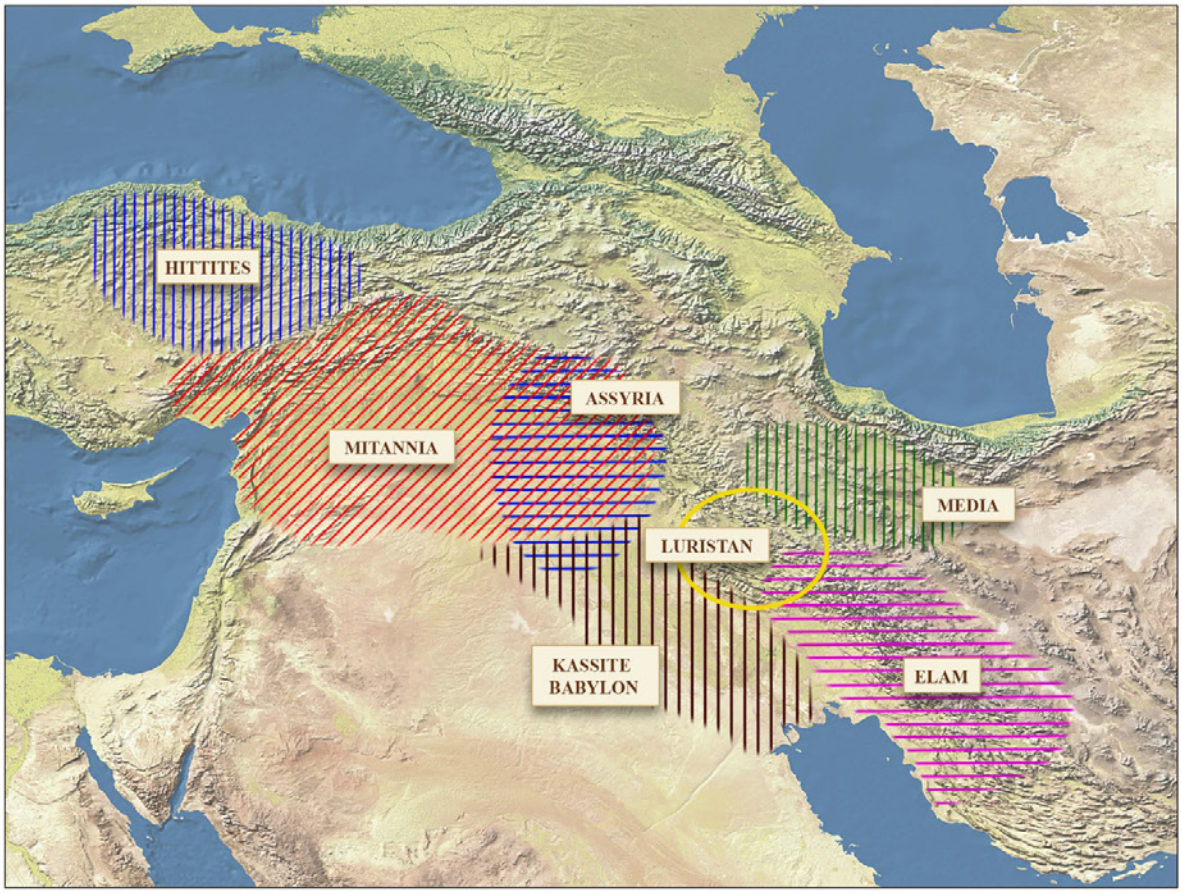
– this substrate should be complemented by components of another culture with Iranian, but, even more likely, also with Aryan, Indo-Aryan or Indo-Iranian features.

According to our observations, the indicated criteria are best met by **Mitannia**, specifically at the level of the following components:

– **Chronology**. The ancient state of Mitannia existed from the 17th to the 13th century BCE, which immediately precedes the appearance of the Luristan bronzes.

– **Geography**. Although the territory of Mitannia has changed over the centuries, in global terms it stretched across northern Mesopotamia i.e. the upper reaches of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, east to Nuzi

[83] On the authors of this thesis with presented bibliography: O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 120 - footnote 6.
[84] S. Ayazi, *Luristan*, 12; on relations with the modern Lurs: А. Леонидов, *Луллубейство*.
[85] R. Zadok, *Lulubi*.
[86] S. Przeworski, *Zagadnienia*.


HITTITES
MITANNIA
ASSYRIA
LURISTAN
MEDIA
KASSITE
BABYLON
ELAM

1



2



3



4



5

(modern-day Kirkuk), and west to Aleppo and the Syrian coast. According to that, the area in which the Luristan bronzes extended is located about 200 km east of the southeastern peripheral zones of this state (I7: 1).

– **Language and ethnocultural affiliation**. Mitannia was inhabited by Hurrians - non-Indo-Europeans who spoke the Hurrian language. However, several documents written in cuneiform (14 - 13th century BCE) note the **names of some of their rulers**, in which one can clearly recognize **Aryan linguistic features**, but transferred to Hittite transcription (**Paršatatar, Tušratta, Šuttarna, Artatama** etc.). The treaty of a Mitanni king contains an oath which mentions the **names of four gods** who also bear Indo-Aryan characteristics i.e they **coincide with gods of Vedic mythology**: **Indara** (Indra), **Uruvana** (Varuna), **Mitra** and **Nasatja**. Discovered in the Hittite capital is a document from the 14th century BCE, written in Hurrian, which is a kind of **manual for training horses**. On this occasion it is important because its author was a Mitannian and because it uses **terms related to breeding and training horses**, once again with clear **Indo-Aryan linguistic features**: *tri*, *pancha*, *sapta*, *nana* … (numbers), *vartanna* (turning), *ashva* (horse). The great importance of horses in Mitanni society is also reflected in the **title of their rulers**, which again has Indo-Aryan etymology meaning *"the one who manages horses"*, but also through the presence of the meanings *horse*, *chariot* and *management* in the etymology of the names of some of their rulers.[87] Several names of Mitanni kings contain the Old Indic term *r'ta*, which denotes **"cosmic order and truth"** i.e. the central moral concept of the Rig Veda.[88]

Despite the skepticism of some scholars, today it is considered proven that the mentioned names and lexemes belonged to a language with Indo-Aryan characteristics, although they also show certain dialectal differences in relation to the **language of the Vedas** and of the **Indian Aryans** i.e. they leave the impression as **their older forms**. It is especially important to emphasize that the referenced examples **do not reflect living linguistic traditions**, but **remnants of a foreign (Indo-Aryan) language that had apparently "petrified" in the local languages of the region**, specifically as a result of its presence and interaction with them in previous centuries - probably in the 17th - 16th century BCE, and perhaps even earlier. There is a conviction that the Indo-Aryans were present in Mitannia in the function of **warriors** who, after occupying its territory, established in it their own **ruling dynasties and aristocracy**. It is thought that precisely because of such an elite character that these formations were relatively quickly **culturally and linguistically assimilated** by the dominant autochthonous population.[89]

The presence of these **"Mitanni Aryans"** is also sought in the visual medium such as the **relief from the tomb of Pharaoh Horemheb** (end of the 14th - beginning of the 13th century BCE), which depicts Mitanni captives with a long tuft of hair on the head (śikhā) - a hairstyle characteristic of the Aryans from India (I7: 2 – 5).[90]

We have seen that analogous Indo-Aryan loans (once again theonyms) are also noted in written **documents relating to the Kassites**. We think that they could also be due to the **same Indo-Aryan core** that is responsible for their presence in the Mitanni documents.

Based on the satisfaction of the indicated components of our "photo robot", could we treat these "Middle East Indo-Aryans" as potential bearers and/or producers of the Luristan bronzes?

Nevertheless, no, despite the similarities between these objects and the seals from Karkuk pointed out by E. Herzfeld (I1), because the **Mitanni state and the time of its Aryan dynasty do not coincide with the Luristan bronzes in chronological terms** (precedes the appearance of these objects for about 300-400 years), nor in **geographical**, because this state was nonetheless located a few hundred kilometers northwest of the

[87] Summarized, with presented bibliography: Л. С. Клейн, *Древн. миграции*, chapter II. 3; Л. С. Клейн, *Время*, 173, 174; R. Schmitt, *Aryans*; Е. Е. Кузьмина, *Откуда*, 189, 190; Г. Н. Курочкин, *К археологической*, 150-153.
[88] D. Anthony, *The Horse*, 49, 50.
[89] Л. С. Клейн, *Древн. миграции*, chapter II. 3; R. Schmitt, *Aryans*.
[90] Л. С. Клейн, *Древн. миграции*, chapter II. 3; Л. С. Клейн, *Время*, 188 – Рис. 65.

area where the Luristan bronzes did extend. Because of that, we could treat them only as a factor that in some **indirect way stimulated i.e. inspired the creation of these objects**. In fact, according to the indicated written documents, the same - indirect Indo-Aryan presence in Mitannia was manifested through the mentioned Aryan names which, instead of their authentic, had a foreign pronunciation. This speaks of a certain distance of these elements from the living culture of Mitannia in a chronological, geographical and/or identity sense. The situation is also similar in regard to the traces of the Indo-Aryan language in the culture of the Kassites.

3. Historical-cultural model in relation to the origin i.e. creation of the Luristan bronzes

Based on the above-presented facts and assumptions, we decided in this chapter to propose and analyze a hypothetical model that would account for the origin of the Luristan bronzes and their ethnocultural affiliation. In this model we will try to also incorporate the theories of previous authors, but also our own proposals that address these issues. The model begins with the following point:

– In the first centuries of the 2nd millennium BCE in Western Asia, more specifically in the South Caucasus, appears a group of Indo-Aryans that arrives from the north - across the Caucasus, most likely from Southeast Europe as their native territory (I8: 1).

According to the theory of **P. Kretschmer**, supported and supplemented by **O. N. Trubachev**, the source of these Indo-Aryan movements would be the **North Black Sea region**.[91] This theory is considered by some to be quite speculative and insufficiently argued, hence it is parried by another, according to which these movements would start in the lower reaches of the Volga and Kazakhstan and would take place across the eastern Caspian regions i.e. across Sogdiana, Chorasmia and Bactria.[92] In our opinion, the above-proposed location of the oldest Indo-Aryan core in the South Caucasus region prefers the first route more.

– Upon arrival, the Indo-Aryans conquer Mitannia, thus beginning their influence on its culture, first from the position of occupiers, and then also of rulers. As a result of their political, military and economic power, these "Western Asian Indo-Aryans" manage during their several decades or centuries of rule to maintain some aspects of their native culture (language, symbols, myth, religion), but also to impose them on the autochthonous culture, and probably receive certain components from it as well (I8: 3).

In this part of our model we can fit the **conceptions of E. Herzfeld** about the global influence of Mitannia in the development of the Luristan bronzes and those of **E. Porada** about its role only in the early phase of their existence. As indicators of this phase we take the mentioned Indo-Aryan names in the Mitanni documents and the "northern" motifs present on the Karkuk seals and eventually on the Luristan bronzes (I8: 5).

– As a consequence of the greater demographic and cultural power of the autochthonous population of Mitannia, but also of the small number of these "Western Asian Indo-Aryans" (we could now also call them "Mitanni Indo-Aryans"), they enter a process of gradual linguistic and cultural assimilation (I8: 4).

This is indicated by the new non-Aryan pronunciation of the mentioned Aryan names, and perhaps also by the autochthonous Middle Eastern motifs on the Karkuk seals (I8: 6) and the Luristan bronzes, as well as the absence in later sources of other information about the indicated Aryan rulers of Mitannia.

Here we should examine in more detail the question about the character i.e. composition of this first Indo-Aryan wave to Western Asia, which ultimately comes down to the motivations that stood behind it. The

[91] О. Н. Трубачев, *Indoarica*, (with presented works of P. Kretschmer); discussion: K. Elst, *Linguistic*, 259, 260; their more specific location is considered to be the shores of the Sea of Azov and the course of the river Don (М. Н. Погребова, Д. С. Раевский, *Ранние*, 172).

[92] R. Schmitt, *Aryans*; Е. Е. Кузьмина, *Откуда*; Г. Н. Курочкин, *Ранние*, 115, 116.

solution should of course be sought between the following **two extreme options** - that it was a case of **more massive migrational processes** involving the entire population, or of **military campaigns** composed only of **male warriors** led by the **ruling elites**. The first option in principle gives greater opportunities for survival of the original identity of the given population in the newly settled territories, while the second is more predisposed to end with their rapid assimilation.[93] The existence of these options in pure form is unlikely, but in the form of some kind of compromise versions, such as the movement of warriors accompanied in the background by part of the population, at the very least the families of the ruling elites and the first rank of their companions.

According to the first impression, the scarce traces of this first Indo-Aryan wave in Western Asia and the short duration of the formations that emerged from the subsequent one (the presence of Cimmerians and Scythians in Western Asia), speak in favor of the second of the proposed options, regardless of whether it would be present in its extreme or compromise variant. At the time in which the indicated accounts were written, the "Mitanni Aryans" (which probably arrived 3 - 4 centuries earlier?) were already to a large extent **assimilated** or **withdrawn to the margins of society**. It is not excluded that a part of this core was **resettled to the periphery of the kingdom or in its surroundings** (I8: 7).

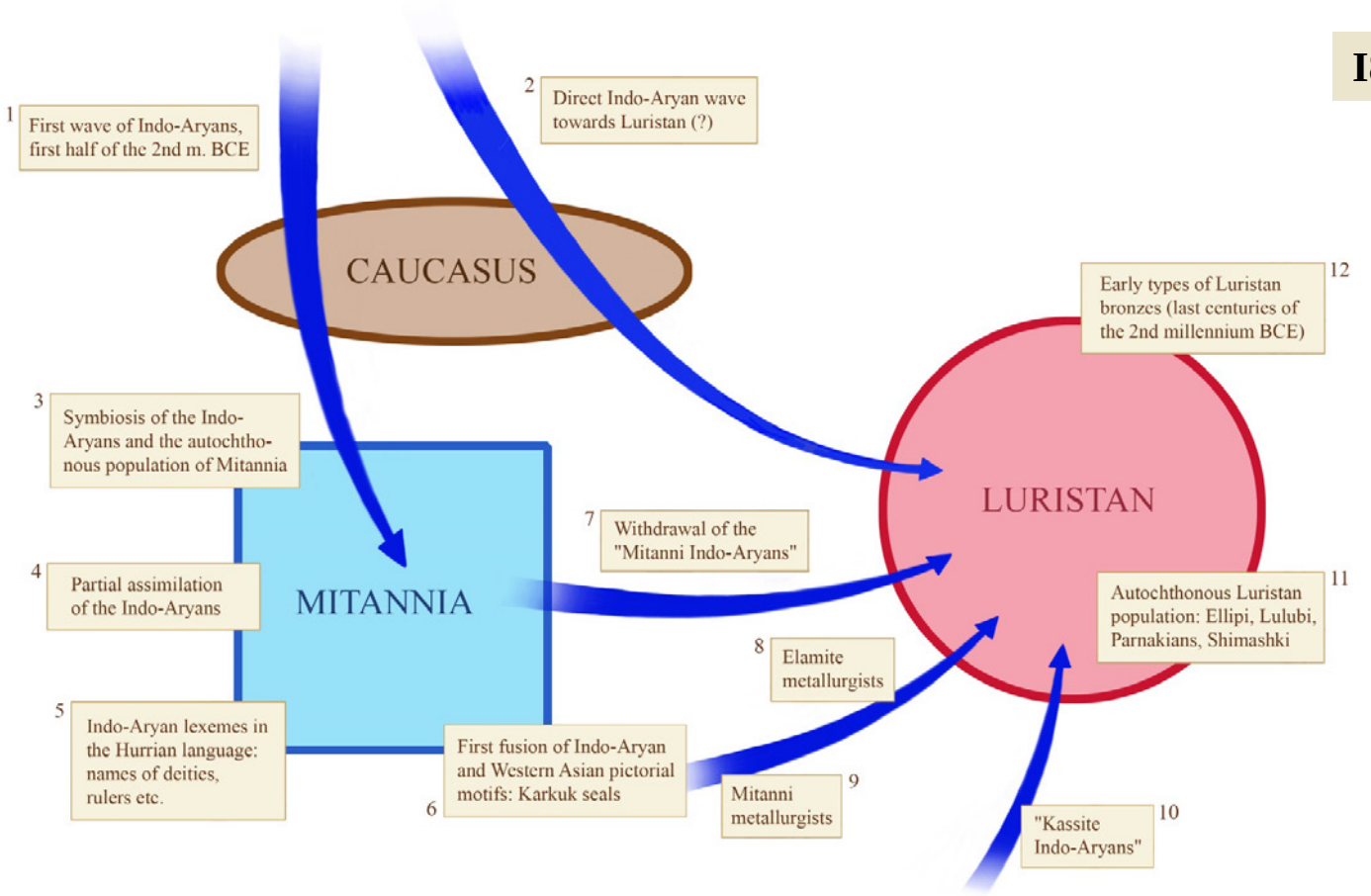
As a more recent and better documented example of this model we can take the **ancient Macedonian occupation of Western Asia** during the 4th century BCE, which through the furious campaign of Alexander III was realized in just about ten years. After his death and the disintegration of the empire, the mentioned part of it was mostly succeeded by the Seleucid empire, on whose territory only some cultural features of the occupier did survive, integrated primarily in the higher strata of society. In the long run they did not exert a greater influence on the identity and ethnocultural features of the autochthonous populations of this part of Asia. The situation is similar with the **medieval Bulgarian state** which during the 7th and 8th century CE consisted of a majority Slavic population and a ruling elite of non-Slavic but Proto-Bulgarian (Turkish and Iranian) origin which, although smaller, determined the name and other identity features of the state. But despite such a powerful position, over the next two centuries the Slavic language and culture would prevail in it, while the Proto-Bulgarian elite were fully assimilated, along with its main ethno-cultural features. This second example also illustrates the opposite option - as with the mass settlement of Slavs in the territory of present-day Bulgaria, but also in the other Balkan regions, this population in two centuries would significantly change the ethnic picture of the Peninsula at the expense of the autochthonous (previously partially Romanized) population.

The first option (more massive migration) in principle does not exclude the successful survival and expansion of the newly settled in the new environment if it is accompanied by **military and political power** followed by an **effective concept of assimilation of the natives**: - principles of zealous preservation of one's own ethnic identity (based on strict patriarchal rules, taboos such as prohibitions on mixing with other ethnic groups and disapproval of marriages of women from their native with men from other ethnic communities); - gradual expansion of the ethnic core through a high birth rate and successful economy; - powerful and prominent ideology i.e. religion that functions as an additional factor of homogenization of the native and assimilation of the autochthonous population. The effectiveness of these components is best illustrated by the **example of the Jews** who in past centuries, despite the absence of particular political power, have succeeded worldwide in preserving and increasing their ethnic nuclei, despite the apparent inclusion in them of a significant percentage of non-Jewish population. It is assumed that a similar concept functioned in the process of **Aryanization of India** whose initial stages (15th century BCE) certainly could not involve some particularly large Aryan population.[94]

[93] On the indicated and other aspects of migration as a phenomenon: Л. С. Клейн, *Миграция*.
It is thought that the Scythian movements throughout Western Asia were consisted only of Scythian warriors, without their families: М. Н. Погребова, *Закавказье*, 42; М. Н. Погребова, Д. С. Раевский, *Ранние*, 15, 183-186; Г. Н. Курочкин, *Ранние*, 109.

[94] On these processes: D. Anthony, *The Horse,* 117-119; C. Renfrew, *Archaeology*, 454.

I8



Do the undeniable similarities between the style and motifs of the Karkuk seals and the Luristan bronzes, presented in comparative analyzes by E. Herzfeld (I1)*, must at all costs indicate an autochthonous genesis?* Not at all, considering that the author himself emphasizes the connection of the city from which they originate with the Aryan dynasty of Mitannia.[95] If such an overlap is accepted as true then it would be quite expected that this dynasty, during its reign, also influenced the introduction into the iconography of the seals of that time of motifs from their (Aryan) religion, mythology and iconography. The living presence of these original spiritual traditions of theirs is confirmed by the indicated Aryan theonyms in the inscriptions of that time. This means that the similarity of the motifs that are compared by E. Herzfeld should not have to be interpreted at all costs as **inclination of Luristan iconography towards the scenes from autochthonous Mitanni seals**, but also vice versa - as **continuation of the existence of Aryan-Mitanni motifs in the Luristan bronzes as well** (slightly younger than the first), behind which there could be a certain ethnic or at least cultural closeness between the bearers of both types of objects (I8: 6, 8, 9).

If we take into account the presence of Indo-Aryan elements among the Kassites as well, in this stage of our model we could also fit in it the **"Kassite theory" of A. Godard**, with that in this case as well, it does not have to be at all costs a matter of influence over the Luristan bronzes by the **autochthonous Kassites**, but also of components of some kind of **mixed "Kassite Indo-Aryans"** (I8: 10).

In this part of our model, we could also incorporate **the Elamite theory of E. Porada**, not so much for the Elamites as bearers of the Luristan bronzes as much as for being **their producers**, specifically through the **adaptation of the indicated autochthonous iconographic and stylistic elements to the needs of their Indo-Aryan orderers**. At the same time, it would also give additional explanation for the origin of the obvious autochthonous elements in these objects (I8: 8).

[95] E. Herzfeld, *Iran*, 161.

– In the last centuries of the second millennium BCE, part of the population of the indicated first Indo-Aryan wave (which meanwhile underwent changes due to interaction with the autochthonous cultures) would find itself in the territory of Luristan. In this case, too, it could have mainly been a group composed of the military elite i.e. aristocracy accompanied by their families (among others, also including wives of autochthonous and children of mixed descent), which would gradually absorb and assimilate part of the local Luristan population (perhaps Ellipi, Parnakians, Shimashki or Lulubi) (I8: 7, 11).

In this part of the model we could fit well the **conception of A. Godard**, on the **belonging of the Luristan bronzes to a "defeated and expelled elite"**, but in an indirect way i.e. more as a concept, because in it this role is assigned to the Kassites. The next segment of our model would also follow in that context.

– This new Luristan ethnocultural core consists mainly of members of the "Aryan-Mitanni elite" (perhaps also/or "Aryan-Kassite") which was previously defeated by some other group and expelled from the kingdom it ruled. After the loss of power, it retreated to this inaccessible mountainous area, creating there a kind of conglomerate which, judging by current knowledge, did not outline some more highly organized socio-political formation (I8: 7, 10).

Here we could suggest a **parallel version of our model**, which would not follow the previous events related to the "Mitanni" or "Kassite Indo-Aryans", but would start from the first point - the arrival of the Indo-Aryans in the South Caucasus region (I8: 1):

– After the arrival of the Indo-Aryans in the South Caucasus region, a group of them moved to Luristan where in the following centuries, in interaction and symbiosis with the local population, they formed an isolated culture predominated by their native Indo-Aryan features (I8: 2, 11).

If we agree that the **Luristan bronzes are the product of some kind of hybrid Aryan-Indigenous core**, the question remains open about the factors that were crucial for its survival in a powerful non-Aryan and even non-Indo-European environment. In this regard, we could note the following components:

- Settlement of the mentioned elite group **together with their families**, which would have provided a strong enough and homogeneous (probably already semi-assimilated) Indo-Aryan core that was able to survive in the next few centuries.

- High degree of **distinctiveness (ethnic, primarily linguistic, but also cultural) of this core in relation to the surrounding population**, which in some later cases of history has proven to be a strong factor in the creation of **ethnic isolates** (an ideal example of this are the Hunza i.e. Burusho people of North Pakistan and northern India).

- **Isolated i.e. hard-to-reach mountainous region** (Zagros mountain massif) which, due to its geomorphology and distance from the main roads, provides favorable conditions for homogenization and gradual development and expansion of a, perhaps originally not very large and homogeneous community.

Here this parallel version of our model ends and its main line continues.

– At the end of the second millennium BCE, within the communities of the first Indo-Aryan wave that settled in Luristan emerged the early types of Luristan bronzes (I8: 12) *in which all the above-mentioned historical circumstances are embodied: native Indo-Aryan spiritual traditions (symbolic and mythological system, religion, specific pictorial concept i.e. style) accompanied by significant autochthonous elements (iconography, style, technology of execution).*

Archaeologically, the proposed hypothetical events could be related to the **appearance of a new population in Luristan in the Iron Age II (**10th - 8th century BCE).[96] They are also denoted by the high degree of similarity between numerous bronze objects from Western Iran (within those frames also some Luristan bronzes) and Transcaucasia, from the end of the 2nd and the beginning of the 1st millennium BCE, and their relations with the synchronous cultures north of the Caucasus ("Koban" and Colchian cultures). Most often, they represent close relations between objects from the indicated region with objects from the whole of northwestern Iran, not only those from Luristan. Although in some cases such similarities refer also

[96] М. Н. Погребова, *Закавказье*, 167-169.

to the **level of morphology**, more often it is a matter of **closeness at the level of style** that point not to direct relations of the type "prototype - derivative", but to **common iconographic paradigms**.[97] In addition to the chronological, they also indicate s**ome kind of spatial i.e. geographical closeness**, that is, the presence of objects from these cultures (together with their creators and/or users) next to each other, in the same or close regions. This is an indication of the **direct contacts between Transcaucasia and Luristan**, which, in some cases, would also refer to regions north of the Caucasus, such as the area of the "Koban" culture. But, the nature of these similarities and the fact that they are synchronous cultures indicate not some simple relations between objects, but kinships on some other level. A possible indicator of this is the **presence of objects from both cultures - "Koban" and Luristan - in a third place**, such as the island of **Samos** (H14).[98] We think that these relations are best explained by the following sentence of M. N. Pogrebova, although it refers to a specific type of objects: "If there was any influence here, then it was a gradual and long process started in the period that preceded the formation of the culture of the Luristan bronzes, which could hardly be a consequence of specific historical events."[99]

M. N. Pogrebova disagrees with the connection of the Luristan bronzes with the Iranian populations as it is implied by the frequent interpretations of their iconography based on paradigms from the Iranian mythical-religious traditions. She thinks that this concept is not supported by the specific comparisons that point more to the Western Asian than Iranian (nor Indo-European) basis of these objects.[100] Respecting this observation, we propose to fit it into our model in such a way that the indicated **Western Asian similarities** of the Luristan bronzes would be connected with the presumed **first wave** which, as we have seen, did not introduce in that region traditions of Iranian, but **Indo-Aryan character**. Unlike it, the subsequent waves also contained features characteristic of the Iranian ethnic groups, which at that time were already separated from the Indo-Iranian core and gradually, along various routes, entered the Iranian Plateau (I9: 9).

The economic power of the indicated communities to possess these, basically quite expensive items can be justified by their previous **high (ruling, aristocratic) status**, by the principles and skills characteristic of their culture (previous **nomadic way of life, militancy, aggressiveness, inclination towards looting, combat and riding skills**) and the **resources** offered by the region (livestock, metallurgy, horse breeding).[101]

– In the first decades of the 8th century BCE, along the same northern route of the first Indo-Aryan wave, Western Asia was entered by a new wave of settlers, this time clearly mentioned in historical sources under the ethnonyms Cimmerians and Scythians, the former with Indo-Aryan, while the latter with Iranian ethnocultural features (I9: 1, 2, 6, 9).

Although the sources do not mention their presence specifically in Luristan, such a circumstance can be expected, especially if the assumption is accepted that, at that time, communities of similar origin were already stationed in the indicated region.

– This new wave caused refreshment and strengthening (in a genetic and cultural sense) of the existing and already weakened Indo-Aryan Luristan core with new and fresh Indo-Aryan (Cimmerian) and Iranian impulses (Medes, Scythians), the latter perhaps arriving from the native northern regions across the eastern Caspian route (I9: 2, 9, 11). *These processes generated the second (and most dominant) phase of the Luristan bronzes manifested by obvious changes in existing types of objects at the level of their global form, technology of execution, iconography and style (higher degree of stylization, geometrism, hybridization and anthropomorphization)* (I9: 12, 13).

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[97] М. Н. Погребова, *Закавказье*, 73-158, 162-204, especially: 118-120, 131, 132, 140, 147, 172, 173, 177, 181, 182. Among these relations are also referenced examples connected to the Luristan "zoomorphic standards" (144, 145, T.XIX).

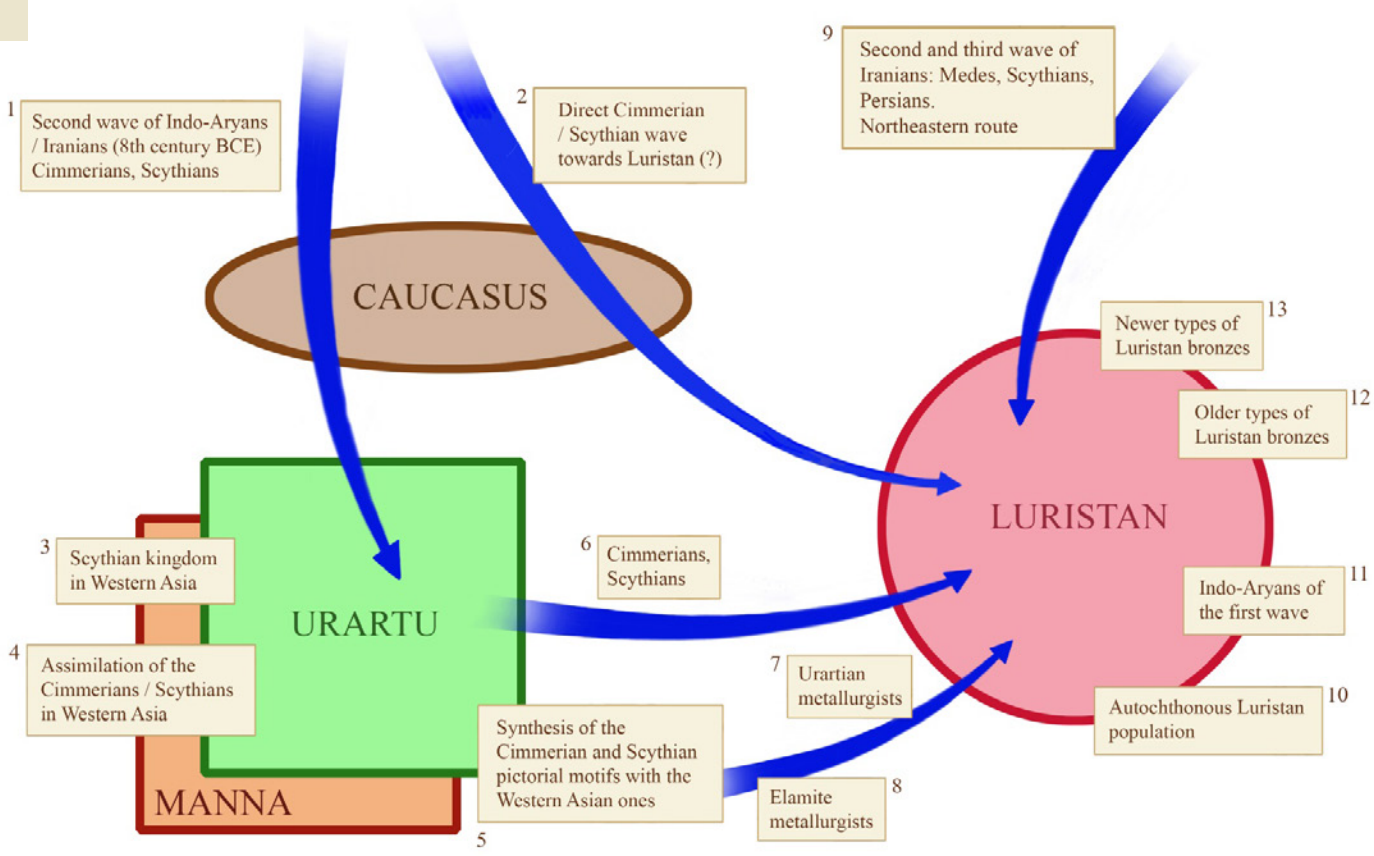
[98] М. Н. Погребова, *Закавказье*, 182-186.

[99] М. Н. Погребова, *Закавказье*, 141.

[100] М. Н. Погребова, *Закавказье*, 172, 173, 176.

[101] About this type of communities: В. А Кореняко, *Произхождение*, 147-163.

I9



Archaeologically, these changes could be related to the sudden appearance of **"Baba Jan B" type pottery** over a large area, probably as a result of the stationing of newcomers from the northern regions.[102]

– After the attacks on Urartu and the creation of the Scythian Kingdom in the territory of Mannea, there took place a synthesis of Cimmerian and Scythian with Western Asian pictorial motifs, manifested, among other things, through the finds in Ziwiye (I9: 1, 3, 5). *The products of this synthesis, with the mediation of Urartian and Elamite metallurgists, reach Luristan and participate in the creation of newer types of Luristan bronzes i.e. the modification of the older types* (I9: 5, 7, 8, 12, 13). *Judging by the absence of any data on the Scythians and Cimmerians in Western Asia in the following centuries, it is quite probable that soon after their arrival in this region, there took place their complete assimilation* (I9: 4).

In this part of our model we could well fit the **theory of R. Ghirshman about the Cimmerians**, which coincides with the most lavish phase in the development of the Luristan bronzes (from the 8th and 7th centuries BCE). It is clear that this theory cannot refer to the previous points of the model, given the later presence of this ethnic group in the Iranian Plateau. Its incompatibility with the older phases can be, to a certain extent, amortized in two ways. First, with the assumptions that the **Cimmerians were coming to Western Asia even before this main wave of theirs**, perhaps under a different name and with somewhat different ethno-cultural features. The second amortization would be based on the inclusion in R. Ghirshman's thesis of the **Medes** (who are present here even before the Cimmerians), but also of the Scythians (who come simultaneously with the Cimmerians) (I9: 9). If we take into account that the Medes and Scythians in scholarly circles **are not treated as Indo-Aryans** but as **Iranian ethnicities**, their inclusion in our model would also mean projecting into it the **last phase of development of the Luristan bronzes**.

[102] C. Goff Meade, *Luristan*, 130, 131; М. Н. Погребова, *Закавказье*, 168.

Archaeologically, these events could be related to the **Iron Age III**, which is dated to around 700 BCE.[103]

How on the basis of the model proposed here could we explain the Luristan bronzes found in the sanctuaries in the Aegean region i.e. Samos, Crete and Thessaly (H14)?

As we have already mentioned, one possibility is that they are connected with the **invasion of Asia Minor by the Cimmerians**, followed by the **occupation of Lydia and the Ionian cities**. The presence in these sanctuaries of bronze objects from other areas of Western Asia as well, could be explained by the hypothesis of M. N. Pogrebova that the Scythian-Cimmerian expeditions through this area also included the participation of tribes from Transcaucasia (and we would add: from other regions of Western Asia as well).[104] In that case, it would not be unbelievable that **these campaigns, specifically those aimed at Asia Minor and the Aegean, had also involved the bearers of the Luristan bronzes**. This assumption becomes even more plausible if we agree with the hypothesis that the creators and users of the early Luristan bronzes were members of the first Indo-Aryan wave in Western Asia, whereby the kindred Indo-Aryan origins of the two peoples would be an additional motive for this alliance. It seems quite logical that the "Luristanians" in this campaign also took with them their "cult bronzes", which they would then deposit in the Aegean sanctuaries, in the same way as they did that in their native land.

Summarizing the facts and assumptions presented in the previous paragraphs, the entire almost half-millennium existence of the Luristan bronzes, perceived at a global cultural-historical level, could be broken down into three phases:[105]

First phase (11th - 9th centuries BCE) as a result of the settlement and/or consolidation of the **first wave of Indo-Aryans in Western Asia** (remnants of the "Mitanni Indo-Aryans" and possibly the "Kassite Indo-Aryans" that had arrived in previous centuries).

Second phase (8th century BCE) as a result of the **second wave of Indo-Aryans and Iranians in Western Asia** (Cimmerians, Scythians, Medes).

Third phase (end of the 8th and 7th century BCE) as a result of the **third (Iranian) wave in Western Asia** (Scythians, Persians).

* * *

At the end of this chapter, and at the same time of the entire monograph, many questions, facts and assumptions are imposed regarding the relations between the Luristan standards, and more broadly of the Luristan bronzes, with various objects belonging to other cultures, regardless of the degree of their mutual chronological, geographical or culturological closeness to the Luristan one. Here we have in mind the similarities at any level: general shape, style and technique of execution, iconographic concepts, specific pictorial motifs and compositions, and spiritual culture (symbolism, mythology and religion) that stood behind the compared objects. Many of these relations were already pointed out, and to some extent also elaborated and argued, in the previous chapters, so that their re-notation in this place would be superfluous and would represent a departure from our main topic. We believe that this publication will be a good occasion for future researchers to deal in more detail with the indicated similarities, as well as with the revealing of their character and the reasons that produced them. As an additional incentive for them, we decided to once again, at this place, indicate these intercultural relations, by pointing to the specific pages of this publication where they

[103] C. Goff Meade, *Luristan*, 130, 131; М. Н. Погребова, *Закавказье*, 168; on the migrations of the Iranians to Zagros: T. Cuyler Young, Jr., *The Iranian*.

[104] М. Н. Погребова, *Закавказье*, 204.

[105] A similar definition of the phases based on the dating and classification of L. Vanden Berghe and other authors: М. Н. Погребова, *Закавказье*, 165-169.

were denoted or elaborated in more detail. Thereby, designated with normal numbers are those pages where these relations are treated at the level of comparisons of objects, pictorial motifs, symbolic, mythical, religious, or some other specific cultural phenomena. On the other hand, numbers in bold indicate those pages where these comparisons are accompanied by observations and assumptions that to a greater or lesser extent also touch upon the cultural-historical aspects. At the end of this chapter, as a follow-up to the first six comparative tables (I1 – I6) we present nine more (I10 – I18), featuring a selection of some of the most striking parallels to the Luristan iconographic motifs, but this time grouped according to the culture to which they belong.

- Cultures of the Middle East: 72, 76, **87**, **129-132**, **193**, **199**, **278**, 327, 335, 339, **347-349**, 357-360, **406-407**, 409, 412, 423, 459-461, 475-477, 480, **482-484**, **491**, **503**, 505, **511**, 526, **544-547**, 571, 579, 580, **624-634**, **641-643**, 647-649, **659**, 660. (I1, I2, I3 – motifs from Middle Eastern seals)

- Culture of the Scythians and other steppe-nomadic populations akin to them: **26-27**, 28, 98, **193**, 243, 275-278, **347**, 413, **475-477**, **524**, **530**, **544-545**, 577, **621-623**, **688**. (I4, I5, I6 – Scytho-Siberian zoomorphic style, finds made of organic materials)

- Hindu culture: 59, 128, 147-148, 243, **246-247**, 252, 281, 325, **329**, **333**, 337, 351, 407, **413-415**, **418-420**, 423, **482**, **518-520**, **528-530**, 544, 561, 569, **573**, 604-605, 617, **641**, **650-653**, 662. (I10, I11)

- Tibetan culture: 74, 295, 325, 477-478, 518, 550, 602, 651. (I12)

- Medieval culture of the Slavic populations: 74-76, 243, 249, 278, 287, 295-296, 299, 323, 351, **374-375**, **378**, 393-394, **400**, **401**, **420-422**, **428**, **430**, 493-494, 463, **496-499**, **503-504**, **524-525**, **534-542**, 544-547, **550-554**, 561, 571-572, 577, 615, 711. (I13, I14)

- Medieval culture of the Finno-Ugric populations: 106-109, **278**, 323-325, 337, 351, **377**, **397-399**, 415, **499-501**, **504**, **546**. (I14)

- Medieval culture of the Germano-Nordic populations: 74-75, 278, 287-289, 291, 295, **333-335**, **375-377**, **401**, **473-474**, **496**, **504**, 517, **544-546**, 550-552, **557**, 561, 565, 569, 570, 571, 575-577, 618. (I14: 3, 5; I18: 7)

- Cultures of the Apennine Peninsula and surrounding islands: 68-69, **74**, **189**, **199**, 323, 337-339, **347-349**, 351, **357-360**, **372-374**, **399**, **478**, 485, **491**, **503-504**, **511**, **524**, 530-532, 556-557, 559-561, 563, 564-566, 568, 569, 570, 573, 574, 579, 580, **581-582**, **606**, **617-618**, **634**, **635**, 647, **660**. (I16)

- Cultures of the Balkan Peninsula and the Eastern Mediterranean: 28, 33, 95, 100, 106, 249, **275-278**, 281, **322-323**, 325, 329, 335, 337, 346, 351, 357-360, **399**, **412-413**, 423, **482-491**, **503-505**, **508-511**, 515-518, **524**, 530-532, **544**, 554, 559, 561, 564, 565, 566, 569, 570, 571, 580, **581-582**, 617, **618-624**, **634-643**, **653-659**, 660, 662-664. (I17)

- Culture of the Celts: 193, 287-289, **415-418**, **493-496**, 497, **504**, **511-515**, 516, 518- 519, **520-523**, **524-525**, 532-534, 563, **581-582**.

- Other cultures of Central and Western Europe (from prehistory to the Middle Ages): 325, 327, **357-360**, **401**, **426-430**, 444, 461-463, **491-493**, 532-534, **544-547**, 561, **580**. (I18)

- Cultures of ancient China: 38, 135, 215, **318**, 336, 339, 355, 542, **649-650**.

- Christian culture: 38-39, **61**, 133, 138, 149, 199, **261**, **264**, 278, 295, 346, 353-354, **377-378**, **400-401**, 441, 463, 487, 495, 497, 515, **520**, 523, 524-525, 534-535, 542-544, 554, 561, 567, 588, **635**, 657.

These are, in fact, guidelines for another monograph that would focus not on reading and interpreting the iconography of the Luristan bronzes, but on its intercultural aspects. We are convinced that such a study will confirm what was already begotten in this monograph - that the Luristan bronzes present an extremely wide field of interaction with other cultures. It consists of receiving, and in our opinion even more giving to them various components, whereby the latter occured to such an extent and at such distances that modern science still fails to understand and explain. We believe that through such a study, if it is conducted in detail,

comprehensively, i.e. interdisciplinary and in mutual interaction of all available facts, it will be possible to more accurately assess the character of these similarities, both generally and at the level of specific examples:

- Whether they were a reflection of the relations between Luristan and a certain other culture, based on concrete historical events?

- In what direction did the phenomenon that produced the apostrophized similarity take place, whether from Luristan towards the other culture, vice versa - from it towards Luristan, or even from some third culture towards both?

- Whether these are motifs that were present more widely, whereby their striking i.e. exclusive presence in Luristan and in the other compared cultures is due to random circumstances which have allowed them to be preserved and developed in permanent media that are accessible to modern science?

- Which of the indicated similarities can be considered the result not of concrete historical events, but of archetypal motifs that had a polygenic character? Here we have in mind the phenomena that were created parallelly i.e. independently of each other, in cultures that did not come into mutual contact, specifically as a result of the same concepts of symbolization and mythologization that are universal to all mankind.

I10



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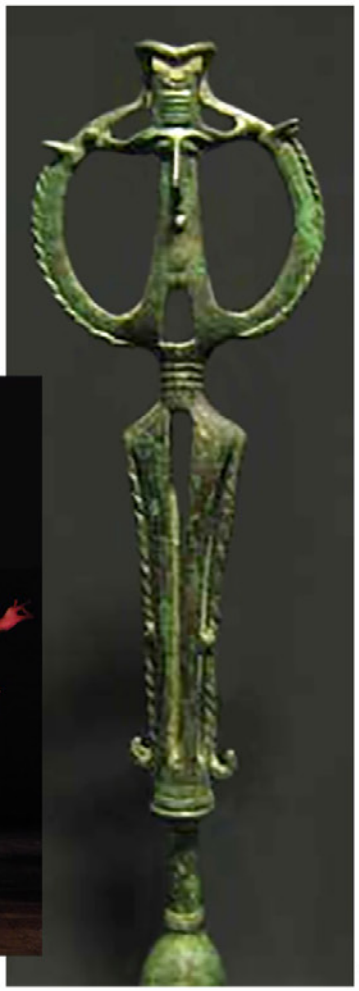
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I11



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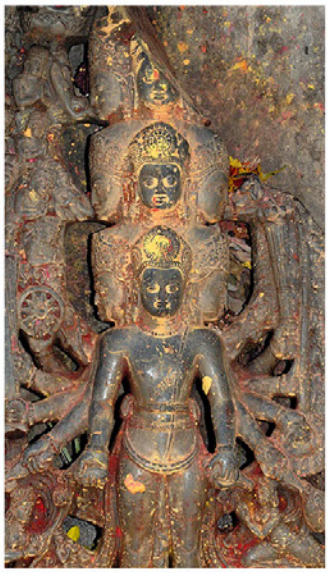
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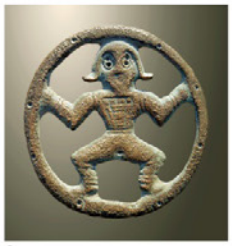
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I12



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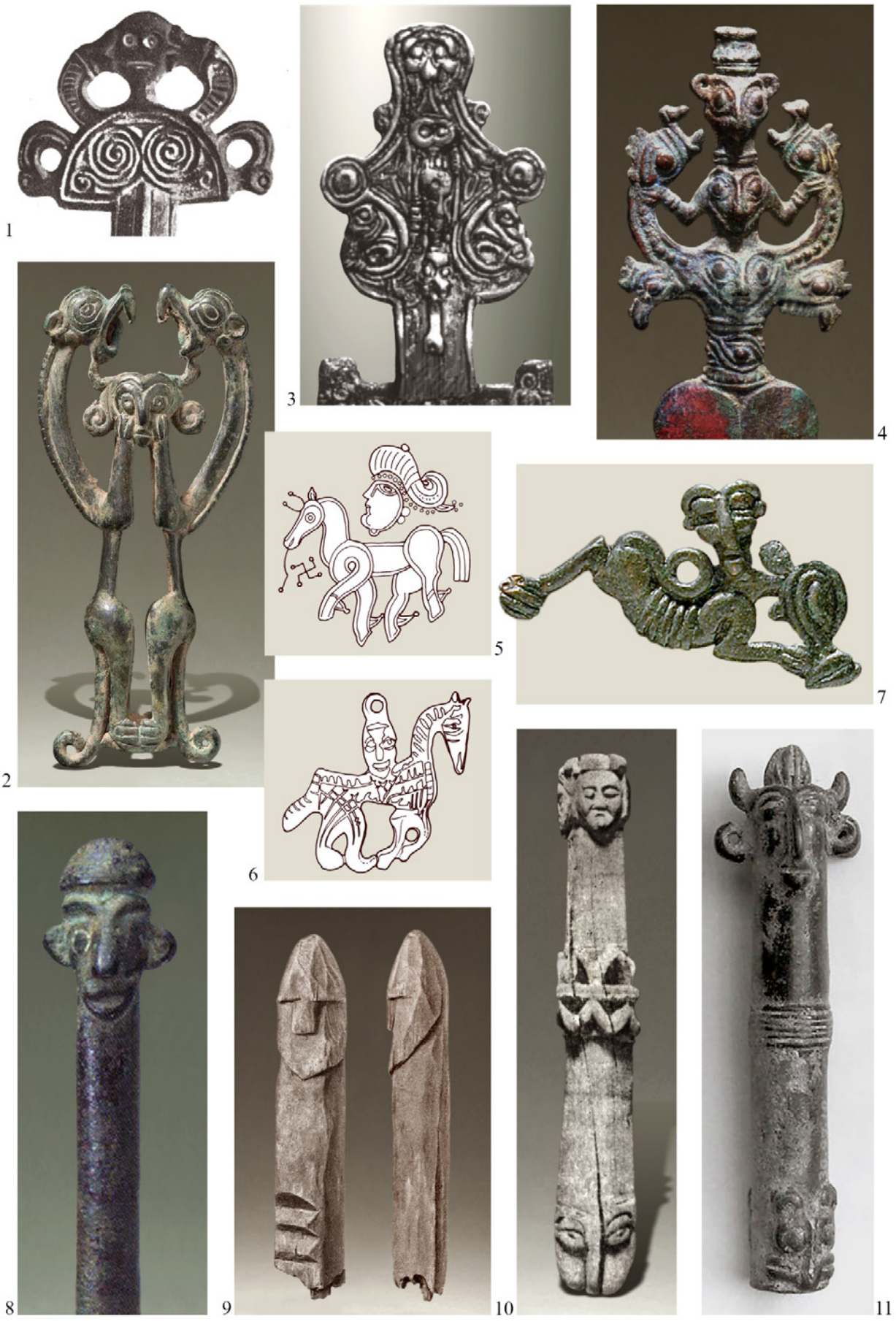

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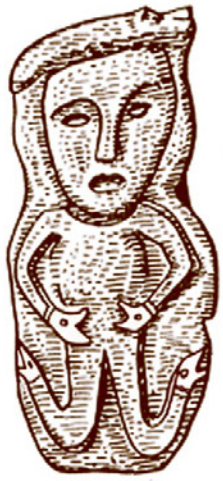

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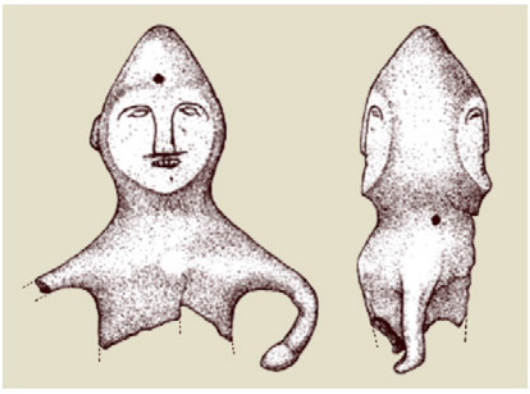

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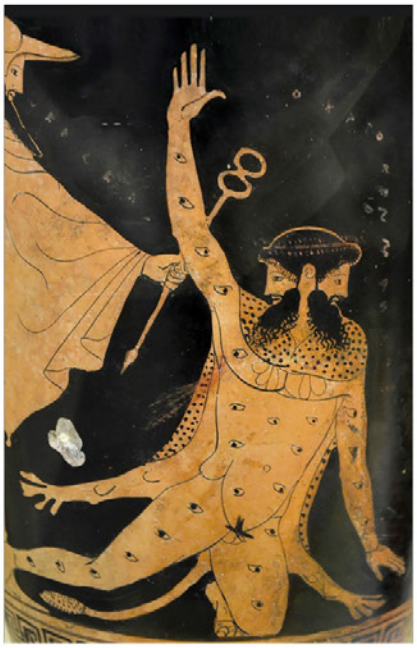

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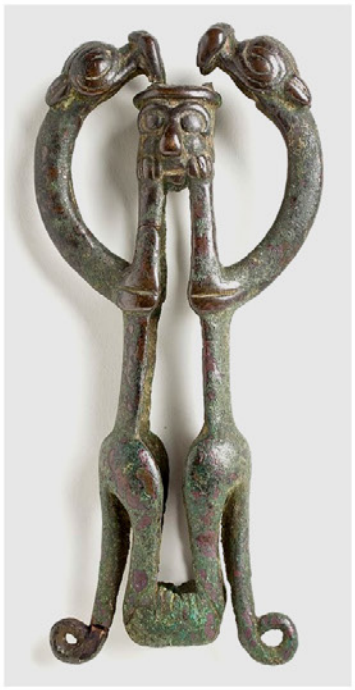

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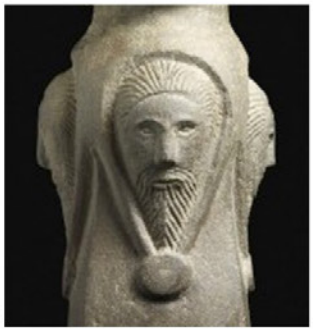

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ILLUSTRATIONS CATALOGUE



ILLUSTRATIONS CATALOGUE

I. BASIC INFORMATION AND TERMINOLOGY RELATED TO THE LURISTAN STANDARDS

Fig. 1
Map of the Luristan region with sites where standards and other Luristan bronzes have been found. Adaptation of the map (according to G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 8, 9): Nikos Chausidis.

Fig. 2; 2a
Previous and newly proposed names of the various types of Luristan standards. Table: Nikos Chausidis.

II. THEORETICAL BASIS AND METHODOLOGY

Fig. 3
The three dominant components (geometrism, zoomorphism and naturalism) in the Luristan standards. Diagram: Nikos Chausidis.
1. Openwork bronze objects, Iron Age, Nor Bayazet (Gavar), Armenia. P. Avetisyan et al, *Axes*, Fig. 1.
2. Bronze figurine, 8th century BCE, Greece (Metropolitan: 21.88.24). *Bronze horse* 2021.
3. Wooden applique, 4th century BCE, Pazyryk culture, Altai Territory, the Valley of the River Bolshoy Ulagan, Russia (Hermitage). *Scythian Griffin* 2020.
4. Wooden applique for the forehead of a horse, Pazyryk culture, Altai Territory, the Valley of the River Bolshoy Ulagan, Russia. *Оконеть* 2020.
5. Luristan standard (LACMA: M.76.97.49). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
6. Luristan standard (LACMA: M.76.97.9). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
7. Luristan standard. *The British M.* 2020, Museum number 115516.
8. Object cast from bronze, Old Babylonian period, ca. 2000–1600 BCE, Mesopotamia. *Plaque* 2019.
9. Stone figurine, Neo-Sumerian period (Louvre). *Toro* 2021

III. GEOMETRIC LEVEL

A1
Luristan standards:
1. (LACMA: M.76.97.50). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
3. (LACMA: M.76.97.42). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
4. *Admiralty* 2020.
5. (Ashmolean: 1965. 194). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 31: 164.
6. (Metropolitan: 32.161.20). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 146, No. 226.

7. Detail (LACMA: M.76.97.47). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
8. Detail, private collection. *Lur. br. artefact* 2020.
9. (LACMA: M.76.97.15). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
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2. Geometric image of the cubic-hemispherical model of the universe. Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.

A2
Luristan standards:
1. (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1973,112). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 112 – Kat. 235.
2. N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 191, No. 191.
3. *Arts d'Orient* 2012, No. 42
4. (LACMA: M.76.97.10). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
5. (LACMA: M.76.97.19). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
6. (Barakat Collection). *Barakat* 2020.

A3
1. Cubic-hemispherical model of the universe, a variant with the earth as a rhombus and the sky as a calotte. Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, Б28: 1.
2. Possible cosmological meaning of the geometric basis of the Luristan standards. Scheme: N. Chausidis
3. Cubic-hemispherical model of the universe: vertical division of the sky and earth. Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, А6: 2.
4. Cubic-hemispherical model of the universe: horizontal division of the sky and earth according to the concentric concept. Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, А6: 1.
5. The rhombus as a symbol of the earth: interaction between the vulva and the square. Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, Б2: а - д.

A4
Openwork bronze objects, Iron Age, Armenia and Georgia:
1. Shirakavan, Armenia. P. Avetisyan et al, *Axes*, Fig. 12: H.
2. Tolors, Armenia. P. Avetisyan et al, *Axes*, Fig. 4: G.
3. Horom, Armenia. P. Avetisyan et al, *Axes*, Fig. 3: A.
4. Nor Bayazet (Gavar), Armenia. P. Avetisyan et al, *Axes*, Fig. 1.
5, 6. Nor Bayazet (Gavar), Armenia. Assumed composition of the previous object from two separate objects. Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.
7. Gyumry, Armenia. P. Avetisyan et al, *Axes*, Fig. 6: A.
8. Shirakavan, Armenia. P. Avetisyan et al, *Axes*, Fig. 12: A.
9. Shulaveri, Georgia. P. Avetisyan et al, *Axes*, Fig. 6: C.
10. Spandaryan, Armenia. P. Avetisyan et al, *Axes*, Fig. 15: A.

A5
Openwork bronze objects, Iron Age, Armenia, Georgia:
1, 4, 8. Details and possible reconstruction of the lost parts. Nor Bayazet (Gavar), Armenia. According to: P. Avetisyan et al, *Axes*, Fig. 1.
2. Artschador, Nagorno Karabakh (Artsakh). P. Avetisyan et al, *Axes*, Fig. 4: K.
6. Shirakavan, Armenia. P. Avetisyan et al, *Axes*, Fig. 3: O.
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3. Luristan standard (Princeton University Art Museum). *Finial Princeton* 2020.
5. Luristan bronze pin with an openwork head (LACMA: M.76.97.226). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
7. Luristan standard, Tepe Giyan, Iran (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1955, 203). *Idoli* 1986, 49 (No. 54 – a); color photography: G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 114 – Kat. 239.

A6
Openwork bronze objects, Iron Age:
1. (Ashmolean Museum: 1965.886a). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 67: 436.
2. (Ashmolean Museum: 1965.886d). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 67: 439.
3. Shirakavan, Armenia. P. Avetisyan et al, *Axes*, Fig. 13: C.
4. Shirakavan, Armenia. P. Avetisyan et al, *Axes*, Fig. 12: I.
5. "Pobrenje", Maribor, Slovenia. S. Pahič, *Maribor*, 25 – Sl. 5.
6. "Zlokukjani", Skopje, RN Macedonia. Д. Митревски, *Гробовите*, 148.
7. "Odžinka", Vranje, Serbia. I. Kilian-Dirlmeier, *Anhänger*, Taf. 10: 153.

Belt buckles, Early Middle Ages:
8. Cipau, Romania. M. Rusu, *Pontische*, 488 – Abb. 3.
9. Szentes-Nagyhegy, Hungary. M. Rusu, *Pontische*, 493 – Abb. 6: 1.
10. Unešić, Dalmatia. D. Mrkobrad, *Arheološki*, T. XXIII: 7.

A7
1. Bronze bracelet (Collection Godard). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 199 – Fig.172 – No. 331.
2. Three-dimensional model of the cosmological structure depicted on the previous bracelet. Made by: Noemi Chausidis.
3. Illustration to the work "Christian Topography" by Cosmas Indicopleustes. В. Ставиский, *Христианская*, 136 – Рис. 18.
4. Idealized three-dimensional model of the cosmos, according to the illustrations of "Christian Topography" by Cosmas Indicopleustes. Г. Цветковић-Томашевић, *Рановизантијски*, Сл. 86: е.
5. Scheme of the construction of a Byzantine domed temple with squinches and pendentives. Ф. Шарард, *Византија*, 139.
6. Mandala, Hindu culture. *Parvati* 2017.

A8
1. The human sextuple system of perception and orientation in relation to the surrounding space. Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 448 – Д1: 4.
2. Metal bracelet, Iron Age, Poznan, Poland. Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Славян*, 341.
3. Small stupa made of stone, Hindu culture (Museum of Indian Art in Kolkata/Calcutta), India. J. Chevalier, A. Gheerbrant, *Rječnik*, 651.
4. Depiction on a garment, ethnography, Siberia. С. В. Иванов, *Материалы*, 239 – Рис. 109.
5. Motif painted on a shamanic drum, Sami culture, Lapland. В. Петрухин, *Мифы*, 279.

A9
1. Openwork bronze object, Iron Age, Nor Bayazet (Gavar), Armenia. P. Avetisyan et al, *Axes*, Fig. 1.
2. Fibula, 6th – 7th century CE, Pastyrs'ke gorodyshche, Chyhyryn, Ukraine. J. Werner, *Slaw. Bügelfibeln*, Taf. 41: 42.
3. Fibula, 6th – 7th century CE, Kerch, North Black Sea Region. И. Гавритухин, *Боспор*, Рис. 10.
4. Belt buckle, Early Middle Ages, Acquasanta, Ascoli Piceno, Italy. G. Anabaldi, J. Werner, *Ostgotische*, Taf. 39:1a.
5. Fibula, 6th – 7th century CE, Pastyrs'ke gorodyshche, Chyhyryn, Ukraine. J. Werner, *Slaw. Bügelfibeln*, Taf. 41: 45.
6. Belt buckle, Early Middle Ages, Skalyste, Crimea, North Black Sea Region. Е. В. Веймарн, А. К. Амброз, *Большая*, 250 – Рис. 3.
7. Element of a belt set, Early Middle Ages, ancient Heraclea Lyncestis, Bitola, RN Macedonia. И. Микулчиќ, В. Лилчиќ, *Фибули*, 268 – Т. VI: 13.
8. Fibula, Early Middle Ages, Dour, Belgium. A. Koch, *Bügelfibeln*, Teil 2, Taf. 38: 1.
9-11. Two-plated bow fibulae in relation to notions on the cubic-hemispherical shape of the universe and the movement of the sun through it, scheme: Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, Б28: 1, 2, 6.

A10
1, 2. Painted motifs on Easter eggs, ethnography, Carpathian region. Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Славян*, 52.
3. Wooden distaff, ethnography, Russia. Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Славян*, 247.
4. Wooden distaff, ethnography, Russia. Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Славян*, 243.
5. Wooden distaff, ethnography, Russia. Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Славян*, 247.
6. Wooden distaff, ethnography, Russia. Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Славян*, 241.
7. Wooden distaff, ethnography, Russia. Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Славян*, 241.
8. Detail from a wooden distaff, ethnography, Eastern Lika, Croatia. J. Barlek, *Preslice*, 52 – Сл. 3.

A11
1. Openwork bronze object, Iron Age (Ashmolean Museum: 1965.886d). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 67: 439.
2. Openwork bronze object, Iron Age, Nor Bayazet (Gavar), Armenia. P. Avetisyan et al, *Axes*, Fig. 1.
3, 4. Openwork bronze pendant, Iron Age, *Lot 331 two Luristan* 2020.
5. Bronze pendant, 9th – 8th century BCE, "Marlik" culture, Guilan Province, Iran (Musée Barbier-Mueller, Geneva, Switzerland). *Pendentif* 2016.
6. Openwork bronze object, Iron Age (LACMA: M.76.97.768). *Pendant LACMA* 2020.
7. Motif from a painted ceramic vessel, ancient Hellenic culture (Geneva Museum: HR28). *Ixion* 2020.
8. Motif from a painted ceramic vessel, 4th century BCE, Southern Italy (Staatliche Museen, Berlin: F 3023). *Picture Ixion* 2020.
9. Motif from a painted ceramic vessel, 4th century BCE, Southern Italy (Hermitage: 1717 [St 424]). *Châtiment d'Ixion* 2020.

A12

Ceramic vessels with an applique, 8th - 7th century BCE, "Villanova" culture, Italy:
1, 2. Region of Chiusi, Tuscany, Italy (National Museum, Copenhagen). A. Rathje, *The Ambiguous*, 114 – Fig. 4 a – b.
5. Lippi necropolis, Verucchio, Rimini, Italy. *Le ore* 2020.
Bronze additions for vessels, 8th – 7th century BCE, "Villanova" culture, Italy:
3. Bronze vessel with applique, Campi Bisenzio, Tuscany (Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia, Rome), Italy. *Cup* 2020.
4. Verucchio, Rimini, Italy. *Figure holding* 2020.
6. P. Jacobsthal, *Early*, Pl. 237: a.
7. Verucchio, Rimini, Italy. *Handle* 2020.
12. B. Bagnasco Gianni, *Presenza*, 437 – Fig. 3: 8.
13. B. Bagnasco Gianni, *Presenza*, 437 – Fig. 3: 5.
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8. Bronze pendant or applique, prehistory (?), Tibet (Collection of G. Tucci). M. Bussagli, *Bronze*, 337 – No. 6.
9. Bronze pendant or applique, prehistory (?), Tibet (Collection of G. Tucci). M. Bussagli,. *Bronze*, 339 – No. 12.
10. Bronze buckle, 8th – 7th century BCE, "Villanova" culture (Museo civico archeologico, Verucchio), Italy. *Verucchio* 2020.
11. Petroglyph, 2nd – 1st millennium BCE, Moynak, Kazakhstan. U. Sansoni, *Reflection*, 6 – Tav. 2: 3.

A13

Lead cult objects, Roman period, Ain-al-Djoudj near Baalbek, Lebanon:
1, 4, 7. H. Seyrig, *La triade*, Pl. LXXXVI.
2. L. Badre, *Les figurines*, 192 – Fig. 11: 82.31.
3. L. Badre, *Les figurines*, 192 – Fig. 11: 82.30.
5. L. Badre, *Les figurines*, 192 – Fig. 11: 82.28.
6. L. Badre, *Les figurines*, 192 – Fig. 11: 82.27.
8. H. Seyrig, *La triade*, Pl. LXXXIV: 1.
9. L. Badre, *Les figurines*, 190 – Fig. 9: 82.14.
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10. Openwork bronze object, detail, Iron Age, Nor Bayazet (Gavar), Armenia. P. Avetisyan et al, *Axes*, Fig. 1.
11. Openwork bronze object, Iron Age, Shirakavan, Armenia. P. Avetisyan et al, *Axes*, Fig. 12: H.
12. Luristan standard, detail (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1973,112). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 112 – Kat. 235.
13. Luristan bronze cheekpiece. *The Habib* 2020.

A14

Cylinder seals, Middle East:
1, 2. (British Museum: BM ANE 89257). E. Bleibtreu, *Zur nicht publizierten*, 484 – Abb. 379.
3, 4. Late Akkadian period (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris). H.-U. Steymans, *Die Sammlung*, 558 – Abb. 4.
5, 6. (British Museum: BM ANE 89579). E. Bleibtreu, *Zur nicht publizierten*, 519 – Abb. 518a.
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7. Ceramic figurine (detail), Eneolithic, "Cucuteni – Trypillia" culture, "Platar" collection. М. Ю. Відейко, Н. Б. Бурдо, *Енциклопедія*, Том 2, 202 – Рис. 3; the whole figurine: B41: 5.
8. Bronze plaque (detail), Iron Age, Sangtarashan, Luristan, Iran (Falakolaflak Museum, Khorramabad), Iran. M. Malekzadeh et al, *Fouilles 2005-2006*, 87 – Fig. 27: Type B.3; the whole plaque: B41: 7.
9. Ceramic figurine, detail, Eneolithic, "Anau" culture (Namazga V). Е. В. Антонова, *К исследованию*, 55 – Рис. 3: 6; the whole figurine: B41: 1.
10. Metal amulet, 1400 BCE, Ugarit. U. Holmberg, *Der Baum*, 117 – Abb. 54.

A15

1. Mound with stone structures, prehistory, Sjöborg, Denmark. Z. Krzak, *Swieta gora*, 118: Ryc. 6.
2. Model of the world among the Sumerians and Babylonians (according to K. Lyczkowski, K. Szarzynski). Z. Krzak, *Swieta gora*, 126 – Ryc. 13.
3, 4, 7. Cylinder seal, details and whole composition, Uruk period. H. Frankfort, *Cylinder*, Tab. IV: J.
5, 6, 8. Cylinder seal, details and whole composition, Akkadian period. E. Porada, *The Oldest*, 565 – Fig. 2, 566 – Fig. 4.

IV. ZOOMORPHIC AND PHYTOMORPHIC LEVEL

B1

Luristan standards

1. (LACMA: M.76.97.47). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
2. (LACMA: M.76.97.44). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
3. *Royal* 2020.
4. Bard-i-Bal, Luristan, Iran. B. Overlaet, The *Chronology*, 25 – Pl. 6: 11.
5. *The British M.* 2020, Museum number 115516.
6. Sangtarashan, Luristan, Iran (Falakolaflak Museum, Khorramabad), Iran. M. Malekzadeh et al, *Fouilles 2005-2006*, 86 – Fig. 26: Type A.
7. Bard-i-Bal, Luristan, Iran. B. Overlaet, The *Chronology*, 25 – Pl. 6: 3.
8. Metropolitan Museum. O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 145, No. 219 (32.161.21).
9. *Anc. Art International* 2020, Item Number: 9089.

B2

Luristan standards

1. A. Godard, *Bronzes*, Pl. LIV: 202.
2. (British Museum). H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, Abb. IV: 9.
3. Philia, Thessaly (Archaeological Museum of Volos, Volos), Greece. S. G. Schmid, *Εισηγμένα*, 247 – Εικ. 2.
4. (LACMA: M.64.12.49). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
5. (LACMA: M.76.97.61). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
6. (LACMA: M.76.97.48). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
7. (LACMA: M.76.97.68). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
8. (LACMA: M.76.97.67). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
9. (Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, USA: 54.2582). *Walters Art Mus*. 2020.

B3

Luristan standards. Transformations of the zoomorphic protomes.

1. (Metropolitan: 32.161.21). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 145, No. 219; the whole object: B1: 8.
2. (British Museum: 115516). *The British M.* 2020; the whole object: B1: 5.
3. (LACMA: M.76.97.30). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the whole object: B9: 4.
4. *Arts d'Orient* 2013, No. 54; the whole object: C3: 9.
5. *Anc. Art International* 2020, Item Number: 9089; the whole object: B1: 9.
6. *Royal* 2020; the whole object: B1: 3.
7. (LACMA: M.76.97.47). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the whole object: B1: 1.
8. (LACMA: M.76.97.35). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the whole object: B7: 1.
9. (Ashmolean Museum: 1965. 192). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 32: 169; the whole object: B13: 2.
10. (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, USA: 30.565). *Rod-holder* 2020; the whole object: C1: 2.
11. (LACMA: M.76.97.49). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the whole object: B7: 9.
12. (LACMA: M.76.97.42). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the whole object: C2: 2.
13. (LACMA: M.76.97.55). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the whole object: C18: 3.
14. *Unknown Iranian* 2020; the whole object: C17: 2.
15. (Princeton University Art Museum, Princeton, USA). *Finial Princeton* 2020; the whole object: D12: 1.

B4

1 - 18. Elements of a horse harness, bone and horn, Late Bronze Age - Iron Age, North Black Sea Region, Caucasus, Armenia, Eastern Turkey, Iran. A. P. Канторович, *Истоки*, 217 – Рис. 21.
19. Wooden element of horse equipment, middle of 1st millennium BCE, Tuektinsky mound no. 1, Pazyryk, Altai. A. P. Канторович, *Истоки*, 193 – Рис. 2: 2.
20. Wooden element of horse equipment, middle of 1st millennium BCE, "Pazyryk" culture. A. P. Канторович, *Истоки*, 207 – Рис. 12: 5.
21. Wooden element of horse equipment, middle of 1st millennium BCE, Bashadar mound no. 2, "Pazyryk" culture. A. P. Канторович, *Истоки*, 207 – Рис. 12: 1.
22. Wooden element of horse equipment, middle of 1st millennium BCE, Ak-Alaha mound, "Pazyryk" culture. A. P. Канторович, *Истоки*, 207 – Рис. 12: 2.
23. Bronze object, 8th – 7th century BCE, Berel mound, Kazakhstan. A. P. Канторович, *Истоки*, 207 – Рис. 12: 4.
24. Bronze scepter, 6th century BCE, ancient Byzantium, Turkey. A. P. Канторович, *Истоки*, 204 – Рис. 10: 8.

25. Bronze top of a cult object, 7th century BCE, Scythian culture, Novozavedennoye, Stavropol Krai, Russia. A. P. Канторович, *Истоки*, 191 – Рис. 1: 4.
26. Bronze top of a cult object, 7th century BCE, Scythian culture, Novozavedennoye, Stavropol Krai, Russia. A. P. Канторович, *Истоки*, 203 – Рис. 9: 1.
27. Bronze applique for a cauldron, 7th century BCE, Olympia, Greece. A. P. Канторович, *Истоки*, 194 – Рис. 3: 5.
28. Bronze applique for a cauldron, 7th century BCE, Olympia, Greece. A. P. Канторович, *Истоки*, 197 – Рис. 5: 2.
29. Bronze applique for a cauldron, 7th century BCE, Rhodes (?), Greece. A. P. Канторович, *Истоки*, 197 – Рис. 5: 1.

B5
Luristan standards:
1. (LACMA: M.76.97.69). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
2. (David-Weill Collection, Paris). H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, Abb. XV: 52.
3. (LACMA: M.76.97.62). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
4. Sangtarashan, Luristan (Falakolaflak Museum, Khorramabad), Iran. M. Malekzadeh et al, *Fouilles 2005-2006*, 140 – Fig. 18: 160.
5. *Cast br. finial* 2020.
6. *Admiralty* 2020.
7. *Lur. br. artefact* 2020.
8. (Collection Godard). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 92 – Fig. 74 (106 A).
9. *Anc. Art International* 2020, Item Number: 9089.

B6
Luristan standards:
1. (Metropolitan: 66.104.I). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 143 – No. 218.
2. Louvre. *Etendard* 2020.
3. (Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, USA). *Ibex Standard* 2020.
4. (LACMA: M.76.97.52). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
5. (Christoph Bacher Collection, Viena: 6170). *Two Ibexes* 2020.
6, 7, 8. (LACMA: M.76.97.69). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
9. (Museum August Kestner, Hanover, Germany). *Antithetical* 2020.
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10. Motif from a seal, Elamite period, Luristan. E. F. Schmidt et al, *The Holmes*, Pl. 236: 82.
11. Detail from a cylinder seal, Western Asia (British Museum). W. H. Ward, *The Seal*. 178 – Fig. 481.

B7
Luristan standards:
1. (LACMA: M.76.97.35). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
2. (LACMA: M.76.97.21). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
3. (LACMA: M.76.97.34). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
4. Khatunban, Luristan. E. Haerinck et al, *Finds*, 148 – Pl. 8: Kh. B6-1, 2.
5. (Collection Eduard von der Heydt, Vienna). H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, Abb. IV: 10.
6. (LACMA: M.76.97.53). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
7. *Agora* 2020, Lot 435.
8. (LACMA: M.64.12.31). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
9. (LACMA: M.76.97.49). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.

B8
1. Possible cosmological meaning of the geometric basis of the Luristan standards. Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.
2. Geometric image of the cubic-hemispherical model of the universe with the sky in the form of a zoomorphized circle. Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.
Luristan standards:
3. *Admiralty* 2020.
4. (LACMA: M.76.97.50). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
5. (Ashmolean: 1951.180). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 30: 163.
6. Detail, (LACMA: M.76.97.63). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the whole object: B9: 2.
7. (Archaeological Museum, Tehran, Iran). J.- L. Huot, *Iran*, Sl. 112.
8. Detail, private collection. *Lur. br. artefact* 2020; the whole object: B5:7.

B9

Luristan standards:

1. (Louvre). *Сокровища* 2020.
2. (LACMA: M.76.97.65). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
3. (LACMA: M.76.97.59). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
4. (LACMA: M.76.97.30). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
5. (LACMA: M.76.97.9). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
6. A. Godard, *Bronzes*, Pl. LIV: 202.
8. (Metropolitan: 32.161.10). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 145, No. 224; the whole object: B15: 1.

7, 9. Luristan pin with a discoid head, details (Louvre). *Сокровища* 2020; the whole object: C9:1.

B10

Luristan standards:

1. *Admiralty* 2020.
2. (LACMA: M.76.97.65). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
3. *Persia* 2020.
4. (The Barakat Collection: X.0366). *Two Gazelles* 2020.
6. (Harvard Art Museum, Cambridge, USA: 1931.5). *Harvard* 2020.
7. Detail (Ashmolean: 151.180). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 30: 163; the whole object: B8: 5.
8. (Ashmolean: 1965.194). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue,* Pl. 31: 164.
9. Detail (LACMA: M.76.97.50). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the whole object: A1: 1.

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5. Petroglyph, Uraki, Central Asia (?), М. Е. Килуновская, *Интерпретация*, 105 – Рис. 3.

B11

1. Bronze pendant, Iron Age. Kompolje, Otočac, Lika, Croatia. R. Drechler-Bižić, *Japodska*, T. XLV: 11.
2. Bronze pendant, Iron Age. Kastav, Istra, Croatia. S. Kukoč, *Japodi*, 193 – Sl. 284: 2.
3. Luristan standard (Collection David-Weill: 1933-148). P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, No. 217; color photo: S. Kalyanaraman, *Bronze Age*, Fig. 6: a.
4. Luristan standard (Forūgī, Moḥsen Collection, Tehran, Iran). R. Frye, *Forūgī*, Pl. II.
5. Belt applique, "Pazyryk" culture, Katanda, Altai, Russia. И. В. Тришина, *Многофигурные*, 50 – Рис. 5: 4.
6. Luristan pin with a decorative head (LACMA: M.76.97.234). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
7. Belt applique, Scythian culture, 5th – 4th century BCE, Ulan-Ude (Verkhneudinsk), Buryatia, Russia (Hermitage Museum). *Belt Plate* 2020.
8. Petroglyph, Arpa-Uzen - V, Kazakhstan. М. Е. Килуновская, *Интерпретация*, 105 – Рис. 5, plate no. 69.
9. Luristan pin with a decorative head (LACMA: M.76.97.239). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
10. Bronze matrix (detail), early antique Thracian culture, Garchinovo, Bulgaria. И. Маразов, *Рогозенското*, 53 – Обр. 65.

B12

Openwork bronze buckles, 4th - 2nd century BCE, Caucasus:

1. Mingachevir, Azerbaijan (Hermitage). *Scythians* 2020.
2. *Алан Засеев (3)* 2020.
3. (Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston, USA). *Володимир Кисіль* 2020.
4. (Metropolitan: 21.166.5). *Belt clasp* 2020.
5. *Алан Засеев (1)* 2020.
6. *Алан Засеев (2)* 2020.

B13

Luristan standards:

1. (LACMA: M.76.97.56). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
2. (Ashmolean: 1965. 192). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 32: 169.
3. Детал, (LACMA: M.76.97.30). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
4. (Louvre). *Сокровища* 2020.
5. (LACMA: M.76.97.9). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
6. (Louvre). *Сокровища* 2020.
7. (LACMA: M.76.97.65). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
8. (Museum of Khorramabad, Iran). U. Kampmann, *Welcome*.
9. *Large Lur. Bronze* 2020, Ref: 6195.

B14

Luristan cheekpieces:

1. (Stora Collection, Paris). H. Potratz, *Das "Kampfmotiv"*, Taf. VI: 21.
3. (Mozaffar Cohen Collection). H. Potratz, *Das "Kampfmotiv"*, Taf. V: 18.
6. *Plaque pour monter* 2020.
7. *A large Luristan* 2018.
9. (National Galery of Victoria, Melbourne, Canada: 3482-D3). *Cheek piece* 2020.
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2. Luristan standard (LACMA: M.76.97.9). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
4. Detail from a silver applique, Etruscan culture, 7th century BCE (Bomford Collection). A. C. Brown, *Ancient*, 34 – Pl. X: d.
5. Luristan standard (Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, USA). *Master of Animals* 2020.
8. Bronze applique, Scythian culture, Ivanovskaya station, Krasnodar Krai, (Krasnodar Museum, Krasnodar), Russia. Н. В. Анфимов, *Древнее*, (Меотские памятники Прикубанья).
10. Bronze statue, ca. 400 BCE (National Archaeological Museum of Florence, Florence, Italy). *Chimera of Arezzo* 2020.
11. Vase – buchero nero, Etruscan culture (Musee du Cinquantenaire, Brussels). A. Roes, *The Representation*, 23 – Fig. 2, (A 8I6).
12. Golden fibula, Etruscan culture (British Museum: 1390). A. Roes, *The Representation*, 23 – Fig. 3.

B15

Luristan standards:

1. (Metropolitan: 32.161.10). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 145, No. 224.
2. (LACMA: M.76.97.30). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
3. *Fitting* 2020.
4. (LACMA: M.76.97.37). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
5. (Archaeological Museum, Tehran, Iran). J.- L. Huot, *Iran*, Sl. 112.
6. (LACMA: M.76.97.43). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
7. (LACMA: M.76.97.41). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.

B16

1. Luristan standard (LACMA: M.76.97.43). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
2. Golden figurine, Scythian culture (4th century BCE), Shaanxi Province, China. *The Golden* 2000, 8 – Fig. 6.
3. Relief in stone, Late Hittite period (850 – 750 BCE), Carchemish (Museum of Anatolian Civilizations, Ankara), Turkey. *Chimera* 2020.
4. Motif from a silver vessel, Thracian culture (5th – 4th century BCE), Rogozen, Bulgaria. И. Маразов, *Рогозенското*, 207.
5. Motif from a tattoo on the body of a deceased, "Pazyryk" culture, Pazyryk, Altai. H. Müller-Karpe, *Grundzüge*, 348.
6. Motif painted on papyrus, ancient Egyptian culture. V. Ions, *Egipatska*, 40.
7. Attic black-figure vase, 6th century BCE (Louvre: A478). *Khimaira* 2020.
8. Bronze matrix (detail), Thracian culture, Garchinovo, Bulgaria. И. Маразов, *Рогозенското*, 53 – Обр. 65.
9. Golden applique, Scythian culture (Hermitage). E. D. Philips, *Nomadski*, 309.
10. Laconian black-figure vase, 6th century BCE (J. Paul Getty Museum, Malibu, USA: 85.AE.121). *Khimaira* 2020.

B17

Luristan standards:

1. An idealized cosmological scheme of Luristan zoomorphic standards: a personalized solar disk at the top of the Cosmic Tree; encoding the three zones of the universe through appropriate animals. Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.
2. (Metropolitan: 32.161.10). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 145, No. 224.
3. (LACMA: M.76.97.43). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
4. *Admiralty* 2020.
5. (Louvre). *Сокровища* 2020.

B18

1. Golden quiver covering, Scythian culture (5th century BCE), Il'ichovo, Crimea. А. М. Лесков, *Курганы*, Рис. 19.
2. Head ornament, wood and leather, "Pazyryk" culture (Hermitage). *Before* 2020.
3. Golden applique, Scythian culture (4th century BCE), Kul-Oba, Crimea (Hermitage). *Куль-Оба* 2020.
4. Silver cult vessel (goblet), Thracian culture (4th century BCE), Rogozen treasure (vessel number 165), Bulgaria. И. Маразов, *Рогозенското*, 221.
5. Golden applique, 5th century BCE, Zurivka, Makariv Raion, Ukraine. M. Damyanov, *The matrix*, 33 – Fig. 9.
6. Bronze top of scepter, Scythian culture. *Олень* 2020, (2009-06-13).

7. Silver cult vessel (goblet), Thracian culture, 4th century BCE (Metropolitan: 47.100.88). *Beaker* 2020.
8. Belt applique, Scythian culture (5th – 4th century BCE), Ulan-Ude (Verkhneudinsk), Buryatia, Russia (Hermitage). *Belt Plate* 2020.

B19
Luristan standards:
1. Idealized cosmological scheme of Luristan zoomorphic standards: movement of the sun along the bodies of the two animals; personalization of the sun at its zenith. Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.
2. *Persia* 2020.
3. (Museum August Kestner, Hanover, Germany). *Antitetical* 2020.
4. *Historical* 2020.
5. (Collection Godard: 106 A). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 92 – Fig. 74.
6. (LACMA: M.76.97.60). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
7. (Louvre). *Сокровища* 2020.

B20
Petroglyphs, prehistory:
1. Har Salaa, Altai, Mongolia. В. Д. Кубарев, *Мифы*, 46 – Рис. 13.
2. Tsagaan Salaa/Baga Oigor, Altai, Mongolia. В. Д. Кубарев, *Мифы*, 42 – Рис. 2: 8.
3. Tsagaan Salaa/Baga Oigor, Altai, Mongolia. В. Д. Кубарев, *Мифы*, 42 – Рис. 3: 13.
4. Tsagaan Gol, Altai, Mongolia. В. Д. Кубарев, *Мифы*, 42 – Рис. 3: 12.
5, 6, 8. Petroglyphs, Northern Asia. А. И. Мартынов, *О мировоззренческой*, 16, 17 – Рис. 1: 9 – 12, 28.
Luristan standards:
10. Bard-i-Bal, Luristan. B. Overlaet, The *Chronology*, 25 – Pl. 6: 11.
11. Bard-i-Bal, Luristan. B. Overlaet, The *Chronology*, 25 – Pl. 6: 3.
12. C. Kevokrian, *L`art*, 122.
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7. Bronze fibula, Roman era, August, Kt. Aargau, Switzerland. Z. Vinski, *Kasnoantički*, T. X: 9.
9. Clay figurine (toy), ethnography, Filimonovo, Odoyevsky Raion, Tula Oblast, Russia. И. М. Денисова, *Зооморфная*, 29 – Рис. 3: в.

B21
1. Petroglyph, prehistory, Tsagaan Gol, Altai, Mongolia. В. Д. Кубарев, *Мифы*, 43 – Рис. 4: 12.
2. Luristan standard, detail (LACMA: M.76.97.62). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
3. Petroglyph, prehistory, Siberia. *Сибирские* 2020.
4. Luristan standard. *Persia* 2020.
5. Luristan bronze whetstone handle (Artemis Gallery: Lot 27). *Rare Double* 2020.
6. Applique, Scythian-Sarmatian cultures, Yaguna, Serebryakovo, Kazakhstan. А. И. Мартынов, *О мировоззренческой*, 17 – Рис. 1: 15.
7. Applique, Scythian-Sarmatian cultures, Yaguna, Serebryakovo, Kazakhstan. А. И. Мартынов, *О мировоззренческой*, 17 – Рис. 1: 16.
8. Applique, "Tagar" culture, 6th – 3rd century BCE, Shestakovo, Tisulsky Raion, Kemerovo Oblast, Russia. *Экспозиция* 2020.

B22
Luristan standards:
1. (LACMA: M.76.97.47). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
6. (Collection Eduard von der Heydt, Viena). H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, Abb. IV: 108.
7. (LACMA: M.76.97.36). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
8. Detail (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1973,112). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 112, Kat. 235.
9. *Idole maître* 2020.

Petroglyphs, prehistory:
2. Tsagaan Gol, Altai, Mongolia. В. Д. Кубарев, *Мифы*, 42 – Рис. 3: 13.
3. Kalbak-Tash, Altai, Russia. В. Д. Кубарев, *Мифы*, 44 – Рис. 8: 1.
4. Tsagaan Gol, Altai, Mongolia. В. Д. Кубарев, *Мифы*, 42 – Рис. 3: 20.
5. Tsagaan Gol, Altai, Mongolia. В. Д. Кубарев, *Мифы*, 42 – Рис. 3: 19.
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10. Motif drawn on a bronze object, Bronze Age, Lem, Viborg, Denmark. E. Sprockhoff, *Nordische*, 47 – Abb. 9: 1.
11. Detail from earrings, 13th century CE, Russia. Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Руси*, 529 – Рис. 89.

12. Bronze pendant, first third of 1st millennium BCE, "Koban" culture, unknown site, North Caucasus. *Бронзовый* 2013, 606 (кат. бр. 306.18.18).
13. Bronze object in the form of a cheekpiece, "Karakuš", Valandovo, RN Macedonia. B. Husenovski, E. Slamkov, *Archaeological*, 17 – Pic. 21.

B23
1. Cosmological iconographic paradigm of the comb from fig. 2: double zoomorphic creature = lower zones of the universe; joined horns = celestial vault; protomes = phases of the movement of the sun. Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.
2. Brass comb, 19th century CE, northern Russia. Л. Гончарова, *Медные*, 101.
3. Luristan bronze pin with a decorative head, detail (Collection Godard). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 108 – Fig. 87 (No. 163, 164, 165).
4. Luristan cheekpiece (Louvre, Departement des Antiquites Orientales). *Horsebit* 2017.
5. Bronze figurine, 1st millennium BCE, Van, Transcaucasia. Л. И. Ремпель, *Цепь*, 91, Рис. 36: а.
6. Metal plaque, ca. 2000 BCE (?), Turkmenistan (Schaffhausen Museum, Switzerland). *Goddess Ishtar* 2020.
7. Motif from folk embroidery, Mariovo, RN Macedonia. А. Крстева, *Народни*, Сл. 9.
8. Motif from folk embroidery, Russia. Г. С. Маслова, *Орнамент*, 113 – Рис. 56: б.
9. Motif from folk embroidery, Russia. Г. С. Маслова, *Орнамент*, 112 – Рис. 56: а.
10. Openwork bronze buckle (detail), 4th – 2nd century BCE, Caucasus. F. Eber-Stevens, *Stara*,T.XII: 399.
11. Luristan bronze cheekpiece. *The Habib* 2020.
12. Metal plaque, Scythian era (3rd century BCE), Alexandropol kurgan, Ukraine. В. Цагараев, *Осетинское*.

B24
1. Luristan standard (LACMA: M.76.97.41). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
2. Motif from a sword hilt, Assyrian culture. H. J. Kantor, *The Shoulder*, 274 – Fig. 7: c.
3. Petroglyph, prehistory, Kalbak-Tash, Altai, Russia. В. Д. Кубарев, *Мифы*, 42 – Рис. 3: 2.
4. Motif engraved on a bronze belt, "Koban" culture, Tli cemetery (grave no. 76), South Ossetia. Г. Н. Вольная, *К вопросу*, 270 – Рис. 1: 17.
5. Motif engraved on a bronze belt, "Koban" culture, Tli cemetery (grave no. 74), South Ossetia. Г. Н. Вольная, *К вопросу*, 270 – Рис. 1: 14.
6. Petroglyph, prehistory, Sukhanikha, Krasnoturansky Raion, Krasnoyarsk Krai, Russia. А. И. Мартынов, *О мировоззренческой*, 16, 17 – Рис. 1: 31.
7. Petroglyph, prehistory, Tsagaan Salaa/Baga Oigor, Altai, Mongolia. В. Д. Кубарев, *Мифы*, 42 – Рис. 3: 5.
8. Bronze fibula, Roman period. Z. Vinski, *Kasnoantički*, T.X: 13.
9. Figure from the hunting scene of Khnumhotep III, ancient Egyptian culture (12th dynasty). H. J. Kantor, *The Shoulder*, Pl. VIII: C.
10. Relief motif from a tombstone (stećak), Middle Ages, Dugo Polje, Blidinje, Bosnia and Herzegovina. M. Wenzel, *Ukrasni*, T. LXXVI: 11.
11. Bronze fibula, Roman period. Z. Vinski, *Kasnoantički*, T.X: 7.
12. Bronze fibula, Iron Age, "Duero" culture, Lara de los Infantes, Burgos, Spain. W. Schüle, *Probleme*, 119 – Abb. 27: 5.
13. Bronze fibula, Iron Age, "Duero" cuture, "Numantia", Gemeinde Garray, Soria, Spain. W. Schüle, *Probleme*, 119 – Abb. 27: 4.
14. Luristan bronze applique. *Applique of a Lion* 2020.
15. Luristan bronze applique. *Iranian Antiquities* 2020.

B25
1. Luristan bronze pin with a decorative head (Louvre: AO20534). *Epingle* 2020.
2. Luristan bronze pin with a decorative head (Metropolitan: 48.154.6). *Pin* 2020.
3. Motif engraved on a bronze sheet metal object (Ashmolean: 494B). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 259 – Fig. k.
4. Bronze plaque, Surkh Dum-i-Luri, Luristan. E. F. Schmidt et al, *The Holmes*, Pl. 212: c.
5. Motif from a cylinder seal, Western Asia. T. van Bakel, *The magical*, Number 26 (Inv. AO 2334).
6. Drawing on stone (detail), Middle Ages, Pliska, Bulgaria. Д. Овчаров, *Български*, T.LXXXVII: 1.
7. Drawing on stone (detail), Middle Ages, Pliska, Bulgaria. Д. Овчаров, *Български*, T.LXXXV: 1.
8. Petroglyph, prehistory (?), Ust'-Tuba, Minusinsk Hollow, Southern Siberia. Я. А. Шер, *Петроглифы*, 153 – Рис. 78.
9. Rock drawing, prehistory (?), Aodan. А. И. Мартынов, *О мировоззренческой*, 16 – Рис. 1: 6.
10. Coin, Celtic cultural circle. M. Aldhouse-Green, *An Arch. of Images*, 83 – Fig. 3: 14.
11. Coin, Celtic cultural circle, Seine-Maritime, Rouen, France. *Le cheval* 2020.
12. Coin of the city of Asido, 2nd century BCE, Phoenician culture, Spain. *Asido* 2014.
13. Motif painted on ceramic larnax, Minoan culture, Palaikastro, Praisos, Crete, Greece. A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 525 – Fig. 393.

14. Silver coin, Derrones, 5th century BCE. Е. Павловска, *Паруте*, 17.
15. Silver coin, Derrones, 5th century BCE. И. Маразов, *Mum*, 138.

B26
1. Luristan bronze ring. *Bridle ring with ibex* 2020.
2. Luristan standard (Ashmolean: 1965. 790). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 33: 171.
3. Luristan standard (Ashmolean: 1965. 193). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 34: 174,.
4. Luristan cheekpiece. Stora Collection, Paris. H. Potratz, *Das "Kampfmotiv"*, Taf. VI: 21.
5. Luristan cheekpiece. *Dea Qiboo* 2020.
6. Luristan cheekpiece (LACMA: M.76.97.97). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
7, 8. Luristan standard, frontal and lateral view (Ashmolean: 1965. 788). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 33: 171.

B27
1, 2, 3. Luristan pin with an openwork head, appearance of the head and details (LACMA: M.76.97.184). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
4. Stone seal, Minoan culture, Phaestos, Crete, Greece. M. P. Nilsson, *The Minoan-Mycenaean*, 234 – Fig. 117.
5. Motif from a silver vessel, Thracian culture, 5th – 4th century BCE, Rogozen, Bulgaria. И. Маразов, *Рогозенското*, 207.
6. Luristan whetstone handle (Collection David-Weill: 1933-17). P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, Fig. 71.
7. Motif from a Proto-Corinthian vase (collection in Boston). A. Roes, *The Representation*, 22 – Fig. 1.
8. Bone comb, ca. 3000 BCE, Gullrum, Gotland (National Historical Museum, Stocklholm), Sweden. M. Hoernes, *Urgeschichte*, 245 – Abb. 5.
9. Motif from a medallion, Middle Ages, Tjurkö, Blekinge, Sweden. D. Ellmers, *Zur Ikonographie*, 232 – Abb. 34.
10. Petroglyph, Bronze Age, Sakachi-Alyan, lower stream of the Amur River. Б. А. Рыбаков, *Эпоха бронзы*, 425, Рис. 146: 1.
11. Motif from a painted vessel, 10th century CE, Selishte, Preslav, Bulgaria. Л. Дончева-Петкова, *Митологични*, 120 – Обр. 91.
12. Motif hammered on bronze sheet metal, Early Middle Ages (?), Levroux, Indre, France. M. Hoernes, *Urgeschichte*, 569: 2.
13. Metal pendant, Middle Ages or 18th – 19th century, Archaeological Museum, Varna, Bulgaria. Р. Рашев, *Модел*, 43, Обр. 5: a.

B28
Luristan bronze cheekpieces:
1. (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1985,963). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 55, Kat. 104.
2. *Сарматы* 2014.
3. (Béla Heine Collection, Paris). H. A. Potratz, *Die Pferdegebisse*, 15 – Abb. 26.
4. (Frank Savery Collection). S. Przeworski, *Luristan Bronzes*, Pl. LXXIII: e (no. 11).
Luristan bronze rings:
6. (Stora Collection, Paris). *Bridle ring* 2020.
7. (LACMA). *Cheekpiece* 2020.
8. (Louvre). *Сокровища* 2020.
9. (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, USA). H. Potratz, *Das "Kampfmotiv"*, Tab. XV: 60.
10. (Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, USA). *Harness* 2020, Accession Number: 54.118
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5. Bronze pendant, Iron Age, Fortetsa, Crete, Greece. O. W. Muscarella, *Archaeology*, 677 – Fig. 1.
11. Bronze pendant, Iron Age, Libna, Krško, Slovenia. B. Teržan, *Goldene*, Abb. 6.

B29
1. Scene hammered on a vessel made of bronze sheet metal (Collection Godard: 385). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 225 – Fig. 202.
2. Motif hammered on bronze sheet metal (Ashmolean: 1965. 833). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 241 – Fig. f: no. 461.
3. Bronze vessel, Luristan (?). E. F. Schmidt et al, *The Holmes*, Pl. 264: a.
4. Bronze quiver covering, detail. *Large Lur. Br. Plate* 2020.
5. Luristan pin with a discoid head, Surkh Dum-i-Luri, Luristan. E. F. Schmidt et al, *The Holmes*, Pl. 206: b.
6. Scene from a bronze vessel, Luristan. P. R. S. Moorey, *Towards*, 118 – Fig. 2: 32.
7, 8. Ring and imprint of the scene engraved on it, Surkh Dum-i-Luri, Luristan. E. F. Schmidt et al, *The Holmes*, Pl. 253: XXXV.
9. Motif from a cylinder seal, Late Middle Elamite – Neo-Elamite Period. E. F. Schmidt et al, *The Holmes*, Pl. 236: 81.

10. Motif from a cylinder seal, Late Middle Elamite – Neo-Elamite Period. E. F. Schmidt et al, *The Holmes*, Pl. 236: 84.
11. Motif from a seal, Elamite period, Luristan. E. F. Schmidt et al, *The Holmes*, Pl. 236: 82.

B30
1. Scene hammered on bronze sheet metal, Surkh Dum-i-Luri, Luristan. E. F. Schmidt et al, *The Holmes*, Pl. 213: a.
2. Scene from a bronze situla (LACMA: M.76.97.350). P. R. S. Moorey, *The Art*, 88 – No. 433.
3. Scene from a Luristan bronze quiver covering (Metropolitan: 41.156). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, Fig. 15.
4. Scene from a Luristan bronze quiver covering (Louvre). P. R. S. Moorey, *Some Elaborately*, Pl. IIa.
5. Luristan bronze pin with a decorative head (LACMA: M.76.97.233). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
6. Luristan bronze pin with a decorative head. E. Porada, *Nomads*, Pl.V:1.
7. Scene from a Luristan bronze quiver covering (Cinquantenaire Museum, Brussels). P. R. S. Moorey, *Some Elaborately*, Pl. IIb.

B31
Luristan bronze pins with a discoid head:
1. (Louvre). *Сокровища* 2020.
2. A. Godard, *The Art*, 54 – Fig. 30.
3. (LACMA: M.76.97.168). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
4. (Liège private collection). N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 155 – No. 145.
5. *Cloak Pin* 2020.
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6. Luristan bronze pin with an openwork head (Ashmolean: 1965. 808). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 56: 344.
7. Luristan bronze belt. М. Н. Погребова, *Закавказье*, 107 – Табл. IX: 5.

B32
Luristan bronze cheekpieces:
1. (LACMA: M.76.97.122). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
2. (LACMA: M.76.97.126). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
3. (LACMA: M.76.97.123). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
4. (Musee d'art et d'histoire, Genève). H. Potratz, *Das "Kampfmotiv"*, Taf. X: 37.
5. Motif painted on a board, ethnography, Siberia (Krasnoyarsk Museum, Krasnoyarsk), Russia. *Мифы нар. мира. Том.1*, 644.
6. Relief from a tombstone (stećak), Middle Ages, Ledinac, Lištica, Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina. M. Wenzel, *Ukrasni*, T. XLI: 14.
7. Embroidery on women's socks, ethnography, Ohrid region, RN Macedonia. J. Ристовска Пиличкова, *Македонската*, 602 – В29: Сл. 1.
8. Illustration from a manuscript: H. Reussner, Pandora, Basle, 1582. A. Roob, *Alchemy*, 420.
9. Embroidery on a women's shirt, ethnography, Bitola region, RN Macedonia. J. Ристовска Пиличкова, *Македонската*, 494 – Б44: Сл. 1.
10. Embroidery on a women's shirt, ethnography, Kukurečani, Bitola, RN Macedonia. А. Крстева, *Македонски*, Сл. 78.

B33
Luristan bronze pins with a discoid head:
1. (Royal Museums of Art and History, Brussels: IR.0647). *Epingle (IR.0647)* 2020.
2. (Royal Museums of Art and History, Brussels: IR.0649). *Epingle (IR.0649)* 2020.
3. (LACMA: M.76.97.160). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020. 0
5. (LACMA: M.76.97.148). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
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4. Luristan bronze pin with an openwork head (LACMA: 64.12.50). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
6. Luristan bronze pins with a double discoid head, detail (LACMA: M.76.97.163). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.

B34
1. Seal motif, Sumerian culture, 27th century BCE, Ur, Iraq. О. А. Кифишина, *Священное*, Илл. 25.
2. Metal plaque, Hittite Culture, 900 BCE, Tell-Halaf, Syria (Museum of Oriental Antiquities, İstanbul, Turkey). *Hittite plaque* 2020.
3. Ivory plaque, Phoenician culture, 9th – 8th century BCE, Nimrud, Iraq (Cleveland Museum of Art, USA: 1968.47). *Phoenician* 2020.
4. Sumerian stamp seal (impression), earthenware, 3000 BCE, Mesopotamia, (Oriental Institute Museum, Chicago, USA). *Sumerian Stamp* 2020.

5. Stamp-bead, Minoan culture, Knossos, Crete, Greece (Ashmolean). A. Evans, *The Palace*. Vol. IV – II, 453 – Fig. 377.
6. Lentoid gem, Mycenae, Greece. A. J. Evans, *Mycenaean Tree*, 154 – Fig. 30.
7. Golden hatchet handle, Scythian culture, 7th – 6th century BCE, Kelermes, Adygea, Russia. *Scyth. Slide Collection* 2020.
8. Stucco relief plaque, Sasanian period, 5th – 6th century CE, Iran (Cincinnati Art Museum, Cincinnati, USA). *Relief plaque* 2020.
9. Relief in stone, Hittite culture, 800 BCE, Karatepe, Osmaniye Province, Turkey. *Hittite tree* 2020.
10. Painted relief, terracotta, 6th century BCE, Pazarli, Frygie (Museum of Anatolian Cultures, Ankara), Turkey. *Rampant Goats* 2020.
11. Golden appliques, Achaemenid Period, 5th – 4th century BCE (Reza Abbasi Museum, Theran, Iran). *Achaemenid* 2020.

B35
1. Motif from a cylinder seal, Assyrian culture. G. Lechler, *The Tree of Life*, 87.
2. Motif from a cylinder seal, Assyrian culture, 8th century BCE. О. А. Кифишина, *Священное*. Ил. 51.
3. Motif from a bowl, Phoenician culture. E. Goblet d'Alviella, *The migration*, Pl. IV: Fig b.
4. Motif from a capital, ancient Hellenic culture, temple of Athena, Priene, Turkey. E. Goblet d'Alviella, *The migration*, Pl. IV: Fig. E.
5. Composition woven into textile, 9th century CE, Central Asia. *Lion medallion* 2020.
6. Relief in stone, 12th century CE (Byzantine and Christina Museum, Athens). *Tree of life* 2020.
7. Relief from a madrasa, Seljuk culture, 14th century CE, Erzurum, Turkey. *Anadolu* 2020.

B36
1. Motif from a Luristan discoid pin, detail. A. Godard, *The Art*, 60 – Fig. 44.
2, 3. Motif from a cylinder seal, Old Babylonian period, Larsa, Iraq. J. Black, A. Green, *Gods*, 19 – Fig. 13.
4. Motif from a cylinder seal, 3rd millennium BCE, Kish, Iraq. О. А. Кифишина, *Священное*. Ил. 32.
5. A scene carved into a pithos, 9th – 8th century BCE, Kuntillet ʻAjrud, Sinai Peninsula, Egypt. *Asherah* 2020.
6. Scene from a golden vessel, about 1000 BCE, "Marlik" culture, Gilan, Iran. Z. Kazempoor, M. Marasi, *The Study*, 195 – Fig. 1.
7. Gold signet ring, Mycenae, Greece. A. J. Evans, *Mycenaean Tree*, 155 – Fig. 33.
8. Lentoid gem, Goulas, Crete, Greece. A. J. Evans, *Mycenaean Tree*, 154 – Fig. 32.
9. Motif from a cylinder seal, Late Middle Elamite – Neo-Elamite Period. E. F. Schmidt et al, *The Holmes*, Pl. 237: 86.

B37
1. Motif hammered on a silver belt, Early Antiquity, Batince, Ćuprija, Serbia. M. Stojić, *Tribalski*, 53.
2. Object cast from metal, ethnography, Vratsa, Bulgaria. С. Георгиева, Д. Бучински, *Старото*, Табл. LXIV: 17.
3. Illustration from the book *"Buch der heiligen Dreifaltigkeit"*, 15th century CE. A. Roob, *Alchemy*, 462.
4. Motif painted on papyrus (detail), ancient Egyptian culture, XVIII Dynasty. E. Neumann, *The Great Mother*, 243 – Fig. 53.
5. Drawing carved in rock, Bronze Age, Tsarevets (cave no. 20), Mezdra, Bulgaria. Т. Стойчев, *Скално*, 161 – Рис. 121.
6. Motif from a shamanic costume, late 19th century CE, Siberia (American Museum of Natural History, New York City). В. Н. Топоров, *Древо мировое*, 405.
7. Sephiroth tree, illustration from the book R. Fludd, "*Utrisque Cosmi"*, Vol. II, 1621 CE. A. Roob, *Alchemy*, 318.

B38
1. Pictorial motif, Neo-Elamite period, 226 CE. U. Holmberg, *Der Baum*, 82 – Abb. 34.
2. Motif painted on a shamanic drum, ethnography of the Ket people, Siberia. В. Н. Топоров, *К рекон. некоторых*, 108 – Рис. 9.
3. Motif painted on a shamanic drum, ethnography, Selkup people, Northern Siberia. U. Holmberg, *Der Baum*, 154 – Abb. 75.
4. Depiction of a phytomorphized cross, Middle Ages, Sweden, А. Голан, *Миф*, Рис. 338: 5.
5. Bronze pin head, Metal Ages, Istebne-Hradok, Slovakia. M. Novotna, *Die Bronzenadeln*, 30 – Abb. 1: 3.
6. Motif painted on a shamanic drum, ethnography, Selkup people, Northern Siberia. U. Holmberg, *Der Baum*, 154 – Abb. 74.
7. Depiction on clothes, ethnography, Siberia. С. В. Иванов, *Материалы*, 239 – Рис. 109.
8, 9. Stone monuments, 10th century CE, Norman culture, Isle of Man, Britain. D. Coenen, O. Holzapfel, *Germanische*, (Steinriesen).

B39
1. Motif from a carpet, "sofra", 19th century CE, Ohrid, RN Macedonia (Ohrid Museum).
2. Motif from a painted ancient vase, 3rd – 2nd century BCE, Cabezo de Alcalá, Azaila, Teruel, Spain. M. Tarradell, E. Sanmartí, *L'état*, 327 – Pl.5.
3. Motif from a carpet, Nov Dojran, RN Macedonia (Archive of the "Marko Cepenkov" Institute of Folklore, Skopje: AIF 6329). Ј. Ристовска Пиличкова, *Македонската*, 602 – В4: Сл. 2.
4. Golden applique, 5th century BCE, Zurivka, Makariv Raion, Ukraine. M. Damyanov, *The matrix*, 33 – Fig. 9.
5. Bronze sculpture, 15th century CE, Hindu culture. Dž. K. Kuper, *Ilustrovana*, 39.
6. Bronze top of scepter, Scythian culture. *Олень* 2020, (2009-06-13).

B40
1. Stone relief, 3rd century BCE, tomb in Sveshtari, Isperih, Bulgaria. Д. Попова, *Отвориха*.
2. Stone sculpture (antefix), 5th century BCE, Panticapaeum, North Black Sea Region (Historical-Archaeological Museum, Kerch). *Скифская богиня* 2020.
3. Motif engraved on a bronze vessel, ancient Egyptian culture, Saite period, ca. 600 BCE. Neumann, *The Great Mother*, Pl. 108.
4. Illustration from the book of Hieronymus Reussner, *"Pandora"*, Basle 1582. A. Roob, *Alchemy*, 503.
5. Coin of the city of Myra, Lycia region, 3rd century CE, Asia Minor. U. Holmberg, *Der Baum*, 69 – Abb. 28.
6. Impression of an alabaster cylinder seal, detail, 3rd millennium BCE, Shahdad, Iran (Archaeological Museum, Tehran: 1792 – 488/50). H. Pittman, *Anchoring*, 631 – Fig. 7b.
7. Embroidery motif, ethnography, Russia. Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Славян*, 479.
8. Embroidery motif, ethnography, Russia. Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Славян*, 483.
9. Motif from a ceramic vessel (terra sigillata), Roman culture, Mainz, Germany. J. de Groot, *Masclus*, Abb. 3: 4.
10. Embroidery motif, ethnography, Russia. Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Славян*, 507.
11. Motif engraved on a ring head, Middle Ages, Rudina, Stari Kostolac, Serbia. М. Поповић, В. Иванишевић, *Град*, Сл. 24: 1.
12. Motif from a tombstone (stećak), Middle Ages/Early Modern Period, Pargani, Mramorje, Zvornik, Bosnia and Herzegovina. M. Wenzel, *Ukrasni*, T. LII: 30.

B41
1. Luristan pin with a discoid head (Royal Museums of Art and History, Brussels: IR.0647). A. Godard, *The Art*, 75 – Fig. 77.
2. Luristan pin with a discoid head (National Museum of Iran, Tehran). G. M. D'Erme, *The Cappella*, 414 – Fig. 13.
3. Motif from a carpet, "sofra", 19th century CE, Ohrid, RN Macedonia (Ohrid Museum).
4. Illustration from the manuscript: V. Weigel, *"Studium Universale"*, Frankfurt, 1698. A. Roob, *Alchemy*, 320.
5. Motif painted on a shamanic drum, ethnography, Siberia. U. Holmberg, *Der Baum*, 20 – Abb. 6.
6, 7, 8. Motif engraved on a vessel (whole representation and details), ethnography, 19th century CE, Hungary. J. Simpson, *Evropska*, 29.

B42
1. Ceramic figurine, Eneolithic, "Anau" culture: Namazga V, Turkmenistan. Е. В. Антонова, *К исследованию*, 55 – Рис. 3: 6.
2. Gold pendant - amulet, Middle Bronze Age, 16th century BCE, Palestine. R. Hestrin, *Understanding*.
3. Gold pendant - amulet, Middle Bronze Age, 16th century BCE, Palestine. U. Holmberg, *Der Baum*, 117 – Abb. 54.
4. Bottom of a ceramic vessel, Cycladic culture, 3rd millennium BCE, Syros, Greece. M. Gimbutas, *The Language*, 102 – Fig. 166.
5. Ceramic figurine, Eneolithic, "Cucuteni – Trypillia" culture (Platar Collection). М. Ю. Відейко, Н. Б. Бурдо, *Енциклопедія*, Том 2, 202 – Рис. 3.
6. Bone plate figurine, Neolithic, Gaban cave, Trento, Italy. M. Gimbutas, *The Language*, 103 – Fig. 168: 3.
7. Bronze plaque, Iron Age, Sangtarashan, Luristan (Falakolaflak Museum, Khorramabad), Iran. M. Malekzadeh et al, *Fouilles 2005-2006*, 87 – Fig. 27: Type B.3.
8. Luristan standard (LACMA: M.76.97.10). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
9. Motif from a carpet, "Pazyryk" culture, 5th century BCE, Pazyryk, Altai, Russia (Hermitage). *Пазырыкская* 2020.
10. Bone object, Late Neolithic – Early Chalcolithic, Neveh Yam, Israel. E. Galili et al, *Figurative*, 134 – Fig. 2.
11, 12. Bone object, Late Neolithic – Early Chalcolithic, Ha-Gosherim, Israel. E. Galili et al, *Figurative*, 136 – Fig. 3.
13. Petroglyph, Ukir Mountain, Bokhansky District, Russia. E. Devlet, M. Devlet, *Siberian*, 124 – Fig. 3: 2.

B43

Luristan standards, upper part with a pair of protomes:
1. (LACMA: M.76.97.50). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the whole object: B8: 4.
2. (Metropolitan: 32.161.10). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 145, No. 224; the whole object: B17: 2.
3. *Admiralty* 2020; the whole object: B5: 6.
4. (Ashmolean: 1951.180). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 30: 163; the whole object: B8: 5.
5. Geometric image of the cubic-hemispherical model of the universe with the sky in the form of a zoomorphized circle. Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.
6. Bronze additions for vessels, "Villanova" culture, 8th – 7th century BCE, Capo dimonte – Bisenzio, Italy. G. Kossack, *Studien*, Taf. 13: 1.
7. Motif from a bronze belt buckle, Early Middle Ages, Saint Quentin, Aisne, France. A. France-Lanord, *Die Gürtelgarnitur*, Taf. 49 – 1a.
8. Three-dimensional cubic-hemispherical model of the universe with the sky as a zoomorphized circle, the earth as a vulva, and the cosmic axis as a personalized phallus. Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.
9. The movement of the sun as being swallowed and disgorged by the two zoomorphized halves of the celestial vault. Scheme: Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, Д14: 14.
10. Double zoomorphized celestial vault with phases of the movement of the sun and the cosmic mountain as supporter of the sky. Scheme: Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, Д22: 10.
11. Bronze two-plated bow fibula, 6th – 7th century CE, Pastyrs'ke gorodyshche, Chyhyryn, Ukraine. Г. Ф. Корзухина, *Клады*, Табл. 33: 1.
12. Metal pendant - pectoral, Iron Age, Vinica, Slovenia. F. Stare, *Upodobitev*, T. II: 1.
13. Fitting of a bronze belt buckle, 7th century CE, Karojba, Istra, Croatia. *Slaveni* 1987.

B44

Luristan bronze pins with an openwork head:
1. (LACMA: M.76.97.226). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
2. (LACMA: M.76.97.251). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
3. (LACMA: M.76.97.892). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
4. (LACMA: M.76.97.185). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
Luristan standards:
5. (Collection Godard: 106). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 92 – Fig.74.
6. *Rampant bulls* 2018.
7. (LACMA: M.76.97.45). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
8. *Ancient and Oriental* 2018, G-315.

4, 5. Combination of a standard and pin. Photomontage: Nikos Chausidis.

B45

Luristan bronze pins with a discoid head:
1. A. Godard, *The Art*, 67 – Fig. 54.
2. A. Godard, *The Art*, 67 – Fig. 57.
3. A. Godard, *The Art*, 67 – Fig. 53.
4. A. Godard, *The Art*, 67 – Fig. 52.
5. (LACMA: M.76.97.150). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
6. (Collection Godard: No. 221). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 150 – Fig. 124.
9. *A Luristan Br. Pin* 2020, MB1520.
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7. Luristan bronze pin with a "decorative" head (Collection Godard: No. 209). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 141 – Fig. 116.
8. Luristan bronze pin with a "decorative" head (Collection Godard: No. 208). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 141 – Fig. 116.
10. Luristan garniture with standard, support and discoid head (Louvre). *Сокровища* 2020.
11. Luristan garniture with standard and pin with a "decorative" head (LACMA: M.76.97.20). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.

B46

Luristan standards:
1. (Metropolitan: 32.161.20). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 146, No. 226.
2. (Museum of Fine Arts Boston: 30.565). *Rod-holder* 2020.
4. (LACMA: M.76.97.34). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
5. (LACMA: M.76.97.46). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
7. (Archaeological Museum, Tehran, Iran). J.- L. Huot, *Iran*, Sl. 112.
9. (Ashmoelan: 1965.192). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 32: 169.

11. (LACMA: M.76.97.44). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
13. (LACMA: M.76.97.45). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
Luristan bronze pins with a "decorative" head:
3. *Hair Pin* 2018.
6. (Collection Godard: 209). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 141 – Fig. 116.
Luristan bronze pins with a discoid head:
8. (Collection Godard: No. 221). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 150 – Fig. 124; partial reconstruction of the destroyed part: photomontage Nikos Chausidis; original condition: B45: 6.
10. (LACMA: M.76.97.150). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
12. (LACMA: M.76.97.162). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
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3 and 4; 6 and 7; 8 and 9; 10 and 11; 12 and 13. Combination of standard and pin; photomontage: Nikos Chausidis.

B47
Luristan pins with a discoid head:
1. (LACMA: M.76.97.162). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
3. A. Godard, *The Art*, 67 – Fig. 53.
Luristan pins with an openwork head:
2. (LACMA: M.76.97.185). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
5. (LACMA: M.76.97.226). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
7. (LACMA: M.76.97.233). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
Luristan standards:
4. (Collection of M. Hakim, London), H. Potratz, *Die Stangen-aufsätze*, Abb. VIII: 26.
6. (LACMA: M.76.97.49). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
8. (Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, USA). *Ibex Standard* 2020.

B48
Zoomorphic standards:
1. (LACMA: M.76.97.55). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
5. (LACMA: M.76.97.19). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
9. (LACMA: M.76.97.53). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
Luristan pins with an openwork head:
2. *Persian ornament* 2020.
3. (LACMA: M.76.97.211). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
4. (Louvre). *Etendard avec héros* 2020.
6. (Metropolitan, 30.97.16). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 178, No. 287.
7, 8. (LACMA: M.76.97.270). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
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8 and 9. Combination of a standard and pin; photomontage: Nikos Chausidis.

B49
Luristan standards:
1. J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, T. XXXV: Abb. 223.
3. (LACMA: M.76.97.47). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
4. (Copenhagen Museum). *Lur. Br. Copenhagen Museum* 2017.
5. *Sculpture Master of Animals* 2020.
6. (Art Institute of Chicago, USA). J. Michelet, *Luristan*, 92 – Fig. 1.
7. (Louvre). P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 89 – Fig. 48.
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2. Luristan bronze pin with an openwork head (LACMA: M.76.97.227). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.

B50
Luristan standards:
1. (Louvre). *Сокровища* 2020.
6. (Ashmolean: 1965.194). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue,* Pl. 31: 164.
Luristan pins with zoomorphic protomes:
3. (Collection David-Weill: 1931 – 213). P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, No. 168.
4. (LACMA: M.76.97.239). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
5. (LACMA: M.76.97.234). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
7. E. F. Schmidt et al, *The Holmes*, Pl. 260: d.

9. (Collection David-Weill: 1930 no. 210). P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, No. 167.
2, 8. Hypothetical combination of a pair of pins with protomes and a bottle-shaped support: photomontage Nikos Chausidis.

V. PAIR OF SYMMETRICAL ANIMALS AND A CENTRAL ANTHROPOMORPHIC CHARACTER

C1

Luristan standards:
1. (LACMA: M.76.97.35). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
2. (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, USA: 30.565). *Rod-holder* 2020.
3. (Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, UK). J. M. Munn-Rankin, *Luristan*, Pl. I: a; color photo: *Luristan br. ear-whisperer* 2020.
7. (LACMA: M.76.97.16). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
8. *Standard with a tube* 2020.
Transformations of the iconography of the Luristan standards.
4. Basic composition of the type "zoomorphic standards". Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.
5. Addition of an anthropomorphic head in the front legs of the two animals - the emergence of the type "zoomorphic standards with a human head". Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.
6. Merging of the front legs of the two animals into a columnar element with the meaning of neck of the human head. Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.
9. Transformation of the columnar element i.e. the neck of the human head into the torso of an anthropomorphic figure with (or without) hands - emergence of the standards of the type "idols with protomes". Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.

C2

Luristan standards:
1. *Mossgreen* 2020.
2. (LACMA: M.76.97.42). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
3. (Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal: 1931. Dm. 22). Ph. Verdier, *Les bronzes*, 47 – Fig. 33.
4. (British Museum: 115516). *The British M.* 2020.
5. (Collection David-Weill: 1931 – 217). P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, Fig. 209.
6. (LACMA: M.76.97.46). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
7. (Metropolitan: 32.161.20). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 146, No. 226.
8. (Collection Godard: 110). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 96 – Fig. 77.
9. (Art Institute of Chicago, USA). J. Michelet, *Luristan*, 92 – Fig. 1.

C3

Luristan standards:
1. (LACMA: M.76.97.43). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
2. (LACMA: M.76.97.40). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
3. (Ashmolean: 1965. 193). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 34: 174.
4. (Art Museum, Princeton University, Princeton, USA). J. C. Waldbaum, *Luristan*, 13 – Fig. 11.
5. (LACMA: M.76.97.17). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
6. J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, T. XXXII: 209.
7. (Copenhagen Museum). *Lur. Br. Copenhagen Museum* 2017.
8. *Eloge* 2020.
9. *Arts d'Orient* 2013, No. 54.

C4

Luristan standards:
1. (Freud Museum, London: 3044). *Freud Museum* 2020.
2. (LACMA: M.76.97.29). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
3. (Ashmolean: 1965. 793). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 35: 181.
4. (Ashmolean: 1965. 792). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 36: 183.
5. (The Smithsonian`s Museums of Asian Art Washington, DC, USA: Id 22628). *The Smithsonian`s* 2017.
6. (Collection David-Weill: 1933 – 148). P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, No. 217; color photo:
S. Kalyanaraman, *Bronze Age*, Fig. 6: a.
7. (LACMA: M.76.97.6). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
8. (Ex Elliot collection, Tennessee, USA). *Janifrom figure* 2020.
9. (LACMA). *Bensozia* 2020.
10. J. A. H. Potratz, *Luristanbronzen*, Taf. XXIX: 184.

C5

Luristan standards:
1, 2. *Helios Gallery* 2020.
3. *Mistress* 2020.
4. (Art Museum, Princeton University, Princeton, USA). J. C. Waldbaum, *Luristan*, 13 – Fig. 10.
5. *Sadigh Gallery* 2020.
6. (LACMA: M.76.97.54). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
7. (Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, UK: 1982A2225). P. Watson, *Luristan*, 5, 6 – Fig. 2: 5.
8. (Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal, Canada: 1931. Dm. 14). Ph. Verdier, *Les bronzes*, 47 – Fig. 34.
9. (LACMA: M.76.97.15). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.

C6

1. Motif from a cylinder seal (detail), Nuzi, Irak. E. Porada, *Seal*. Pl. LII: 661.
2. Luristan standard (Collection Godard: no. 110). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 96 – Fig. 77.
Luristan pins with a discoid head:
3. Detail (LACMA: M.76.97.133). A. Godard, *The Art*, 60 – Fig. 44; color photo: LACMA. *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
4. Surkh Dum, (1319 AH), Luristan, (National Museum of Iran, Tehran: 7099). S. Ayazi, *Luristan*, cat. 40; contour reconstruction of the lost parts: Nikos Chausidis.
5. (Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal, Canada: 1945. Dm. 14). Ph. Verdier, *Les bronzes*, 45 – Fig. 30.
6. (Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal, Canada: 1945. Dm. 13). Ph. Verdier, *Les bronzes*, 45 – Fig. 29.
7, 8. Details of the same pin (Baron von der Heydt Collection, Ascona, Switzerland). H. A. Potratz, *Scheibenkopfnadeln*, 45 – Abb. 3.

C7

1. Luristan pin with a discoid head, Surkh Dum, Luristan. R. Dussaud, *Anciens*, 203 – Fig. 6.
2. Luristan pin with a discoid head (Metropolitan: 39.96.4). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 203, No. 312.
3. Metal covering for a helmet, Roman period, Gammertingen, Germany. É. Salin, *Sur quelques*, 229 – Fig. 5: b.
4. Motif from a cylinder seal (detail), Nuzi, Iraq. E. Porada, *Seal*. Pl. XXXIX: 775.
5. Golden plaque, Achaemenid period, 6th – 4th century BCE (Metropolitan). *Plaque with horned* 2020.
6. Luristan bronze covering for a quiver (Metropolitan: 41.156). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 192, No. 308, Fig. 15.
7. Golden pendant, Crimea. É. Salin, *Sur quelques*, 229 – Fig. 5: a.
8. Scene painted in the interior of a house, Neolithic, Çatal Höyük, Turkey. J. Mellaart, *Čatal Hüyük*, 83 – Fig. 15.
9. Luristan bronze covering for a quiver (Louvre: AO 20642). P. Amiet, *Un carquois*, 250 – Fig. 3.

C8

Luristan bronze pins with a discoid head:
1. (Godard Collection). A. Godard, *The Art*, 61 – Fig. 45.
2. (Godard Collection). A. Godard, *The Art*, Fig. 23.
3. (Godard Collection). A. Godard, *The Art*, 61 – Fig. 48.
Luristan standards:
5. (Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal, Canada: 1931. Dm. 22). Ph. Verdier, *Les bronzes*, 47 – Fig. 33.
6. (Metropolitan: 66.104.I). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 143 – No. 218.
7. (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, USA: 30.565). *Rod-holder* 2020.
Luristan bronze objects for planting:
4. (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, USA). H. Potratz, *Das "Kampfmotiv"*, XVI: 61.
8. (LACMA: M.76.97.38). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.

C9

Luristan pins with a discoid head:
1. (Louvre). *Сокровища* 2020.
2. (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1973,144). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 66, 68, Kat. 132.
4. (LACMA: M.76.97.170). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
5. (Rietberg Museum, Zürich, Switzerland). *Disc-headed* 2020.
6. (Louvre). N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 163, 164 (no. 153).
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3. Bronze umbo, Etruscan culture, 7th century BCE (Museo Gregoriano, Rome). G. M. D'Erme, *The Cappella*, 416 – Fig. 17.

C10

Luristan standards:

1. Addition of an anthropomorphic head in the front legs of the two animals in the standards of the type "zoomorphic standards" and the emergence of the type "zoomorphic standards with a human head". Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.
2. (LACMA: M.76.97.42). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
7. (Musée Cernuschi, Paris: MC.8877). N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 194, no. 196.
8. (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, USA: 30.565). *Rod-holder* 2020.
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3. The movement of the sun as being swallowed and disgorged by the two zoomorphized halves of the celestial vault. Scheme: Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, Д14: 14.
4. Fibula (detail - semicircular plate), 6th – 7th century, Pastyrs'ke gorodyshche, Chyhyryn, Ukraine. J. Werner, *Slaw. Bügelfibeln*, Taf. 41: 45.
5. Fibula (detail - semicircular plate), 6th – 7th century, Luchyste, Alushta, Crimea. И. О. Гавритухин, А. М. Обломский, *Гапоновский*, 250 – Рис. 69: 14.
6. Bronze covering, Roman period, 4th – 5th century CE, Ptuj, Slovenia. S. Ciglenečki, *Arheološki*, 508 – Sl. 1.
9. Detail from a bronze torc, Early La Tène period, Northern France. T. G. E. Powell, *Varvarska*, 365 – Sl. 18.
10. Applique, Early Middle Ages, Moylough, Ireland. J. Werner, Ein *völkerwanderungszeitliches*, 80 – Abb. 3.
11. Motif from a tombstone, Papil Stone, Scotland. J. R. Allen, J. Anderson, *The Early*, 14 – Fig. 9.

C11

Luristan bronze pins with a discoid head:

1. (Louvre). *Pinhead disc* 2020.
2. Surkh Dum, Luristan (National Museum of Iran, Tehran: 15134), Iran. S. Ayazi, *Luristan*, cat. 20.
3. (LACMA: M.76.174.73). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
4. (David-Weill Collection). R. Ghirshman, *Iran*, Pl.8: b.

Motifs from cylinder seals, Western Asia:

5. (Berlin: V A637). W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 61 – no. 145.
6, 7. (Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris). W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 47 – no. 125.

Luristan standards:

8. *Pierre Berge* 2020.
9. (Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal, Canada: 1931. Dm. 14). Ph. Verdier, *Les bronzes*, 47 – Fig. 34.

C12

1, 2, 3. Possible emergence of the motif "animal with two bodies and a shared/common head" as a transformation of the motif "two animals that in their mouths hold a head". Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.
4. Detail from a stone relief, Middle Ages, exterior of the church of St. Nicholas in Nir, Matka, Skopje, RN Macedonia. В. Лилчиќ, *Матка*, 101 – Сл. 55.
5. Motif from a seal, Sumerian culture. F. Eber-Stevens, *Stara*, T. XII: 380.
6. Early Achaemenid toreutics, 8th – 7th century BCE. Л. А. Лелеков, *Искусство*, 61: 1.
7. Relief hammered on a metal vessel: "Situla Boldu Dolfin I", 5th – 4th century BCE, Este, Italy. H. Parcinger, *Inandiktepe*, Abb. 14.
8. Detail from a stone relief, 12th century CE, exterior of the Cathedral of Saint Demetrius, Vladimir, Russia. Г. К. Вагнер, *Скульптура*, Рис. 201.
9. Painted black-figured ceramic vase, ancient Greek culture. F. Eber-Stevens, *Stara*, T. XII: 375.
10. Detail from a stone relief, Romanesque style, 12th century CE, church St. Pierre, Chauvigny, Vienne, France. B. Rupreht, *Romanička*, 99.
11. Golden relief plaque, 8th – 7th century BCE, Ziwiye, Iran. Л. А. Лелеков, *Искусство*, 61: 1.

C13

Luristan standards:

1. (Metropolitan: 32.161.12). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 146, No. 227.
2. (Metropolitan: 1998.319.1). *Top for standard* 2020.
3. *Arts d'Orient* 2013, No. 54.
4, 5, 6. *Sculpture Master of Animals* 2020.

C14

Luristan standards:

1. (LACMA: M.76.97.16). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
2. *Master of dragons* 2020.
3. *Idole maître* 2020.

4. (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1998,8174). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 111, 112, Kat. 234.
5. (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1973,112). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 112, Kat. 235.
6. N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 191, No. 190.

C15
Luristan standards:
1. (LACMA: M.76.97.47). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
3. (Collection David-Weill: 1931 – 217). P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, Fig. 209.
4. (Metropolitan: 32.161.12). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 146, No. 227.
5. (Metropolitan: 1998.319.1). *Top for standard* 2020.
6. *Arts d'Orient* 2013, No. 54.
7. *Standard with a tube* 2020.
9. (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: Inv. 1973,120). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 119, Kat. 249.
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2. Combination of standard and pin; photomontage: Nikos Chausidis. Luristan pin with a discoid head (LACMA: M.76.97.150). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; Luristan standard (LACMA: M.76.97.44). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
8. Luristan bronze pin with an openwork head (LACMA: M.76.97.19). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.

C16
1. Petoglyph, prehistory, Har-Salaa, Altai, Mongolia. В. Д. Кубарев, *Мифы*, 46 – Рис. 13.
2. Relief from a stone vase, royal necropolis in Ur, Iraq. A. Godard, *Bronzes*, 73, 111, Pl. L: 186.
Luristan standards:
3. Archaeological Museum, Tehran. J.- L. Huot, *Iran*, Sl. 112.
4. *Elamite Bronze* 2020.
5. *Finial and Stand* 2020.
6. *Standard with a tube* 2020.

C17
Luristan standards:
1. (Metropolitan: 1996.82.1). *Top for standard (MET)* 2020.
2. *Unknown Iranian* 2020.
3. (Ashmolean: 1965. 794). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 35: 180.
4. (LACMA: M.76.97.1). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
5. (Dalas Museum of Art, Dalas, USA: 1963.21). *Pole Top* 2020.
6. (LACMA: M.76.97.2). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.

C18
Luristan standards:
1. (LACMA: M.76.97.4). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
2. Collection Godard. E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 99 – Fig. 80: 120 (no. 118).
3. (LACMA: M.76.97.55). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
4. (LACMA: M.76.97.3). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
5. *Quadruple* 2020.
6. (LACMA: M.76.97.5). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.

C19
Luristan standards:
1. (LACMA: M.76.97.9). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
2. (Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, USA). *Master of Animals* 2020.
3. *Elamite Bronze* 2020.
4. (LACMA: M.76.97.56). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
5. *Admiralty* 2020.
6. (Collection David-Weill: 1933 no. 148). P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, No. 217; color photo: S. Kalyanaraman, *Bronze Age*, Fig. 6: a.
7. (Forūgī, Moḥsen Collection, Tehran). R. Frye, *Forūgī*, Pl. II.

C20
Luristan bronze pins with an openwork head:
1. (Metropolitan: 30.97.16). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 178, No. 287.
2. Detail (Louvre). *Etendard avec héros* 2020; the whole object: B48: 4.

3. *Votive pinhead* 2020.
4. (Collection Godard: no. 210). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 142 – Fig. 117.
5. (LACMA: M.76.97.19). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
6. (LACMA: M.76.97.211). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
Luristan standards:
7. (Collection Godard: 116). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 101 – Fig. 81.
8. *Eloge* 2020.
9. (British Museum: 108816; 1914,0214.42). *Bronze standard* 2020.

C21
1. Luristan bronze pin with an openwork head (Metropolitan: 30.97.16). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 178, No. 287.
2. Luristan standard. A. Godard, Bronzes, Pl. LIV: 202.
3. Luristan bronze pin with an openwork head (LACMA: M.76.97.211). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
4. Luristan standard. *Standard Finial* 2020.
5. Luristan bronze bottle-shaped support (Collection Godard: No. 106). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 92 – Fig.74.
1, 2; 3, 4, 5. Combination of standard, pin and support; photomontage: Nikos Chausidis.

C22
Luristan standards:
1. Detail *Idoli* 1986, 53 – No. 55a.
2. *Hermitage* 2020.
3. *Standard Finial* 2020.
4. Detail (LACMA: M.76.97.5). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
5. Detail (Metropolitan: 32.161.17). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 152, No. 240.
6. (Forūgī, Moḥsen Collection, Tehran). R. Frye, *Forūgī*, Pl. II.
7. Tattulban, Luristan, B. Overlaet, The *Chronology*, 33 – Pl. 14: 11.
8. Tattulban, Luristan. L. Vanden Berghe, *Excavations*, 267.

C23
Transformations of the iconography of the Luristan standards:
1. Basic composition of the type "zoomorphic standards with a human head". Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.
2. Transformation of the human head at the front legs of the two animals into a human bust and the emergence of the type "idols with protomes". Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.
3. Separation of the pair of protomes from the bodies of the two animals and their fusion with the torso of the central anthropomorphic character. Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.
Luristan standards:
4. (Stora Collection, Paris). M. Rostovtzeff, *Some Remarks*, Taf. 5: 8.
5. (Metropolitan: 32.161.20). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 146, No. 226.
7. *Mistress* 2020.
8. (Ashmolean: 1965. 793). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 35: 181.
10. (Ashmolean: 1965. 792). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 36: 183.
11. C. Kevokrian, *L`art*, 114.
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6. Ceramic figurine, early 1st millennium BCE, Caspian region of Iran (Metropolitan: 64.130). *Statuette of a female* 2020.
9. Ceramic figurine, Middle Elamite period ca. 1300-1200 BCE, Susa, Iran. *Mesopotamia* 2020.

C24
Luristan standards:
1. (LACMA: M.75.27.1). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
2. (Archaeological Museum, Athens: 24410). Photography: Noemi Chausidis.
3. (Metropolitan: 1980.324.5). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 147, 148, No. 230.
4. (LACMA: M.76.97.33). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
5. (Metropolitan: 30.97.4). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 147, 148, No. 230.
6, 7. *Catawiki* 2020.

C25
Luristan standards:
1. (Collection Godard: no. 116). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 101 – Fig. 81.
2. *Luristan br. deity* 2020, (FZ.113).

3. (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1985,1064). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 116, Kat. 241.
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4. Bronze tripod, detail (Vorderasiatisches Museum, Berlin). H. Potratz, *Das "Kampfmotiv"*, Taf. XVIII: 66.
5. Bronze ring (Stora Collection, Paris). H. Potratz, *Das "Kampfmotiv"*, Taf. XIX: 69.
6. Ceramic figurine, Eneolithic, "St. Athanasius" – Spančevo, Kočani, RN Macedonia. И. Атанасова, *Антроморфна*, 145 – Сл. 14.

C26
Luristan standards:
1. (LACMA: M.76.97.71). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
2. *Bronze idol* 2018.
3. (Metropolitan: 57.51.47). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 151, No. 239.
4. A. Godard, *Bronzes*, Pl. LVI: 204.
5. (Collection Godard: 123). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 104, 105 – Fig. 85.
6. (Memorial Art Gallery, Rochester, New York, USA). *Goddess Finial* 2020.
7. A. Godard, *Bronzes*, Pl. LVII: 208.
8. (Barbier-Mueller Museum, Geneva, Switzerland: 242-16). *Tubular figure* 2018.

C27
Luristan standards:
1. *Bronze goddess finial* 2020, (20.06.1990, lot. 118).
2. (Ashmolean: 1965. 786). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 37: 187.
3. (Rietberg Museum, Zürich, Switzerland: RVA 2114). N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 196, No. 199.
4. (Metropolitan: 32.161.14). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 151, No. 238.
5, 6. (Walters Art Museum**,** Baltimore, USA: 54.121). *Female Fertility Finial* 2020; photo of the back side: A. Godard, *Bronzes*, Pl. LVII: 209.
7. (LACMA: M.76.97.18). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
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8. Head from a bronze "decorative" pin, Iron Age, Sorkdom-e-Lori, Luristan. B. Overlaet, *Čale Ğār*, 137 – Fig. 26.
9. Figure hammered in bronze sheet metal, Iron Age, Sorkdom-e-Lori, Luristan. B. Overlaet, *Čale Ğār*, 136 – Fig. 25.

C28
Luristan standards:
1. (Barakat Collection: AM.0183). *Luristan Mistress* 2020.
2. (Royal Museum of Art and History, Brussels: IR. 0612). *Royal Museum* 2020.
3, 4. *Etendard-épingle* 2020.
5. (Louvre). *Сокровища* 2020.
6. (Barakat Collection: OF.025). *Bronze Standard Finial* 2020.
7. *Hixenbaugh* 2020.

C29
1. Terracotta figurine, "Mehrgarh" culture, ca. 2800-2600 BCE, Indus Valley. *Statuette de femme* 2020.
2. Silver figurine, Inca culture, 1400-1500 CE, Peru. *Petite figurine* 2020.
3. Bronze figurine, Canaanite culture, Late Bronze Age, ca. 1400-1200 BCE. *A Canaanite* 2018.
4. Ceramic figurine, Minoan culture, Cnossos, Crete, Greece. *Minoan female* 2018.
5. Representation of the goddess Maya, Hindu culture. J. Chevalier, A. Gheerbrant, *Rječnik*, 412.
6. Ceramic figurine, Bronze Age, 1500-1000 BCE, Kličevac, Požarevac, Serbia. *Kličevac* 2020.
7. Wooden figurine, ethnography, Yombe people, Africa. *A Yombe* 2020, (Auction 1063, Lot 57).
8. Relief scene from a silver cauldron, ca. 1st century BCE, Gundestrup, Himmerland, Denmark. *Panel of the Gundestrup* 2020.
9. Ceramic figurine, 5th-4th century BCE, Boeotia, Greece. *Boetian terracotta* 2020.
10. Terracotta figurine, 1700-1450 BCE, Piskokephalo, Crete (Herakleion Archaeological Museum, Crete), Greece. *Minoan Art* 2018.

C30
1. Ceramic figurine, Late Helladic IIIB2, second half of the 13th century
BCE, Mycenae (Mycenae Archaeological Museum: MM294), Greece. *Female figurine* 2020.
2. Terracotta statuette, Late Cypriot II period, ca. 1450-1200 BCE (Metropolitan: 74.51.1549). *Terracotta statuette* 2020.

3. Ceramic figurine, Early Bronze Age, 3200–2800 BCE, Syria (Museum of fine Arts, Boston, USA). *Figurine holding breasts* 2020.
4. Terracotta figurine, cultures of Mesopotamia, ca. 1900 BCE. *Terracotta figurine* 2020.
5. Ceramic figurine, ca. 1000 BCE, Amlash, Iran. *Northern Iran* 2020.
6. Bronze figurine, Hittite culture, beginning of the 2nd millennium BCE, Asia Minor. *Hittite Goddess* 2020.
7. Terracotta figurine, Eneolithic, Cernavodă, Romania. *Terracotta idol* 2020.
8. Stone figurine, Pre-Nuragic "Ozieri" culture, 3500-2700 BCE, Sardinia, Italy. *Eternal* 2020.
9. Stone figurine, early Neolithic, Göbekli Tepe, Turkey. *Mesopotamian Science* 2020.
10. Marble figurine, Early Cycladic II period, 2300-2200 BCE, Cyclades, Greece. *Marble female figure* 2020.

C31

1. Ceramic figurine, Neo-Hittite civilization, ca. 1800 BCE, Northern Syria – Southern Anatolia. *Syro-Hittite* 2020.
2. Luristan standard (LACMA: M.76.97.8). *Decorated Tube* (M.76.97.8.) 2020.
3. Wooden "Blolo Bla" figurine, ethnography, Baule people, Ghana. *Blolo Bla figure* 2018.
4. "Chinesco" ceramic figure, 200 BCE – 100 CE, region of ancient Jalisco, Mexico. *Chinesco* 2018.
5. Ceramic figurine, Neolithic, ca. 4500 BCE, "Vinča" culture. *Neolithic Cer. Vinca* 2018.
6. Ceramic figurine, Neolithic, 5000-4600 BCE, Hamangia, Baïa, Dobruja, Romania. D. W. Anthony and J. Y. Chi (eds.), *The Lost*, 36 – Fig. 1-6.
7. Terracotta, figurine, Neolithic, ca. 5500-2400 BCE, Mehrgarh, Balochistan, Pakistan. *Mehrgarh* 2020.
8. Ivory figurine, Paleolithic, Mal'ta, Irkutsk Oblast, Siberia, Russia. *Мальтинская* 2020.
9. Limestone figurine, Paleolithic, Kostyonki (Костёнки), Voronezh, Russia. *Venus figures* 2020.

C32

Luristan standards:
1. Schematic representation of one iconographic layer of the standards of the type "idols with protomes". An anthropo-zoomorphic figure that holds its spread legs with ends in the form of animal protomes; below it a figure with arched arms, slightly spread thighs, bound feet, and two animal protomes placed laterally to the central human head. Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.
2. *Christie's* 2020.
3. (Barakat Collection: AM.0178). *Standard Barakat* 2020.
4. (Metropolitan: 32.161.14). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 151, No. 238.
5. (Ashmolean: 1965. 786). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 37: 187.
6. (Barakat Collection: AM.0183). *Luristan Mistress* 2020.

C33

Luristan standards:
1. N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 197, No. 200.
2. (Ex Elliot collection, Tennessee, USA). *Janifrom figure* 2020.
3. (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1985,1063). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 109, 110, Kat. 230.
4. (LACMA). *Bensozia* 2020.
5. *Sadigh Gallery* 2020, image 11.
6. (Royal Museums of Art and History, Brussels: IR.0619). *Idool standard* 2020.
7. (LACMA: M.76.97.8). *Decorated Tube* 2020.
8. (Stora Collection, Paris). M. Rostovtzeff, *Some Remarks*, Taf. 5: 8.
9. (Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal, Canada: 1931. Dm. 14). Ph. Verdier, *Les bronzes*, 47 – Fig. 34.

VI. MALE AND FEMALE PRINCIPLE

D1

Luristan standards:
1. (Louvre). *Idoles tubulaires* 2020.
2. (Ashmolean: 1951.185). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 37: 189.
3. (Collection Godard: 122). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 104 – Fig. 84.
4. (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1985,1064). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 116, Kat. 241.
5. Detail. *Idoli* 1986, 53 – No. 55a.
6. Detail. *Idoli* 1986, 53 – No. 55c.
7. *Elamite Bronze* 2020.
8. (Collection Godard: 116). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 101 – Fig. 81.

D2

Luristan standards:

1. The presence of a phallus and vulva at the basis of the composition of standards of the type "idols with protomes". Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.

3, 4, 5. Striping away the additional iconographic elements of the standards and their reduction to the representations of a phallus and vulva; **5.** The standard in original form: *Idoli* 1986, 50 – No. 54b; **3, 4.** Photomontage: Nikos Chausidis.

6. (Collection Godard: 119). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 99, – Fig. 80, 102.

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2. Three-dimensional cubic-hemispherical model of the universe with the sky as a zoomorphized circle, the earth as a vulva, and the cosmic axis as a personalized phallus. Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.

D3

Luristan standards:

1. (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1973,114). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 110, 111, Kat. 233.

2. *A Luristan Br. Finial* 2020, (A0814).

3. N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, No. 189.

4. (Barakat Collection: Pf.4709). *Luristan Br. Votive* 2020.

5. (LACMA: M.76.97.58). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.

6. (Metropolitan: 1998.319.1). *Top for standard* 2020.

7. (Metropolitan: 32.161.12). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 146, No. 227.

D4

1. Ceramic figurine, Neolithic (?), Optičari, Bitola (collection of M. Malbašić, Bitola), RN Macedonia. Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 345 – T.LXXXII: 4.

2. Wooden figurine, Middle Ages, Novgorod, Russia. Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Руси*, 500 – Рис. 83.

3. Wooden figurine, Middle Ages, Opole, Poland. W. Hensel, *Early*, Fig. 14.

4. Wooden figurine, Middle Ages, Novgorod, Russia. Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Руси*, 500 – Рис. 83.

5. Wooden phallic object, 11th century CE, Staraya Russa, Novgorod Oblast, Russia. Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Славян*, 41.

6. Wooden object, Middle Ages, Novgorod, Russia. В. Л. Янин (et al), *Новгородская 1970*, 17.

Stone sculptures (idols), Scythian culture:

7. Prydniprovs'ke, Ukraine. В. С. Ольховский, Г. Л. Евдокимов, *Скифские*, 135 – Илл. 80.

8. Vil'khivchyk, Ukraine. В. С. Ольховский, Г. Л. Евдокимов, *Скифские*, 136 – Илл. 81.

9. Hrushivka, Ukraine. В. С. Ольховский, Г. Л. Евдокимов, *Скифские*, 120 – Илл. 61.

11. Kyiv Museum, Kyiv, Ukraine. В. С. Ольховский, Г. Л. Евдокимов, *Скифские*, 128 – Илл. 73.

12. Dniprorudne, Ukraine. В. С. Ольховский, Г. Л. Евдокимов, *Скифские*, 109 – Илл. 43.

13. Semenivka, Ukraine. В. С. Ольховский, Г. Л. Евдокимов, *Скифские*, 126 – Илл. 72.

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10. Stone Idol, Prehistory or Middle Ages (?), Gounitsa, Larissa, Greece. *Chron. des fouilles* 1958, 756 – Fig. 10.

14. Wooden object, detail, 12th century CE, Svenborg, Denmark. N. Profantová, M. Profant, *Encyklopedie*, 212; photo: *Halla* 2020; the whole object: G42: 1.

15. Object from deer antler, detail, Middle Ages, Davina, Čučer, Skopje, RN Macedonia. Е. Манева, *Словенски*, 21 – Сл. 1: Б; the whole object: G42: 2.

16, 17. Stone idol, ca. 10th century CE, Husyatyn, valley of the Zbruch river, Ternopil Oblast, Ukraine (Kraków Archaeological Museum, Poland). Drawing (with and without interior details): Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 475 – T. CIX: 2 (according to published photos: G. Leńczyk, *Światowid*, T. II; T. III; Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Руси*, Рис. 50; 51); the whole monument: G40: 4.

D5

Parallel iconographic layers of the standards of the type "idols with protomes" (schemes - Nikos Chausidis):

1. Central anthropomorphic character that holds the two animals by the neck.

2. Phallus and vulva.

3. Anthropo-zoomorphic figure holding its spread legs that end in the form of animal protomes; below it a figure with arched arms and slightly spread thighs.

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4. Phallus-shaped object, wood, 12th century CE, Łęczyca, Poland. А. Гейщор, *Митология,* 202 – Обр. 22.

5. Luristan standard (Ashmolean: 1931. 28). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 38: 191.

6. Luristan standard (Metropolitan: 30.97.10). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 152, No. 242.

7. Ceramic figurine, Iron Age, Ripač, Bihać, Bosnia and Herzegovina. M. Hoernes, *Urgeschichte*, 51 – Abb. 1.

D6

1. Sculpture of Shiva Lingobdhava, granite, Hindu culture, 10th century CE, (British Museum). V. Ions, *Indijska*, 27.
2. Sculpture of Shiva Lingodbhava, 2nd century CE, Gudimallam Temple, Chittoor, India. *Venerated* 2020.
3. Bronze pendant, Iron Age (7th – 6th century BCE), unknown site, Macedonia (private collection, Paris, France). J. Bouzek, *Graeco-Macedonian*, Pl. VI: D; phallic pillar of the object (photomontage: Nikos Chausidis).
4. Drawing of Shiva Lingobdhava, Hindu culture. C. Bright, *Columns*.
5. Bronze pendant, detail, Iron Age (7th – 6th century BCE), Kuç i Zi, Korçë, Albania. *Shqip. Arkeologike* 1971, 48.
6. Bronze pendant, Iron Age (7th – 6th century BCE), Mavropiyi, Kozani, Greece. Γ. Καραμητρου-Μεντεσιδη, *Νομός Κοζάνης*, 368 – Εικ. 34.
7. Mukhalinga, Champa culture, 6th – 7th century CE, Oc Eo, An Giang (Vietnam National Museum of History, Hanoi), Vietnam. *Вьетнамский* 2020.
8. Stone altar (Lingam-Yoni), Hindu culture. C. Bright, *Columns*.
9. Stone altar (Lingam-Yoni), Hindu culture. *What is the Shiva* 2020.

D7

Luristan standards:
1. (LACMA: M.76.97.47). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
2. (Freud Museum, London: 3044). *Freud Museum* 2020.
3. (LACMA: M.76.97.54). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
4. Detail (Archaeological Museum, Athens: 24410). Photography: Noemi Chausidis.
5. Detail (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1973, 111). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 112, 113, Kat. 236; the whole object: D20: 4.
6. Detail (Collection Godard: 118). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 102, – Fig. 82; the whole object: C24: 2.
7. Detail (Collection Godard: no. 119). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 99, – Fig. 80, 102; the whole object: D2: 6.
8. Detail (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1973,114). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 110, 111, Kat. 233; the whole object: D3: 1.
9. Detail (Princeton University Art Museum, USA). *Finial Princeton* 2020; the whole object: D12: 1.
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10. Ceramic figurine, 5th century BCE, Priene, Asia Minor. E. Neumann, *The Great Mother*, Pl. 48.
11. Ceramic figurine, 5th century BCE, Priene, Asia Minor. E. Neumann, *The Great Mother*, Pl. 48.
12. Wooden dish, ethnography, Sepik province, Papua New Guinea (Masco Collection). *L. Jones, Enc. of Religion Vol. 13*, 12.

D8

1. Petroglyph, Middle Ages, Pliska, Bulgaria. Д. Овчаров, *Български*, Табл. XLVIII: 2.
2. Petroglyph, Middle Ages (?), Austria. F. Mandl, *Felsritzbilder*, 20.
3. Petroglyph, Middle Ages (?), Austria. F. Mandl, *Felsritzbilder*, 20.
4. Yoni / Lingam yantra amulet, modern replica of a traditional amulet, India (?). *Yoni Lingam* 2018.
5. Ceramic object (?), traditional Chinese culture, replica from the 20th century CE. *Chinese Sex Phallic* 2018.
6. Jade object, traditional Chinese culture, a replica from the 20th century CE. *Jade* 2018.
7. "Yoni Phallus prai attraction amulet", modern replica of a traditional amulet, India (?). *Authentic Yoni Phallus* 2020.
8, 9. Bronze amulet, Roman period, 1st – 3rd century CE. *Roman bronze* 2018.
10. Wooden object (amulet?), 20th century CE. *Sculpture phallus* 2018.
11. Modern replica from lead of an original object from the 14th – 15th century CE, Western Europe. *Phallus und Vulva* 2020.
12. Iron object, ca. 18th century CE, traditional culture of Tibet / Bhutan. *Ijzeren fallus* 2018.

D9

Luristan standards:
1. (LACMA: : M.75.27.1). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
2. (LACMA: M.76.97.10). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
3. (Collection Godard: no. 123). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 104, 105 – Fig. 85.
8, 9. *Catawiki* 2020.
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4. Luristan bronze pendant in the form of an ithyphallic figure. *Ithyphallic figure* 2020.
5. Luristan bronze pendant in the form of an ithyphallic figure. *Phallic Amulet* 2018.
6. Luristan bronze figurine, Piravand (?), Luristan. *Qatre idoles* 2020.
7. Bronze pendant in the form of an ithyphallic figure, Iron Age, 6th – 5th century BCE, Kazbek, Georgia. *Находки* 2020.

D10
1, 2. Pair of Luristan bronze pins with an openwork head (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1985, 1014a+b). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 72, Kat. 146.
3. Motif from a stone stela, 5th – 7th century CE, Pikuzy, Mariupol (Zhdanov), Pryazovia, Ukraine. М. Л. Швецов, *Стела*, 269.
4. Fresco, 14th century CE, church of St. Demetrius, "Marko's Monastery", Markova Sušica, Skopje, RN Macedonia. Л. Мирковић, *Анђели*, Сл. 66.
5. Fresco, 14th century CE, church of St. Demetrius, "Marko's Monastery", Markova Sušica, Skopje, RN Macedonia. Л. Мирковић, *Анђели*, Сл. 67.
6. Luristan bronze pin with an openwork head, detail (Museum of the Cranbrook Academy of Art, USA: No. 1949.121). B. Goldman, *Some*, Pl. 1: B.
7. Terracotta figurine, ancient Greek culture. S. Mollard-Besques, *Catalogue*, Pl. L: B539.
8. Motif from an Attic painted vase, archaic period, ("Antikensammlungen", Munich, Germany). *Satyros* 2020.
9, 10. Pair of Luristan bronze pins with an openwork head (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1985,1016a+b). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 72, 73, Kat. 147.
11. Motif from a painted vase, ancient Greek culture. *Eros kalos* 2020.

D11
Luristan standards:
1. (Stora Collection, Paris). M. Rostovtzeff, *Some Remarks*, Taf. 5: 8.
2. N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 197, No. 200.
3. Detail (Archaeological Museum, Athens: 24410); the whole object: C24: 2.
4. Detail (Collection Godard: 116). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 101 – Fig. 81; the whole object: C25: 1.
5, 6. (LACMA: M.76.97.71). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
7, 8. (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1985,1064). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 116, Kat. 241.
9, 10. A. Godard, *Bronzes*, Pl. LVII: 208.
11, 12. (Barbier-Mueller Museum, Geneva, Switzerland: 242-16). *Tubular figure* 2018.

D12
1. Luristan standard (Princeton University Art Museum, USA). *Finial Princeton* 2020.
2. Schematic representation of one iconographic layer of the standards of the type "idols with protomes". Figure with spread legs in the form of zoomorphic protomes and below them a representation of a rhombus (vulva?). Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.
3. Luristan standard (Collection Godard: 119). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 99, – Fig. 80, 102; accentuation of the anthropo-zoomorphic figure with spread legs in the form of zoomorphic protomes and the rhombic element (vulva) in the lower part of the object; the whole object: D2: 6.
4. Petroglyph, detail, Neolithic (?), Kanozero, Kola Peninsula, Russia. E. M. Kolpakov (et al), *The rock carvings*, 93 – Fig. 14; a larger part of the composition: D26: 8.
5. Petroglyph, Middle Ages (?), Kapchugay, course of the Shura-Ozen' River, Dagestan. В. И. Марковин, *Наскальные*, 149 – Рис. 3: г.
6. Petroglyph, Middle Ages (?), Leninkent, Dagestan. В. И. Марковин, *Наскальные*, 152 – Рис. 6: б.
7. Petroglyph, Middle Ages (?), Kapchugay, course of the Shura-Ozen' River, Dagestan. В. И. Марковин, *Наскальные*, 149 – Рис. 3: г.
8. Petroglyph, Middle Ages (?), Kapchugay, course of the Shura-Ozen' River, Dagestan. В. И. Марковин, *Наскальные*, 149 – Рис. 3: д.
9. Bronze votive figurine, 2nd millennium BCE, Bactria-Margiana Archaeological Complex. *Bactria-Margiana* 2020.
13. A cult object in a roadside shrine, Kathmandu, Nepal. *Visuals* 2020.
Reliquary wooden figures, 19th – 20th century CE, ethnography of the Kota people, eastern Gabon, western Congo:
10. *Superbe* 2020.
11. *Figure de reliquaire* 2020.
12. *A Kota* 2020.

D13
Luristan standards:
1. (LACMA: M.76.97.54). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
2. Detail. *Unknown Iranian* 2020; the whole object: D17: 5.
3. Detail (LACMA: M.76.97.14). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the whole object: D39: 2.
4. Detail (LACMA: M.76.97.5). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the whole object: D17: 1.

5, 7. Details from the fresco-composition "Lamentation of Christ", 12th century CE, church of St. Panteleimon, monastery "Nerezi", Skopje, RN Macedonia. А. Серафимова, *Среден век*, 143 – Сл. 19; figure of the Virgin Mary without the body of Christ, with a rhombus in the contour of her legs, photomontage: Nikos Chausidis.
6, 8. Fresco-composition "Massacre of the Innocents", 14th century CE, church of St. Demetrius, "Marko's Monastery", Markova Sušica, Skopje, RN Macedonia. *Freso – Rachel* 2020; figure of Rachel with a rhombus in the contour of her legs, photomontage: Nikos Chausidis.
9. Detail of fresco-painting, end of the 14th century CE, St. Bogorodica (Holy Virgin) Bolnička, Ohrid, RN Macedonia. Г. Суботиќ, *Охридската*, 139 – Сл. 105.
10. Detail of fresco-painting, end of the 14th century, Holy Mary Perybleptos, Ohrid, RN Macedonia. A. Serafimova, *On the Conceptual*, T. XXIV.
11. Motif from a cylinder seal, 1850-1720 BCE, Northern Syria, (Keel Collection, Fribourg: VR 1993.6). *Bodo* 2019.

D14
1. Schematic representation of one iconographic layer of the standards of the type "idols with protomes". Figure with a rhombic contour of the legs depicted below the anthropo-zoomorphic figure with spread legs in the form of animal protomes. Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.
2. Luristan standard, detail (LACMA: M.76.97.55). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the whole object: C18: 3.
3. Motif from a seal, steatite, Early Minoan period, Kasteli Pedeada, Crete, Greece. M. Gimbutas, *The Gods*, 182 – Fig. 140.
4. Supta Baddha Konasana. *Reclining* 2020.
5. Baddha Kona Sirsasana. *Bound-Angle* 2020.
6. Motif from a ceramic vessel, Neolithic, Sarvaš, Slavonija, Croatia. K. Minichreiter, *Reljefni*, 8 – Sl. 3.
7. llustration from a manuscript, 11th century (Vatican: Vat.gr.747 0086 fa 0046). *Rebecca* 2019.
8. Terracotta plaque, Kushan culture, 1st century BCE, Bhita, Uttar Pradesh (Indian Museum, Kolkata/Calcutta), India. P. Mukherjee, *A Study*, Fig. 3.
9. Petroglyph, Bronze Age, Calmn-Varre, Kola Peninsula. Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Славян*, 477.
10. Ballet movement "Demi-Plié". *Demi-Plié* 2020.
11. Luristan standard, detail (British Museum: 108816; 1914,0214.42). *Bronze standard* 2020; the whole object: C20: 9.
12. Luristan standard, detail. *Quadruple* 2020; the whole object: C18: 5.
13. Motif from a wooden temple chariot (Rath), Hindu culture. *Visuals* 2020.
14. Motif from a wooden temple chariot (Rath), Hindu culture. *Visuals* 2020.

D15
1. Relief in the interior of a building, Neolithic, Çatal Hüyük, Turkey. M. Gimbutas, *The Language*, 253 – Fig. 390: 2.
4. Relief in stone (detail), 400-600 CE, Smiss, Gotland, Sweden. *Snake-witch* 2020.
5, 6. Luristan bronze whetstone handle (Collection David-Weill: 1930 – 104). P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, No. 67.
Luristan bronze pins with an openwork head:
2. (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1985, 1014a+b). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 72, Kat. 146.
3. (Ashmolean: 1965. 806). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 55: 348.
7. *Mistress of Beasts* 2020.
8, 9. *Ancient metal pins* 2020, Image ID: G1DF3H; accentuation of the central motif.
10. Ceramic figurine, early Roman period, 1st century BCE - 1st century CE (Yoav Sasson Collections, Jerusalem). *A Baubo* 2014.
11. Wooden figure (Dilukai) placed above the house door, ethnography, 19th-early 20th century CE, Caroline Islands, Belau/Palau, Pacific Ocean (Metropolitan). *Dilukai* 2020.

D16
1. Sculpture of Shiva Lingobdhava, granite, Hindu culture, 10th century CE (British Museum). *Ancient (Shiva)* 2020; the whole object: D6: 1.
2. Evangelistar von Speyer, 1220 CE, (Badische Landesbibliothek, Karlsruhe, Germany: Cod. Bruchsal 1, Bl. 1v). *Codex Bruchsal* 2020.
3. Portable icon "The Transfiguration of Christ", 12th century CE, Constantinople (Louvre Museum: ML 145). *Icône portative* 2020.
4. Ceramic figurine, Eneolithic, "Cucuteni–Trypillia" culture. Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Руси*, 182.
5. Ceramic figurine, Eneolithic, "Cucuteni–Trypillia" culture. Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Руси*, 182.
6. Detail of a fresco, 11th century CE, church of St. Sophia, Ohrid, RN Macedonia. А. Серафимова, *Среден век*, Сл. 10.
7. Luristan standard (British Museum: BM132346). P. R. S. Moorey, *Ancient*, Pl.XII: A.
8. Metal object (amulet?), Middle Ages, Skripunova, Khanty-Mansi Okrug, Urals – Western Siberia, Russia. В. В. Седов, *Финно – угры*, Т. LXXXIX: 17.

9. Detail from a scene painted on a ceramic vessel, Eneolithic, "Cucuteni–Trypillia" culture. Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Руси*, 205.
10. Votive object in the form of a frog, ethnography (?), Germany. J. Janićijević, *U znaku*, 169.
11. Pictorial motif from the ethnography of the Dayak people, Borneo. F. Eber-Stevens, *Stara*, T.VII: 266.
12. "The wound and the arma Christi", Psalter and Hours of Bonne de Luxembourg, Duchess of Normandy, before 1349 CE, Paris. L. D. Graham, *Gender*, 19 – Fig. 11.

D17
Luristan standards, details of a human figure with spread legs and arms:
1, 2. (LACMA: M.76.97.5). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
3, 4. (Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, USA). *Master of Animals* 2020.
5, 6. *Unknown Iranian* 2020.
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7. Luristan bronze pin with an openwork head (Private collection, Tehran). R. Ghirshman, *The Art*, 46 – 54.
8, 9. Luristan bronze pin with a discoid head (Collection Godard: no. 217). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 147 – Fig. 122, 148; drawing: detail with the right hand of the figure.

D18
1. Bronze figurine, 3rd – 5th century CE, Karata, Dagestan. О. А. Брилёва, *Древняя*, 365 – Кат. 571.
2. Lead figurine, 6th – 7th century CE, Velestino, Thessaly. *Woman in Childbirth* 2021.
3. Relief from a bronze biga, Etruscan culture, 6th century BCE, Monteleone di Spoleto, Perugia, Italy. E. Neumann, *The Great Mother*, Pl. 80.
4. Luristan bronze pin with a discoid head, Louvre. N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 163, 164 (no. 153).
7. Luristan bronze pin with a discoid head (LACMA: M.76.97.140). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.

Luristan bronze pins with an openwork head:
5. (LACMA: M.76.97.270). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
6. (Metropolitan: 32.161.34). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 176, 177 , No. 286.
8. Surkh Dum, Luristan (Metropolitan: 43.102). O. W. Muscarella, *Surkh Dum*, 336 – No. 5.

D19
Luristan standards:
1. Schematic representation of one iconographic layer of the standards of the type "idols with protomes". Figure with a rhombic contour of the legs depicted below the anthropo-zoomorphic figure with spread legs in the form of animal protomes. Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.
2. Detail (LACMA: M.76.97.5). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the whole object: D17: 1.
3. Detail. *Unknown Iranian* 2020; the whole object: D17: 5.
8. Detail (Clay Lancaster Collection). C. Lancaster, *Luristan*, 97 – Fig. 2; the whole object: E7: 1.
9. Detail (LACMA: M.76.97.14). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the whole object: D39: 2.
10. Detail (LACMA: M.76.97.55). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the whole object: C18: 3.
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4. Ceramic figurine, detail, "Mehrgarh" culture, ca. 2800–2600 BCE, Indus Valley. *Statuette de femme* 2020. the whole object: C29: 1.
5. Ceramic figurine, detail, 5th millennium BCE, Northern Mesopotamia. *Idoli* 1986, 5 – No. 1, color photography: cover page.
6. Ceramic figurine, detail, Bronze Age, 1500–1000 BCE, Kličevac, Požarevac, Serbia. *Kličevac* 2020; the whole object: C29: 6.
7. Ceramic figurine, detail, Minoan/Mycenaean culture, Knossos, Crete, Geece. G. Charles-Picard**,** *Larousse*, 253.

D20
Luristan standards:
1. Schematic representation of one iconographic layer of the standards of the type "idols with protomes". Marginalization of the rear parts of the two animals from the "zoomorphic standards" and emphasization of the anthropo-zoomorphic figure with spread legs that end in the form of animal protomes. Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.
2. (Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham, UK: 1955A372). P. Watson, *Luristan*, 9 – Fig. 4: No. 12.
3. (Metropolitan: 1980.324.5). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 147, 148, No. 230.
4. N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 191, no. 191.
Luristan pins with an openwork head:
5. (LACMA: M.76.97.19). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
6. (Collection Godard: 210). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 142 – Fig. 117.

7. (Metropolitan: 30.97.16). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 178, No. 287.
8. (Rietberg Museum, Zürich, Switzerland). B. Goldman, *A Luristan*, Pl. I: 1.

D21

Luristan standards:
1. Schematic representation of one iconographic layer of the standards of the type "idols with protomes". Marginalization of the rear parts of the two animals from the "zoomorphic standards" and emphasization of the anthropo-zoomorphic figure with spread legs that end in the form of animal protomes. Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.
5. Detail (British Museum: 108816; 1914,0214.42). *Bronze standard* 2020; the whole object: C20: 9.
6. Detail. *Unknown Iranian* 2020; the whole object: D17: 5.
7. Detail. *Christie's* 2020; the whole object: D31: 6.
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2. Bronze applique from a krater, 6th – 5th century BCE, Trebenishte, Ohrid, RN Macedonia. П. Кузман, *Уметноста*, Сл. XXVI.
3. Bronze applique from a krater, 6th – 5th century BCE, Trebenishte, Ohrid, RN Macedonia. М. Грбић, *Одабрана*, Т. VII.
4. Metal applique, Early Antiquity, Olynthus, Greece. И. Маразов, *Мит. на Траките*, 15 – Обр. 6.
8. Detail from a silver applique, Etruscan culture, 7th century BCE (Bomford Collection). A. C. Brown, *Ancient*, 34 – Pl. X: d.
9. Golden plaque, Sarmatian culture, 1st century CE, Komarovo, North Ossetia. В. Цагараев, *Осетинское*.
10. Bronze top of a cult object, Scythian culture, 4th century BCE, Alexandropol kurgan, Dnipropetrovsk Oblast, Ukraine. *Навершие* 2020.
11. Golden applique, Scythian culture, Kul-Oba, Crimea. *A gold ornament* 2020.
12. Golden applique for the forehead of a horse, detail, Scythian culture, Velyka Cimbalka, Velyka Bilozerka, Zaporizhia Oblast, Ukraine. *Курган* 2020; a larger part of the object: D35: 4.

D22

1. Fibula, 6th – 7th century CE, Kel'mentsi, Chernivtsi Oblast, Ukraine. И. А. Бежан, *Корпус*, 7, 25 (7-2-58-2).
2. Fibula, 6th – 7th century CE, Borovka. J. Werner, *Slaw. Bügelfibeln*, Taf. 34: 5.
3. Fibula, 6th – 7th century CE, Pastyrs'ke gorodyshche, Chyhyryn, Ukraine. Эпоха 2007, 365 - III.20.4.
4. Bronze applique, Middle Ages, Finno-Ugric culture, Kip, course of the Irtysh river, Russia. В. В. Седов, *Финно – угры*, Т. LXXXII: 5.
5. Motif from a metal applique, Middle Ages, Dietersheim, Ldkr. Freising, Bavaria. V. Milojčić, *Zur frage*,Taf. 22: 11.
6. Schematic representation of the character with zoomorphic legs from the elongated plate of the Dnieper type of two-plated bow fibulae, 6th – 7th century CE. Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, B36: 6.
7. Schematic representation of the character with zoomorphic legs from the elongated plate of the Dnieper type of two-plated bow fibulae, 6th – 7th century CE. Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, B36: 4.
8. Motif from a cylinder seal (detail), Akkadian period. J. Prosecky (et al), *Encyklopedie*, 53.
9. Motif from an amulet – "zmeevik" („змеевик“), 11th – 12th century CE, Belgorod, Russia. В. Цагараев, *Осетинское*.
10. Motif from a belt buckle, Middle Ages, Aker, Norway. V. Milojčić, *Zur frage*, Taf. 22: 15.
11. Motif from a gem ("Anguipede"), Roman period. J. Campbell, *The mythic*, 294 – Fig. 274.
12. Embroidery motif, ethnography, Russia. Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Славян*, 481.
13. Metal plaque, 7th century CE, Velestino, Thessaly, Greece. J. Werner, *Slaw. Bronzefiguren*, T. 3: 4.

D23

1. "Decorative" head from a Luristan bronze pin (Art Institute of Chicago, USA). J. Michelet, *Luristan*, 93 – Fig. 4.
2, 3. "Decorative" head from a Luristan bronze pin (Rietberg Museum,Zürich, Switzerland). B. Goldman, *A Luristan*, photograph: Pl. I: 1, drawing: 53 – Fig. 1.
4. Motif from stone plastics, 12th century CE, Church of the Holy Virgin in the Studenica Monastery, Serbia. J. Магловски, *Знамење*, 53 – Сл. 2.
5. Relief in stone, 12th century CE, northern portal of the monastery of St. Jacob, Regensburg, Bavaria, Germany. G. Devereux, *Bauba*, 185.
6. Relief depiction on a capital, 12th century CE, church of Sant Pere de Galligants, Girona, Catalonia, Spain. *Girona* 2020.
7. Detail from the stone stele of the king of Elam Untash-Napirisha, 13th century BCE. A. Parrot, *Sumer*, 324 – Fig. 401.
8. Motif from a band-like silver bracelet, 12th-13th century CE, Russia. Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Руси*, 715 – Рис. 136-а.
9. Motif from a mosaic, 12th century CE, Otranto Cathedral, Apulia, Italy. *Sirena* 2020.

10. Luristan bronze pin with an openwork head (LACMA: M.76.97.204). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the whole object: D24: 9.
11. Relief in stone (Museo Lapidario di Duomo de Modena, Italy). L. D. Graham, *Mother Earth*, Fig. 3: a.
12. Bronze figurine (applique for a krater handle), 6th – 5th century BCE, Armento Basilicata, Italy (British Museum). C. Rolley, *La Tombe*, 98 – Fig. 55.

D24
Luristan bronze pin with an openwork head (LACMA: M.76.97.204). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020:
1-6. Extraction from the composition on the pin of various iconographic variants of the birth-giving woman with zoomorphized legs.
9. Image of the pin.
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7. Ceramic figurine, 5th century BCE, Priene, Asia Minor. E. Neumann, *The Great Mother*, Pl. 48.
8. Luristan bronze pin with an openwork head. *Luristan rectangular* 2020.
10. Metal plaque, 7th century CE, Velestino, Thessaly, Greece. J. Werner, *Slaw. Bronzefiguren*, T. 3: 4.
11. Luristan bronze pin with an openwork head. *Openwork pin* 2020.
12. Luristan standard (LACMA: M.76.97.37). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the whole object: D25:1.

D25
Luristan standards:
1. (LACMA: M.76.97.37). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
2. (LACMA: M.76.97.89). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
3. *Luristan br. master* 2020.
4. A. Godard, *Bronzes*, Pl. LVIII: 214.
5. *Fitting* 2020.
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6. Bronze vajra ("Jin Gangchu Vajra"), 11th – 12th century CE. А. Третьякова, *Буддийские*.
7. "Kongo Vajra" with five prongs, ancient Japanese culture, "Heian" period, 12th century CE, Japan (private collection). A. Mollerup, *Vajra*.

D26
1. Luristan standard (LACMA: M.76.97.37). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
2. Detail (representation of coitus) from a larger drawing made on leather, ethnography of the Chukchi people, Siberia. С. В. Иванов, *Материалы*, Рис. 28: 5 (between p. 448 and 449).
3, 4. Petroglyphs, prehistory, Carcare, Val Chisone, Piedmont, Italy. L. Olivieri, *Incisioni*, 116 – Fig. 68, 69.
5. Bronze pendant, detail, Iron Age, Mati, Albania. I. Kilian-Dirlmeier, *Anhänger*, Taf. 74: 1310.
6. Fibula, 6th – 7th century CE, Pastyrs'ke gorodyshche, Chyhyryn, Ukraine. Б. А. Рыбаков, *Искусство*, 52.
7. Possible reconstruction of the representation of "sacred marriage" on the fibula from Blazhki, Zin'kiv, Ukraine. Drawing: Nikos Chausidis (Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, Д31: 2, 3) according to Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Славян*, 199 (Рис. 38), 202 (Рис. 39).
8. Petroglyph, detail, Neolithic (?), Kanozero, Kola Peninsula, Russia. E. M. Kolpakov (et al), *The rock carvings*, 93 – Fig. 14.
9. Drawing on silk: "Magic circle" that protects from evil spirits, Tibet. *Мифы нар. мира. Том 2*, 19.
10. Relief in stone, Paleolithic, Laussel, Dordogne, France. F. Eber-Stevens, *Stara*, T. X: 336.
11. Stone sculpture - idol, Scythian culture, Meskety, Nozhay-Yurtovsky District, Chechnya, Russia. В. С. Ольховский, Г. Л. Евдокимов, *Скифские*, 172 – Илл. 84: 145.
12. Motif engraved into rock, prehistory, Jaora, India. E. Neumayer, *Lines*, 151 – Fig. 398.

D27
Luristan standards:
1. Schematic representation of one iconographic layer of the standards of the type "idols with protomes". Combination of the phallus with testicles, represented by the pillar of the standards, with the anthropo-zoomorphic figure with spread legs that end in the form of animal protomes. Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.
3, 4. N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 191, no. 191; extraction of the phallus; its combination with a scene of coitus with the figure with spread zoomorphized legs.
5. (Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham, UK: 1955A372). P. Watson, *Luristan*, 9 – Fig. 4: No. 12.
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2. Limestone tomb slab, ca. 200 BCE, Castelluccio, Sicily (Museo Archeologico Regionale "Paolo Orsi" – Syracuse, Sicily), Italy. *Limestone* 2020.
6. Tantric image painted on paper, 19th century CE, Rajasthan, India. *Tantric painting* 2018.

7. Motif from a metal chest ornament, "Quimbaya" style ("Museum of Gold", Bogota, Colombia). F. Eber-Stevens, *Stara*, Sl. 60; T. XX: 569.
8. Ceramic relief, Akkadian period, Nippur, Iraq. H. Müller-Karpe, *Handbuch.* III, Taf. 197: 5.

D28
1. Stone urn cover, Bronze Age, Maltegårdens Mark, Zealand, Denmark. *Men and women* 2020.
2. Relief motif from a ceramic vessel, Hittite culture, ca. 1600 BCE, Inandiktepe, Turkey. H. Parcinger, *Inandiktepe*, Abb. 2.
3. Luristan bronze pin with a double discoid head, detail (LACMA: M.76.97.163). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
Bronze figurines, with representation of copulation, 1st millennium BCE, Amlash, Iran, private collection::
4. *Amlash (34)* 2020, figurine no. 34.
5. *Amlash figurines* 2020.
6. *Amlash (6)* 2020, figurine no. 6.
7. *Amlash (5)* 2020, figurine no. 5.
8. *Amlash (35)* 2020, figurine no. 35.
9. *Amlash (19)* 2020, figurine no. 19.
10. Terracotta plaque, 1850-1650 BC, Kish, Iraq. S. Moorey, *The Terracotta*, Pl. XXV: b.

D29
Luristan standards:
1. Schematic representation of one iconographic layer of the standards of the type "idols with protomes". A human head at the joint of the spread legs of an anthropo-zoomorphic figure with ends in the form of animal protomes. Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.
2. Detail (Metropolitan: 1980.324.5). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 147, 148, No. 230; the whole object: C24: 3.
3. Detail (LACMA: M.76.97.37). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the whole object: D25: 1.
4. Detail (Metropolitan: 1996.82.1). *Top for standard (MET)* 2020; the whole object: C17: 1.
5. Detail (Collection Godard: 119). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 99, – Fig. 80, 102; the whole object: D2: 6.
7. Detail (Staatliches Museum für Völkerkunde, München, Germany: VK.31-10-4). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 115, 116, Kat. 240; the whole object: D39: 6.
8. Detail (Louvre). A. Parrot, *Assur*, 132 – Fig. 153; the whole object: D31: 5.
9. Detail. *Etendard au Maître* 2020.
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6. Luristan pin with a discoid head (Louvre). N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 163, 164 (no. 153).
10. Luristan pin with an openwork head (LACMA: M.76.97.19). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
11. Luristan pin with an openwork head (Metropolitan: 30.97.16). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 178, No. 287.

D30
1. Fibula, Early Middle Ages, Fridaythrope, Yorkshire, England. H. Kühn, *Die germanischen*, Taf. 103: 40, 4.
2. Metal plaque, 7th century CE, Velestino, Thessaly, Greece. J. Werner, *Slaw. Bronzefiguren*, T. 3: 4.
3. Golden applique, Scythian culture, "Bolshaya Bliznitsa", Steblievka, Taman Peninsula, Russia. *Скиф. бог. земли* 2020.
4. Golden applique, Etruscan culture, Caere, Italy. H. G. Niemeyer, *Die Phönizier*, Taf. 21: 2.
5. Golden applique, Etruscan culture, Cerveteri, Italy. *Ταρκυνια* 2002, 7.
6. Motif from a relief in stone, prehistory, Pfalzfeld, Rhein-Kreis, Rhineland, Germany. H. Polenz, *Ein maskenverzierter*, Abb. 4: 4.
7. Motif from a metal applique, detail, Celtic culture, Weißkirchen, Kr. Merzig-Wadern, Germany. H. Polenz, *Ein maskenverzierter*, Abb. 4: 1.
8. Motif from the cover of a book: M. Majer, *Arcana Arcanissima*. Openhajm, 1614. F. Eber-Stevens, *Stara*, XX – 578.
9. Fibula, 6th – 7th century CE, Daumen/Tumiany, Gmina Barczewo, Poland. J. Werner, *Slaw. Bügelfibeln*, Taf. 29: 22.
10. Fibula, 6th – 7th century CE, Scheufelsdorf/Tylkowo, Gmina Pasym, Poland. J. Werner, *Slaw. Bügelfibeln*, Taf. 29: 23.
11. Fibula, 6th – 7th century CE, Kellaren, Olsztyn, Poland. J. Werner, *Slaw. Bügelfibeln*, Taf. 29: 24.

D31
Parallel iconographic layers on the standards of the type "idols with protomes" (schemes - Nikos Chausidis):
1. Central anthropomorphic character that holds the two animals by the neck.
2. Phallus and vulva.
3. Anthropo-zoomorphic figure that holds its spread legs with ends in the form of animal protomes; below her a figure with arched arms and slightly spread thighs.
4. Collection Godard. E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 99, – Fig. 80 (no. 120), 102, 103.

5. Louvre. A. Parrot, *Assur*, 132 – Fig. 153.
6. *Christie's* 2020.

D32
Luristan standards:
1. (Ashmolean: 1965. 794). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 35: 180.
2. N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 192, 193 – no. 193.
3. (Archaeological Museum, Tehran). J.- L. Huot, *Iran, I*, Sl. 112.
4. (Musée Cernuschi, Paris: MC.8877). N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 194, no. 196.
5. (LACMA: M.76.97.19). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
6. (LACMA: M.76.97.10). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.

D33
Luristan standards:
1. Detail (LACMA: M.76.97.5). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the whole object: C18: 6.
2. Detail. *Unknown Iranian* 2020; the whole object: C17: 2.
4. Detail (LACMA: M.76.97.14). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the whole object: D39: 2.

Bronze pendants, Early Middle Ages:
11. Chernivtsi Oblast, southwestern Ukraine. А. Н. Спасёных, *Первые*, 89 – Рис. 8.
12. Moldova. А. Н. Спасёных, *Первые*, 89 – Рис. 6.
13. Unknown site (probably southern or southwestern Ukraine). А. Н. Спасёных, *Первые*, 89.
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3. Relief metal plaque, 7th century CE, Velestino, Thessaly, Greece. Drawing: Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, B19: 5, according to a photograph: J. Werner, *Slaw. Bronzefiguren*, Taf. 3: 1.
5. Top of a "decorative" Luristan bronze pin (Metropolitan: 43.102.4). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 129 – No. 201.
6. Relief representation on a capital, 12th century CE, church of Sant Pere de Galligants, Girona, Catalonia, Spain. *Girona* 2020.
7. Relief in stone, 12th century CE, northern portal of the monastery of St. Jacob, Regensburg, Bavaria, Germany. G. Devereux, *Bauba*, 185.
8. Mosaic motif, 12th century CE, Otranto Cathedral, Apulia, Italy. *Sirena* 2020.
9. Relief in stone, 12th century CE, Saints-Pierre-et-Paul church, Rosheim, Alsace, France. *Église Saints-Pierre-et-Paul* 2014.
14. Relief motif from a tombstone (stećak), Middle Ages, Podvelež, Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina. M. Wenzel, *Ukrasni*, T.XXX: 3.

D34
Luristan standards:
1. Detail (Ashmolean: 1965. 794). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 35: 180; the whole object: D32: 1.
2. Detail (Metropolitan: 1996.82.1). *Top for standard (MET)* 2020; the whole object: C17: 1.
3. Detail (Louvre). A. Parrot, *Assur*, 132 – Fig. 153; the whole object: D31: 5.
4. Detail. *Finial and Stand* 2020; the whole object: C16: 5.
5. Detail (Barakat Collection: OF.005). *Luristan Br. Standard* 2020; the whole object: D35: 6.
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6. Motif from a black-figure painted vase, ancient Hellenic culture, 6th century BCE, (Metropolitan). *Typhoeus* 2020, (M10.2 TYPHOEUS).
7. Mosaic, Hellenistic period, ca. 2nd century BCE (Archaeological Museum of Sparta), Greece. *Tritons* 2020, (Z34.2 TRITON).

D35
Luristan standards:
1. Schematic representation of one iconographic layer of the standards of the type "idols with protomes". Anthropo-zoomorphic figure that holds its spread legs with ends in the form of animal protomes; below it a figure with a mustache and beard, with arched arms, slightly spread thighs and bound feet. Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.
2. (Archaeological Museum, Tehran, Iran). J.- L. Huot, *Iran, I*, Sl. 112.
3. *Anthropomorphic Tube* 2020.
5. *Tête d'étendard* 2020.
6. (Barakat Collection: OF.005). *Luristan Br. Standard* 2020.

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4. Golden applique for the forehead of a horse, detail, Scythian culture, Velyka Cimbalka, Velyka Bilozerka, Zaporizhia Oblast, Ukraine. *Курган* 2020.

D36
1. Luristan standard (Archaeological Museum, Tehran, Iran). J.- L. Huot, *Iran, I*, Sl. 112; drawing with emphasis on the lower figure with a mustache: Nikos Chausidis, according to a photograph – D35: 2.
2. Fibula (detail – elongated plate), 6th – 7th century CE, Veszel. J. Werner, *Slaw. Bügelfibeln*, Taf. 27: 7.
3. Fibula (detail – elongated plate), 6th – 7th century CE, Linkuhnen, East Prussia. J. Werner, *Neues*, Taf. 30: 4.
4. Motif from a belt buckle, Early Middle Ages, Dombóvár, Tolna, Hungary. G. Anabaldi, J. Werner, *Ostgotische*, Taf. 42: 3.
5. Motif from a belt buckle, Early Middle Ages, Acquasanta, Ascoli Piceno, Italy. G. Anabaldi, J. Werner, *Ostgotische*, Taf. 39: 1a.
6. Relief in stone, Middle Ages (?), Leskovica, Štip, RN Macedonia. Т. Јанакиевски, *Антички*, 18 – Сл. 9.
7. Detail from the decoration of a medieval manuscript, 14th century CE, Novgorod, Russia. Н. К. Голейзовский, *Семантика*, 211 – Рис. 103.
8. Stone relief, Hindu culture, 3rd century BCE – 3rd century CE, Amaravati stupa, Guntur district, Andhra Pradesh, India. F. Eber-Stevens, *Stara*, T. XIII: 407.
9. Motif from stone plastics, 12th century CE, church of the Studenica Monastery, Serbia. J. Магловски, *Студенички*, 20 – Сл. 6.
10. Pictorial motif, traditional culture of Tibet. R. Beer, *The Encyclopedia*, 69 – Fig. 46.
11. Detail from a relief on an altar triphora, 14th century CE, St. Tryphon, Kotor, Montenegro. М. Кашанин, *Камена*, 124 – Сл. 61.

D37
Luristan standards:
1. Schematic representation of one iconographic layer of the standards of the type "idols with protomes". Anthropo-zoomorphic figure that holds its spread legs with ends in the form of animal protomes; below it a figure with arched arms, slightly spread thighs, bound feet and two animal protomes placed laterally from the central human head. Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.
2. *Catawiki* 2020.
3. *Christie's* 2020.
4. Detail (Musée Cernuschi, Paris: MC.8877). N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 194, no. 196; the whole object: D32: 4.
5. Detail (Ashmolean: 1965. 794). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 35: 180; the whole object: D32: 1.
6. (Barakat Collection: AM.0178). *Standard Barakat* 2020.

D38
1. Schematic representation of one iconographic layer of the standards of the type "idols with protomes". Anthropo-zoomorphic figure that holds its spread legs with ends in the form of animal protomes; below it a figure (female?) with arched arms and slightly spread thighs and knees. Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.
2. Top of a "decorative" Luristan bronze pin, in the shape of a frog (Metropolitan: 43.102.4). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 129 – No. 201.
3. Luristan bronze pendant in the shape of a frog (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1998,8076). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 78, 79, Kat. 163.
4. Luristan bronze pendant in the shape of a frog (Collection Godard: 260). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 170 – Fig. 140.
5. Relief in stone, Middle Ages, church of San Pietro da Gropino, Arezzo, Italy. F. Eber-Stevens, *Stara*, T. XX: 582; drawing: Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 241 – T. LVII: 11.
6. Metal belt fitting with an elongated form, Early Middle Ages, Mali Iđoš, Vojvodina, Serbia. D. Mrkobrad, *Arheološki*, T.LXV: 1.
7. Relief in wood, 15th – 16th century CE, Yaksheswor Mahadev Temple, Bhaktapur, Nepal. *Erotic sculptures* 2014.
8. Votive relief of Demeter, ancient Hellenic culture, Eleusis, Greece. И. Маразов, *Художествени*, 243.
9. Drawing incised in pottery, Iron Age, Austria. K. Kromer, *Das östliche*, Abb. 69: 5.
10. Relief from a tombstone (stećak), Middle Ages, Cista, Sinj, Dalmatia, Croatia, Š. Bešlagić, *Stećci*, 215 – Sl. 66.
11. Relief on a tombstone (stećak), Middle Ages, Donje Bare, Blidinje, Bosnia and Herzegovina. M. Wenzel, *Ukrasni*, T. XLIII: 16.

D39
1. Schematic representation of one iconographic layer of the standards of the type "idols with protomes". Anthropo-zoomorphic figure that holds its spread legs with ends in the form of animal protomes; below it a figure (female?) with arched arms and slightly spread thighs and knees. Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.

Luristan standards. Emphasization of the lower figure with a pair of side growths at the head (locks or braids of hair?):
2. (LACMA: M.76.97.14). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
3. (LACMA: M.76.97.92). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
4. (Princeton University Art Museum, USA). *Finial Princeton 2020.*
5. (Dalas Museum of Art, USA: 1963.21). *Pole Top* 2020.
6. (Staatliches Museum für Völkerkunde, München, Germany: VK.31-10-4). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 115, 116, Kat. 240.

VII. MACROCOSMIC GIANT

E1

Layers of iconography of the Luristan standards (schemes - Nikos Chausidis):
1. Transformation of the columnar shaft with a human head at the top into a torso of an anthropomorphic figure that holds the two animals from the "zoomorphic standards" by the neck; emergence of the standards of the type "idols with protomes".
2. Separation of the pair of protomes from the bodies of the two animals and their fusion with the torso of the central anthropomorphic character; transformation of the rumps and hind legs of the two animals into the hips and legs of this character.
3. The presence of a phallus and vulva at the basis of the composition of the standards of the type "idols with protomes".
5. Equation of the pair of protomes with the outstretched arms of the figure that covers the entire standard.
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4. Luristan standard (LACMA: M.76.97.19). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
6. Luristan standard (The Barakat Collection: LK.052). *Luristan Br. St. Finial* 2020.

E2

1. Petroglyph, prehistory, San Rafael Swell, Utah, USA. *Head of Sinbad* 2020.
2. Petroglyph, prehistory, San Rafael Swell, Utah, USA. *Buckhorn* 2020.
3. Detail from a cult image executed on the ground with different colored sand, ethnography, Navajo people, USA, *Sandpainting* 2020.
4. Detail from a cult image executed on the ground with different colored sand, ethnography, Navajo people, USA. *Gallery of Navajo* 2020.
5. Scene from a red-figure lekythos, 470 – 460 BCE (Museum of the Roman Forum of Thessaloniki, Greece). *Red figure lekythos* 2020.
6. Petroglyph, prehistory, Mont Bego, Tende, Alpes Maritimes, France. M. Gimbutas, *The Language*, 127 – Fig. 204: 5.
7. Petroglyph (detail), 11th – 7th century BCE, Magura Cave, Rabisha, Vidin, Bulgaria. E. Anati, *Magourata*, 98 – Fig. 59.
8. Scene from red-figure krater, ancient Hellenic culture, Ruvo (collection of R. Barone, Naples, Italy). A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 380 – Fig. 287.
9. Petroglyph, prehistory, Oglakhty (I), Minusinsk Hollow, Republic of Khakassia, Russia. Я. А. Шер, *Петроглифы*, Рис. 87.

E3

Petroglyphs, prehistory:
1. Karakyr, Karabastau, Kazahstan. А. Е. Рогожинский, *Наскальные*, 57 – Рис. III: 2.
3. Renegade Canyon, Coso Range, California, USA. A. P. Garfinkel, *Paradigm*, 212 – Fig. 2: h.
4. Coso Range, California, USA. A. P. Garfinkel et al, *Myth*, 4 – Fig. 7: d.
9. Tamgaly, Semirechye (Zhetysu), Kazakhstan. А. Е. Рогожинский, *Петроглифы*, 189 – Рис. 152: 2.
10. Tamgaly, Semirechye (Zhetysu), Kazakhstan. А. Е. Рогожинский, *Петроглифы*, 188 – Рис. 151: 1.
11. Tamgaly, Semirechye (Zhetysu), Kazakhstan. А. К. Акишев, *Искусство*, 55 – Табл.V: 9.
12. Tamgaly, Semirechye (Zhetysu), Kazakhstan. А. Е. Рогожинский, *Петроглифы*, 188 – Рис. 151: 9.
13. Akkaynar, Zhambyl District, Kazahstan. А. Е. Рогожинский, *Наскальные*, 57 – Рис. III: 3.
14. Tamgaly, Semirechye (Zhetysu), Kazakhstan. А. Е. Рогожинский, *Петроглифы*, 188 – Рис. 151: 7.
15. Tamgaly, Semirechye (Zhetysu), Kazakhstan. А. Е. Рогожинский, *Петроглифы*, 42 – Рис. 23; 78 – Рис. 59.
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2. Openwork bronze object, Iron Age, Nor Bayazet (Gavar), Armenia. P. Avetisyan et al, *Axes*, Fig. 1.
5. Relief in stone, prehistory (?),Tübingen, Germany. J. Lechler, *Vom Hakenkreuz*, 29: 21.
6. Luristan bronze pin with openwork head (LACMA: M.76.97.226). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
7. Openwork bronze object, Iron Age (Ashmolean: 1965.886d). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 67: 439.
8. Openwork bronze object, Iron Age, "Pobrenje", Maribor, Slovenia. S. Pahič, *Maribor*, 25 – Sl. 5.

E4
1. Wooden idol (so-called "Shigir idol"), Mesolithic period, 8 millennium BCE, surroundings of Kirovgrad, Russia. Н. М. Чаиркина, *Большой*, 101 – Рис. 1: 1.
2. Bronze statuette, Etruscan culture, 4th century BCE (Villa Giulia, Rome). O. J. Brendel, *Etruscan*, 33 – Fig. 252; color photography: *Etruscan bronze statues* 2020.
3. Bronze statuette, Etruscan culture, 4th century BCE (Villa Giulia, Rome). *Etruscan bronze statues* 2020.
4. Bronze statuette, Etruscan culture, 4th century BCE (Villa Giulia, Rome). O. J. Brendel, *Etruscan*, 33 – Fig. 252; *Etruscan bronze statues* 2020.
5. Bronze statuette, Etruscan culture, 4th century BCE, sanctuary of Diana in Nemi, Italy (Louvre). O. J. Brendel, *Etruscan*, 33 – Fig. 252; color photography: *Statuette of Aphrodite* 2020.
6. Luristan standard (Memorial Art Gallery, Rochester, New York). *Goddess Finial* 2020.
7. Luristan standard (Collection Godard: 124). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 104 – 106, Fig. 85.
8. Marble statue, Roman era, 190 CE, Ostia Antica, Italy (Biblioteca Vaticana). M. J. Vermaseren, *Corpus*, 143, 144 (Mon. 312), Fig. 85; drawing: *Мифы нар. мира. Том. 2*, 155 – Рис. 1.

E5
Bronze additions for vessels, 8th – 7th century BCE, "Villanova" culture, Italy:
1. Capodimonte, Bisenzio, Tuscany. G. Kossack, *Studien*, Taf. 13: 1.
2. Spadarolo, Rimini. M. Hoernes, *Urgeschichte*, 60 – Fig. 2.
3. Verucchio. *Figure holding* 2020.
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4. Tolors, Armenia. P. Avetisyan et al, *Axes*, Fig. 4: G.
5. Embroidery motif, ethnography, Russia. Б. А. Рыбаков, Яз. др. *Славян*, 391.
6. Motif from an Easter egg, ethnography, Ukraine. М. Р. Селивачов, *Украинская*, (Словник), LXI.
7. Graffiti incised on a fresco, 12th – 14th century CE, church of St. George, Gorni Kozjak, Štip, RN Macedonia. Б. Алексова, *Епископија*, Сл. 160.
8. Motif engraved on a ring (detail from a more complex composition), 12th – 13th century CE, Lešje, Serbia. Б. Радојковић, *Наким*, 101: 48, Сл. 37.
9. Relief on a tombstone (stećak), Late Medieval – Early Modern Period, Kupres, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Š. Bešlagić, *Kupres*, 51 – Sl. 29.
10. Motif engraved on a ring (detail from a more complex composition), 15th century CE, Kosovo. Б. Радојковић, *Наким*, 120: 64, Сл. 53.
11. Motif engraved on a bronze mirror, Etruscan culture (Minneapolis Institut of Arts: 57. 198, USA). I. Krauskopf, *Ex Oriente Sol*, 1278 – Fig. 11.

E6
Luristan standards:
1. (LACMA: M.76.97.10). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
2. (Musée Cernuschi, Paris: MC.8877). N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 194, no. 196.
4. Detail (Dalas Museum of Art, USA: 1963.21). *Pole Top* 2020; the whole object: D39: 5.
6. Detail (LACMA: M.76.97.14). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the whole object: D39: 2.
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3. Ceramic figurine, Late Neolithic, Karanovo, Aytos, Bulgaria. *Clay female* 2013.
5. The custom of gradually lengthening the neck of women with the help of metal bracelets, Kayan people, Thailand. S. Campagnola, *Thailand*.
7. Ceramic figurine, Geometric period, ca. 700 years. BCE, Thebes, Boeotia, Greece (Louvre). *Bell idol* 2020.
8. Anthropomorphic vessel, Early Minoan period, Myrtos, Crete, Greece. *Goddess of Myrtos* 2020.

E7
Luristan standards:
1. (Clay Lancaster Collection). C. Lancaster, *Luristan*, 97 – Fig. 2.
3. (LACMA: M.76.97.4). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
6. (LACMA: M.76.97.5). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
7. (Rietberg Museum, Zürich: RVA 2114). N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 196, No. 199.
11. (LACMA: M.76.97.90). *LACMA Standard* 2020.
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2. Stone relief of Vishnu Vishvarupa, 9th century CE, Changu Narayan temple, Bhaktapur District, Nepal. *Vishvarupa* 2020.
4. Motif from a painted ceramic vessel, 4th millennium BCE, Tepe Moussian, Iraq. L. Vanden Berghe, *Les ateliers*, 7 – Fig. 9.

5. Motif from a painted ceramic vessel, 4th millennium BCE, Iran. A. Godard, *The Art*, 40 – Fig. 3.
8. Detail from a scene painted on a ceramic vessel, Eneolithic, "Cucuteni–Trypillia" culture, Petreni, Drochia, Moldova.V. Sorochin, *Aşezarea*, 258 – Fig. 2: 3; the whole scene: E8: 2.
9. Motif from a painted ceramic vessel, 4th millennium BCE,Tepe Sialk/Tepe Giyan, Iran. A. Parrot, *Assur*, 239 – Fig. 294.
10. Motif from the relief on the sarcophagus of Wereshnefer, Ptolemaic period, Saqqara, Egypt (Metropolitan: 14.7.1). J. P. Allen, *The Egyptian*, 28 – Fig. 2: 2.
12. Cult object khatvanga (tantric staff), Tibetan Buddhism. R. Beer, *The Encyclopedia*, 257 – Pl. 116.

E8
Painted ceramic vessel, Eneolithic, "Cucuteni–Trypillia" culture, Petreni, Drochia, Moldova:
1. Drawing of the vessel. V. Sorochin, *Aşezarea*, 258 – Fig. 2: 1.
2. Scene painted on the vessel.V. Sorochin, *Aşezarea*, 258 – Fig. 2: 3.
6. Photograph of the vessel. *Трипільський Пуруша* 2020.
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3. Motif from the bottom of a silver cup, 6th – 7th century CE, Khwarazm/Chorasmia (Hermitage). *Четырёхрукая 2020*.
4. Motif from the bottom of a silver cup, 6th – 7th century CE, Khwarazm/Chorasmia (State Historical Museum, Moscow). Н. В. Дьяконова, О. И. Смирнова, *К вопросу*, 79 – Рис, 4: 3.
5. Motif from a wooden icon, Kushan-Hephthalite period, Central Asia (Hermitage: ГА-1120). Н. В. Дьяконова, *Материалы*, 52 – Рис. 5: 1.
7. Bronze sculpture of Shiva Nataraja, Hindu culture, 10th century CE, Madras, India (Victoria and Alber Museum, London). V. Ions, *Indijska*, 47.

E9
Luristan standards:
1. (Barakat Collection: AM.0183). *Luristan Mistress* 2020.
2. (Rietberg Museum, Zürich: RVA 2114). N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 196, No. 199.
3. *Luristan Br. Barakat* 2020.
6. (Metropolitan: 66.104.I). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 143 – No. 218.
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4. Bronze statuette, Luristan (?) (LACMA: M.76.97.743). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
5. Petroglyph, prehistory, Tamgaly, Semirechye (Zhetysu), Kazakhstan. А. К. Акишев, *Искусство*, 55 – Табл.V: 9.
7. Ceramic censer stand, Maya culture, 7th – 8th century CE, Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico (Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas, USA). *Censer Stand* 2020.

E10
Luristan standards:
1. Schematic representation of a central anthropomorphic character from the standards depicted as he holds by the neck a pair of animal protomes protruding from his loins. Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.
2, 3. N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 192, 193 (no. 193); drawing according to a photograph: Nikos Chausidis.
4. *Anc. Lur. br. master* 2020, (Lot 184).
5. *Master of Anim. Standard* 2020.
6. (LACMA: M.76.97.19). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.

E11
1. Luristan bronze object. *Luristan Br. Figure* 2018.
2. Luristan standard, detail (Collection Godard: 116). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 101 – Fig. 81; the whole object: C25:1.
3. Bronze fibula, 6th – 7th century CE, "Pastyrs'ke gorodyshche", Chyhyryn, Ukraine. Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Руси*, 199 – Рис. 38.
4. Bronze pendant, Iron Age, Vinica, Črnomelj, Slovenia. F. Stare, *Upodobitev*, T.II: 3, 1.
5. Petroglyph, detail, Bronze Age, Bayan Jurek, Kapal, Taldykorghan region, Kazakhstan. K. Lymer, *Sensuous*, 30 – Fig. 2.
6. Miniature plastic cast from bronze (handle of a vessel?), Iron Age, "Villanova" culture. O. J. Brendel, *Etruscan*, 61.
7. Miniature plastic cast from bronze (handle of a vessel?), Iron Age, "Villanova" culture (Albert L. Hartog Collection, New York). *A Proto-Etruscan* 2020.
8. Bronze applique, Middle Ages, culture of the Kama Finns, course of the river Kama. И. Белоцерковская, Н. Тухтина, *Древности*, 39.
9. Representation of Shiva, relief in stone, 13th century CE, Hindu culture. R. Graves, *New Larousse*, 370.

10. Relief from a tombstone (detail), culture of the Franks, ca. 600 CE, Niederdollendorf, Königswinter, Germany. F. Eber-Stevens, *Stara*, T. XXI: 612.
11. Belt buckle, 9th century CE, Cugny, Aisne department, France. É. Salin, *Sur quelques*, Pl. XIII: 12.

E12
Metal stirrups, 19th – beginning of the 20th century CE, traditional handicraft of the peoples of Southern Siberia and Mongolia:
1. В. А. Кореняко, *Искусство*, Рис. VII: 1.
2. В. А. Кореняко, *Искусство*, Рис. VII: 2.
3. В. А. Кореняко, *Искусство*, Рис. IX: 2.
4. В. А. Кореняко, *Искусство*, Рис. XI: 1.
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5. Medallion of Commodus, Roman period, 2nd century CE, A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 371 – Fig. 276.
6. Handle of a vessel, Fabrecce, Citt'a di Castello (Museo Archeologico, Florence). E. Hill Richardson, *The Recurrent*, Pl. XIX: 72.
7. Object cast from bronze, Old Babylonian period, ca. 2000–1600 BCE, Mesopotamia. *Plaque* 2019.
8. Motif from a cylinder seal, Northern Syria (Keel Collection, Fribourg, Switzerland: VR 1993.6). *Bodo* 2019.

E13
1. Luristan bronze pin with a discoid head, detail (Rietberg Museum, Zürich: RVA 2205). *Art of anc. Luristan* 2020.
2. Motif from a metal vessel, 9th century CE, Nagy Szent Miklos, Hungary. Л. Дончева-Петкова, *Митологични*, 110 – Обр. 84.
3. Bronze covering for a shield, 6th century BCE, Olympia, Greece. Г. И. Соколов, *Олимпия*, 61.
4. Relief in ivory, "Veroli" casket, 10th – 11th century CE. D. Oates, R. H. Pinder-Wilson, *Rani*, 126 – Sl. 28.
5. Ideal paradigm of the mythical image of the celestial vault composed of two fused zoomorphic protomes resting on the cosmic mountain that enable the movement of the sun across the sky. Scheme: Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, Д24: 16.
6. Detail from a fresco-painting, end of the 14th century CE, St. Bogorodica (Holy Mary) Bolnička, Ohrid, RN Macedonia. Г. Суботиќ, *Охридската*, 139 – Сл. 105.
7. Detail from a scene depicted on a Luristan discoid pin. R. Dussaud, *Anciens*, 205 – Fig. 7.
8. A Luristan bronze disk. *A Luristan br. disk* 2020.
9. Relief from a tomb, Han Dynasty Period, Shandong, China. F. Eber-Stevens, *Stara*, T. XXI: 611.
10. Image on textile, Middle Ages, Chimu Cuture, Peru. F. Eber-Stevens, *Stara*, T. XXI: 607.

E14
Luristan standards:
1. Separation of the pair of protomes from the bodies of the two animals and their fusion with the torso of the central anthropomorphic character. Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.
2. *Master of Anim. Standard* 2020.
3. (LACMA: M.76.97.19). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
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4. Seal, Minoan/Mycenaean culture, Kalkani, Mycenae, Greece. *Kalkani* 2020, (CMS-I-144-1).
5. Cylinder seal, Mesopotamia. A. Parrot, *Sumer*, XXXIII-A, 140 – Fig. 169: c; the whole representation: E15: 3.
6. Silver applique, Etruscan culture, 7th century BCE (Bomford Collection). A. C. Brown, *Ancient*, 34 – Pl. X: d.
7. Bronze signum, Roman period, 3rd century CE, ancient Brigetio, Hungary. F. Jenő, *Religions*, 85 – No. 114.
8. Gold pendant, Aegina treasure, 17th century BCE, Greece (British Museum). *Gold pendant* 2020.
9. Bronze figurine, Roman period, ancient city of Heraclea Lyncestis, Bitola, RN Macedonia. *Anc. casting* 2020.

E15
1. Luristan standard, detail (LACMA: M.76.97.13). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
2, 7. Cylinder seal (impression), hematite, ca. 1720–1650 B.C., Syria (Morgan Library and Museum, New York). *Nude Goddess* 2020, seal no. 937.
3, 5. Cylinder seal (impression), Mesopotamia (Louvre). A. Parrot, *Sumer*, XXXIII-A, 140 – Fig. 169.
4. Luristan bronze pin with an openwork head (LACMA: M.76.97.19). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
6. Cylinder seal, Mesopotamia (Oriental Institute, Chicago, USA). A. Parrot, *Assur*, 131 – Fig. 154.
8, 9. Cylinder seal (impression), hematite, 1800-1650 BCE, Syria. *Cylinder Seal with Worshippers* 2020, accession number: 42.450.

E16

Luristan standards:

1. Equation of the pair of protomes with the outstretched arms of the figure that covers the entire standard. Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.
2. (Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, UK: 1982A2230). P. Watson, *Luristan*, 7, 8 – Fig. 3: 11.
3. *Master of Anim. Standard* 2020.
5. Detail. *Idole maître* 2020; the whole object: C14: 3.
6. Detail (Art Museum, Princeton University, USA). J. C. Waldbaum, *Luristan*, 13 – Fig. 10; the whole object: C5: 4.
7. (Ex Elliot collection, Tennessee, USA). *Janifrom figure* 2020.
8. *Helios Gallery* 2020.
9. (Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, UK: 1982A2225). P. Watson, *Luristan*, 5, 6 – Fig. 2: 5.
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4. Luristan bronze horse bridle (National museum of Tehran). *Lur. Br. Horse* 2019.
10. Luristan bronze pin with an openwork head. A. Godard, *Bronzes*, Pl. XXXV: 150.

E17

Luristan standards:

1. Equation of the pair of protomes with the outstretched arms of the figure that covers the entire standard. Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.
2. Barakat Collection. *Barakat* 2020.
3. *Luristan Open-Work* 2018.
4. *Arts d'Orient* 2012, No. 42.
5. (Art Museum, Princeton University, USA). J. C. Waldbaum, *Luristan*, 13 – Fig. 11.
6. *Luristan Br. Finial* 2020.
7. (The Barakat Collection: LK.052). *Luristan Br. St. Finial* 2020.

E18

1-3. Semicircular plate of Dnieper type of zoo-anthropomorphic fibulae, 6th – 7th century CE. Reconstruction of the assumed iconographic paradigms: Н. Чаусидис, *Космолошки*, Д24: 16 – 18.
4. Silver fibula, 6th – 7th century CE, Pastyrs'ke gorodyshche, Chyhyryn, Ukraine. *Эпоха* 2007, 365 – III.20.4.
5. Blazhki, Zin'kiv, Ukraine. Drawing according to a photograph: Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Руси*, 199 – Рис. 38.
6. Bronze pendant, Middle Ages, Zaozer'ye, Southern Priladozh'ye, territory of the Wes (Весь) people. А. Эря-Эско, *Племена*, Рис. 21.
7. Bronze pendant, Iron Age, Jezerine, Bihać, Bosnia and Herzegovina. A. Stipčević, *Kultni*, T.XXI: 1.
8. Old Ritualist („старообрядческая") illustration, "Seven deadly sins" („Семь смертных грехов"), 19th century CE, Russia. Д. И. Антонов, М. Р. Майзульс, *Демоны*, 321 – Илл. 68.
9. Motif from a black-figure painted vase, ancient Hellenic culture, 6th century BCE, (Metropolitan). *Typhoeus* 2020, (M10.2 TYPHOEUS).
10. Supposed zoo-anthropomorphic iconographic paradigm of the miniature bronze vessels with zoomorphic protomes (group "Macedonian bronzes"), Iron Age. Scheme: Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 75 – А36: 2.
11. Miniature bronze vessel with zoomorphic protomes (group "Macedonian bronzes"), Iron Age, Radanje, Štip, RN Macedonia. Н. Чаусидис, *Предисторија*, 42 – Сл. 23.

E19

1. Triple structure of the basic elements and functions of the human body. Scheme: Nikos Chausidis. Н. Чаусидис, *Архаични*. T.VII: 1.
2. Motif from an amulet – "zmeevik" („змеевик"), 11th – 12th century CE, Belgorod, Russia. В. Цагараев, *Осетинское*.
3. Terracotta pendant, ancient Hellenic culture, sanctuary of Artemis Orthia, Sparta, Greece. D. Glogović, *Gospodarica*, 265 – Sl. 12; drawing: L. F. Fitzhardinge, *The Spartans*, 51 – Fig. 39.
4. Luristan bronze pin with an openwork head (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1985,1015a). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 70, 71 (cat. 143).
5. Bronze applique, Middle Ages, Finno-Ugric culture, Kip, course of the Irtysh river, Russia. В. В. Седов, *Финно – угры*, T. LXXXII: 5.
6. Relief in stone, 9th – 15th century CE, Angkor Thom, Cambodia. *Fronton* 2020.
7. Classical Indian dance, "Bharatam" – festival, India. *Classical* 2013.

E20

1, 2, 10. Motifs painted on rock, 11th – 7th century BCE, Magura Cave, Rabisha, Vidin, Bulgaria. B. Hänsel, *Höhlen*, 114 – Abb. 2.
3. Ceramic figurine, Late Geometric period, "Agora", Athens, Greece. R. S. Young, *Late Geometric,* 54 – Fig. 36.
4. Ceramic figurine, ca. 600 BCE, Boeotia, Greece (Charles Gillet Collection, Lyon, France). *Two Boeotian* 2020.
5. Ceramic figurine, Late Mycenaean period, 1400 – 1100 BCE (Naxos Museum, Naxos, Greece). *Terracotta female* 2020.
6. Human statue with a representation of "ka" in the form of hands in the orans posture, ancient Egyptian culture. *Imaginary* 2020.
7. Bronze object from the group "Macedonian bronzes", Iron Age, "Krivi Dol", Radanje, Štip, RN Macedonia. Photograph: Н. Чаусидис, *Предисторија*, 42 – Сл. 23.
8. Detail from a painted ceramic vessel, ca. 4. millennium BCE, unknown site, Egypt. Y. Garfinkel, *Dancing*, 255 – Fig. 11.15: a.
9. Ceramic figurine - applique from a ceramic vessel, Late Mycenaean culture, 12th century BCE, Perati, Attica, Greece. K. Demakopoulou, *Das mykenische*, 201: 177; photograph (replica of the object): *Mycenean PHI idol* 2013.
11. Motif painted on papyrus (detail), "Egyptian Book of the Dead", ancient Egyptian culture, M. Višić, *Egipatska*, 123 – Tab. 2.
12. Golden applique, 4th century BCE, "Bolshaya Bliznitsa" burial mound, Taman Peninsula, Russia. И. Ю. Шауб, *Миф*, 340 – Рис. 86.
13. Fresco of "The Virgin Orans", 1295 CE, Church of Holy Mary Perybleptos, Ohrid, RN Macedonia. А. Серафимова, *Среден век*, 91.
14. Columnar mythical figure with three pairs of arms in the form of animal protomes that form concentric circles (layers of the sky) around his head. Schematic representation: Nikos Chausidis.
15. Luristan bronze pin with an openwork head (Royal Museums of Art and History, Brussels: IR.0663). *Votive pin* 2020.

E21

1. Coin "aes grave" cast at Volterra, Etruria, after ca. 350 BCE. A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 384 – Fig. 291.
Gold coverings from ritual hats, Bronze Age, 11th-9th century BC:
2. Schifferstadt, Germany (Historical Museum of the Palatinate, Speyer, Germany). *Goldener hut* 2020.
3. "Berlin Gold Hat" (Neues Museum on Museum Island, Berlin). *Berlin Gold Hat* 2020.
4. Ezelsdorf, Middle Franconia; Buch, Upper Palatinate (Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg), Germany. *Gold cone* 2020.
Luristan standards:
5. (Collection Godard: no. 125). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 105, 106, Fig. 85.
6. (Collection Godard: no. 124). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 104 – 106, Fig. 85.
7. (Royal Museum of Art and History, Brussels: IR.0607). *Funerary idol (IR.0607)* 2020.
Bronze figurines:
8. Detail, Etruscan culture, 4th century BCE (Villa Giulia, Rome). *Etruscan bronze statues* 2020; the whole object: E4: 2.
9. Detail, Etruscan culture, 4th century BCE (Villa Giulia, Rome). *Art Etruscan* 2018; the whole object: E4: 4.
10. Sardinia (private collection). C. Krumm, *Kegel*, 107 – Fig. 146.
11. 11th – 10th century BCE, Abini, Nuoro, Sardinia (Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Cagliari), Italy. C. Krumm, *Kegel*, 107 – Fig. 145.

E22

1. Reconstruction of a veil based on the bronze plaque found in the female grave no. 110, Early Bronze Age, Franzhausen, Austria. K. Grömer, *The Art*, 367 – Fig. 199.
2. Luristan pin with a discoid head, Louvre. N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 163, 164 – no. 153.
3, 4. Gable of the house roof and its decorations as an image of the sky with the three key phases of the movement of the sun. Scheme: Н. Чаусидис, *Куќата*, 74 – Fig. 8: в, г.
5. Luristan bronze pin with a discoid head, detail (Rietberg Museum, Zürich: RVA 2205). *Art of anc. Luristan* 2020; the whole composition: E13: 1.
6. Luristan bronze pin with a discoid head, detail (E. Graeffe Collection). R. Dussaud, *Anciens*, 198 – Fig. 1.
7. Luristan bronze disk, detail. *A Luristan br. disk* 2020; the whole object: E13: 8

VIII. THE ANDROGYNOUS PRIMORDIAL GOD GIVES BIRTH TO HIS TWO SONS - HEIRS

F1

Two iconographic paradigms of the Luristan standards of the type "idols with protomes" (schemes - Nikos Chausidis):
1. A singular anthropomorphic figure that covers the entire standard, complemented by a pair of arched protomes and two more human heads placed on the torso.
2. Two figures, the upper of which is with spread legs in the form of animal protomes and an additional head on the abdomen, while the lower one with arched arms and legs with spread thighs and knees and bound feet.
Luristan standards:
3. (Collection Godard: 118). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 99 – Fig. 80: 120; the whole object: C18: 2.
4. (LACMA: M.76.97.10). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
5. (LACMA: M.76.97.4). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
6. (LACMA: M.76.97.90). *LACMA Standard* 2020.
7. *Tête d'étendard* 2020.

F2

Luristan plaque made of silver sheet metal (Art Museum, Cincinnati, USA). R. Ghirshman, *Notes VIII*, 40 – Fig. 2:
1. The central character reduced to the head, two wings and an additional face on the chest.
2. The central character reduced to the head, torso, pair of wings and an additional face on the chest.
3. The whole figure of the central character supplemented by two human busts above the shoulders.
4. Image of the entire plaque.
5. Image of the main part of the composition.

F3

Bronze pendants, Iron Age, "Fritzens – Sanzeno" culture, Alpine region of Northern Italy:
1. Main part, without the hanging elements, private collection, Switzerland. *A Celtic* 2020.
2. Sanzeno, Trento, Italy. F. Marzatico, *Testimonianze*, 319 – Fig. 10: 4.
3. Mechel, Trento, Italy. F. Marzatico, *Testimonianze*, 319 – Fig. 10: 3.
4. Sanzeno, Trento, Italy. *So già che perderò la testa* 2020.

5, 6. Central figure from the Luristan plaque of silver sheet metal (Art Museum, Cincinnati, USA). R. Ghirshman, *Notes VIII*, 40 – Fig. 2; the whole object: F2: 4.
7. Fibula, 6th – 7th century CE, Asia Minor. J. Werner, *Neues*, Taf. 30: 2.
8. Metal plaque, 7th century CE, Velestino, Thessaly, Greece. Drawing - Nikos Chausidis according to a photograph: J. Werner, *Slaw. Bronzefiguren*, Taf. 3: 7.
9. Fibula, 6th – 7th century CE, Lezhe, Albania. F. Prendi, *Një varrëze*, 166 – Tab. XX: 3.

F4

1. Silver fibula, Early Middle Ages. *Gothic Fibula* 2020.
2. Fibula, Early Middle Ages, Fridaythrope, Yorkshire, England. H. Kühn, *Die germanischen*, Taf. 103: 40, 4.
3. Fibula, Early Middle Ages, Täbingen, Rosenfeld, Germany. H. Kühn, *Die germanischen*, Taf. 103: 40, 7.
4. Metal applique, Middle Ages, region of Cherdyn, Perm Krai, Russia. Л. С. Грибова, *Пермский*, Т. II: 4; photograph: *Украшения-амулеты* 2020.
5. Central figure from the Luristan plaque of silver sheet metal (Art Museum, Cincinnati, USA). R. Ghirshman, *Notes VIII*, 40 – Fig. 2; the whole object: F2: 4.
6. "Devil's Tree" ("Бесовское древо"/"Besovskoe drevo"), illustration from a miscellany of church texts (detail), 19th century CE, Russia. Д. Антонов, М. Майзульс, *Анатомия*, 218 – Рис. 5; the whole image: F27: 7.
7. Lead plaque, 7th century CE, Velestino, Thessaly, Greece (Princeton University Art Museum: y98 a). *Princeton* 2020.
8. Stone altar slab, 9th century CE, Isle of Man, Britain. D. Oates, R. H. Pinder-Wilson, *Rani*, 245 – Sl. 7.
9. Fresco-composition "Virgin Mary with Christ" (partially retouched detail), 11th century CE, altar of the cathedral church of St. Sophia, Ohrid, RN Macedonia. Н. Чаусидис, *Дуалистички*, Т. XLVII; Т. LVIII – Т. LXI.

F5

1. Luristan band-like bronze object, detail. M. M. Khorasani, *Bronze*, 198, 215 – Fig. 10, 216 – Fig. 11.
2. Luristan bronze cheekpiece (Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal: 1944. Dm.16). Ph. Verdier, *Les bronzes*, 41 – Fig. 18.
3. Scene from a Luristan bronze covering for a quiver (Metropolitan: 41.156). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 192, 193 – No. 308.

4. Luristan bronze covering for a quiver (Metropolitan: 41.156). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 192, 193 – No. 308.
5. Scene from a Luristan bronze covering for a quiver (Metropolitan: 41.156). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 199, No. 308.
6. Detail from a Luristan bronze covering for a quiver (LACMA: M.76.97.178 a,b). *Iran. Quiver* 2020.

F6
1. Luristan pin with a discoid head (University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, USA: 41-21-5). *Disc Wand* 2020.
2. Central figure from a Luristan pin with a discoid head (University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, USA: 41-21-5). P. R. S. Moorey, *Some Elaborately*, Pl. IIIb; extraction of the figure: Nikos Chausidis.
3. Central figure from a Luristan pin with a discoid head (Coiffard Collection). A. Godard, *The Art*, 56 – Fig. 36.
4. Scene from a Luristan pin with a discoid head (Coiffard Collection). A. Godard, *The Art*, 56 – Fig. 36.
5. Luristan pin with a discoid head (LACMA: M.76.97.169). *Disc-headed Pin* 2020.
6. Central figure from the Luristan plaque of silver sheet metal (Art Museum, Cincinnati, USA). R. Ghirshman, *Notes VIII*, 40 – Fig. 2; the whole object: F2: 4.

F7
1. Fragment of a Luristan pin with a discoid head (LACMA: M.76.97.155). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; partial reconstruction of the composition: Nikos Chausidis.
2. Luristan pin with a discoid head (LACMA: M.76.97.155). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; extraction of the character from the upper part of the composition: Nikos Chausidis.
3. Luristan pin with a discoid head (private collection in Basel, Switzerland). E. D. Phillips, *The People*, 226 – Fig. 17; extraction of the character from the upper part of the composition: Nikos Chausidis.
4. Luristan pin with a discoid head (private collection in Basel, Switzerland). E. D. Phillips, *The People*, 226 – Fig. 17.
5. Central part from the composition of a Luristan pin with an openwork head (LACMA: M.76.97.210). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
6. Luristan bronze pin with an openwork head (LACMA: M.76.97.210). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.

F8
Luristan bronze pin with a discoid head (LACMA: M.76.97.134). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020:
4. Image of the whole disk of the pin.
1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8. Individual iconographic elements extracted from the background of the composition (Nikos Chausidis).

F9
Luristan bronze pins with an openwork head, image of the pins with a detail of the central figure:
1, 2. (Collection Godard). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 146 – Fig.121.
3, 4. (Royal Museum of Art and History, Brussels: IR.0705). *Disc-headed (Royal M.)* 2020.
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5. Luristan bronze horse bridle (National museum of Tehran). *Lur. Br. Horse* 2019.
6. Bronze votive figure, Phoenician culture (Instituto Valencia de Don Juan, Salamanca, Spain). I. Krauskopf, *Ex Oriente Sol*, 1266 – Fig. 4.
7. Amphora, La Tolfa painter (National Archaeological Museum of Florence, Italy: 84819). I. Krauskopf, *Ex Oriente Sol*, 1265 – Fig. 3.

F10
1. Figures on a scene from a Luristan bronze covering for a quiver (Metropolitan: 41.156). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 192, 193 – No. 308; the whole scene: F5: 3.
2. Central figure from the Luristan plaque of silver sheet metal (Art Museum, Cincinnati, USA). R. Ghirshman, *Notes VIII*, 40 – Fig. 2; the whole object: F2: 4.
3. Motif from a Luristan band-like bronze object. M. M. Khorasani, *Bronze*, 198, 215 – Fig. 10, 216 – Fig. 11; the scene together with the background: F5: 1.
4. Central figure from a scene on a Luristan bronze covering for a quiver (LACMA: M.76.97.178 a,b). *Iran. Quiver* 2020; the whole scene: F5: 6.
5. Central figure from a Luristan bronze cheekpiece (Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal: 1944. Dm. 16). Ph. Verdier, *Les bronzes*, 41 – Fig. 18; the whole composition: F5:2.
6. Central figure from a Luristan pin with a discoid head (University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, USA: 41-21-5). P. R. S. Moorey, *Some Elaborately*, Pl. IIIb; extraction of the figure: Nikos Chausidis; the whole scene: F6: 1.
7. Central figure from a Luristan pin with a discoid head. A. Godard, *The Art*, 56 – Fig. 36; the whole scene: F6: 4.

F11

1. Fibula, Early Middle Ages, Fridaythrope, Yorkshire, England. H. Kühn, *Die germanischen*, Taf. 103: 40, 4.
2. Metal plaque, 7th century CE, Velestino, Thessaly, Greece. Drawing: Nikos Chausidis, according to a photograph: J. Werner, *Slaw. Bronzefiguren*, Taf. 3: 7.
3. Fibula, 6th – 7th century CE, Asia Minor. J. Werner, *Neues*, Taf. 30: 2.
4, 6. Extraction of two iconographic units from a Luristan bronze pin with a discoid head (LACMA: M.76.97.134). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the whole disc of the pin: F8: 4.
5. Figure from a scene on a Luristan bronze covering for a quiver (Metropolitan: 41.156). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 192, 193 – No. 308; the whole scene: F5: 3.
7. Scene from a Luristan pin with a discoid head (University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, USA: 41-21-5). P. R. S. Moorey, *Some Elaborately*, Pl. IIIb; extraction of the scene: Nikos Chausidis.
8. Scene from a Luristan pin with a discoid head. A. Godard, *The Art*, 56 – Fig. 36.

F12

1, 2, 3. Extraction of three iconographic units from a Luristan bronze pin with a discoid head (LACMA: M.76.97.134). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the whole disc of the pin: F8: 4.
4. Central figure from a Luristan plaque of silver sheet metal, reduced to the head, wings and additional busts at the shoulders (Art Museum, Cincinnati, USA). R. Ghirshman, *Notes VIII*, 40 – Fig. 2; the whole object: F2: 4.
5. Metal plaque, 7th century CE, Velestino, Thessaly, Greece; drawing – Nikos Chausidis, according to a photograph: J. Werner, *Slaw. Bronzefiguren*, Taf. 3: 7.
6. Detail from a bronze buckle, Late Iron Age, Prozor, Bosnia and Herzegovina. S. Kukoč, *Japodi,* 218 – Sl. 341.
7. Roman or Sassanid period. Ю. А. Рапопорт, *Космогонический*, 59 – Рис 11: г.
8. Cult object, "Ust-Polui" culture, 4th – 2nd century BCE, region of the Ural Mountains and east of it. М. Бонгард-Левин, Э. А. Грантовский, *От Скифии*,131.
9. Scene from an ancient painted vase, Vulci, Italy. V. Bérard, *Harpya*, 15 – Fig. 3709.
Metal amulets made in the so-called "Permian animal style", Middle Ages, culture of the Finno-Ugric peoples, from the Perm region, Russia:
10. *Птицы* 2020.
11. В. Петрухин, *Мифы*, cover page.
12. 8th – 10th century CE, Gaynsky District, Perm Krai, Russia. *Птицы* 2020.
13. 5th – 7th century CE (Local Lore Museum of Perm). *Птицы* 2020.

F13

1. Central figure from a Luristan pin with a discoid head (The University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, USA: 41-21-5). P. R. S. Moorey, *Some Elaborately*, Pl. IIIb; extraction of the figure: Nikos Chausidis.
Luristan standards, details:
2. (Metropolitan Museum: 1980.324.5). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 147, 148, No. 230; the whole object: C24: 3.
4. (Ashmolean: 1965. 794). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 35: 180; the whole object: D32: 1.
7. (Rietberg Museum, Zürich: RVA 2114). N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 196, No. 199; the whole object: C27: 3.
Stone relief and statues, Roman period:
3. (Galleria Estense, Modena, Italy). M. J. Vermaseren, *Corpus*, 253, 254, Fig. 197 – Mon. 695.
5. (Museo arqueologico Nacional at Merida, Spain). M. J. Vermaseren, *Corpus*, 273, Fig. 211 – Mon. 777.
6. M. J. Vermaseren, *Corpus*, 200, Fig. 142 – Mon. 491.
8, 9. (Villa Barberini, Rome). M. J. Vermaseren, *Corpus*, 147, 148, Fig. 89; Fig. 90 – Mon. 326.

F14

1. Metal plaque, 7th century CE, Velestino, Thessaly, Greece. Drawing - Nikos Chausidis, according to a photograph: J. Werner, *Slaw. Bronzefiguren*, Taf. 3: 7.
2. Central figure from Luristan plaque of silver sheet metal, reduced to the head, wings and additional busts at the shoulders (Art Museum, Cincinnati, USA). R. Ghirshman, *Notes VIII*, 40 – Fig. 2; the whole object: F2: 4.
3. Miniature, "*Liber Divinorum Operum*" ("Book of Divine Works"), 13th century CE. *Ninth Vision* 2020.
4. Cherubim with multiple eyes, fresco, 16th century CE, Dionysiou Monastery, Athos, Greece. *Ангелы* 2020.
5. Representation of a seraphim, fresco, apse of Santa María d'Àneu, 1090 – 1120 CE (National Art Museum of Catalonia, Barcelona, Spain). *Seraphim* 2020.
6. Bronze bust, Iron Age, Haglunda, Alböke parish, Öland (Swedish History Museum, Stockholm), Sweden. J. P. Lamm, *On the Cult*, 229 – Fig. 26.
7. Silver applique, detail, middle of the 4th century BCE, Thracian culture, Letnitsa, Bulgaria. *The Letnitza treasure* 2020.
8. Knee-piece, gold and silver, Thracian culture, first half of the 4th century BCE, treasure of Zlatinitsa – Malomirovo, Yambol Province, Bulgaria. *Zlatinitsa – Malomirovo* 2019.

9. Miniature "Trinity of Evil", 15th century CE, France. J. Chevalier, A. Gheerbrant, *Rječnik*, 709.
10. Stone statue, Roman period (Villa Barberini, Rome). M. J. Vermaseren, *Corpus*, 147, 148, Fig. 89; Fig. 90 – Mon. 326.
11. Luristan standard (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1985,1064). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 116, Kat. 241.

F15
1, 2. Impression of cylinder seal, southeastern Iran (Louvre: Sb 6707). H. Pittman, *Anchoring*, 630 – Fig. 4b.
3, 4. Impression of cylinder seal, southeastern Iran (M. Foroughi Collection). H. Pittman, *Anchoring*, 578 – Pl. I: A.
5. Alabaster cylinder seal, Shahdad, Iran (Archaeological Museum, Tehran: No. 0882, Inv. No. 170/49; 661, Ib.3). H. Pittman, *Anchoring*, 631 – Fig. 7a.
6. (Rietberg Museum, Zürich: RVA 2114). N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 196, No. 199.
7. Detail from a silver applique, Etruscan culture, 7th century BCE (Bomford Collection). A. C. Brown, *Ancient*, 34 – Pl. X: d.
8. Bronze applique, Scythian culture, Ivanovskaya station, Krasnodar Krai (Krasnodar Museum, Krasnodar), Russia. Н. В. Анфимов, *Древнее*.

F16
1. Cylinder seal, Mitannian/Middle Assyrian period (Louvre: AO 22350). P. R. S. Moorey, *Some Elaborately*, 25 – Fig. 6.
2, 3. Relief from the stela of Gudea, Sumer, 22nd century BCE (Berlin Museum). A. Parrot, *Sumer*, 231 – Fig. 284.
4. Cylinder seal depicting King Gudea, detail, Sumer, 22nd century BCE. E. D. Van Buren, *The God Ningizzida*, 72 – Fig. 1; the whole scene: F17: 9.
5. Upper part of the central figure from a scene on a Luristan bronze covering for a quiver (LACMA: M.76.97.178 a,b). *Iran. Quiver* 2020; the whole scene: F5: 6.
6. Upper part of the central figure from a Luristan pin with a discoid head. A. Godard, *The Art*, 56 – Fig. 36; the whole scene: F6: 4.
7. Central figure from a Luristan pin with a discoid head (University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, USA: 41-21-5). P. R. S. Moorey, *Some Elaborately*, Pl. IIIb; the whole scene: F6:1.
8. Motif from a Luristan band-like bronze object. M. M. Khorasani, *Bronze*, 198, 215 – Fig. 10, 216 – Fig. 11; together with the background: F5: 1.
9. Central figure from a Luristan bronze cheekpiece (Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal, Canada: 1944. Dm. 16). Ph. Verdier, *Les bronzes*, 41 – Fig. 18; the whole composition: F5: 2.
10. Figure from a scene on a Luristan bronze covering for a quiver (Metropolitan: 41.156). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 192, 193 – No. 308; the whole scene: F5: 3.

F17
Luristan standards:
1. (LACMA: M.76.97.18). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
2. *Bronze goddess finial* 2020, (20.06.1990, lot. 118).
7. (Barakat Collection: OF.025). *Bronze Standard Finial* 2020.
Scenes and details from cylinder seals, Western Asia:
3, 6. Babylonian period (Pierpont Morgan Library). W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 129 (No. 368b).
5, 8. Babylonian period (Pierpont Morgan Library). W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 129 (No. 368f).
9. Scene with King Gudea, detail, Sumer, 22nd century BCE. E. D. Van Buren, *The God Ningizzida*, 72 – Fig. 1.
11. Babylonian period. W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 377 – 18c.
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4. Marble statue, Roman era, 190 CE, Ostia Antica, Italy (Biblioteca Vaticana). M. J. Vermaseren, *Corpus*, 143, 144 (Mon. 312), Fig. 85; drawing: *Мифы нар. мира. Том. 2*, 155 – Рис. 1.
10. Scene from the relief of the sacrificial vase of Gudea, Sumer, 22nd century BCE (Louvre). *The modern alchemist* 2020.

F18
1. Schematic representation of one iconographic layer of the standards of the type "idols with protomes". Anthropo-zoomorphic figure that holds its spread legs with ends in the form of animal protomes; below it a figure with arched arms, slightly spread thighs, bound feet, and two animal protomes placed laterally to the central human head (Scheme: Nikos Chausidis).
2. Protoattic "Eleusis neck-amphora", detal, mid 7th BCE (Eleusis, Archeological Museum, Greece). J. Chevalier, A. Gheerbrant, *Rječnik*, 651.
3. Protoattic "Eleusis neck-amphora", mid 7th BCE (Eleusis, Archeological Museum, Greece). *Protoattic* 2020.

4. Statuette (Cerberus?), antiquity (British Museum). M. Sanader, *Kerber*, Sl. 173.
5. Statuette (Cerberus?), antiquity (British Museum). M. Sanader, *Kerber*, Sl. 174.
6. Motif from the decoration of a bronze tripod, Early Antiquity, Trebenishte, Ohrid, RN Macedonia (National Museum, Belgrade). M. Грбић, *Одабрана*, T. VIII.
7. Illustration from "Da`vet-name-Firdevsi-i Tavil", 15th century CE (Istambul University Library, Turkey). F. Edgü, *Magic*, 2.
8. Ivory pendant, ancient Hellenic culture, Sparta, Greece. L. F. Fitzhardinge, *The Spartans*, 64 – Fig. 63.
9. Terracotta pendant, ancient Hellenic culture, sanctuary of Artemis Orthia, Sparta, Greece. D. Glogović, *Gospodarica*, 265 – Sl. 12; drawing: L. F. Fitzhardinge, *The Spartans*, 51 – Fig. 39.
10. Golden applique, Scythian culture, Kul-Oba, Crimea. *A gold ornament* 2020.
11. Detail from a silver applique, Etruscan culture, 7th century BCE (Bomford Collection). A. C. Brown, *Ancient*, 34 – Pl. X: d.
12. Bronze applique, ancient Hellenic culture, "Acropolis", Athens, Greece. M. Egg, *Die Herrin*, 75 – Abb. 8: 1.

F19
Luristan standards:
1. (LACMA: M.76.97.18). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
2. (Barakat Collection: AM.0183). *Luristan Mistress* 2020.
3. *Hixenbaugh* 2020.
4. (Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, USA: 54.121). *Female Fertility Finial* 2020.
5. *Bronze goddess finial* 2020, (20.06.1990, lot. 118).
6. (Ashmolean: 1965. 786). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 37: 187.
7. *Etendard-épingle* 2020.

F20
Luristan standards:
1. Schematic representation of one iconographic layer of the standards of the type "idols with protomes". Anthropo-zoomorphic figure that holds its spread legs with ends in the form of animal protomes; below it a figure with arched arms, slightly spread thighs, bound feet, and two animal protomes placed laterally to the central human head (scheme: Nikos Chausidis)
2. *Catawiki* 2020.
3. *Christie's* 2020.
4. Detail (Musée Cernuschi, Paris: MC.8877). N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 194, no. 196; the whole object: D32: 4.
5. Detail (Ashmolean: 1965. 794). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 35: 180; the whole object: D32: 1.
6. (Barakat Collection: AM.0178). *Standard Barakat* 2020.

F21
1. Bronze statuette, Luristan (?) (LACMA: M.76.97.743). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
2. Ceramic relief, Sumerian civilization, beginning of the 2nd millennium BCE (Baghdad Museum). A. Parrot, *Sumer*, 301 – Fig. 368.
3. Bronze figurine (Cagliari Museum, Sardinia, Italy). G. Leńczyk, *Światowid*, 54 – Ryc. 17a.
4. Detail from the decoration of a golden horn, Iron Age, 5th century CE, Gallehus, Møgeltønder, Southern Jutland, Denmark. D. Ellmers, *Zur Ikonographie*, 258 – Abb. 67.
5. Bronze figurine, after the 2nd century CE, Caucasus. A. A. Zakharov, *Materials*, 85 – Fig. 86.
6. Tapestry, detail, 13th century CE, Skog, Sweden. *Skog Kerk* 2020.
7. Fibula, 6th – 7th century CE, collection Kofler-Truniger. J. Werner, *Neues*, Taf. 28: 1.
8. Fibula, 6th – 7th century CE, private collection in the United Kingdom. А. Н. Спасёных, *Первые*, 54, 69.
9. Luristan standard (British Museum: BM132346). P. R. S. Moorey, *Ancient*, Pl.XII: A; the whole object: D16: 7.
10. Three sides of the lower zone of a stone idol, ca. 10th century CE, Husyatyn, valley of the Zbruch river, Ternopil Oblast, Ukraine (Kraków Archaeological Museum, Poland). Drawing: Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 475 – Т. CIX: 2 (according to published photographs G. Leńczyk, *Światowid*, T. II; T. III; Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Руси*, Рис. 50; 51); the whole monument: G40: 4.

F22
1. Bronze openwork plaque, 1st – 3rd century CE, Salekhard, Western Siberia (Local Lore Museum of Salekhard). Б. Маршак, М. Крамаровский, *Сокровища*, 50 – бр. 3.
2. Luristan standard, detail. *Luristan Br. St. Finial* 2020; the whole object: E17: 7.
3. Luristan bronze pin with an openwork head, detail (Royal Museum of Art and History, Brussels: IR.0705). *Disc-headed (Royal M.)* 2020; the whole object: F9: 1.
4. Bronze element from a chariot, 300 – 250 BCE, Orval, Manche, Normandie, France. *Mobilier* 2020.

5. Central figure from a scene on a Luristan bronze covering for a quiver. (LACMA: M.76.97.178 a,b). *Iran. Quiver* 2020; the whole scene: F5: 6.
6. Central figure from a Luristan pin with a discoid head. A. Godard, *The Art*, 56 – Fig. 36; the whole scene: F6: 4.
7. Sculpture of Vaikuntha Chaturmurti, detal, chlorite schist, 875 – 900 CE, Jammu and Kashmir, Kashmir region, India (LACMA: M.69.13.2). *The Hindu God (chlorite)* 2020.
8. Sculpture of Vaikuntha Chaturmurti, Brass inlaid with copper and silver, ca. 850 CE, Jammu and Kashmir, Kashmir region, India (LACMA: M.80.6.2). *The Hindu God (brass)* 2020.

F23
1. Luristan circular disc-headed bronze pin, (National Museum of Iran, Tehran: 1868). S. Ayazi, *Luristan*, cat. 31.
2. Luristan bronze finial (LACMA: M.76.174.25). *Finial* 2020.
3. Stone statue of Gandabherunda, 11th century CE, Bherundeshvara Temple, Belligavi, India. *Gandaberunda* 2020.
4. Detail from a battle hammer, Bactria, first half of the 2nd millennium BCE. *De Bactria Margiana* 2020.
5. Motif from a golden cup, "Marlik" culture. Z. Kazempoor, M. Marasi, *The Study*, 202 – Fig. 12.
6. Seal Impression, detail, Middle Assyrian period, Reign of Eriba-Adad, Ashur, Iraq. *Middle Assyrian* 2020.
7. Extraction of an iconographic unit from a Luristan bronze pin with a discoid head (LACMA: M.76.97.134). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the whole disc of the pin: F8: 4.
8. Luristan standard (Ashmolean: 1965. 793). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 35: 181.
9. Goblet, electrum, "Marlik" culture, 14th – 11th century BCE (Louvre: AO 20281). *Goblet* 2020.
10. Etruscan scarab. A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 720 – Fig. 658.
11. Motif from a red-figure amphora, ancient Hellenic culture (collection in Munich, Germany). A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 719 – Fig. 657.
12. Limestone sarcophagus, detail, 475 – 460 BCE, Golgoi, Cyprus (Cesnola collection, New York). A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 718 – Fig. 656.

F24
1. Relief in marble, Aion/Phanes inside the Zodiac, Roman period, 2nd century CE (Galleria Estense, Modena, Italy: 2676). *Relief with Aion* 2020.
2, 3. Illustration and detail from a manuscript, Anon. *"Mèlanges de Mèdicine"*, ca. 1450 CE (BnF Hébreu 1181, fol. 263v). *Zodiac Man (Microcosm)* 2020.
4. Illustration of the work *"Christian Topography"* by Cosmas Indicopleustes, 17th century CE, Serbia. В. Моле, *Минијатуре*, Т. XXIII; color photography: Д. Милосављевић, *Зограф*.
5. Illustration from the manuscript *"German medical miscellany"*, 15th century CE (Bl MS Arundel 251 f.46.). *Zodiac Man (Microcosm)* 2020.
6. Zodiac Man illustration, 19th century CE, Persia. *Zodiac Man (Wikipedia)* 2020.
7. "Devil's Tree" ("Бесовское древо"/"Besovskoe drevo"), illustration from a miscellany of church texts (detail), 19th century CE, Russia. Д. Антонов, М. Майзульс, *Анатомия*, 218 – Рис. 5.

F25
1. Aion statue, Roman period (Vatican Musea, Rome). M. J. Vermaseren, *Corpus*, 213 (Mon. 545), Fig. 153; drawing: *Мифы нар. мира. Том. 2*, 155 – Рис. 3.
2. Illustration with a representation of the god Radegast, *"Acta Eruditorum"*, 1715 CE. *Radegast* 2020.
3. Illustration from the incunabulum, Conrad Bote, *"Cronecken der Sassen"*. Mainz: Peter Schöffer, 1492. *Krodo* 2020.
6. Zodiac Man illustration, Johannes de Ketham, *"Fasiculo de medicina"*. Venice: Gregori, 1493. *The Horse* 2020.
Bronze figurines, Prillwitz, contested dating i.e. authenticity, Mecklenburg, West Pomerania, Germany:
4. A. G. Masch (et al), *Die gottesdienstlichen*, Fig. 4 (§86).
5. A. G. Masch (et al), *Die gottesdienstlichen*, Fig. 3: a, b (§77).
7. A. G. Masch (et al), *Die gottesdienstlichen*, Fig. 6 (§110).
8. A. G. Masch (et al), *Die gottesdienstlichen*, Fig. 5 (§98).
9. A. G. Masch (et al), *Die gottesdienstlichen*, Fig. 1: a (§61).

F26
Luristan standards:
1. (LACMA: M.76.97.6). P. R. S. Moorey, *The Art*, 55 – No. 227.
2. (Collection David-Weill: 1932 no. 61). P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 93 – No. 218.
3. (Ashmolean: 1965.791). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 35: 182.
4, 5. (Collection David-Weill: 1933 – 14). P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 93 – No. 219.
6. Ph. Ackerman, *The Oriental*, 219 – Fig. 2: c.
7. (LACMA: M.76.97.7). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.

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8. Luristan bronze pin with a "decorative" head (Collection David-Weill: 1935 – 15). P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 79 – No. 172.

F27
Luristan standards:
1. *Sadigh Gallery* 2020, image 11.
2. (Ex Elliot collection, Tennessee, USA). *Janifrom figure* 2020.
3. (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1985,1063). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 109, 110, Kat. 230.
5. (LACMA). *Bensozia* 2020.
6. Detail (Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, USA). *Master of Animals* 2020; the whole object: F30: 2.
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4. "Father of Sin" illustration from "Old Ritualist Miscellany" („Старообрядческий Сборник“/"Staroobryadcheskiy Sbornik"), 19th century CE, Russia. Д. Антонов, М. Майзульс, *Анатомия*, 217 – Рис. 3.
7. "Devil's Tree" ("Бесовское древо"/"Besovskoe drevo"), illustration from a miscellany of church texts (detail), 19th century CE, Russia. Д. Антонов, М. Майзульс, *Анатомия*, 218 – Рис. 5.
8. "Father of Sin" illustration from "Old Ritualist Miscellany" („Старообрядческий Сборник“/"Staroobryadcheskiy Sbornik"), 19th century CE, Russia. Д. Антонов, М. Майзульс, *Анатомия*, 217 – Рис. 4.
9. Stone sculpture, Early Middle Ages, Sankt Martin am Silberberg, Austria. A. Pleterski, *Gab es bei*, 42 – Abb. 5; color photography: *Studia mythologica Slavica*, 2, Ljubljana, 1999, back cover of the journal.

F28
Luristan standards:
1. (LACMA). *Bensozia* 2020.
2. (LACMA: M.76.97.7). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
3. (Royal Museum of Art and History, Brussels: IR.0627). *Funerary idol (IR.0627)* 2020.
9. *Anc. Lur. Br. Finial* 2019.
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4. Character from the upper part of the composition of a Luristan pin with a discoid head, (private collection in Basel, Switzerland). E. D. Phillips, *The People*, 226 – Fig. 17; the whole composition: F7: 4.
5. Luristan pin with a discoid head (LACMA: M.76.97.155). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; extraction of the character from the upper part of the composition: Nikos Chausidis; rest of the composition: F7: 1.
6. Central figure from a Luristan plaque of silver sheet metal (Art Museum, Cincinnati, USA). R. Ghirshman, *Notes VIII*, 40 – Fig. 2; the whole object: F2: 4.
7, 8. Extraction of two iconographic units from a Luristan bronze pin with a discoid head (LACMA: M.76.97.134). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the whole disc of the pin: F8: 4.

F29
Luristan standards:
1. (Metropolitan: 32.161.14). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 151, No. 238.
2. (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1985,1064). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 116, Kat. 241.
3. (Denver Art Museum, Denver, Colorado, USA). *Lur. Br. decorative arts* 2020.
4. (British Museum: BM132346). P. R. S. Moorey, *Ancient*, Pl.XII: A.
10. (Louvre). *Сокровища* 2020.
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5. Central figure from a Luristan plaque of silver sheet metal (Art Museum, Cincinnati, USA). R. Ghirshman, *Notes VIII*, 40 – Fig. 2; the whole object: F2: 4.
6. Central figure from one of the scenes on a Luristan bronze covering for a quiver (Metropolitan: 41.156). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 192, No. 308; the whole scene: F5: 5.
7. Bronze pendant, Iron Age, “Fritzens-Sanzeno” culture, Mechel, Trento, Italy. F. Marzatico, *Testimonianze*, 319 – Fig. 10: 3.
8. Central figure from a Luristan pin with a discoid head. A. Godard, *The Art*, 56 – Fig. 36.
9. Central figure from a Luristan pin with a discoid head (University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, USA: 41-21-5). P. R. S. Moorey, *Some Elaborately*, Pl. IIIb; extraction of the figure: Nikos Chausidis; the whole composition: F6: 1.

F30
Luristan standards:
1. Collection Godard. E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 99 – Fig. 80: 120 (no. 118).
2. (Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, USA). *Master of Animals* 2020.

3. (Archaeological Museum, Tehran). J.- L. Huot, *Iran, I*, Sl. 112.
4. (LACMA: M.76.97.5). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
5. *Elamite Bronze* 2020.
6. *Quadruple* 2020.

F31

Parallel iconographic paradigms of the Luristan standards of the type "idols with protomes" (schemes - Nikos Chausidis):

1. Singular anthropomorphic figure that covers the entire standard, complemented by a pair of arched protomes and two more human heads placed on the torso.
4. Anthropo-zoomorphic figure that holds its spread legs with ends in the form of animal protomes; below it a figure with arched arms, slightly spread thighs, bound feet, and two animal protomes placed laterally to its main human head.
5. Anthropo-zoomorphic figure that holds its spread legs with ends in the form of animal protomes; below it a figure with a mustache and beard, with arched arms, slightly spread thighs and bound feet.
6. Human head at the joint of the spread legs of an anthropo-zoomorphic figure with ends in the form of animal protomes.

Luristan standards:

2. (LACMA: M.76.97.19). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
3. (LACMA: M.76.97.10). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
7. Detail (Barakat Collection: OF.005). *Luristan Br. Standard* 2020; the whole object: D35: 6.
8. (Ashmolean: 1965. 794). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 35: 180; the whole object: D32: 1.
9. Detail. *Christie's* 2020; the whole object: D31: 6.
10. Detail (LACMA: M.76.97.5). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the whole object: C18: 6.
11. Detail (Metropolitan: 1996.82.1). *Top for standard (MET)* 2020; the whole object: C17: 1.

F32

Luristan standards:

1. Detail (LACMA: M.76.97.5). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the whole object: F30: 4.
2. Detail. *Elamite Bronze* 2020; the whole object: F30: 5.
3. Detail. *Quadruple* 2020; the whole object: F30: 6.
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4. Central figure from a Luristan pin with a discoid head (University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, USA: 41-21-5). P. R. S. Moorey, *Some Elaborately*, Pl. IIIb; extraction of the figure: Nikos Chausidis; the whole composition: F6: 1.
5. Central figure from a Luristan pin with a discoid head. A. Godard, *The Art*, 56 – Fig. 36; the whole composition: F6: 1.
6. Luristan pin with a discoid head (LACMA: M.76.97.155). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the rest of the composition: F7: 1.
7. Luristan pin with a discoid head (private collection, Basel, Switzerland). E. D. Phillips, *The People*, 226 – Fig. 17; the whole composition: F7: 4.
8. Central figure from one of the scenes on a Luristan bronze covering for a quiver (Metropolitan: 41.156). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 192, No. 308; the whole scene: F5: 5.
9. Central figure from a Luristan pin with a discoid head (LACMA: M.76.97.169). *Disc-headed Pin* 2020; the whole composition: F6: 5.

F33

Luristan standards:

1. Detail (Musée Cernuschi, Paris: MC.8877). N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 194, no. 196; the whole object: D32: 4.
2. Detail. *Catawiki* 2020; the whole object: D9: 9.
3. Detail (Barakat Collection: AM.0183). *Luristan Mistress* 2020; the whole object: F19: 2.
4. Detail (Barakat Collection: AM.0178). *Standard Barakat* 2020; the whole object: F20: 6.
5. (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1985,1064). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 116, Kat. 241.
6. (Metropolitan: 32.161.14). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 151, No. 238.
8. (Ex Elliot collection, Tennessee, USA). *Janifrom figure* 2020.
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7. Central figure from a Luristan pin with a discoid head A. Godard, *The Art*, 56 – Fig. 36; the whole composition: F6: 1.
9. Figure from a scene on a Luristan bronze covering for a quiver (Metropolitan: 41.156). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 192, 193 – No. 308; the whole scene: F5: 3.
10. Motif from a Luristan band-like bronze object. M. M. Khorasani, *Bronze*, 198, 215 – Fig. 10, 216 – Fig. 11; the rest of the scene: F5: 1.

11. Central figure from a Luristan bronze cheekpiece (Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal, Canada: 1944. Dm. 16). Ph. Verdier, *Les bronzes*, 41 – Fig. 18; the whole composition: F5: 2.
12. Central figure from a scene on a Luristan bronze covering for a quiver (LACMA: M.76.97.178 a,b). *Iran. Quiver* 2020; the whole scene: F5: 6.
13. Extraction of an iconographic unit from a Luristan bronze pin with a discoid head (LACMA: M.76.97.134). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the whole disc of the pin: F8: 4.
14. Central figure from a Luristan pin with a discoid head (University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, USA: 41-21-5). P. R. S. Moorey, *Some Elaborately*, Pl. IIIb; extraction of the figure: Nikos Chausidis; the whole composition: F6: 1.

IX. HUMAN HEAD WITH TWO OR MORE FACES ORIENTED IN VARIOUS DIRECTIONS

G1
Luristan standards:
1. Collection Godard. E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 104 – Fig. 84 – no. 122.
2. (Ashmolean: 1951.185). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 37: 189.
3. (Ashmolean: 1951.184). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 37: 188.
4. (Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham, UK: 1982A2233). P. Watson, *Luristan*, 10, 11 – Fig. 5: No. 16.
5. (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1973,121). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 119, Kat. 247.
6. (Metropolitan: 32.161.18). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 152, No. 241.
7. (Metropolitan: 32.161.17). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 152, No. 240.
8. (Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham, UK: 1982A2237). P. Watson, *Luristan*, 10, 11 – Fig. 5: No. 15.

G2
Luristan standards:
1. (Louvre). *Idoles tubulaires* 2020.
2. (Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham, UK: 1982A2234). P. Watson, *Luristan*, 10, 11 – Fig. 5: No. 17.
3. (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1973,123). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 118, 119, Kat. 245.
4. (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1973,122). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 119, Kat. 246.
5. *Idoli* 1986, 53 – No. 55a.
6. *Standard Finial* 2020.
7. *Idoli* 1986, 53 – No. 55c.
8. (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1973, 120). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 119, Kat. 249.

G3
Luristan standards:
1. (LACMA: M.76.97.85). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
2. *Luristan Head* 2018.
3. *Anthropomorphic Dec. Tube* 2020.
4. Baba Jan, Luristan (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1985,1066a). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 118, 119, Kat. 244.
5. (LACMA: M.76.97.4). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the whole composition: F1: 5.
6. Baba Jan, Luristan. C. Goff, *Excavations*, Fig. 14: 26.
7. Doubtful authenticity (Ashmolean). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 38: 190.

G4
Luristan standards:
1. (Ashmolean: 1969. 258). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 38: 191A.
2. (Metropolitan: 30.97.10). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 152, No. 242.
3. (Ashmolean: 1931.28). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 38: 191.
5. M. Malekzadeh et al, *Fouilles 2005-2006*, 86 – Fig. 26: Type B.
6. (LACMA: M.76.97.79). P. R. S. Moorey (et al), *Ancient Bronzes*, 64 – No. 276.
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4. Phallus-shaped object, wood, 12th century CE, Łęczyca, Poland. А. Гейщор, *Митология,* 202 – Обр. 22.

G5
Luristan standards:
1, 2, 3. *Luristan Br. Janus* 2020.
4. Detail (British Museum: BM132346). P. R. S. Moorey, *Ancient*, Pl.XII: A; the whole object: F29: 4.

5. *A Lur. Br. Finial (Christie's)* 2020.
6. Detail. Ph. Ackerman, *The Oriental*, 219 – Fig. 2: c; the whole object: G10: 1.

G6
1. Luristan bronze pin with an openwork head (Staatliches Museum für Völkerkunde, München, Germany: VK 50-1-8). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 71, 72, Kat. 144.
2, 3. Scepter with iron shaft and bronze head and handle, 1st millennium BCE, Iran. *Arts d'Orient* 2013, No. 33.
4. Luristan standard (?) (LACMA: M. 76.97.11). P. R. S. Moorey (et al), *Ancient Bronzes*, 65 – No. 277.
5. Luristan standard (?), *Idole tub. du Luristan* 2020.
6. Luristan standard (LACMA: M.76.97.72 a-b). *Decorated Tube* (M.76.97.72a-b) 2020.
7. Bronze object, Luristan (?) (Metropolitan: 64.139). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 153, 154 – No. 247.

G7
Comparisons of the phallus-shaped upper part in the Luristan standards of the type "idols" and "idols with protomes":
1. (Collection Godard: 122). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 104 – Fig. 84.
2. N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 191, no. 191.
3. (Ashmolean: 1951.185). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 37: 189.
4. (Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham, UK: 1955A372). P. Watson, *Luristan*, 9 – Fig. 4: No. 12.
5. *Luristan Head* 2018.
6. Detail (LACMA: M.76.97.89). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the whole object: D25: 2.
7. *Standard Finial* 2020.
8. (LACMA: M.76.97.6). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
9. (LACMA: M.76.97.85). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
10. (LACMA: M.76.97.37). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the whole object: D25: 1.
11. *Anthropomorphic Dec. Tube* 2020.
12. (Musée Cernuschi, Paris: MC.8877). N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 194, no. 196.
13. (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1973,120). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 119, Kat. 249.
14. Detail (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1985,1064). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 116, Kat. 241; the whole object: D1: 4.

G8
1, 8. Luristan standard (Royal Musums of Art and History, Brussels: IR.0555). *Torch* 2021.
2. Bronze tube, with a head at the top, Qumish, Luristan. E. F. Schmidt et al, *The Holmes*, Pl. 260: b.
3, 5. Luristan bronze tube with a head at the top (Royal Musums of Art and History, Brussels: IR.0553). *Idol (IR.0553)* 2020.
4. Luristan bronze pin with a discoid head (Louvre). N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 163, 164 (no. 153).
6. Luristan standard (LACMA: M.76.97.56). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
7. Luristan bronze bottle-shaped support (LACMA: M.76.174.47). *Finial Support* 2020.
9. Luristan standard (LACMA: M.76.97.50). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
10. Luristan bronze pin with a discoid head (Godard Collection). A. Godard, *The Art*, 61 – Fig. 45.
11. Luristan standard with a support, Khatunban, Luristan. E. Haerinck et al, *Finds*, 148 – Pl. 8: Kh. B6-1, 2.

4-7; **8, 9.** Photomontage: Nikos Chausidis.

G9
Luristan standards, interactions and transformations:
1. Luristan bronze tube with a head at the top (Royal Musums of Art and History, Brussels: IR.0553). *Idol (IR.0553)* 2020.
2. Photomontage, see: G8: 5, 6.
3. (Collection David-Weill: 1931 – 217). P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, Fig. 209.
4. Photomontage, see: G8: 8, 9.
5. (Royal Musums of Art and History, Brussels: IR.0555). *Torch* 2021.
6. (Collection Godard: 122). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 104 – Fig. 84.
7. (Metropolitan: 1998.319.1). *Top for standard* 2020.
8. *Arts d'Orient* 2013, No. 54.
9. (Metropolitan: 32.161.14). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 151, No. 238.
12. (Collection Godard: 119). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 99, – Fig. 80, 102.
14. N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 197, No. 200.
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10. Impression of cylinder seal, detail, Southeastern Iran (M. Foroughi Collection). H. Pittman, *Anchoring*, 578 – Pl. I; the whole composition: F15: 4.
11. Ceramic figurine, Middle Elamite period, ca. 1300 – 1200 BCE, Susa, Iran. *Mesopotamia* 2020.
13. Cylinder seal, Mesopotamia. A. Parrot, *Sumer*, XXXIII-A, 140 – Fig. 169: c; the whole representation: E15: 3.

G10
Luristan standards:
1. Ph. Ackerman, *The Oriental*, 219 – Fig. 2: c.
2. (LACMA: M.76.97.2). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
3. Ashmolean Museum. P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 35: 180, (1965. 794).
4. Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, USA. *Master of Animals* 2020.
5. *Quadruple* 2020.
6. Louvre. A. Parrot, *Assur*, 132 – Fig. 153.

G11
Luristan standards with a detail of the human head at the bottom:
1, 5. (Collection Godard: 118). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 99 – Fig. 80: 120.
2, 6. *Christie's* 2020.
3, 7. (LACMA: M.76.97.55). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
4. E. F. Schmidt et al, *The Holmes*, Pl. 263: a.
8, 9. (LACMA: M.76.97.3). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.

G12
Luristan supports for standards in the shape of a bottle:
1. *Bouteille* 2020.
2. (Collection David-Weill: 1930 no. 260). P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 94 – No. 226.
3, 4. (Collection David-Weill: 1933 no. 46). P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 91 – No. 200.
5. (Collection David-Weill: 1931 no. 1482). P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 94 – No. 227.
6. (LACMA: M.76.97.12). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
7. (Elisabeth und Peter Suter-Dürsteler Collection). S. Schmid, *Ständer*, 47, 48 (Cat. 8); details: G28: 8, 9.

G13
Bronze heads of ceremonial maces:
1. Circa 2nd millennium BCE (Dr. Khateeb collection, Dubai, United Arab Emirates). *A Western* 2014.
2. (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1985,965). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 38, Kat. 57.
3, 4. Iron Age, Luristan, Iran (Sackler collection). *Ancient fertility* 2020, Fif. 7; Fig. 15.
5. 15th century CE, canal between Lake Beloslav and Lake Varna, Bulgaria. А. Кузев, *Маршрутът*, 149 – Обр. 2.
6. Mace or scepter, Middle Ages, Allinge, Bornholm, Denmark. J. P. Lamm, *On the Cult*, 225 – Fig. 13.
7. 9th-8th century BCE, Amlash, Iran. E. D. Phillips, *The People*, 236.
8. 3rd – 2nd Mill. BC. Near East. *Abstract Faces* 2019.
9. (Collection David-Weill: 1933 – 19). P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 35 – No. 31.

G14
Heads of maces or scepters:
1. Bronze, end of the 3rd millennium BCE, Natal'ino, Saratov Oblast, Russia. *Бронзовый* 2013, 62 – Ил. 4.
2. Quartzite, Bronze Age, "Catacomb" culture, 3rd – 1st millennium BCE (Museum of the History of Weapons, Zaporizhzhia), Ukraine. *Оружие* 2014.
3. Stone, 3rd – 2nd millennium BCE (collection of A. A. Bobrinskiy). *Бронзовый* 2013, 400 – 82.1.
4. Stone, type "Decea Muresului", Eneolithic, Sard, Ighiu, Alba, Romania. *Preh. Of Transylvania* 2020.
5. Stone, Eneolithic (National Museum of the History of Ukraine, Kyiv). М. Ю. Відейко, Н. Б. Бурдо, *Енциклопедія*. Том. 1, кн.1, 484.
6. Stone, Bronze Age, Wietenbergkultur, Wietenberg, Sighișoara, Mureș, Romania. K. Horedt, *Die Wietenbergkultur*, 131 – Abb. 14: 8.
9. Stone, Bronze Age, 18th – 17th century BCE, "Seima-Turbino" culture, hoard near Borodino, Akkerman District, Bessarabia Governorate, Ukraine. *Бронзовый* 2013, 162 – Ил. 7.
10. Bronze, Iron Age, 900 – 700 BCE, Luristan, Iran. *Luristan Br. Mace – 1*, 2014.
12. Bronze, Bronze Age, middle of the 2nd millennium BCE, Digoriya, North Ossetia, Russia. *Бронзовый* 2013, 619 (319.1).
Beads in the shape of a mace-head:
7. Bronze, Bronze – Iron Age, "Koban" culture (?). *Кобан. амулеты* 2014.

8. Stone, prehistory, Southern Urals. *Как выглядели* 2020.
13. Bronze, Bronze – Iron Age, "Koban" culture (?). *Кобан. амулеты* 2014.
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11. Bronze object, Iron Age, Brazda, Skopje, RN Macedonia. Д. Корачевиќ, *Наод*, 60 – Сл. 10.

G15
Luristan pendants in the form of a foot i.e. shoe with multiplicated human faces at the top:
1. (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1985,1002 a+b). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 79 – No. 165.
2. (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1985,977). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 79 – No. 164.
3. (Collection David-Weill: 1932 – 45: 1-2). P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 69 – No. 140.
4. (Frank Savery Collection). S. Przeworski, *Luristan Bronzes*, Pl. LXXVII: e (no. 33).
5. (Royal Museums of Art and History, Brussels). *Amulet - shod foot* 2020.
6. (Ashmolean: 1951. 315). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 234 – Pl. 66: 431.
7. (Ashmolean: 1951. 316). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 234 – Pl. 66: 432.

G16
1. Relief representation carved into a rock, Hittite culture, 13th century BCE, Yazilikaya, Boghasköy, Turkey. A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 551 – Fig. 428.
2. Central figure from a scene on a Luristan bronze covering for a quiver (LACMA: M.76.97.178 a,b). *Iran. Quiver* 2020; the whole scene: F5: 6.
Luristan iron swords with a pair of human heads on the hilt:
3. P. R. S. Moorey, *The Decorated*, 6 – Fig. 2.
5. E. F. Schmidt et al, *The Holmes*, Pl. 261: b.
7. (Royal Museum of Art and History, Brussels: IR.0546). *Sword handle* 2020.
Tibetan cult objects of the type kīla i.e. phurba, Tibetan Buddhism:
4. Metal. R. Beer, *The Encyclopedia*, 248 – Pl. 114.
6. Wood, 19th century CE. *Shaman Eye Phurba* 2020.
8. Metal. R. Beer, *The Encyclopedia*, 248 – Pl. 114.
9. Wood. *Winged Deity* 2020.
10. Bronze hilt, blade of meteoric metal, 12th – 13th century CE. *A Master piece* 2020.

G17
Cylinder seals, Middle East:
1, 2. Akkadian period (British Museum: 89115). *The Adda Seal* 2020.
3, 4. Sumerian period. E. Porada (ed.) *Ancient Art in Seals*, cf. fig. II-23; *Sumerian god Enki* 2020.
5, 6. Akkadian period. B. Buchanan, W. W. Hallo, *Early Near Eastern Seals*. 184 – No. 472.
7, 8, 9. Syro-Hittite culture. C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*, 203 – Fig. 7, Fig. 8.

G18
1, 2. Cylinder seal, Akkadian period, Middle East. *Las dos caras* 2020.
3. Stone sculpture, Post-Akkadian period (Staatliche Museen zu Berlin: AN2050). D. M. Srinivasan, *Many Heads*, Pl. 13: 8.
4. Cylinder seal, Syro-Hittite culture. C. N. Deedes, *The Double-Headed*, 207 – Fig. 11.
5. Figure with two faces, Early Achaemenid seal, Persepolis, Iran. А. В. Подосинов, *Символы*, Рис. 33.
6. Cylinder seal, Kassite period (Department of the History of Art, University of Pennsylvania, USA). *Cylinder seal* 2020.
7. Miniature terracotta figurine, transition between the Persian and Hellenistic periods, 5th – 2nd century BCE, Maresha, Israel. A. Erlich, *Double Face*, 28 – Fig. 6.
8. Cramic pillar figurine, Syro-Hittite culture, 2750 – 1900 BCE. *Ceramic Double Headed* 2020.

G19
1, 2. Part of a ceramic figurine with two faces, Harappan period, Mohenjo-daro, Sindh province, Pakistan. D. M. Srinivasan, *Many Heads*, Pl. 13: 2.
3. Double-faced head, Harappan period, Kalibangan, Rajasthan, India. D. M. Srinivasan, *Many Heads*, Pl. 13: 3.
4. Double-faced head. Bharhut style, ca. 2nd century BCE (Museum für Indische Kunst, Berlin: 1.10.126). D. M. Srinivasan, *Many Heads*, Pl. 13: 8.
5, 6. Terracotta double-faced head, Kushan period (State Museum, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India: 60.15/14). D. M. Srinivasan, *Many Heads*, Pl. 13: 12, 13.

7. Dvimukha Lińga. Kushan period, Aring (Government Museum, Mathura: 462), India. D. M. Srinivasan, *Many Heads*, Pl. 19: 21.
8, 9, 10. Double-faced head, around the beginning of the Common Era (Ashmolean: SC267). D. M. Srinivasan, *Many Heads*, Pl. 13: 9, 10, 11.

G20
1. Scene from an Attic black-figured amphora, ancient Hellenic culture. A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 379 – Fig. 286.
2. Scene from a red-figure lekythos, ancient Hellenic culture, 470 – 460 BCE (Museum of the Roman Forum of Thessaloniki, Greece). *Red figure lekythos* 2020.
3. Scene from a red-figure krater, ancient Hellenic culture, Ruvo (collection of R. Barone, Naples), Italy. A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 380 – Fig. 287.
4. Scene from a red-figure stamnos, ancient Hellenic culture (Ciai collection, Chiusi, Italy). A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 381 – Fig. 288.
5. Silver coin (diobol), Lampsacos, Mysia, Asia Minor, during the reign of the Achaemenid Persian Empire. *Persian Empire* 2020.
6. Silver coin (trihemiobol), Lampsacos, Mysia, Asia Minor, 390 – 330 BCE. *Mysia* 2020.
7. Coin of Tenedos, Troas region, Asia Minor. A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 657 – Fig. 594.
8. Silver coin (obol), Cilicia (Tarsus?), Asia Minor, ca. 400 – 380 BCE. *What is a janiform head* 2020.
9. Silver coin, Tenedos, Troas region, Asia Minor, ca. 100 – 70 BCE. *Greek Silver* 2020.

G21
1. Painted vessel - kylix, ancient Greek culture (Regional Archeological Museum Antonio Salinas, Palermo, Italy). A. Cermanović, *Grčke*, 68 – Sl. 42.
2. Painted vessel - kylix, ancient Greek culture, 530 – 520 BCE, Attica, Greece. *History Contained* 2020.
3. Painted vessel - kylix, ancient Greek culture, late 6th century BCE (collection in France). *Attic* 2014.
4. Engraved carnelian, Greek work of Hellenistic date (collection in Berlin). A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 385 – Fig. 292.
5. Fragment from a terracotta kiln, ancient Hellenic culture, Delos, Greece. J. Marcadé, *Hermès*, 623 – Fig. 25.
6. Detail of a scene painted on a black-figure lekythos, ancient Hellenic culture. A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 382 – Fig. 289.
7. Two-faced herma, Dionysus and Silenus, ca. 1 – 200 CE, Italy (Fitzwilliam museum – Cambridge, UK: GR.20.1850). *Scanner Art* 2020.
8. Two-faced herma, Bacchus and Ariadne (Guarnacci Etruscan Museum, Volterra, Italy). *Two faced herma* 2020.
9. Kantharos, with faces of Hercules and Omphale, Etruscan culture, ca. 320 BCE (Museo Nazionale del Palazzo di Venezia, Rome). *Etruscan Kantharos* 2020.
10. Red-figure two-faced kantharos, ca. 470 – 460 BCE (Cleveland Museum of Art, USA). *Red-Figure Janiform* 2020.
11. Attic red-figure aryballos, ca. 520 – 510 BCE, ancient Hellenic product (Louvre). *Red-figure pottery* 2020.

G22
1. Bronze coin, Panormos, Sicily, ca. 120 BCE. *Sicily, Panormos* 2019.
2. Bronze coin struck under Septimius Severus at Baris/Isparta, Pisidia, Asia Minor. A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 445 – Fig. 355.
3. Bronze coin struck under Septimius Severus at Baris/Isparta, Pisidia, Asia Minor. A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 445 – Fig. 356.
4. Detail from the relief on a stone sarcophagus, Etuscan culture, ca. 300 BCE. Tuscania, Lazio (Museo Archeologico, Tuscania), Italy. *Culsans 2019*.
5. Bronze figurine, prehistory (?) (Collection of Prince of Torrebruna, Palermo, Sicily, Italy). A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 375 – Fig. 281.
6. Bronze statuette, Teti, Sardinia. A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 446 – Fig. 353.
7. Bronze statuette, Etuscan culture, 3rd century BCE, Cortona (Museo dell'Accademia Etrusca, Cortona) Italy. *Culsans – Statuetta 2020*.
8. Detail from a bronze cauldron, 8th-7th century BCE, a product of Etruscan culture or of a workshop from Urartu (?), Vetulonia, Italy. M. Pallottino, *Urartu*, 45 – Fig. 20.
9. Coin "aes grave", cast at Volterra, Etruria, after ca. 350 BCE. A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 384 – Fig. 291.

G23
Stone relief slabs, 6th – 3rd century BCE, Spain:
1. Villaricos, Vera, Almeria (Museo Arqueologico de Cataluña, Barcelona), Spain. *Lord of the Horses* 2020.
2. Villaricos, Vera, Almeria (Museo Arqueológico de Almería), Spain. *El Domador* 2020.
3. Villaricos, Vera, Almeria (Museo Arqueologico de Cataluña, Barcelona, Spain). *Domador de Caballos* 2020.
Openwork bronze cheekpiece appliques, 6th – 5th century BCE:
4. Possible reconstruction of a horse bridle with the cheekpieces. F. Quesada Sanz, *El gobierno*, 112 – Fig. 17.
5. (Museo Arqueologico de Murcia, Spain). F. Quesada Sanz, *Un elemento*, 42 – Fig. 3.
6. Cancho Roano, Zalamea de la Serena, province of Badajoz, Spain. *Cancho Roano* 2020.

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7. Luristan bronze cheekpiece. *The Habib* 2020.

G24

Stone monuments (idols), with two heads, Celtic culture:
1, 2. Idol, sandstone, 4th century BCE, Holzgerlingen, Germany. *Stele aus Holzgerlingen* 2020.
3. Top of an idol, basalt, Weltersbach, Leichlingen, Germany, H. Lehner, *Hölzerne*, 9 – Abb. 2.
4. A pair of joined stone heads, 5th century BCE, sanctuary at Roquepertuse, Velaux (Musée d'archéologie méditerranéenne, Marseille), France. *Têtes accolées* 2020.
6. Stone idols or funerary monuments (?), Boa and Lustymore Islands, Northern Ireland. *Boa Island* 2020.
7. One side of the upper zone of a stone idol, ca. 10th century CE, Husyatyn, valley of the Zbruch river, Ternopil Oblast, Ukraine (Kraków Archaeological Museum, Poland). Drawing: Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 475 – Т. CIX: 2 (according to published photographs: G. Leńczyk, *Światowid*, T. II; T. III; Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Руси*, Рис. 50, 51); the whole monument: G40: 4.
Celtic coins with a two-headed representation:
8. Copper coin of the son of Cunobelinus, 1st century CE, issued in Camulodunum, Essex, Britain. *Coin (Cunobelinus)* 2020.
9. Gold coin, fourth of a stater, Mediomatrici people, 1st century BCE, territory of present-day Belgium. *Médiomatriques* 2020.
10. Silver coin, copy of the tetradrachms of Philip II, 3rd century BCE, Celts from the course the Danube. *Celts in East. Europe* 2019.
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5. Bronze knife hilt, Late La Tène period, Zemplin, Slovakia. B. Benadik, *Die spätlatènezeitliche*, 85 – Abb. 17.
11. Bronze knife hilt, Iron Age, Žerovnišček, Bločice (National Museum of Slovenia, Ljubljana), Slovenia. *Narodni muzej Slovenije* 2020.

G25

1, 2. Wooden Idol, 11th – 12th century CE, Fischerinsel, Neubrandenburg, Germany. drawing: L. P. Słupecki, *Slavonic*, 205 – Fig. 81; photograph of a gypsum cast: *Gipsabguss, Slaw. Götze* 2020.
3. Stone figurine, 10th century CE, Nowy Wiec, Gmina Skarszewy (replica: Archaeological Museum, Gdańsk), Poland. L. J. Łuka, *Kultura*, 67; photograph: *Galeria Słowiańska* 2020.
4. Cast from a mold for casting metal fittings, Middle Ages, Wolin, Poland. J. P. Lamm, *On the Cult*, 225 – Fig. 10; photograph: *Halla* 2020.
5. Motif from a more complex composition, golden ring, Early Middle Ages, Strobjenen, modern Kulikovo, Kaliningrad Oblast, Russia. Н. Чаусидис, *Кольцо*, 548 – Таб. 8: 2.
6. Top of a stone idol, Lád, Badacsony, shore of Lake Balaton, Hungary. G. Leńczyk, *Światowid*, 41 – Ryc. 11.
7. Stone object, Middle Ages (?), Lopushna, Vyzhnytsia, Ukraine. І. Гах, *Лопушанський*.
8. Stone object, indeterminate chronological and cultural affiliation, Mosel, Wieting, Carinthia, Austria. P. Gleirscher, *Ein Doppelkopf*, 62 – Abb. 1.
9, 10. Stone object, Middle Ages, Roughan Hill, Killinaboy, Clara, Ireland. *Roughan* 2020.

G26

Bronze figurines, 8th-10th century CE, "Saltovo – Mayaki" culture:
1. Krasnyy Oskol, Kharkiv Oblast, Ukraine. В. В. Давыденко, В. К. Гриб, *Многоликие*, 199 – Рис. 3: 1, 2
2. Maklashevka, Kuybyshevsky District, Russia. А. Х. Халиков, *Маклашевская*, 106 – Рис. 1.
3. Vozdvizhenka, Stavropol Krai, Russia. В. В. Давыденко, В. К. Гриб, *Многоликие*, 204 – Рис. 8: 1.
4, 5. Zmeyevo, Chistopolsky District, Russia. К. А. Руденко, *Идол*, 168 – Рис.1: 1а, 1б.
6. Gryaznukha, Serdobsky District, Penza Oblast, Russia. А. Х. Халиков, *Маклашевская*, 110 – Рис. 5.
7, 8. Ryazan Governorate, Russia. В. В. Давыденко, В. К. Гриб, *Многоликие*, 202 – Рис. 6: 1 – 3.
9, 10. Course of the Kuban river, Krasnodar Krai, Russia. В. К. Гриб, В. В. Давыденко, *Новые*, 370 – Рис. 9.

G27

1, 2, 3. "Bandu" helmet mask, wood, Bassa people, Liberia. *Bassa* 2020.
4. Sango Staff, wood, Yoruba people, 19th – 20th century CE, Nigeria (Metropolitan: 1989.391.1). *Sango Staff* 2020.
5. Dance headdress, wood, Idoma people, Nigeria. *Idoma Janus* 2020.
6. Ceramic figurine, Koma people, Ghana. *Figurines from Koma* 2020.
7. Ceramic vessel with two human faces, Neolithic, Căscioarele, Călărași County, Romania. S. Hansen, *Bilder, Tel II*, 414: 2.
8. Lithic sculpture, 2nd century BCE, India (Museum Guimet, Paris). *Agni, wood carving* 2020.
9. Cult statue, stone, Huastec culture, 13th – 16th century CE, Ćilituhu, Mesoamerica. F. Eber-Stevens, *Stara*, T. XI: 374.

G28; G28a

Luristan standards:
1. (Ashmolean: 1969. 258). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 38: 191A.
2. Baba Jan, Luristan (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1985,1066a). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 118, 119, Kat. 244.
4. Upper part (British Museum: BM132346). P. R. S. Moorey, *Ancient*, Pl.XII: A; the whole object: F29: 4.
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3. Bronze object, (Luristan (?) (Metropolitan: 64.139). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 153, 154 – No. 247.
5. Bronze figurine, after the 2nd century CE, Caucasus. A. A. Zakharov, *Materials*, 85 – Fig. 86.
6. Bronze mace-head (Collection David-Weill: 1933 – 19). P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 35 – No. 31.
7. Bronze mace-head, 9th – 8th century BCE, Amlash, Iran. E. D. Phillips, *The People*, 236.
8, 9. Luristan bronze bottle-shaped support for a standard. S. Schmid, *Ständer*, 47, 48 – Cat. 8; the whole object: G12: 7.
10. Ceramic relief, Sumerian civilization, 2nd millennium BCE (Bagdad Museum). A. Parrot, *Sumer*, 301 – Fig. 368.
11. Ceramic figurine, Early–Middle Bronze Age, ca. 2200 – 1750 BCE, Syria (Metropolitan: 55.188). *Figurine, Syria* 2020.
12. Bronze statuette, Luristan (?) (LACMA: M.76.97.743). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.

Metal trumpets, 2200 – 1800 BCE, Bactria–Margiana Archaeological Complex, Central Asia:
13, 14. Private collection, USA. B. Lawergren, *Oxus*, 70 (Fig. 15), 71 (Fig. 16).
15, 16. Shahdad, Iran. A. Hakemi, *Shahdad*, 635.
17-20. Private collection, USA. B. Lawergren, *Oxus*, 61 (Fig. 8: F7), 76 (Fig. 23).
21. B. Lawergren, *Oxus*, 61 (Fig. 8: F6).
22-24. Private collection, USA. B. Lawergren, *Oxus*, 73-75 (Fig. 20-22).

G29

1, 2. Herma with a representation of the Cabeiri (Vatican Museums, Rome: Magazzino 121). Photo: *Lexicon iconogr. III,* 1986, (Bachus), p. 792, Pl. 455: 261; drawing: F. Lenormant, *Cabiri*, 761 (Fig. 902-904).
3. Scarab made of carnelian, Etruscan culture (?) (collection in London). I. Krauskopf, *Culsans (LIMC)*, Abb. 5.
4. Attic marble hekataion, late hellenistic period (Benaki Museum, Athens). *Attic marble* 2020.
5. Luristan bronze bracelet, detail (Collection Godard: No. 328). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 194 – Fig. 163.
6, 7. Three-headed herma, Rhodes (Rhodes Museum: E 393), Greece. *Lexicon iconogr. III,* 1986, (Dionisos), pp. 468, 782, Pl. 360: No. 535.
8. Marble statue of the triple Hecate, Roman copy of a Hellenistic original (Vatican Museums, Rome). *Hecate Chiaramonti* 2020.

G30

1. Votive relief in stone with a representation of a "Thracian horseman", Roman period, Philippopolis (today's Plovdiv), Bulgaria. И. Маразов, *Рогозенското*, 279 – Обр. 177.
2. Votive relief in stone with a representation of a "Thracian horseman", Roman period, Izvor, Plovdiv, Bulgaria. Д. Ботева, *Репроблематизация*, 282 – Обр. 6.
3. Bronze figurine (Cagliari Museum, Sardinia, Italy). G. Leńczyk, *Światowid*, 54 – Ryc. 17a.
4. Representation of a three-headed Heracles, ceramic vessel, 350 – 325 BCE (Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples, Italy: 82286 – H1924). *Lexicon iconogr. V,* 1990, (Heracles), pp. 78, 664, Pl. 89: 2503.
5. Bronze coin, obol, Cilicia, Asia Minor, ca. 4th century BCE. *Cilicia obol* 2020.
6. Silver coin, Samaria, 4th century BCE (The Israel Museum, Jerusalem). *Coin from Samaria* 2020.
7. Terracotta figurine, Cypro-Archaic culture, 650 – 600 BCE, Pyrga, Larnaka, Cyprus (British Museum: 1866,0101.298-299). *Terracotta helmetted warriors* 2020.
8. Detail of a sculpture, polychrome colored limestone, ca. 560 BCE, tympanum of the Hekatompedon temple, Athenian Acropolis (Acropolis Museum, Athens), Greece. *The Bluebeards* 2020.

G31

Stone monuments with three heads or three faces, Celtic cultural circle:
1. Iron Age, 1st – 2nd century CE, Corlec, Co. Cavan, Ireland (National Museum of Ireland, Dublin). *The Corleck Head* 2020.
2. Glejbjerg, Jutland, Denmark. F. Rasmussen, *Den førkristne religion*, 4 – Fig. 4.
3. Wiltshire, England. A. Ross, *A Celtic*, 54 – Pl. IV.
4. Woodlands, Raphoe, Ireland. A. Ross, *A Pagan*, 33 – Fig. 8.
5. Sutherland, Scotland. *A. Ross, The Human*, Pl. III.
6. Bramming, Jutland, Denmark. F. Rasmussen, *Den førkristne religion*, 4 – Fig. 4.
7, 8, 9. Netherton, Lanarkshire (Glasgow Art Galeryand Museum), Scotland. A. Ross, *A Pagan*, 28 (Pl. 1 – Pl. 4).

G32

Stone monuments, Gallo-Roman culture, Roman period, France:

1. Statue, 2nd century CE, Condat-sur-Trincou, Dordogne, France. *Cernunnos* 2020.
2. Relief slab, Dennevy, France. *Two-faced* 2020.
3. Relief slab, 2nd century CE, Reims, France. J. Terrisse, *Le dieu*.
4. Relief slab, 2nd century CE, Reims, France. J. Terrisse, *Le dieu*.
5. Relief stela, Beaune, France. *L'Hermès tricéphale* 2020.
6. Head of a statue, ancient city of Lugdunum, today's Lyon (Musee de la Civilisation Gallo Romaine, Lyon), France. M. Aldhouse-Green, *An Arch. of Images*, 208 – Fig. 7.15.
10. Relief on a stone block, Hôtel-Dieu, Paris (Musée Carnavalet, Paris: AP48). *Bloc quandrangulaire* 2020.
11. Limestone sculpture, 2nd century CE (private collection, France). *Celtic Three-Headed* 2020.

7, 8. Bust with three faces depicted on a ceramic vessel, Gallo-Roman culture, Bavay, Nord, France. *Vase de Bavay* 2020.
9. Stone head with three faces, archaic style, surroundings of the town of Ay, bank of the river Marne, Marne Department, France. A. Ross, *A Pagan*, 29 – Fig. 4.

G33

1. Stone recipient, Middle Ages (?), the church of St. Helen and St. Mary Magdalene at Magdalensberg/Štalenska gora, Carinthia, Austria. *Studia Mythologia Slavica* 2013, back cover of the journal.
2. Stone recipient, the church of St. Helen and St. Mary Magdalene at Magdalensberg/Štalenska gora, Carinthia, Austria. *Magdalensberg* 2020.
3. Stone idol, Middle Ages (?), Bribir, Vaćani, Dalmatia. A. Milošević, *Slika*, 57 – Sl. 39.
4. Stone idol, Middle Ages (?), Bribir, Vaćani, Dalmatia, sketch (view from above) with possible number of heads shown (three): Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 467 – T.CVII: 7.
5. Triple grylle, ancient period. J. Baltrušaitis, *Fantastični*, 31 – 20: A.
6. Motif from a fresco, Early Modern Period, Gurk/Krka, Carinthia, Austria. J. Baltrušaitis, *Fantastični*, 31 – 20: B.
7. Fibula, 6th – 7th century CE (Diergardt Collection). J. Werner, *Neues*, Taf. 28: 2.
8. Fibula, 6th – 7th century CE (Kofler-Truniger Collection). J. Werner, *Neues*, Taf. 28: 1.
9. Stone sculpture, Early Middle Ages, Sankt Martin am Silberberg, Austria. A. Pleterski, *Gab es bei*, 42 – Abb. 5; color photograph: *Studia mythologica Slavica* 1999, back cover of the journal.
10. Three sides of the lower zone of the stone idol from the Zbruch river, ca. 10th century CE, Husyatyn, Ternopil Oblast, Ukraine (Kraków Archaeological Museum, Poland). Drawing: Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 475 – T. CIX: 2 (according to published photographs: G. Leńczyk, *Światowid*, T. II; T. III; Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Русu*, Рис. 50; 51); the whole monument: G40: 4.

G34

1. Tapestry, detail, 13th century CE, Skog, Sweden. *Skog Kerk* 2020.
2. Detail from the decoration of a golden horn, Iron Age, 5th century CE, Gallehus, Møgeltønder, Southern Jutland, Denmark. D. Ellmers, *Zur Ikonographie*, 258 – Abb. 67.
3. Mounting with unknown purpose, Hemdrup, Himmerland, Denmark. J. P. Lamm, *On the Cult*, 226 – Fig. 15.
4. Fitting for a rhyton, Taplow, Bucks, England. J. P. Lamm, *On the Cult*, 227 – Fig. 21.
5. Gold coin of Vasudeva I, Kushan Empire, ca. 195 CE. *The Coin Galleries* 2020.
6. Relief representation of Tridevi, 15th century CE, Gujari Mahal palace, Gwalior, India. *Kala Ksetram* 2020.
7. Bronze figurine, ancient cultures of the Indus Valley. *Indus Valey* 2020.
8. Steatite seal, Indus Valley Civilization, ca. 2350-2000 BCE, Mohenjo-daro, Pakistan. *Pashupati seal* 2020.
9. Agni, God of Fire, colour lithography, author: Charles Etienne Pierre (1785-1836). *Agni, God of Fire* 2020.
10. Sacrificial vase of the type kapala (skull-cup), Tibetan culture. R. Beer, *The Encyclopedia*, 265 – Fig. 119.

G35

1. Fresco composition Holy Trinity, chapel Shroud of the Holy Virgin, 18th century CE, Hilandar, Mount Athos, Greece. З. Ракић, *Црква Покрова*, Сл. 17.
2. Pictorial representation of the Holy Trinity, 14th century CE, Santa Croce Andria, Napoli, Italy. S. Bogevska, *The Holy Trinity*, 154 –Fig. 13.
3. Holy Trinity, icon, detail, 1704 CE (Museum of the Serbian Orthodox Church, Belgrade). A. Kučeković, *The Three-headed*, 239 – Fig. 3.
4. Trinity, illustration from a Greek manuscript, detail, 14th century CE (Marciana Library of Venice, ms. gr. Z, 516 (=904), fol. 158v.). S. Bogevska, *The Holy Trinity*, 157 – Fig. 15.
5. Miniature "Trinity of Evil", 15th century CE, France. J. Chevalier, A. Gheerbrant, *Rječnik*, 709.
6. Wooden face mask, ca. early to mid 20th century CE, Lega or Lengola people, Congo. *Triple face mask* 2020.

7. Three-Headed wooden figure – Sakimatwemtwe, 19th century CE, Lega people, Congo (Brooklyn Museum, New York: 22.486). *Three-Headed Figure* 2020.
8. Wooden statue, Fang people, Gabon. *Statue Fang* 2020.

G36
1. Stone Idol, 13th – 8th century BCE, Navur/Itsakar, Tavush Province, Armenia. С. А. Есаян, *Каменная*, 269 – Рис. 1.
2. Stone Idol, 13th – 8th century BCE, Yayji, Goris, Armenia. Drawing: С. А. Есаян, Каменная, 269 – Рис. 2: 1; photograph: *Каменные* 2020.
3. Illustration from the work: Eliphas Levi, *The Magical Ritual of the Sanctum Regnum*. London, 1896. *The Magical Ritual* 2020.
4. Luristan standard. *A Lur. Br. Finial (Christie's)* 2020.
5, 6. Vessel (aryballos) made of faience, 6th century BCE, ancient Greek culture (Metropolitan). *Greek art* 2014.
7. Bronze statuette, Old Babylonian Period, 18th – 17th century BCE, Ishchali, Iraq. *Near Eastern* 2020.
8. Bronze statuette, Old Babylonian Period, 18th – 17th century BCE, Ishchali, Iraq. *Ancient Man* 2020.
9. Hathor headed column, Hator Temple, hypostyle hall, 1st century CE, Dendera, Egypt. *Temple of Dendera* 2020.
10. Motif from a cylinder seal, Middle East (Syria?). W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 304 (No. 954).

G37
1. Stone statue of Brahma, 9th – 10th century CE, Phnom Bok, Siemreap, Kambodia (Musée Guimet, Paris). *Brahma* 2020.
2. Pictorial representation of the god Surya with 4 heads, watercolor, 19th century CE, Hindu culture. *Four headed* 2020.
3. Caturmukha Linga, Kushan period, Mathura, India (Russek Collection: no. 1761 MG). D. M. Srinivasan, *Many Heads*, Pl. 19: 3.
4. Stone statue of a five headed Shiva (Sadashiva), 10th century CE, Cambodia. *Shiva (Wikipedia)* 2020.
5. Stone pillar – Shivalingam, 9th – 10th century CE, Uttar Pradesh, India. *Shivalingam* 2020.
6. Modern representation of the four faces of the Buddha, cast in metal. *The four faces* 2014.
7. The faces of Buddha, Bayon Temple, Angkor Thom, 12th – 13th century CE, Cambodia. *Bayon* 2020.
8. Chaturmukha Linga, Kushan period, 2nd century CE, Mathura, India (Natuional Museum, New Delhi: 65-172). *Chaturmukha* 2020.

G38
1. Top of a stone pillar, unknown origin and dating (museum in Worms, Germany). A. Plichta, *Čtyřhlavá*, 157 – Obr. 5.
2. Sketch made after 1790 of a wooden idol, Middle Ages (?), Ballybritain Bog, Aghadowey, Co. Derry, Northern Ireland. J. Waddell, *Equine*, 14 – Fig. 9.
3. Bronze object in the form of perforated hollow ball, Iron Age, "Milci", Gevgelija, RN Macedonia. Д. Митревски, *Карактеристични*, 89 – T.II: 12.
4. Bronze candelabra or "vase-holder", Vetulonia, Italy. I. Falchi, *Vetulonia*, 192 – no. 4, Tav. XVII: 28, 31; photograph: *Sovrani etruschi* 2009, no. inv. 7333.
5. Bronze object, Iron Age, "Vilanova" culture, Vetulonia, Italy. Drawing: M. Hoernes, *Urgeschichte*, 499 – Abb. 8.
6. Stone idol, Middle Ages (?), Bribir, Vaćani, Dalmatia. A. Milošević, *Slika*, 57 – Sl. 39
7. Stone idol, Middle Ages (?), Bribir, Vaćani, Dalmatia, sketch (view from above) with possible number of heads shown (four): Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 467 – T.CVII: 7.
8. Glass bead, Iron Age, Prozor, Otočac, Lika, Croatia. R. Drechler-Bižić, *Japodska*, T. XLV: 5.
9. Glass bead, Iron Age, Prozor, Otočac, Lika, Croatia. A. Stipčević, *Kultni*, T.XXXIV: 5.
10. Stone monument with four faces, Celtic cultural circle, Ovingham, Nordhumberland, Northeast England. A. Ross, *A Pagan*, 31 – Fig. 7.
11. Bronze pin, Iron Age, Gorica, Grude, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Б. Човић, *Од Бутмира*, 261 – Сл. 146 – б.

G39
1. Coin (as) with the figure of Hadrianus quadrifrons, Roman period, 2nd century CE. *Hadrian As* 2020.
2. Coin (as) with the figure of Hadrianus quadrifrons, Roman period, 2nd century CE. R. Taylor, *Watching*, 3 – Fig. 2.
3. Stone herma, ancient period, surroundings of Sofia (?) (National Museum of History, Sofia, Bulgaria). Г. И. Кацаров, *Антични*, 54 – Обр. 39.
4. Top of a stone herma, Roman period, Kreuzwegstein, Niederkerschen, Luxsembourg. F. Hettner, *Provinzialmuseum*, 33 – No. 42.
5. Dress-pin, silver, Roman period (?), Borgholm, Öland (Swedish History Museum, Stockholm), Sweden. J. P. Lamm, *On the Cult*, 228 – Fig. 22.
6. Marble statue, 2nd century CE, Egypt (Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna: I 687). *Four-headed Sphinx* 2020.
7. Marble herma, ancient Greek culture, 4th century BCE, Pons Fabricius, Rome. *Four-faced herma* 2020.

8. View towards the two hermai on Pons Fabricius, date of the bridge – 1st century BCE, Rome. Photograph: *Four-faced herma* 2020.
9, 10. Alabaster container (alabastron), Etruscan culture, Phoenician product (?), 7th – 6th century BCE, Vulci (?), Italy. S. Haynes, *An Etruscan*; photography: *An Etruscan Alabaster* 2020.
11. Marble statue, second half of the 2nd century CE, Appia, Beşkarış Hüyük, Turkey. *Monumenta* (Vol. X) *1993,* no. 53.
12. Relief slab, marble, 2nd – 3rd century CE, Eskişehir (Eskişehir Museum), Turkey. N. Eda Akyürek Şahin, *Eskişehir'den*, 8 – Fig. 3a.

G40
1. Stone pillar with 4 faces, conceptual reconstruction, 12th century CE, Bogolyubovo, Vladimir, Russia. Г. К. Вагнер, *Скульптура*, 93 – Рис. 58.
2. Stone pillar with 4 faces, 12th century CE, Bogolyubovo, Vladimir, Russia. *Четырехликая капитель* 2020.
3. Stone Idol, 7th – 8th century CE, spolia in the circular church in Plaveč, Moravia (Moravská galerie, Brno, Czechia: E 303). *Torzo* 2020.
4. Stone idol, ca. 10th century CE, Husyatyn, valley of the Zbruch river, Ternopil Oblast, Ukraine (Kraków Archaeological Museum, Poland). Drawing: Н. Чаусидис, *Митските*, 475 – Т. CIX: 2 (according to published photographs: G. Leńczyk, *Światowid*, T. II; T. III; Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Руси*, Рис. 50, 51).
5. Stone idol, 4th – 5th century CE, Ivankivtsi, Kamianets-Podilskyi Raion, Ukraine. И. С. Винокур, Р. В. Забашта, *Монументальна*, 66 – Рис.1: 5.

G41
1. Bone object, Middle Ages, Uppland, Sweden. *Резьба по кости* 2020. (probably the same object as the following one)
2. Bone object, 10th century CE, Tunby, parish of St. Ilian, Västmandland, Sweden. J. P. Lamm, *On the Cult*, 228 – Fig. 22.
3. Object carved in amber, Middle Ages (?), Skåne, Sweden. J. P. Lamm, *On the Cult*, 229 – Fig. 27.
4. Painted decoration from a medieval manuscript, details, 14th century CE, Novgorod, Russia. Н. К. Голейзовский, *Семантика*, 212 – Рис. 103.
5. Bone object, 10th century CE, Väsby, parish of Vallentuna, Uppland (Swedish History Museum, Stockholm), Sweden. J. P. Lamm, *On the Cult*, 228 – Fig. 24.
6. Bone object, 10th century CE, Väsby, parish of Vallentuna, Uppland (Swedish History Museum, Stocjholm), Sweden. *Halla* 2020.
7, 8, 9. Miniature idol, stone, 9th – 10th century CE, Kouřim (Regional Museum, Kolín), Szechia. *Pagan idol from Kouřim* 2020.

G42
1. Wooden object, 12th century CE, Svenborg, Denmark. N. Profantová, M. Profant, *Encyklopedie*, 212; photograph: *Halla* 2020.
2. Object made from deer antler, Middle Ages, "Davina", Čučer, Skopje, RN Macedonia. E. Maneva, *A pagan*, back cover of the journal.
3. Object made from deer antler, 10th century CE, Preslav, Bulgaria. Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Руси*, 357 – Рис. 68.
4. Bone object, Middle Ages, Wiślica, Busko-Zdrój, Poland. Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Руси*, 357 – Рис. 68.
5. Wooden pillar, 12th – 13th century CE, Riga, Latvia. А. В. Цауне, *Антропоморфные*, 131 – Рис. 32: 3.
6. Wooden columnar object, 12th – 13th century CE, Riga, Latvia. С. В. Трусов, *О Вильнюсе*, Рис. 4.
7. Bronze figurine, Middle Ages, Staraya Ryazan, Russia. *Рязанский идол* 2020.
8. Bronze figurine, Middle Ages, surroundings of Stavropol, Krasnodar Krai, Russia. В. К. Гриб, В. В. Давыденко, *Новые*, 366 – Рис. 5.
9. Antler mouthpiece of an instrument, Middle Ages, Wolin (Muzeum Regionalne im. Andrzeja Kaubego w Wolinie: W3/2012/S/492), Poland. A. Janowski, *W wolińskim*, 27 – No. 36.
10. Miniature bronze idol, Middle Ages, Perm, Russia. J. P. Lamm, *On the Cult*, 229 – Fig. 27.
11. Bronze pin, 5th century CE, Hagested, Region Zealand, Denmark. T. K. Ruffin, *Sutton Hoo*, 29 – Fig. 13.

G43
1, 2. Scepter in the form of a sharpening tool made of stone and metal, 7th century CE, Sutton Hoo, Woodbridge, UK. *Whetstone* 2020.
3. Wooden cult object in the form of a whetstone, 8th – 9th century CE, Wolin, Poland. A. Milošević, *Slika*, 58 – Sl. 40.
4. Stone mold for casting a bronze socket for implanting a whetstone, Wolin, Poland. *Из раскопок Волина* 2020.
5. Stone mold for casting bronze objects, Middle Ages, Szczecin, Poland (Pommersches Landesmuseum, Greifswald, Germany). *Поморский музей* 2020.

6. Bronze socket for implanting a whetstone, Middle Ages, Wolin ("Muzeum Regionalne", Wolin), Poland. J. P. Lamm, *On the Cult*, 224 – Fig. 9.
7, 8. Stone mold for casting metal objects, Middle Ages, Szczecin, Poland. J. P. Lamm, *On the Cult*, 223 – Fig. 6.
9. Bronze pin with a decorative head, Viking period, Praestegarden, Bodin (Bergen University Museum), Norway. J. P. Lamm, *On the Cult*, pins: 230 – Fig. 28.

G44
1. Wooden drum, ethnography of the Punum people, Gabon. *Punu Drum* 2020.
2. Wooden helmet, ethnography of the Fang people, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon. *Fang* 2020.
3. Ceramic vessel with four painted faces, 13th – 15th century CE, Casas Grandes, Chihuahua, Mexico (Metropolitan: 1979.206.1171). *Jar with Four Faces* 2020.
4. Ceramic vessel, "Moche" culture, 4th century CE, Peru. *Stirrup Vessel* 2020, (Catalog Number: AB0319-1571).
5. Ceramic vessel, "Moche" culture, 1st – 8th century CE, Peru. *Moche* 2020.
6. Bronze head of the Buddha with four faces, a modern replica, Borneo (?). *Four-Faced Buddha* 2020.
7. Wooden figurine, ethnography of the Ashanti or Ewe people, territory of Benin, Togo or Ghana. *Statue Mami Wata* 2020.
8. Wooden container for tobacco, ethnography of the Bambara people, Mali. *Muz. afr. umetnosti* 1989, 144 – Sl. 146.
9. Wooden pillar, Taiwu, Kaviyangan, Taiwan. *Paiwan* 2019.

G45
1. Cross-shaped metal plaque decorated with gold and enamel, Pre-Columbian cultures of America. *Precolumbian faience* 2020.
2. Motif from folk embroidery, ethnography, Bulgaria. Е. Петева, *Животински*, 128 – Обр. 4.
3. Bronze gilded cross, 8th – 9th century CE, Ždrijac, Nin, Dalmatia. J. Belošević, *Materijalna*, T.XLIV: 11.
4. Cross-shaped applique, 8th – 9th century CE, Mikulčice, Czechia. A. Milošević, *Slika*, 62 – Sl. 46;
5. Metal applique, 5th – 4th century BCE, Weiskirchen, Ldkr. Merzig-Wadern, Germany. S. Seiffert, *Die Fürstengräber*, 4 – Abb. 7.
6. Cross made of gold sheet metal, Early Middle Ages, Milano, Italy. G. Haseloff, *Die Langobardischen*, 151 – Abb. 5.
7. Cross made of gold sheet metal, Early Middle Ages, Calvisano, Brescia, Italy. G. Haseloff, *Die Langobardischen*, 152 – Abb. 6.
8. Cross-shaped applique, 9th century CE, Blatnica, Slovakaia. J. Ковачевић, *Аварски*, 134 – Сл. 75.
9. Tetramorph, fresco, 16th century CE, church of St. Nicholas, village of Zrze, Prilep, RN Macedonia. А. Василески, *Претставата*.

G46
Luristan bronze pins with an openwork head, details with anthropomorphic or anthropo-zoomof head at the bottom of the composition:
1. (LACMA: M.76.97.211). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
2. (LACMA: M.76.97.184). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
3. (LACMA: M.76.97.251). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
4. (LACMA: M.76.97.182). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
5. (LACMA: M.76.97.185). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
6. (LACMA: M.76.97.205). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
7. (Collection Godard: 210). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 142 – Fig. 117.
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8. Luristan standard, detail (Metropolitan: 1980.324.5). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 147, 148, No. 230; the whole object: C24: 3.

G47
Luristan bronze pins with a discoid head:
1. A. Godard, *The Art*, 54 – Fig. 30.
2. Detail, (LACMA). A. Godard, *The Art*, 60 – Fig. 44; color photo: LACMA. *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020, accession number: M.76.97.133.
4. Detail, Surkh Dum, (1319 AH), Luristan (National Museum of Iran, Tehran). S. Ayazi, *Luristan*, cat. 40, (museum no. 7099); the rest of the object: C6: 4.
5. (Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal). Ph. Verdier, *Les bronzes*, 45 – Fig. 30 (1945. Dm. 14).
6, 7. Details. G. L. Winthrop Collection. H. A. Potratz, *Scheibenkopfnadeln*, 45 – Abb. 3.
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3. Luristan bronze situla (Collection David-Weill). P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, 52 – No. 83 (1931 no. 181).

G48

Luristan bronze pins with a decorative part in the form of a zoomorphic or zooanthropomorphic head:

1. (Ashmolean: 1951. 261). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 51: 319.
2. (Ashmolean: 1951. 281). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 51: 320.
3. (Ashmolean: 1965. 805). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 51: 323.
4. (Ashmolean: 1951. 280). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 51: 321.
5. (Ashmolean: 1952. 243). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 51: 322.
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6. Detail from a scene on a Luristan bronze covering for a quiver (Metropolitan: 41.156). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 192, 193 – No. 308; the whole scene: F5: 3.
7. Miniature terracotta figurine, transition between the Persian and Hellenistic periods, 5th – 2nd century BCE, Maresha, Israel. A. Erlich, *Double Face*, 28 – Fig. 4.
8, 9. Miniature terracotta figurine, transition between the Persian and Hellenistic periods, 5th – 2nd century BCE, Maresha, Israel. A. Erlich, *Double Face*, 28 – Fig. 5.
10. Luristan standard (?), *Idole tub. du Luristan* 2020.
11. Stone relief of Vishnu Vishvarupa, 9th century CE, Changu Narayan temple, Bhaktapur District, Nepal. *Vishvarupa* 2020.
12. Luristan standard. *Quadruple* 2020.

G49

Fibulae, Early Middle Ages:

1. Schwarzrheindorf, Landkr. Bon, Germany. H. Kühn, Die *germanischen*, Taf. 53: 194a.
2. Karlich, Kr. Koblenz, Germany. H. Kühn, *Die germanischen*, Taf. 23: 79.
3. Andernach, Kr. Mayen, Germany. H. Kühn, *Die germanischen*, Taf. 10: 35.
4. Marchelepot, Somme department, Hauts-de-France, France. A. Koch, *Bügelfibeln*, 2, Taf. 21: 3.

Luristan standards:

5. (Ashmolean: 1969. 258). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 38: 191A.
7. (Metropolitan: 30.97.10). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 152, No. 242.
8. M. Malekzadeh et al, *Fouilles 2005-2006*, 86 – Fig. 26: Type B.
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6. Wooden pillar, Middle Ages, Riga, Latvia. А. В. Цауне, *Антропоморфные*, 131 – Рис. 32: 3; photograph: *Рижский кумир* 2020.
9. Luristan bronze pin with a discoid head, detail. A. Godard, *The Art*, 54 – Fig. 30; the whole composition: G42: 1.
10. Representation on a shield, bronze biga, Etruscan culture, 6th century BCE, Monteleone di Spoleto, Perugia, Italy. *Klasična* 1978*, II dio*, 50.

G50

1. Fresco by Giovanni da Modena (1409-1455 CE), San Petronio, Bologna, Italy. C. G. Jung (i dr.), *Čovjek*, 80; *Scalarchives* 2020, Code: 0062180.
2. Fresco by Fra Angelico, 1441-1442 CE, Crucifixion between the Virgin and St Dominic, Convent of San Marco, Florence, Italy. *Голгофа* 2020.
3. Detail of a painting by Alberto Sotio, Crucifixion, 1187 CE, Spoleto Catedral, Italy. *Sotio's Christus* 2019.
4. Fra Angelico, The Crucifixion with Saint Nicholas and Saint Francis, 1435 CE, skull of Adam on the Hill of Golgotha. *Fra Angelico* 2020.
5. Facade with bifora, church of San Pietro, 12th – 13th century CE, Tuscania, Lazio, Italy. *Le due bifore* 2020.
6. Representation on an amulet, Middle Ages, Preslav, Bulgaria. Р. Рашев, *За езическия*, 132 – Обр. 3: а.
7. Motif from stone plastics, 12th century CE, church of the Studenica Monastery, Serbia. J. Магловски, *Студенички*, 20 – Сл. 6.
8. Motif painted on an ancient Greek vessel, Attica (Louvre). M. Gimbutas, *The Living*, 25 – Fig. 16: b.

G51

Roman coins with a representation of a bifrons:

1. Bronze as, Roman Republic, Q. Titius, ca. 90 BCE. *Q. Titius. As* 2020.
2. Bronze as, Roman Republic, 3rd century BCE. *Coin Week* 2020.
3. Silver denarius, Roman Republic, 119 BCE. *Janus Roma Trophy* 2020.
4. Bronze medallion of Commodus, possibly struck for New Year's Day 187 CE. *Coin Week* 2020.
5. Silver denarius, Roman Republic,114 – 113 BCE. *Roman Republic Coin* 2020.
6. Silver coin, didrachm or quadrigatus, Roman Republic, ca. 225 – 212 BCE. *Quadrigatus* 2020.
9. Coin "aes grave", cast at Volterra, Etruria, after ca. 350 BCE. A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 384 – Fig. 291.
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7. Two-faced head of Janus, stone (Vatican Museums, Rome). *Janus* 2019.
8. Two-faced head of Janus, terracotta, 2nd century BCE, Vulci (Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia, Rome), Italy. *Testa di Giano* 2020.

G52
Coins, Roman Empire:
1. Bronze sestertius, Nero, ca. 54 – 68 CE. Drawing: F. Barenghi, *The temple*.
2. Bronze sestertius, Nero, ca. 54 – 68 CE. Photograph: F. Barenghi, *The temple*.
3. Gold (aureus), Nero, ca. 64 – 66 CE. Photograph: F. Barenghi, *The temple*.
4. Gold (aureus), Commodus, 186 – 187 CE. *Commodus* 2020.
5. Gold (aureus), Commodus, 186 – 187 CE. *Commodus* 2019.
6. Silver (denarius), Augustus. A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 357 – Fig. 244.
7. Figure of Jupiter stands with thunderbolt and sceptre underneath an arch, part of a Roman bronze lamp. A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 366 – Fig. 264.
8. Roman bronze medallion, Commodus. A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 365 – Fig. 261.
9. Engraved carnelian, Greek work of Hellenistic date (collection in Berlin). A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 385 – Fig. 292.
10. Schematic reconstruction of the Arch of Janus Quadrifrons, 312 – 337 CE, Velabrum, Forum Boarium, ancient Rome. *Constantine Arch* 2020.
11. Arch of Janus Quadrifrons, 312 – 337 CE, Velabrum, Forum Boarium, ancient Rome. *Roma, Arco di Giano* 2020.

G53
1. Medallion of Commodus, Roman period, 2nd century CE, A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 371 – Fig. 276.
2. Medallion of Commodus, Roman period, 2nd century CE, A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 372 – Fig. 278.
3. Miniature plastic cast from bronze, Iron Age, "Villanova" culture, Italy. O. J. Brendel, *Etruscan*, 61.
4. Miniature plastic cast from bronze, Iron Age, "Villanova" culture, Italy (Albert L. Hartog Collection, New York). *A Proto-Etruscan* 2020.
5. Luristan bronze pin with an openwork head (Metropolitan: 30.97.16). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 178.
6. Luristan standard, detail (Collection Godard: 116). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 101 – Fig. 81; the whole object: C25:1.
7. Object cast from bronze, Old Babylonian period, ca. 2000 – 1600 BCE, Mesopotamia. *Plaque* 2019.
8. Three-dimensional cubic-hemispherical model of the universe with the sky as a zoomorphized circle, the earth as a vulva, and the cosmic axis as a personalized phallus. Scheme: Nikos Chausidis.

G54
Luristan standards:
1, 2. (LACMA: M.76.97.4). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
8. Detail (Metropolitan: 1996.82.1). *Top for standard (MET)* 2020; the whole object: C17: 1.
9. Detail (Collection Godard: 119). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 99 – Fig. 80, 102; the whole object: D2: 6.
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3. "Decorative" head from a Luristan bronze pin (Art Institute of Chicago, USA). J. Michelet, *Luristan*, 93 – Fig. 4.
4. "Decorative" head from a Luristan bronze pin (Rietberg Museum,Zürich). B. Goldman, *A Luristan*, Pl. I: 1.
5. Metal plaque, 7th century CE, Velestino, Thessaly, Greece. J. Werner, *Slaw. Bronzefiguren*, T. 3: 4.
6, 7. Electrum plaque, ornament (sema) on a shield, Scythian culture, 6th century BCE, Vettersfelde, Province of Brandenburg, modern Witaszkowo, near Gubin, Poland (Altes Museum, Berlin). *Scythian Gold* 2020.
10. Golden applique, Scythian culture, Kul-Oba, Crimea. *A gold ornament* 2020.
11. Gold applique for the forehead of a horse, detail, Scythian culture, Velyka Cimbalka, Velyka Bilozerka, Zaporizhia Oblast, Ukraine. *Курган* 2020; a larger part of the object: D35: 4.

X. CHARACTER AND PURPOSE OF THE LURISTAN STANDARDS

H1
1. Luristan standard with a support. C. Kevokrian, *L`art*, 114. Photomontage with the addition of a wooden pole: Nikos Chausidis.
2, 3. Virtual garniture (combination: Nikos Chausidis). Standard: N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 191, no. 191; support (Collection Godard: No. 106). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 92 – Fig. 74; cross-section: Nikos Chausidis.
4. Pin with a discoid head, detail (Collection Godard: No. 218). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 157 – Fig. 128; standard: *Idoli* 1986, 50 – No. 54b; support: (Collection Godard: 132). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 118 – Fig. 95; drawing of the standard and the whole hypothetical combination: Nikos Chausidis.
5. Standard: *Idoli* 1986, 50 – No. 54b; support: (Collection Godard: 132). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 118 – Fig. 95; drawing of the standard and the whole hypothetical combination: Nikos Chausidis.

H2

Luristan standard supports:

1. (Collection Godard: 131). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 121 – Fig. 97.
2. (Collection Godard: 132). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 118 – Fig. 95.
5. (Ashmolean: 1965. 783). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 39: 209.
6. (Collection Godard: 138). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 121 – Fig. 97.

Luristan standards:

3. *Cast br. finial* 2020.
4. (Collection Godard: 106 A). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 92 – Fig. 74.
7. Standard: Khatunban, Luristan. E. Haerinck et al, *Finds*, 148 – Pl. 8: Kh. B6-1, 2; support: (Collection Godard: 132). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 118 – Fig. 95; pin with a discoid head: A. Godard, *The Art*, 61 – Fig. 45; combination: Nikos Chausidis.
8. Sangtarashan, Luristan (Falakolaflak Museum, Khorramabad), Iran. O. Oudbashi et al, *Archaeolmetallurgical*, 171 – Pl. 4: d. (ST84 E.095).
9. (Metropolitan: 32.161.20). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 146, No. 226.
10. *Arts d'Orient* 2013, No. 54.

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11. Luristan bronze tube with a head at the top (Royal Musums of Art and History, Brussels: IR.0553). *Idol (IR.0553)* 2020.

H3

1. Luristan garniture with standard, support and pin with a discoid head (Louvre). *Сокровища* 2020.
2. Luristan garniture composed of a bronze pin with an openwork head and a support (Louvre). *Etendard avec héros* 2020.
3. Bronze signum, Roman period, 3rd century CE, ancient Brigetio, Hungary. F. Jenő, *Religions*, 85 (No. 114).
4. Virtual garniture (combination: Nikos Chausidis). Pin with a discoid head: N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 157 – no. 147; standard: (Barakat Collection: OF.025). *Bronze Standard Finial* 2020; support: (Collection Godard: 126). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 92 – Fig. 74.
5. Virtual garniture (combination: Nikos Chausidis). Pin with a discoid head: E. F. Schmidt et al, *The Holmes*, Pl. 265: c; standard: N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 192, 193 (no. 193); drawing according to a photograph: Nikos Chausidis (see E10: 2, 3); support: (Collection Godard: No. 138). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 119 – Fig. 96.
6. Luristan standard with a conical support. *Rampant bulls* 2018.

H4

1. Assumption on the possible fixation of the standard to the support with cords (combination: Nikos Chausidis). Drawing of the standard: Nikos Chausidis, according to: *Idoli* 1986, 50 – No. 54b; drawing of the support: (Collection Godard: 132). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 118 – Fig. 95.
2. Assumption on the possible fixation of the standard to the support with cords (combination: Nikos Chausidis). Drawing of the standard: Nikos Chausidis, according to: *Idoli* 1986, 50 – No. 54b; drawing of the support: (Collection Godard: 132). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 118 – Fig. 95.
3. Luristan bronze pin with an openwork head (Staatliches Museum für Völkerkunde, München, Germany: VK 31-15-4). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 69, 70, Kat. 140.
4. Luristan bronze pin with an openwork head (Staatliches Museum für Völkerkunde, München, Germany: VK 50-1-9). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 69-71, Kat. 141.
5. Luristan standard with a bottle-shaped support. *Elamite Bronze* 2020. Addition of tassels and beads: Nikos Chausidis.

H5

1. Relief scene from a stone altar, temple of Ishtar, ca. 1230 BCE, Assur, Al-Shirqat, Iraq (Ancient Orient Museum, Istanbul, Turkey). *I Placed* 2020.
2. Wall relief, stone, North Palace of Ashurbanipal, Nineveh, 668 – 627 BCE. T. Ornan, *Idols*, 96 – Fig. 2.
3. Assyrian Standard, Khorsabat. G. Rawlinson, *The Seven*, Pl. CVIII: Fig. 3.
4. Assyrian Standard. A Macgeorge, *Flags*, Fig. 7.
5. Bronze top of a military standard, Luristan (Louvre). F. Sarre, *Altpersische*, 196.
6. Proposed reconstruction of a Roman carriage with marked positions of bronze busts of Heracles, Delčevo, RN Macedonia. М. Јованов, *Римска*, 358 – Сл. 1.
7. Bronze bust of Heracles, parts of a Roman carriage, Delčevo, RN Macedonia. М. Јованов, *Римска*, 360 – Сл. 3.
8. Bronze figurine, Roman period, ancient city of Heraclea Lyncestis, Bitola, RN Macedonia. *Anc. casting* 2020.
9. Luristan standard fixed to a miniature bronze chariot supplemented by bronze vessels (Reza Abbasi Museum, Tehran). *Bronze Votive* 2020.

H6

1. Ceramic model of a zoomorphized chariot, Iron Age, Este, Italy. A. Hänsel, *Die Kultwagen*, 275 – Abb. 2: 3.
2. Bronze model of a chariot, "Urnfield" culture, 1300 – 800 BCE, Acholshausen, Bavaria, Germany. H. Müller-Karpe, *Handbuch. IV*, Taf. 429: 1.
3. Bronze model of a chariot, Late Bronze Age, Scallerup, Denmark. H. Müller-Karpe, *Handbuch. IV*, Taf. 521: C5.
4. Ceramic model of a chariot with four vessels, "Amlash" culture, ca.1000 BCE (Milwaukee Public Museum: N13847/20157). *Four small* 2020.
5. Luristan standard fixed to a miniature bronze chariot supplemented by vessels, (Reza Abbasi Museum, Tehran). *Bronze Votive* 2020.
6. Zoomorphic ceramic vessel on wheels, Geometric period, Aegean (Louvre). J. Bouzek, *Greece*, Pl.11; photograph: *Mule* 2020.
7. Bronze model of a chariot, 7th century BCE, Bujoru, Teleorman, Romania. *Carul* 2020.
8. Bronze model of a chariot, Szászvárosszek, Orăştie, Transylvania (Naturhistorisches Museum, Vienna). G. Kossack, *Studien*, Taf. 4: 7; photograph: *Bronze tank waggon* 2020.
9. Bronze model of a chariot, Iron Age, 7th century BCE, Glasinačko Polje, Sokolac, Bosnia and Herzegovina (Naturhistorisches Museum, Viena). *Vogelwagen* 2020.
10. Bronze model of a zoomorphized chariot, "Villanova" Culture, 7th century BCE, Tarquinia, Viterbo, Lazio, Italy. D. Strong, *Etrurski*, 192 – Sl. 2.

H7

1. Luristan bronze pitcher with a zoomorphic handle (Ashmolean Museum: 1951. 322). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Fig. 27: 522.
2. Luristan bronze pitcher, detail with the zoomorphic handle (Ashmolean Museum: 1951. 322). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 82: 522.
3. Luristan bronze situla with a pair of zoomorphic handles. D. Delfino, *Um conjunto*, 124 – Fig. 4.
4. Luristan bronze situla with handle supplemented by a pair of animals (Cincinnati, USA). R. Ghirshman, *The Art*, 78 – Fig. 103.
5. Standard: Sangtarashan, Luristan (Falakolaflak Museum, Khorramabad), Iran. O. Oudbashi et al, *Archaeolmetallurgical*, 171 – Pl. 4: d. (ST84 E.095); situla: Sangtarashan, Luristan. M. Malekzadeh et al, *Fouilles 2005-2006*, 140 – Fig. 18: 192; combination of the two objects: Nikos Chausidis.
6. Luristan bronze vessel with zoomorphic handles. *Luristan br. vessel* 2020.
7. Luristan bronze pin with a decorative head (LACMA: M.76.97.233). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
8. Luristan bronze pin with a discoid head (Louvre). *Сокровища* 2020.
9. Bronze pendant, group "Macedonian bronzes", Iron Age, Kuç i Zi, Korçë, Albania. I. Kilian-Dirlmeier, *Anhänger*, Taf. 72: 1290; photograph: Z. Andrea, *Kultura*, (cover page).
10. Bronze pendant, group "Macedonian bronzes", Iron Age, unknown site, Northern Greece (Michael C. Carlos Museum, Atlanta, USA). *Michael C. Carlos Museum* 2013.
11. Luristan bronze pin with head in the form of a vegetative fruit (Ashmolean: 1951. 267). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 48: 299.
12. Luristan bronze pin with head in the form of a vegetative fruit (Ashmolean: 1951. 266). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 48: 302.

H8

Sangtashan sanctuary, Iron Age, Luristan (Falakolaflak Museum, Khorramabad), Iran:
1. General view of the site from north. Z. Hashemi, *The Bronze*, Fig. 2.
2. Plan of Phase 1, votive deposits. Z. Hashemi, *The Bronze*, Fig. 3.
3. Phase 1, architecture and objects' location. Z. Hashemi, *The Bronze*, Fig. 3.
4. Phase 1, objects' location in assemblage no. 6. Z. Hashemi, *The Bronze*, Fig. 4.
5. Phase 1, Lot 6, in place, seen from the south-west, stage 1 of the excavation. M. Malekzadeh et al, *Fouilles 2005-2006*, 135 – Pl. 13: a.
6. Phase 1, Lot 1, in place, two iron daggers planted vertically in the ground. M. Malekzadeh et al, *Fouilles 2005-2006*, 127 – Pl. 5: a.

H9

Sangtashan sanctuary, Luristan, Iron Age, finds from Phase 1, Lot 6 (Falakolaflak Museum, Khorramabad), Iran:
1. Bronze standard. O. Oudbashi et al, *Archaeolmetallurgical*, 171 – Pl. 4: d. (ST84 E.095).
4. Bronze dagger. M. Malekzadeh et al, *Fouilles 2005-2006*, 135 – PL. 17: 169.
5. Bronze goblet. M. Malekzadeh et al, *Fouilles 2005-2006*, 135– PL. 17: 170.
6. Bronze pitcher. M. Malekzadeh et al, *Fouilles 2005-2006*, 141 – PL. 19: 210.

7. Bronze pitcher. M. Malekzadeh et al, *Fouilles 2005-2006*, 141– PL. 19: 172.
8. Bronze pouring pot. M. Malekzadeh et al, *Fouilles 2005-2006*, 141– PL. 19: 162.
9. Bronze pitcher. M. Malekzadeh et al, *Fouilles 2005-2006*, 141– PL. 19: 209.
10. Bronze standard. M. Malekzadeh et al, *Fouilles 2005-2006*, 141– PL. 19: 160.
11. Bronze situla. M. Malekzadeh et al, *Fouilles 2005-2006*, 141– PL. 19: 192.
12. Bronze pitcher. M. Malekzadeh et al, *Fouilles 2005-2006*, 141– PL. 19: 206.
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2. Bronze standard, Sangtashan sanctuary, Phase 1. Luristan (Falakolaflak Museum, Khorramabad), Iran. M. Malekzadeh et al, *Fouilles 2005-2006*, 86 – Fig. 26: Type A.
3. Bronze standard, Sangtashan sanctuary, Phase 1. Luristan (Falakolaflak Museum, Khorramabad), Iran. M. Malekzadeh et al, *Fouilles 2005-2006*, 86 – Fig. 26: Type B.

H10; H10a
Graveyard in Tattulban, Chinan, Luristan, tomb 4, Iron age III:
1. Funerary gifts from the tomb: ceramic vessels. L. Vanden Berghe, *Excavations*, 265 – Fig. 1 – 4.
2. Plan of the tomb before its opening. L. Vanden Berghe, *Excavations*, 265.
3. Plan of the tomb after its opening with the position of the skeleton and the grave goods. L. Vanden Berghe, *Excavations*, 265.
4. Longitudinal cross-section of the tomb. L. Vanden Berghe, *Excavations*, 265.
5. Transverse cross-section of the tomb. L. Vanden Berghe, *Excavations*, 265.
6. Iron dagger with bronze nails. L. Vanden Berghe, *Excavations*, 265 – Fig. 10.
7. Bronze standard, photograph. Tattulban, Luristan. L. Vanden Berghe, *Excavations*, 267.
8. Bronze standard with a support, drawing. Tattulban, Luristan, B. Overlaet, The *Chronology*, 33 – Pl. 14: 11.
9. Bronze circular shield and iron arrowheads. L. Vanden Berghe, *Excavations*, 265 – Fig. 5, 11 – 17.
Gul Khanan Murdah necropolis, Luristan, grave no. 80, Iron Age III (800/750 – 650 BCE):
10. Bronze and iron weapons deposited in the grave. E. Haerinck, B. Overlaet, *Djub-i Gauhar*, Pl. 107.
11. Short tubular object made of bronze, perhaps part of a support. E. Haerinck, B. Overlaet, *Djub-i Gauhar*, 170 – ill. 39: 80-9.
12. Bronze bottle-shaped support. E. Haerinck, B. Overlaet, *Djub-i Gauhar*, 170 – ill. 39: 80-8.
13. Construction of the grave and position of the finds. E. Haerinck, B. Overlaet, *Djub-i Gauhar*, Pl. 107.
14, 15. Bronze bottle-shaped support, photograph of the whole object and detail. E. Haerinck, B. Overlaet, *Djub-i Gauhar*, Pl. 126.
16. Short tubular object made of bronze, perhaps part of a support. E. Haerinck, B. Overlaet, *Djub-i Gauhar*, Pl. 125.

H11; H11a
Graveyard in Bard-i Bal, Pusht-i Kuh, Luristan, collective tomb 17, Iron Age IB – IIA:
1. Selection of burialgoods from the tomb. B. Overlaet, The *Chronology*, 25 – Pl. 6: 1 – 10.
2. Bronze standard with a support from the tomb. B. Overlaet, The *Chronology*, 25 – Pl. 6: 3
3. Cross-section of the tomb construction. B. Overlaet, The *Chronology*, 24 – Pl. 5.
4. Photograph with a view of the tomb construction after its opening. B. Overlaet, The *Chronology*, 24 – Pl. 5.
5. Plan of the tomb construction before its opening. B. Overlaet, The *Chronology*, 24 – Pl. 5.
6. Plan of the tomb construction after its opening. B. Overlaet, The *Chronology*, 24 – Pl. 5.
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7. Bronze standard, graveyard in Bard-i-Bal, Pusht-i Kuh, Luristan. B. Overlaet, The *Chronology*, 25 – Pl. 6: 11.
Chamahzi Mumah necropolis, Luristan, grave no. 53, Iron Age III (800/750 – 650 BCE):
8. Bronze and iron weapons deposited in the grave. E. Haerinck, B. Overlaet, *Chamahzi Mumah*, Fig. 49.
9. Bronze bottle-shaped support. E. Haerinck, B. Overlaet, *Chamahzi Mumah*, 30 – ill. 13.
10. Construction of the grave and position of the finds. E. Haerinck, B. Overlaet, *Chamahzi Mumah*, Fig. 48.
11. Photograph of the bronze support together with the iron statuette. E. Haerinck, B. Overlaet, *Chamahzi Mumah*, color plate I.

H12
1. Standard from tomb no. 6, graveyard in Khatunban, Luristan. Photograph: E. Haerinck et al, *Finds*, 148 – Pl. 8.
2 Standard from tomb no. 6, graveyard in Khatunban, Luristan. Drawings: E. Haerinck et al, *Finds*, 148 – Pl. 8: Kh. B6 – 1, 2.
3. Luristan bronze pin with an openwork head (Collection David-Weill: 1930 – 256). P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, No. 179.
4. Standard, Baba Jan, Luristan (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1985,1066a). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 118, 119, Kat. 244.
5. Standard, Baba Jan, Luristan. C. Goff, *Excavations*, Fig. 14: 26.

6. Virtual garniture (combination: Nikos Chausidis). Pin: (LACMA: M.76.97.182). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; standard: (LACMA: M.76.97.85). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; support: *Finial and Stand* 2020.

H13

Wooden distaffs, ethnography:

1. Lešok, Tetovo, RN Macedonia. M. Крстевска, *Колекцијата*, 38: 19.
2. Tenovo, Tetovo, RN Macedonia. M. Крстевска, *Колекцијата*, 38: 51.
3. Zdunje, Poreče, RN Macedonia. M. Крстевска, *Колекцијата*, 45: 142.
4. Konopište, Kavadarci, RN Macedonia. M. Крстевска, *Колекцијата*, 38: 25.
5. Brezno, Tetovo, RN Macedonia. M. Крстевска, *Колекцијата*, 27: 7.
7, 9. Balkan Peninsula. *Distaffs* 2013.
10, 11. Kynouria, Arcadia, Peloponnese, Greece. *Greece* 2013.
15. Photograph of a woman spinning while riding a donkey, Greece. *Greece* 2013.
16. Photograph of a girl spinning, ethnographic group Sarakatsani, Greece. *Costume* 2020.
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6. Pictorial representation of a thyrsus, ancient period. A. Reinach, *Thyrsus*, 289 – Fig. 6923.
8. Pictorial representation of a thyrsus, ancient period. A. Reinach, *Thyrsus*, 291 – Fig. 6929.
12, 13. Bronze conical object with a pair of elongated segments at the top, group "Macedonian bronzes", Iron Age, Orešani, Skopje, RN Macedonia. R. Vasić, *Srednja*, T.LXIX: 10; a cross-sectional drawing of the object planted on a pole: Н. Чаусидис, *Македонските*, 360 – В21: 3.
14. Modern wooden "finger distaff", photograph during use. *Fingerkunkel* 2020.

H14

1. Luristan standard, Philia, Volos, Thessaly (Archaeological Museum of Volos), Greece. S. G. Schmid, *Εισηγμένα*, 247 – Εικ. 2.
2. Part of a Luristan standard, Samos, Greece. O. W. Muscarella, *Archaeology*, 678 – Fig. 3.
3. Luristan standard, Axos, Crete, Greece. S. G. Schmid, *`Neue´ Luristanbronzen*, Taf. 6: 1.
4. Bronze object, middle of the 1st millennium BCE, Samos, Greece. P. R. S. Moorey, *Ancient Persian*, 192 – Fig. 2: 2.
5. Head from a decorative pin, Vathy, Samos, Greece. S. G. Schmid, *`Neue´ Luristanbronzen*, Taf. 7: 1.
6. Bronze pendant, Iron Age, Fortetsa, Crete, Greece. O. W. Muscarella, *Archaeology*, 677 – Fig. 1.
7, 8. Bronze pitcher, Samos, Greece. Photograph: O. W. Muscarella, *Archaeology*, 677 – Fig. 2; drawing: P. R. S. Moorey, *Ancient Persian*, 191 – Fig. 1.
9. Bronze object, 18th century BCE, Philia, Thessaly (Archaeological Museum of Volos), Greece. S. G. Schmid, *Εισηγμένα*, 247 – Εικ. 4.
10. Bronze bell (Asmolean: 1974, 357). O. W. Muscarella, *Archaeology*, 700 – Fig. 9.
11. Bronze bell, Samos, Greece. O. W. Muscarella, *Archaeology*, 697 – Fig. 1.
12, 13. Bronze pitcher, Sangtarashan, Luristan (Falakolaflak Museum, Khorramabad), Iran. M. Malekzadeh et al, *Fouilles 2005-2006*, 132 – PL. 10: 165.

H15

1. Map with the routes of movement of the Cimmerians: North Black Sea Region – Caucasus; Caucasus – Asia Minor – Ionia; One of the routes of the movement of oriental objects, pictorial motifs and other traditions: Iran – Syria – Cyprus – Aegean – Italy. (Nikos Chausidis)
2. Map with routes of movement of oriental objects, pictorial motifs and other traditions: Western Asia – Asia Minor / Cyprus – Aegean – continental Greece – Italy. (Nikos Chausidis)

H16

Scenes and motifs from cylinder seals, Western Asia:

1, 11. W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 117 (No. 335).
2, 10, 12. W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 408.
3. Cyprus. W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 344 (No. 1160).
4. (Metropolitan). W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 161 (No. 428).
5. (Metropolitan). W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 275 (No. 830).
6, 9. (Metropolitan). W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 161 (No. 424).
7, 8. (British Museum). W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 177 (No. 477).
13. Babylonian period (Pierpont Morgan Library, New York). W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 129 (No. 368b); the whole scene: F17: 6.
14. Babylonian period (Pierpont Morgan Library, New York). W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 129 (No. 368f); the whole scene: F17: 5.

H17

Motifs from cylinder seals, Western Asia:
1. (British Museum). W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 158 (No. 416).
2. (British Museum). W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 158 (No. 417).
3. (British Museum). W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 158 (No. 414).
4. Old Babylonian period, ca. 1841 – 1830 BCE, Larsa, Iraq. J. Black, A. Green, *Gods*, 19 – Fig. 13.
5. (J. Pierpont Morgan Library, New York). W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 321 (No. 1027b).
6. (Harvard: 1882). W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 79 (No. 212).
7. (Pierpont Morgan Library, New York). W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 165 (No. 440).
8. W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 320 (No. 1020).
9. (Metropolitan). W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 159 (No. 418).

H18

Motifs from cylinder seals, Western Asia:
1. W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 165 (No. 442).
2. W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 372: c.
4. (Hermitage). W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 159 (No. 418a).
5. (British Museum: 1945,1015.21). *Cylinder seal (British M.)* 2020.
6. Old Babylonian style, ca. 1900 – 1750 BCE. E. Porada, *Why Cylinder Seals*, 572 – Fig. 24.
7. *The Goddess Inanna* 2020.
8. Old Babylonian period, ca. 1841 – 1830 BCE, Larsa, Iraq. *Shadows* 2020.
9. (British Museum). *Old Babylonian* 2020.
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3. Terracotta relief, early 2nd millennium BCE, Eshnunna, Tell Asmar, Iraq (Louvre). *A relief* 2020.

H19

Scenes and motifs from cylinder seals, Western Asia:
1, 2. W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 402.
3. (Pierpont Morgan Library, New York). W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 240 (No. 719).
4, 5. (Vienna Museum). W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 78 (No. 210).
7, 9, 10. (Lord Southesk). W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 401 (No. 1305a).
Luristan standards:
6. *Tête d'étendard* 2020.
8. (Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, UK: 1982A2230). P. Watson, *Luristan*, 7, 8 – Fig. 3: 11.
11. (Princeton University Art Museum, USA). *Finial Princeton* 2020.

H20

Scenes and motifs from cylinder seals, Western Asia:
1, 2. (British Museum. W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 178 (No. 481).
5, 7. (Berlin, VA 220). W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 84 (No. 237).
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3. Luristan standard (Louvre). *Etendard* 2020.
4. Virtual garniture (combination: Nikos Chausidis). Openwork pin: (LACMA: M.76.97.233). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; standard: (Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, USA). *Ibex Standard* 2020.
6. Scene from a Lucanian red-figure krater, detail, ca. 380 – 360 BCE (Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe Hamburg, Germany: 2008-404). *Hermes* 2020.

H21

1, 2, 3. Transformations towards the hypothetical paradigm of a "caduceus" top depicted on a cylinder seal (no. 1): W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 408; reconstructions (2, 3): Nikos Chausidis.
4. Hypothetical paradigm of a "caduceus" top depicted on a cylinder seal. Drawing: Nikos Chausidis; original condition: British Museum. W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 177 (No. 477); real state of the whole motif and scene: H16: 7, 8.
Coins of the city of Hierapolis/Mabog, Syria, Roman period, 3rd century CE:
5. A. L. Frothingham, *Babylonian*, 208 – Fig. 40.
6. *Syria* 2020.
7. K. Butcher, *Two Syrian*, 284 – Fig. 11.
8. K. Butcher, *Two Syrian*, 284 – Fig. 13.
9. *Cyrrhestica* 2020.

10. Scene from the relief on the sacrificial vase of Gudea, Sumer, 22nd century BCE (Louvre). *The modern alchemist* 2020.
11. Sacrificial vase of Gudea, ruler of Lagash, Sumer, ca. 2150 BCE (Louvre). *Steatite* 2020.

H22
1, 2. Types of ancient kerykeia i.e. caducei, schematic representation. F. J. M. de Waele, *The magic*, table presented at the end of the monograph.
3. Structure of deoxyribonucleic acid. *Deoksiribonukleinska* 2020.
4. Mating of snakes. *Nature* 2020.
5. Twisting rainforest vines. *Rainforest* 2020.

H23
5 – 16. Basic types of ancient kerykeia i.e. caducei.
1-4. Hypothetical proto-models of the kerykeion (proto-kerykeion).
11, 12. Iconographic paradigms of the kerykeion (conceptual kerykeion).
(Schemes: Nikos Chausidis)

H24
1, 2. Part of the scene and detail from an Attic red-figure krater, ancient Hellenic culture, ca. 440 BCE (Metropolitan Museum: 28.57.23; Beazley Archive No. 214158). *The Return* 2020.
3. Scene from an Attic red-figure pelike, middle of 5th century BCE, Agrigento, Sicily, Italy. *Caduceus* 2020.
4. Scene from an Attic lekythos, ca. 475 BCE. *Caduceus* 2020.
5, 9. Gem and detail from the scene, Roman period, 2nd – 3rd century CE. *Rare Roman* 2020.
6, 7. Scene and detail from a ceramic pinax, ancient Hellenic culture, Corinthian product, 7th century BCE. J. Chittenden, *The Master*, Pl. XX: a.
8. Gem, Roman period, 2nd century CE (British Museum: G 420 / EA 56420). *Magical gem* 2020.
10. Marble statue of Hermanubis, Roman period, 1st – 2nd century CE (Vatican Museums). *Marble Statue* 2020.

H25
1. Seal of the alchemic laboratory, Middle Ages (?), Stif Neuburg, Heidelberg, Germany. A. Roob, *Alchemy*, 410.
2. Coin (denarius) of Gens Sanquinia, Roman period, 1st century BCE. *Coins of Gens Sanquinia* 2020.
3. Coin (denarius) of Domitian, Roman period, 88 CE. A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 377 – Fig. 284.
4. Lead weight with a representation of a caduceus, Roman period, 2nd – 1st century BCE. *A lead* 2020.
5. Lead weight with a representation of a kerykeion, ancient Greek culture (?). *Greek lead weight* 2020.
6. Detail of a bronze coin of the city of Ainos, ancient Hellenic culture, ca. 280 BCE. *Thrakien Ainos* 2020.
7. Detail of a silver coin (denarius) of Vespasian, Roman period, 69 – 79 CE. *Vespasian* 2020.
8. Detail of a bronze coin of the city of Menainon, Sicily, 240 – 190 BCE. *Greek Sicily* 2020.
9. Statue of Mercury, Roman period (Weissenburg Museum, Germany). *Weissenburg* 2020.
10. Upper part of a caduceus, early 5th century BCE (Dallas Museum of Art, USA: 1969.7). *Upper part of caduceus* 2020.
11. Photograph of Seraphim (Golubyatnikov), bishop of Yekaterinburg and Irbit with his episcopal crosier, early 20th century CE, Russia. *Странник* 2020.
12. Crosier of the Syriac Orthodox Bishop. *Кадуцей* 2020.
13. Episcopal crosier of the Ecumenical Patriarch. *Vestments* 2020.

H26
Kerykeia and caducei:
1. Circa 480 – 470 BCE, Syracuse, Sicily, Italy. *Hermes* 2020.
7. 2nd century CE (Minneapolis Institute of Art, USA: G241). *Caduceus (MIA)* 2020.
9. 350 – 420 BCE, Longane, Sicily, Italy (British Museum: GR 1975.8-10.3). *Кадуцей* 2020.
Motifs of so-called "caducei" on cylinder seals, Western Asia:
2. W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 408.
6. W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 117 (No. 335).
10. (Metropolitan). W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 161 (No. 424).
11. W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 408.
Luristan standards:
5. (Collection Godard: 106 A). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 92 – Fig. 74.
8. A. Godard, *Bronzes*, Pl. LIV: 202.
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3. Trident in the snake goddess temple, modern time, Tamil Nadu, South India. A. L. Allocco, *Fear*, 236 – Fig. 2; photograph of the rest of the object: H29: 5.
4. Detail (candelabrum or some other kind of cult object) from a coin (denarius) of Domitian, Roman period, 88 CE. A. B. Cook, *Zeus. II*, 377 – Fig. 284.

H27
1. Kerykeion, 4th century BCE, Basilicata, Metapont, Lucania, Italy (Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, Hamburg, Germany). *Heroldstab* 2020.
2. Bronze finial of a kerykeion, late 6th – early 5th century BCE (Metropolitan). *Kerykeion (MET)* 2020.
3. Scene from a bronze helmet, late 7th century BCE, Crete, Greece (Metropolitan: 1989.281.50). W. Burkert, *Structure*, 32 – Fig. 2.
4. Shiva trishul (trident) with damaru (small drum) on a stand, intended for worshiping and decoration in a temple of Shiva, contemporary object. *Shiva Trishul* 2020.
5. Ornament from a ritual bread, ethnography, Dere-Mahle, Ehlovo, Bulgaria. Д. Маринов, *Народна*, 376, Рис. 1н.
6. Detail from a coin of the city of Hierapolis/Mabog, Syria, Roman period, 3rd century CE.
A. L. Frothingham, *Babylonian*, 208 – Fig. 40; the whole coin: H21: 5.
7. Marble statue, Roman era, 190 CE, Ostia Antica, Italy (Biblioteca Vaticana). M. J. Vermaseren, *Corpus*, 143, 144 (Mon. 312), Fig. 85; drawing: *Мифы нар. мира. Том. 2*, 155 – Рис. 1.
8. Trishul in Sudh Mahadev Temple, Udhampur Kashmir, India. *Sudh Mahadev* 2020.
9. Trishul in Sudh Mahadev Temple, Udhampur Kashmir, India. *Publicinsta* 2020.
10. Scene from the relief on the sacrificial vase of Gudea, Sumer, 22nd century BCE (Louvre). *The modern alchemist* 2020.
11. Mating snakes. *Mating snakes* 2020.
12. Ceramic seal, 3rd millennium BCE, Harappa (Indus Valley Civilization gallery of National Museum, New Delhi), India. *Seal – Mohenjo-daro* 2020.

H28
1, 2. Cylinder seal and impression, 4100 – 3000 BCE, Uruk, Mesopotamia. (Louvre: MNB 1167). *Uruk* 2020.
Relief scenes from a Luristan bronze quiver (Louvre: 10 25.585):
3. P. Amiet, *Un carquois*, Pl.XVI: 4.
4. P. Amiet, *Un carquois*, Pl.XVI: 2.
5. P. Amiet, *Un carquois*, Pl.XVI: 3.
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6. Knife with a stone blade, Naqada III period, ca. 3100 BCE, Gebel-Tarif, Egypt. *Gebel el-Arak* 2020.
7. Detal from a Hittite seal. E. Herzfeld, *Iran*, 165 – Fig. 280.
8. Detal of a seal impression, Mesopotamia, Protoliterate Period. H. Frankfort, *The Art*, 34 – Fig. 25: D.
9. Palette of King Narmer, Predynastic period, ca. 3000 – 2920 BCE, Hierakonpolis (Egyptian Museum, Cairo), Egypt. A. Calvert, *Palette*.
10. Two Dogs Palette, ca. 3100 BCE, Hierakonpolis, Egypt (Ashmolean). A. Calvert, *Palette*.

H29
1. The three nadis (Suṣumnā, Iḍā and Piṅgalā) and the six chakras within the human body, a modern scheme. *The Nadis* 2020.
2. The lateral nadis (Iḍā and Piṅgalā) represented as intertwined snakes, a modern scheme. *Discover* 2020.
3. Color on silk, Tang Dynasty, mid 8th century CE, Astana Cemetery, Turpan, Xinjiang, China (Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region Museum). *Fuxi and Nüwa* 2020.
4. Pictorial representation on a ceramic brick, Han dynasty, 206 BCE – 220 CE, China. О. Е. Акимов, *Мифы*, Рис. 1.
5. Stone nāga image with trident in the snake goddess temple, modern times, Tamil Nadu, South India. A. L. Allocco, *Fear*, 236 – Fig. 2.
6. Snake relief, Tanjore Temple, Tamil Nadu, South India. *Naga Cult* 2020.
7. Stone stele depicting Siva with two cobras, 17th – 18th century CE, South India. *A carved stone* 2020.
8. Nagakal/serpent stones, South India. *Kala Ksetram* 2020.
9. Stone stele, Velapur temple, Solapur, Maharashtra, India. *Snake in stone* 2020.

H30
1. Hermes and sphixnes, black-figure olpe, ancient Hellenic culture (National Museum, Athens: 19159). F. Diez De Velasco, *Serpentine*, 18 – Fig. 2
2. Attic black-figure olpe, made in Athens, ca. 600 – 580 BCE, Nola, Campania, southern Italy (British Museum: GR 1867.5-8-1010; Vase B 32). *Hermes* 2020.

3, 4. Scene and detail from a bronze helmet, late 7th century BCE, Crete, Greece (Metropolitan: 1989.281.50). W. Burkert, *Structure*, 32 – Fig. 2.
5. Bronze helmet, late 7th century BCE, Crete, Greece (Metropolitan: 1989.281.50). *Bronze helmet* 2020.
6. Scene from the relief on the sacrificial vase of Gudea, Sumer, 22nd century BCE (Louvre). *The modern alchemist* 2020.
7. Motif from a cylinder seal, Babylonian period (Pierpont Morgan Library, New York). W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 129 (No. 368b); the whole scene: F17: 6.
8. Motif from a cylinder seal, Babylonian period (Pierpont Morgan Library, New York). W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 129 (No. 368f); the whole scene: F17: 5.
9. Fresco, Sts Theodore and George killing serpents, ca. 600 CE, cave church Mavrucan 3, Cappadocia, Turkey. C. Walter, *The Warrior*, Fig. 27.

H31

Relief motifs from tombstones (stećci), Middle Ages:
1. Hodovo, Stolac, Herzegovina. M. Wenzel, *Ukrasni*, T.LXXVI: 1.
3. Glumina, Hutovo, Herzegovina. M. Wenzel, *Ukrasni*, T.LXXVI: 2.
4. Brištanica – D. Hrasno, Hutovo, Herzegovina. M. Wenzel, *Ukrasni*, T.LXXV: 12.
6. Slivno Ravno, Opuzen, Bosansko Primorje. M. Wenzel, *Ukrasni*, T.LXXVI: 4.
7. Glumina, Hutovo, Herzegovina. M. Wenzel, *Ukrasni*, T.LXXVI: 3.
8. Bistrina – Ošlja, Neum, Bosansko Primorje. M. Wenzel, *Ukrasni*, T.LXXV: 11.
11. Cista, Imotski, Dalmatia. M. Wenzel, *Ukrasni*, T.LXXV: 11.
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2. Motif from the entrance doors of the church in the monastery of Treskavec, carved wood, 15th – 16th century CE, Prilep, RN Macedonia. 3. Личеноска, *Македонска*, 286.
5. Motif from the entrance doors of the church in the monastery of Slepče, carved wood, 15th – 16th century CE, Prilep, RN Macedonia. Д. Ќорнаков, *Македонска*, 16.
9. Motif from the entrance doors in the church of St. Nicholas Bolnički, carved wood, 12th – 14th century CE, Ohrid, RN Macedonia. В. Ангелов, *Българска*, Обр. 4.
10. Relief motif from a tombstone, 11th – 13th century CE, Afion, Kara Hisar, Anatolian Turkey. E. Esin, *The Conjectural*, PL.VII: b.

H32

1. White figure lekythos, 470 BC, Attica, Greece (Archaeological Collection of Friedrich Schiller University Jena, Germany). J. E. Harrison, *Prolegomena*, 43 – Fig. 7.
2. White figure lekythos, 470 BC, Attica, Greece (Archaeological Collection of Friedrich Schiller University Jena, Germany). *Hermes Psychopompos* 2020.
3. Metal mirror, Etruscan culture. F. Lenormant, *Cabiri*, 772 – Fig. 15.
4. Roman limestone relief, 3rd century CE. *Hermanubis* 2020.
5. Detail from an Attic red-figure stamnos, ca. 490 – 480 BCE (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston: 10.177). *The Psychostasia* 2020.
6. Detail from an Athenian red-figure clay vase, ca. 460 BCE (Louvre: G399). *Psychostasia* 2020.
7. Lintel from a doorway, late 1st century CE, tomb of the Haterii, originally from the Via Labicana, Rome (Museo Gregoriano Profano, Vatican Museums: RBU2013.3433). *Tomb of the Haterii* 2020.

H33

1, 2, 3, 5, 6. Luristan bronze pin with a discoid head (LACMA: M.76.97.134). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020: Individual iconographic elements extracted from the background of the composition (Nikos Chausidis); for the whole disk of the pin see: F8: 4.
Relief scenes from a Luristan bronze quiver (Louvre: 10 25.585):
7. P. Amiet, *Un carquois*, Pl.XVI: 2.
8. P. Amiet, *Un carquois*, Pl.XVI: 4.
9. P. Amiet, *Un carquois*, Pl.XVI: 3.
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10. Luristan bronze pin with a discoid head. A. Godard, *The Art*, 23, 52 (Fig. 27).

XI. HISTORICAL AND ETHNO-CULTURAL INTERPRETATIONS

I1

Motifs from cylinder seals, Western Asia:
1. E. Herzfeld, *Iran*, 163 – Fig. 278.
4. E. Herzfeld, *Iran*, 164 – Fig. 279.
7, 8. E. Herzfeld, *Iran*, 167 – Fig. 283.
11, 12. E. Herzfeld, *Iran*, 165 – Fig. 280.
13, 14. E. Herzfeld, *Iran*, 165 – Fig. 281.
Luristan bronze pins with a discoid head:
2. (LACMA: M.76.174.73). P. R. S. Moorey (et al), *Ancient Bronzes*, 77 – No. 371.
9. (Louvre). *Сокровища* 2020.
15. Detail (G. L. Winthrop Collection). H. A. Potratz, *Scheibenkopfnadeln*, 45 – Abb. 3.
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3. Luristan bronze pin with a decorative head (Metropolitan: 48.154.6). *Pin* 2020.
5. Luristan motif. E. Herzfeld, *Iran*, 164 – Fig. 279.
6. Motif engraved on a Luristan object from bronze sheet metal (Ashmolean: 494B). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, 259 – Fig. k.
10. Luristan cheekpiece. *A large Luristan* 2018.

I2

Luristan standards, details:
1. (Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal, Canada: 1931. Dm. 14). Ph. Verdier, *Les bronzes*, 47 – Fig. 34.
2. (Collection David-Weill: 1932 – 60). P. Amiet, *Les Antiquités*, No. 220.
5. (Freud Museum, London: 3044). *Freud Museum* 2020.
6. (Forūgī, Moḥsen Collection, Tehran). R. Frye, *Forūgī*, Pl. II.
11. (Barakat Collection: OF.025). *Bronze Standard Finial* 2020.
12. *Bronze goddess finial* 2020, (20.06.1990, lot. 118).
Motifs from cylinder seals, Western Asia:
3, 4. (Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris). W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 47 – no. 125.
7. (Berlin: V A637). W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 61 – no. 145.
8. Cylinder seal, impression, Mesopotamia. A. Parrot, *Sumer*, XXXIII-A, 140 – Fig. 169.
9. Mesopotamia. A. Parrot, *Assur*, 131 – Fig. 154.
10. Southeastern Iran (Collection M. Foroughi). H. Pittman, *Anchoring*, 578 – Pl. I: A.
13. Babylonian period (Pierpont Morgan Library, New York). W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 129 (No. 368f).
14. Babylonian period (Pierpont Morgan Library, New York). W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 129 (No. 368b).

I3

Motifs from cylinder seals, Western Asia:
1. Middle Assyrian period, Reign of Eriba-Adad, Ashur, Iraq. *Middle Assyrian* 2020.
3. Middle East, (Syria?). W. H. Ward, *The Seal*, 304 (No. 954).
8. Detail from a scene depicting King Gudea, Sumer, 22nd century BCE. E. D. Van Buren, *The God Ningizzida*, 72 – Fig. 1; the whole scene: F17: 9.
10. Detail, Nuzi, Iraq. E. Porada, *Seal*. Pl. LII: 661.
11. Detail, Nuzi, Iraq. E. Porada, *Seal*. Pl. XXXIX: 775.
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2. Luristan bronze finial (LACMA: M.76.174.25). *Finial* 2020.
4. Luristan standard. *A Lur. Br. Finial (Christie's)* 2020.
5. Luristan pendant in the form of a foot i.e. shoe with multiplicated human faces at the top (Royal Museums of Art and History, Brussels). *Amulet - shod foot* 2020.
6. Detail from a Luristan bronze covering for a quiver (Metropolitan: 41.156). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 192, 193 – No. 308.
7. Detail from a Luristan bronze cheekpiece (Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal, Canada: 1944. Dm. 16). Ph. Verdier, *Les bronzes*, 41 – Fig. 18.
9. Detail of a Luristan bronze pin with a discoid head (G. L. Winthrop Collection). H. A. Potratz, *Scheibenkopfnadeln*, 45 – Abb. 3.

I4

Objects from organic materials, Pazyryk culture, Altai Territory, the Valley of the River Bolshoy Ulagan, Russia:
1. Horse harness with strung wooden elements, 5th – 4th century BCE, (Hermitage). *Bridle Pazyryk* 2020.
2. Wooden applique, 6th century BCE, (Hermitage: 2179-198). *Head of a Wolf* 2020.
3. Wooden terminal with gold foil, 5th – 4th century BCE (Hermitage). *Terminal* 2020.
4. Wooden saddle plaque, 6th century BCE (Hermitage). *Mounted Archers* 2020.
5. Wooden applique, *Подземный* 2020.
6. Wooden applique, 6th century BCE (Hermitage). *Two Griffins* 2020.
7. Head ornament from wood and leather (Hermitage). *Before* 2020.
8. Motif from a tattoo on the body of a deceased. V. Becker, *Zur Entstehung*, 67 – Abb. 5: 1.
9. Wooden plaque, 5th century BCE (Hermitage). *Plaque Pazyryk* 2020.
10. Felt saddle cover. *Пурпур* 2020.
11. Leather applique from a wooden sarcophagus, 5th century BCE (Hermitage: 1295-43). *Аппликация* 2020.
12. Detal of a felt carpet, 4th century BCE (Hermitage). *Пазырыкские курганы* 2020.
13. A piece of skin from the body of a deceased with tattooed motifs. *The Stunning* 2020.

I5

Objects from organic materials, Pazyryk culture, Altai Territory, the Valley of the River Bolshoy Ulagan, Russia:
2. Wooden applique, 4th century BCE (Hermitage). *Scythian Griffin* 2020.
3. Carved wooden objects. *Pazırık Kurganları* 2020.
6. Detail of a wooden element from a horse harness, 5th – 4th century BCE (Hermitage). *Bridle Pazyryk* 2020; the whole garniture: I4: 1.
8. Forehead plaque from a horse harness, 6th century BC (Hermitage: 2179-79). *Forehead Plaque* 2020.
10. Wooden applique. *Wooden carving* 2020.

1, 7. Luristan pin with a discoid head (Louvre). *Сокровища* 2020.
4. Luristan standard (LACMA: M.76.97.35). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
5. Luristan bronze cheekpiece. *The Habib* 2020.
9. Detail from a Luristan bronze pin with a discoid head, Surkh Dum, Luristan (National Museum of Iran, Tehran: 15134). S. Ayazi, *Luristan*, cat. 20.

I6

Objects from organic materials, Pazyryk culture, Altai Territory, the Valley of the River Bolshoy Ulagan, Russia:
1. Wooden pendant, part of a horse bridle, 305 – 288 BCE. *Horse bridle* 2020.
5. Wooden applique. С. И. Руденко, *Культура*, Т. LXVII: 6.
6. Wooden applique for the forehead of a horse. *Оконеть* 2020.
8. Wooden applique from a horse harness. *Оконеть* 2020.
11. Wooden applique. С. И. Руденко, *Культура*, Т. LXIII: 3.
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2. Luristan standard (Metropolitan: 32.161.21). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 145, No. 219.
3. Luristan bronze pin with decorative head (Ashmolean: 1951. 281). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 51: 320.
4. Luristan bronze pin with decorative head (Ashmolean: 1952. 243). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 51: 322.
7. Detail from a Luristan standard (LACMA: M.76.97.14). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the whole object: D39: 2.
9. Luristan bronze pin with an openwork head. *Openwork pin* 2020.
10. Detail from a Luristan bronze pin with a discoid head (LACMA: M.76.174.73). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the whole object: C11: 3.

I7

1. Map: states and ethnic formations in Western Asia in the 2nd and 1st millennium BCE (Nikos Chausidis).
2, 3, 4, 5. Scene and details from the tomb reliefs of Horemheb, 1333 – 1323 BCE, Saqqara, Egypt. *Tomb reliefs* 2020.

I8

Schematic representation of the historical events and processes related to the territory and history of Luristan, 2nd millennium BCE (Nikos Chausidis)

I9

Schematic representation of the historical events and processes related to the territory and history of Luristan, end of the 2nd - first half of the 1st millennium BCE (Nikos Chausidis)

I10

Luristan standards:

1. (LACMA: M.76.97.4). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
3. (Rietberg Museum, Zürich, Switzerland: RVA 2114). N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 196, No. 199.
5. *Idoli* 1986, 50 – No. 54b; extraction of the personalized phallus and vulva from the other iconographic elements, photomontage: Nikos Chausidis.
7. (The Barakat Collection:LK.052). *Luristan Br. St. Finial* 2020.
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2. Bronze statue of Shiva Nataraja, Hindu culture, 10th century CE, Madras, India (Victoria and Alber Museum, London). V. Ions, *Indijska*, 47.
4. Stone altar (Lingam-Yoni), Hindu culture. C. Bright, *Columns*.
6. Classical Indian Dance, "Bharatam" - festival, India. *Classical* 2013.

I11

1. Disc-headed bronze pin, Luristan (National Museum of Iran, Tehran: 1868). S. Ayazi, *Luristan*, cat. 31.
2. Stone statue of Gandabherunda, 11th century CE, Bherundeshvara Temple, Belligavi, India. *Gandaberunda* 2020.
3. Upper part of a Luristan standard: *Luristan Head* 2018; view from the other sides: G3: 2.
4. Part of a ceramic figurine with two faces, Harappan period, Mohenjo-daro, province of Sindh, Pakistan. D. M. Srinivasan, *Many Heads*, Pl. 13: 2.
5. Detail of the central figure in one of the scenes on a Luristan bronze covering for a quiver (LACMA: M.76.97.178 a,b). *Iran. Quiver* 2020; the whole scene: F5: 6.
6. Upper part of a sculpture of Vaikuntha Chaturmurti, detail, chlorite schist, 875 – 900 CE, Jammu and Kashmir, Kashmir region, India (LACMA: M.69.13.2). *The Hindu God (chlorite)* 2020.
7. Stone relief of Vishnu Vishvarupa, 9th century CE, Changu Narayan temple, Bhaktapur District, Nepal. *Vishvarupa* 2020.
8. Luristan standard. *Quadruple* 2020.
9. Luristan pendant in the from of a foot i.e. shoe with multiplicated human faces at the top (Royal Museums of Art and History, Brussels). *Amulet - shod foot* 2020.
10. Chaturmukha Linga, Kushan period, 2nd century CE, Mathura (National Museum, New Delhi: 65-172), India. *Chaturmukha* 2020.

I12

Cult objects within the frames of Tibetan Tantrism and Buddhism:

1. Ritual dagger, metal, R. Beer, *The Encyclopedia*, 248 – Pl. 114.
4. Bhavacakra, tracing of a Tibetan temple-fresco of Sankar Gompa, Leh, Ladakh, India. *Bhavacakra* 2020.
6. Curved knife and chopper. R. Beer, *The Encyclopedia*, 262 – Pl. 118.
7. Bronze pendant or applique, prehistory (?), Tibet (Collection of G. Tucci). M. Bussagli, *Bronze*, 339 – No. 12.
9. Cult object khatvanga (tantric staff). R. Beer, *The Encyclopedia*, 257 – Pl. 116.
11. Ritual sword with a zoomorphic hilt and scabbard. R. Beer, *The Encyclopedia*, 279 – Pl. 123.
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2. Luristan standard (LACMA: M.76.97.85). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
3. Luristan bronze object, part of a cheekpiece (?). F. Eber-Stevens, Stara, T.XVII: 507.
5. Luristan "halberd". P. R. S. Moorey, *The Decorated*, 5 – Fig. 1: a.
8. Openwork bronze object from Luristan (?) (Ashmolean: 1965.886d). P. R. S. Moorey, *Catalogue*, Pl. 67: 439.
10. Luristan standard (LACMA: M.76.97.90). *LACMA Standard* 2020.
12. Luristan iron sword with a pair of human heads on the hilt. E. F. Schmidt et al, *The Holmes*, Pl. 261: b.
13. "Kongo Vajra" with five prongs, ancient Japanese culture, Heian period, 12th century CE, Japan (private collection). A. Mollerup, *Vajra*.
14. Luristan standard. *Fitting* 2020.

I13

1. Luristan standard.(LACMA: M.76.97.5). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
2. Bronze pendant, Early Middle Ages, Eastern Europe. А. Н. Спасёных, *Первые*, 72: Г.
3. Bronze ring (Stora Collection, Paris). H. Potratz, *Das "Kampfmotiv"*, Taf. XIX: 69.
4. Bronze matrix, Svarychivka, Ichnyans'kyi Raion, Chernihiv Oblast, Ukraine. А. Н. Спасёных, *Первые*, 13, color: cover page.
5. Metal plaque, 7th century CE, Velestino, Thessaly, Greece. Drawing - Nikos Chausidis according to a photograph: J. Werner, *Slaw. Bronzefiguren*, Taf. 3: 7.
6. Central figure from a Luristan plaque of silver sheet metal (Art Museum, Cincinnati, USA). R. Ghirshman, *Notes VIII*, 40 – Fig. 2; the whole object: F2: 4.

7. Bronze pendant, Early Middle Ages, Moldova. А. Н. Спасёных, *Первые*, 89 – Рис. 6.
8. "Devil's Tree" ("Бесовское древо"/"Besovskoe drevo"), illustration from a miscellany of church texts (detail), 19th century CE, Russia. Д. Антонов, М. Майзульс, *Анатомия*, 218 – Рис. 5; the whole image: F27: 7.
9. Motif from folk embroidery, Russia. Г. С. Маслова, *Орнамент*, 113 – Рис. 56: б.
10. Luristan bronze cheekpiece. *The Habib* 2020.
11. Wooden object, detail, 12th century CE, Svenborg, Denmark. N. Profantová, M. Profant, *Encyklopedie*, 212; photo: *Halla* 2020; the whole object: G42: 1.
12. Luristan standard, detail (LACMA: M.76.97.85). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the whole object: G3: 1.

I14
1. Fibula (detail - semicircular plate), 6th – 7th century, Pastyrs'ke gorodyshche, Chyhyryn, Ukraine. J. Werner, *Slaw. Bügelfibeln*, Taf. 41: 45.
2. Luristan standard (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, САД: 30.565). *Rod-holder* 2020.
3. Fibula, Early Middle Ages, Fridaythrope, Yorkshire, England. H. Kühn, *Die germanischen*, Taf. 103: 40, 4.
4. Luristan standard (Collection Godard). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 99 – Fig. 80: 120 (no. 118).
5. Motif from a medallion, Middle Ages, Tjurkö, Blekinge, Sweden. D. Ellmers, *Zur Ikonographie*, 232 – Abb. 34.
6. Metal pendant, Middle Ages or 18th – 19th century, Archaeological Museum, Varna, Bulgaria. Р. Рашев, *Модел*, 43, Обр. 5: а.
7. Luristan pin with an openwork head, detail (LACMA: M.76.97.184). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020; the whole object: B27: 1.
8. Luristan standard (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München, Germany: 1973, 120). G. Zahlhaas, *Luristan*, 119, Kat. 249.
9. Wooden phallic object, 11th century CE, Staraya Russa, Novgorod Oblast, Russia. Б. А. Рыбаков, *Яз. др. Славян*, 41.
10. Wooden pillar, Middle Ages, Riga, Latvia. А. В. Цауне, *Антропоморфные*, 131 – Рис. 32: 3; photograph: *Рижский кумир* 2020.
11. Luristan standard (Metropolitan: 30.97.10). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 152, No. 242.

I15
1. Central figure from a Luristan plaque of silver sheet metal, reduced to the head, wings and additional busts at the shoulders (Art Museum, Cincinnati, USA). R. Ghirshman, *Notes VIII*, 40 – Fig. 2; the whole object: F2: 4.
2. Metal amulet made in the so-called "Permian animal style", 8th – 10th century CE, Gaynsky District, Perm Krai, Russia. *Птицы* 2020.
3. Metal applique, Middle Ages, region of Cherdyn, Perm Krai, Russia. Л. С. Грибова, *Пермский*, Т. II: 4; photograph: *Украшения-амулеты* 2020.
4. Luristan standard (LACMA: M.76.97.90). *LACMA Standard* 2020.
5. Luristan standard, detail (British Museum: 108816; 1914,0214.42). *Bronze standard* 2020; the whole object: C20: 9.
6. "Decorative" head from a Luristan bronze pin (*Rietberg Museum,* Zürich, Switzerland). B. Goldman, *A Luristan*, 53 – Fig. 1.
7. Bronze applique, Middle Ages, Finno-Ugric culture, Kip, course of the Irtysh river, Russia. В. В. Седов, *Финно – угры*, Т. LXXXII: 5.
8. Bronze figurine, Middle Ages, surroundings of Stavropol, Krasnodar Krai, Russia. В. К. Гриб, В. В. Давыденко, *Новые*, 366 – Рис. 5.
9. Bronze figurine, 8th – 10th century CE, "Saltovo – Mayaki" culture, Vozdvizhenka, Stavropol Krai, Russia. В. В. Давыденко, В. К. Гриб, *Многоликие*, 204 – Рис. 8: 1.
10. Luristan standard. Ph. Ackerman, *The Oriental*, 219 – Fig. 2: c.

I16
1. Luristan bronze object. *Luristan Br. Figure* 2018.
2. Miniature plastic cast from bronze (handle of a vessel?), Iron Age, "Villanova" culture (Albert L. Hartog Collection, New York). *A Proto-Etruscan* 2020.
3. Bronze pendant, Iron Age, "Fritzens – Sanzeno" culture, Sanzeno, Trento, Alpine region of Northern Italy. F. Marzatico, *Testimonianze*, 319 – Fig. 10: 4.
4. Central figure from a Luristan plaque of silver sheet metal (Art Museum, Cincinnati, USA). R. Ghirshman, *Notes VIII*, 40 – Fig. 2; the whole object: F2: 4.
5. Luristan standard, detail (Metropolitan: 1980.324.5). O. W. Muscarella, *Bronze*, 147, 148, No. 230; the whole object: C24: 3.
6. Detail from a silver applique, Etruscan culture, 7th century BCE (Bomford Collection). A. C. Brown, *Ancient*, 34 – Pl. X: d.
7. Bronze statuette, Etuscan culture, 3rd century BCE, Cortona (Museo dell'Accademia Etrusca, Cortona) Italy. *Culsans – Statuetta* 2020.

8. Luristan standard. *Idoli* 1986, 53 – No. 55c.
9. Bronze umbo, Etruscan culture, 7th century BCE (Museo Gregoriano, Rome). G. M. D'Erme, *The Cappella*, 416 – Fig. 17.
10. Luristan pin with a discoid head (Louvre). *Сокровища* 2020.

I17
1. Scene from a red-figure lekythos, ancient Hellenic culture, 470 – 460 BCE (Museum of the Roman Forum of Thessaloniki, Greece). *Red figure lekythos* 2020.
2. Luristan standard, detail. *Standard Finial* 2020; the whole object: G2: 6.
3. Gold pendant, Aegina treasure, 17th century BCE, Greece (British Museum). *Gold pendant* 2020.
4. Luristan bronze pin with an openwork head (LACMA: M.76.97.226). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
5. Luristan standard, detail. N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 191, no. 191; the whole object: D20: 4.
6. Metal applique, Early Antiquity, Olynthus, Greece. И. Маразов, *Мит. на Траките*, 15 – Обр. 6.
7. Bronze applique from a krater, 6th – 5th century BCE, Trebenishte, Ohrid, RN Macedonia. М. Грбић, *Одабрана*, Т. VII.
8. Bronze statue, ca. 400 BCE (National Archaeological Museum of Florence, Florence, Italy). *Chimera of Arezzo* 2020.
9. Luristan cheekpiece. *A large Luristan* 2018.
10. Motif from the decoration of a bronze tripod, Early Antiquity, Trebenishte, Ohrid, RN Macedonia (National Museum, Belgrade). М. Грбић, *Одабрана*, Т. VIII.
11. Luristan standard. *Bronze goddess finial* 2020, (20.06.1990, lot. 118).

I18
1. Reconstruction of a veil based on the bronze plaque found in the female grave no. 110, Early Bronze Age, Franzhausen, Austria, detail. K. Grömer, *The Art*, 367 – Fig. 199; the whole photograph: E22: 1.
2. Luristan pin with a discoid head, detail (Louvre). N. Engel (et al), *Bronzes*, 163, 164 – no. 153; the whole object: E22: 2.
3. Luristan standard (Collection Godard: no. 125). E. de Waele, *Bronzes*, 105, 106, Fig. 85.
4. Gold covering from ritual hat, Bronze Age, 11th-9th century BC, Schifferstadt (Historical Museum of the Palatinate, Speyer), Germany. *Goldener hut* 2020.
5. Bronze covering, Roman period, 4th – 5th century CE, Ptuj, Slovenia. S. Ciglenečki, *Arheološki*, 508 – Sl. 1.
6. Luristan standard (LACMA: M.76.97.42). *Lur. Br. in the LACMA* 2020.
7. Scepter in the form of a sharpening tool made of stone and metal, 7th century CE, Sutton Hoo, Woodbridge, UK. *Whetstone* 2020.
8. Luristan standard *A Lur. Br. Finial (Christie's)* 2020; the whole object: G5: 5.
9. Luristan standard, detail. *Luristan Head* 2018; view from the other sides: G3: 2
10. Stone relief slab, 6th – 3rd century BCE, Villaricos, Vera, Almeria (Museo Arqueologico de Cataluña, Barcelona), Spain. *Lord of the Horses* 2020.

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