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**“The origins of the Gundestrup cauldron
A smorgasbord of elements, scenes and cultural influences
of Eurasia, from the Indus valley to Gallia”**

verfasst von / submitted by

Lukas Bernhard Summer, BA BA

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Univ.-Prof. Timothy Taylor, BA MA PhD

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Introduction

The heavily ornamented silver cauldron from Gundestrup is a significant archaeological artefact of European prehistory. Since its discovery, the vessel has occupied many scholars who investigated the iconography and the motifs depicted on the different plates of the cauldron, aiming to interpret and probably identify the relief figures through which the object's place of origin should be located. The images are usually connected with the Celtic period in Europe and the cauldron appears in almost every book about the Celts, their culture and art. An excerpt from the book *'The Celts, First Masters of Europe'* by Christiane Eluère (1993) gives an example of what such a short description of the cauldron could look like:

“The cauldron found at Gundestrup (Denmark) in 1891 had been dismantled and deposited as a votive offering in a bog. It was probably made in the Balkans, on the eastern fringe of the Celtic world, a lot of whose mythology it brings together. Made of partially gilded silver, it is 69 cm in diameter and dates from the 1st century BC. On the outside are seven panels bearing heads of more or less terrifying divinities. The inside displays ritual scenes, in particular a whole procession, complete with musicians and sacrificial ceremonies. Cernunnos is represented sitting cross-legged, with a ram-headed snake (symbol of earthly prosperity and aggressive force) in one hand and in the other a twisted torque of the same type that he himself is wearing round his neck. A female divinity is surrounded by exotic animals - a cat, elephants and winged griffins - a very un-Celtic collection in which influence from the Black Sea is felt.” (Eluère 1993, 117).

Several issues have been and still are the matter of debate: What do the scenes represent? Where does the vessel come from? What time period was it made in? The Gundestrup cauldron is supposed to be **“that”** object in the prehistory of Europe which has most often been the topic of discussion. Five monographic books have been written about this specific silver artefact, beside all other forms of written material that stretches from scientific articles to esoteric ideas. Furthermore, several different theories concerning the right dating of the cauldron emerged, spanning from the 2nd century BC to the 7th centenary AD (Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 107).

The scenes and figures regarding the iconography depicted on several plates placed on the cauldron's inner and outer side have been interpreted diversely. Siegfried de Laet & Pierre Lamprechts (1950) linked the illustrations to Mithraism, while Garrett S. Olmsted (1976,

1979) interpreted the sections as representations of an early variant of the *Táin Bó Cuailnge*¹. A far more 'creative' theory was created by Rudolf Grosse (1963), who understood the depictions as representations of the anthroposophy, an ideology of esoteric and spiritual character that was founded by Rudolf Steiner. Helmut Birkhan (2015, 22-26), a scholar of Celtology, described the scenes on the plates of the cauldron as probably the most important depictions of the antique religion of the Celts, although some of the represented motifs could not be deciphered.

The second sentence of Eluère's description refers to the most controversial aspect of the cauldron's history of research: the place of its origin, about which disunity prevails. The cauldron's provenance has been situated in almost every cardinal direction, varying from the Thracian land in the southeast to the Gallic territory in the west, up to the Scandinavian region in the north (Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 107).

Sophus Müller, a prehistorian from Denmark, (1892, 1898, 1905 and 1933, as cited by Hachmann 1990, 620) interpreted the cauldron as a product of local origin, whose iconography matches the Gallo-Roman art and could have been made either by a craftsman from the North who had stayed in Gallia for some time or from a foreigner who had travelled to Denmark. Both options are possible. People travelling from northern Denmark to Gallia and vice versa was common in the Gallo-Roman period, in which Müller dated the Gundestrup cauldron (Müller 1898, 162 as cited by Hachmann 1990, 622). Müller was the first person to examine the Gundestrup cauldron when it arrived in the Danish National Museum in Copenhagen on the 2nd of June 1891. His scientific work is an essential paper which formed the basis for every thesis and scientific investigation that followed. At the beginning of his work, Müller stated the following explication (Andersen 2004, 4 & 9):

“[...] Especially when facing such a piece, there is good reason to stop and wait. One cannot unpunished attempt to force the investigation beyond the borders set by contemporary knowledge, and equally, it would be erroneous by futile accumulation of

¹ Also called 'The Cattle Raid of Cooley', a mythic legend that originates from the early literature of Ireland. The story is the primary tale of a collection of narrations or myths named the **Ulster Cycle** (Wikipedia: *Táin Bó Cuailnge*. [Online] Available from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Táin_Bó_Cúailnge [Accessed 31th March 2018]).

Explanatory note: There will be several more references or citations from Wikipedia as the one above that will only serve as short explanations for several terms, places, names or objects. On the one hand, these footnotes shall spare the reader to look up the words by himself/herself and prevent interruption during reading, while on the other hand some of the footnotes reference to Wikipedia articles where short descriptions respectively introductions can be found. Although the authenticity as well as the actuality of several articles on Wikipedia can be questioned, the descriptions and references will sufficiently serve the purpose of explanation.

material, which is not strictly relevant, to hamper and burden future considerations. When this strange find for the first time should be introduced into literature it ought to happen in a way that it will not once in the future be necessary first to clear an obstructed position, in order to show the way on the basis of larger knowledge and new finds to the full and right understanding.” (Müller 1892, 36; translated and cited by Andersen 2005, 9)

But several scholars did not approve Müller's interpretation concerning the origin of the cauldron and over several decades of research history, two possibilities were established. These are espoused by different scholars:

On the one hand, Friedrich Drexel (1915), Thomas G. E. Powell (1971, 181-210), Derek F. Allen (1968, 113-118; 1971, 1-31) and J. V. S. Megaw (1970, No. 209) supported the crafting of the cauldron in an eastern workshop located somewhere in the region of the Lower or Middle Danube.

On the other hand, men like Holger Arbman (1948, 109-116), Ole Klindt-Jensen (1961) and G. S. Olmsted (1979) argued that the artefact had either been made in Gallia or by Gallic craftsmen. Richard Pittioni (1984) was also convinced that the cauldron's place of origin lies in the south of Gallia, based on the depictions of elephants which he connected to the campaigns of Hannibal. Therefore, he dated the object in the beginning of the 2nd century BC, around the year 218 BC (Pittioni 1984, 46). In addition, the studies by Klindt-Jensen, Olmsted and Pittioni are essential works about the Gundestrup cauldron (Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 107).

Anders Bergquist and Timothy Taylor (1987, 107-124) espoused the attempt to locate the place of the cauldron's production in the southeast of Europe, on the Balkans, where the Celtic culture met with those of the Thracians. The silversmiths who crafted the cauldron are identified to be of Thracian origin, because of the technical execution of the metal work, of whom Celts had ordered the artefact. Rolf Hachmann (1991, 565-903) who wrote a comprising paper about the cauldron favoured the hypothesis of the artefact's production in the Celtic West, in the northern regions of Gallia, based on the equipment and the fashion of the figures that are depicted on the cauldron. Frank Falkenstein (2003, 57-88) differentiated between the origin of the craftsmen and the people or the clients who ordered the production of the vessel.

Eluère (1993, 117) mentioned that some elements of the cauldron's iconography have been influenced by motifs from the Black Sea area, resulting in a 'symbiosis' of depictions from Celtic art and the pictorial world of the Pontus. But these cultural influences could have

reached further to the East, probably even to ancient India and the Indus valley. This would make the artefact a smorgasboard of elements and influences from a variety of different cultures.

The Danish botanist, zoologist and prehistorian Japetus Steenstrup supposed in 1895 that the Gundestrup cauldron could originate from the Indian subcontinent. He assumed that the vessel might have been crafted in the northern part of India or in Tibet or perhaps in Mongolia. Steenstrup dated the artefact in the Indian Middle Ages and suggested many interpretations as well as similarities between the scenes on the cauldron and the iconography and also the motifs of Indian art. But the parallels listed by Steenstrup have no classification, are very interpretative and are not described in particular by him (*Taylor 1992, 87*). A 'fantastic' interpretation of Steenstrup was to identify the scenes as representation of the self-sacrifice by Siddhārtha Gautama as a Bodhisattva on his journey to become the Buddha (*Schrader 1934, 186*).

Timothy Taylor (*1992, 84-89*) demonstrated that there are some similarities between several figures on the Gundestrup cauldron and depictions of humans and deities from India. Especially the supposed representation of Cernunnos, whose pose is described as a cross-legged position by Eluère (*1993, 117*) could be linked to an older image from the city of Mohenjo-daro in the Indus Valley. This depiction illustrates a decorated ithyphallic figure with the horns of a bull or a buffalo and is surrounded by four different animals. The image is represented on a sigil that is assigned to the Harappa Civilisation which dates in the second half of the third millennium BC. The illustration could be the result of artistic influences and intercultural connections, whereby an exotic, foreign motif from the East was adopted, adapted and combined with images and representations of the European Celtic world.

Similarities between the depiction on the Mohenjo-daro sigil and the representation of the antlered figure on the Gundestrup cauldron were already recognised and described by Friedrich Otto Schrader (*1934, 185-193*). Heinz Mode (*1959, 68*) also noted the interpretations of Schrader and referred to the parallels between the two images which can hardly be denied. Furthermore, Mode assumed that the specific Harappa-sigil from Mohenjo-daro could have influenced cultures beyond India and suggested that there could be possible intercultural connections which probably based on several interlinks.

The following thesis will explain the latest state of art about the different origins of the Gundestrup cauldron and will also search for these intercultural influences and will especially focus on the image of the antlered figure and its sitting position.

- Chapter One -

The Gundestrup cauldron and its problematic nature



- Chapter One -

Several questions have occurred about the Gundestrup cauldron since its discovery. Where did it come from, who produced and designed it and what are the meanings of the images on the inner and outer side of its plates? The answers to these questions vary and have changed over the last decades because of new techniques in research and advanced scientific methods. Therefore, a number of theories have been developed that differ, either more or less, from each other.

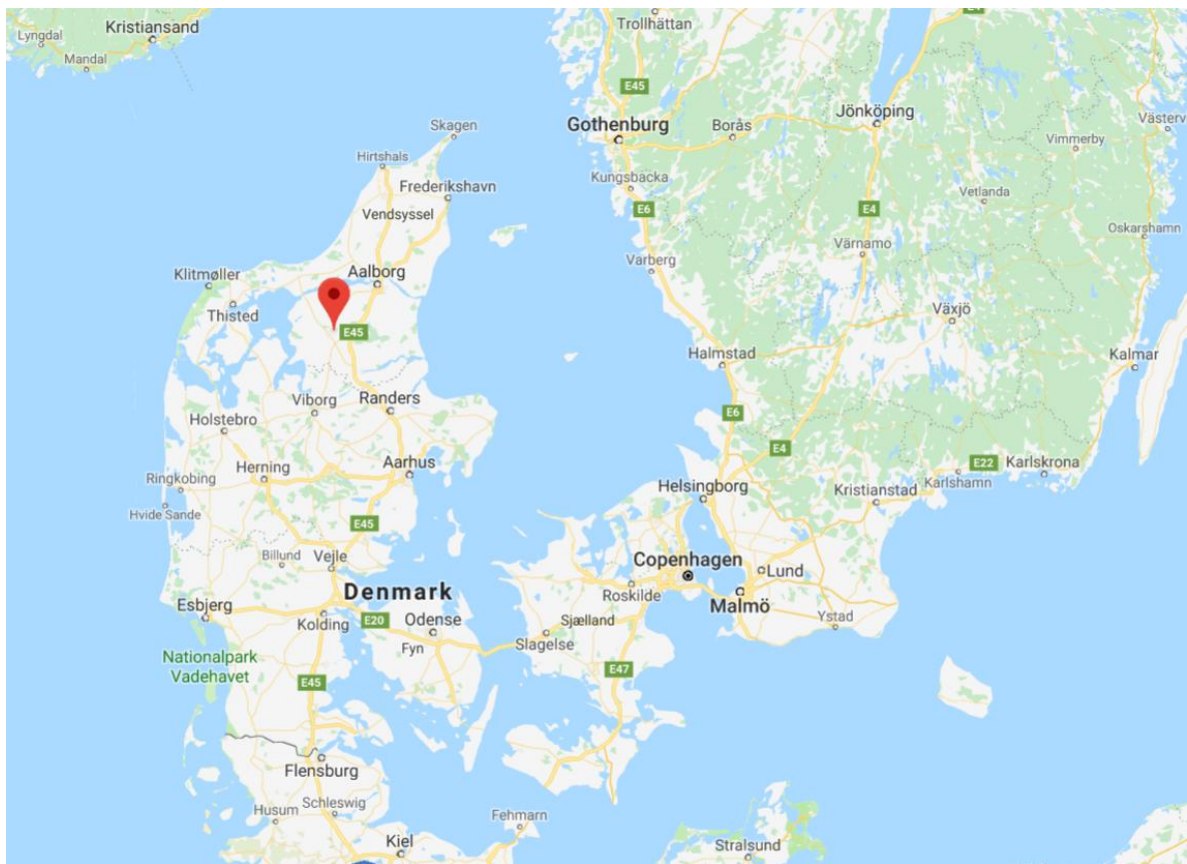


Fig. 1: Location of Gundestrup.

1. The finding

The silver cauldron was found on the 28th of May 1891 in the northern part of Jutland in Denmark, in a peat bog named '*Rævemose*' (Nielsen 2005, 3). The discovery of this artefact happened coincidentally during peat cutting in the bog near the village of Gundestrup in Jutland, Denmark, when a farm labourer named Jens Sørensen was working in the bog which belonged to Christian Mogensen, a farmer and Sørensen's master (Müller 1892, 4). The plates

of the cauldron were separated and lay approximately 60 to 90 cm deep in the bog without any other goods nearby. The cauldrons bottom was formed like a calotte. Inside, there were the twelve side plates, either curved in a convex or a concave way, shaped like a rectangle and one round bottom plate. In addition, two parts of the edging that served as a covering for the upper edge of each rectangular plate and made of rolled silver bent to half open tubes were found together with the other pieces (*Drexel 1915, 3*). The finding of the cauldron was reported to the local gendarmery, probably on the 30th of May, whereupon Lieutenant Daniel Bruun transferred the information to the National Museum and inspected the site by himself (*Müller 1892, 5*). The government of Denmark paid the peat cutters who had found the artefact a substantial amount of money for the cauldron, which resulted in a heavy dispute between the men. The separated parts of the vessel were given to the National Museum of Denmark in Copenhagen (*Taylor 1992, 84*).

Intensive investigations by the National Museum were made in the area where the components of the cauldron were found. These investigations came to the result that the cauldron was neither dropped into the bog nor buried in the earth, but placed on the surface of the bog when the moor water was at a lower level (*Drexel 1915, 5*). According to Larsen (*1995, 85f.*) as cited by Christensen (*2005, 50*), the National Museum requested the inhabitants of Gundestrup to remove an intact peat-area from the bog close to the finding place of the cauldron, whose parts had been discovered around 0,6 m below the actual surface of that time. The section was cut from the peat around 0,6 m away from the exact position of the cauldron and spanned approximately 1,2m: measured from the surface to circa 0,3 m underneath the level on which the artefact had been found.

For further investigations, the removed peat-piece was brought to Emil Rostrup, one of the leading academics in botany during that time. He analysed the different plants including the parts which remained in this section of peat (*Christensen 2005, 50*). Müller (*1892, 37 as cited by Christensen 2005, 50*) reported the results of the tests: the absence of any traces which are connectable to aquatic plants as well as a structure of vegetable material similar to that of an ordinary heath bog led to the conclusion that the artefact could have been placed on a solid area in the bog during the Iron Age. Several branches of birch and juniper were discovered, although the latter sort does not thrive in a bog-vegetation. All of the branches and twigs were discovered on the identical layer level the parts of the cauldron were found in. Therefore, these traces were either placed by men or belong to a period of bush vegetation during the development of the bog.

It is possible that the object was meant to be a votive offering compared to other, similar findings and written sources like *'De bello gallico'* by Cesar, as well as reports from other ancient authors. Cesar wrote that the Gauls would not have touched such deposited offerings because they would have feared the retribution of their gods, but he adds that this specific awe for the gods was accompanied by a cruel punishment for those who would dare to purloin such a donation (Drexel 1915, 5). Larsen (1995, 65-67 as cited by Christensen 2005, 51) noted that Brunn gave a report to the National Museum about the cauldron as well as about the circumstances of its discovery a bit more than one month after the artefact had been discovered. According to the questioning of the peat cutters, Brunner mentioned in his wirtten report that the bog's depth changes in the area around the site and could span from only some centimetres to a thickness of aproximately 3 m.

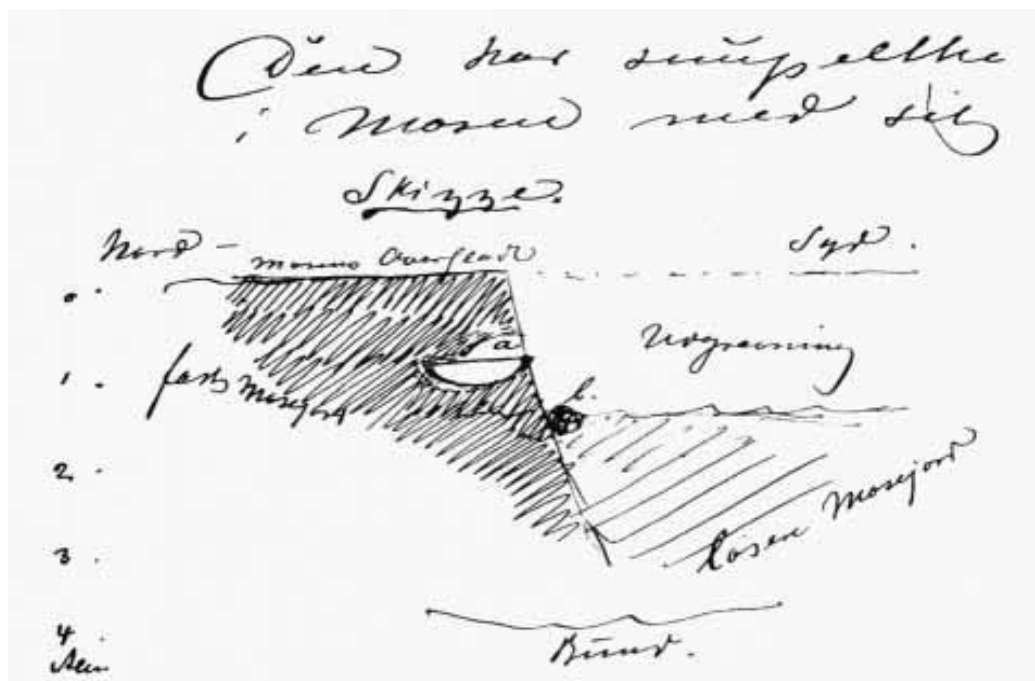


Fig. 2: A sketch of the cauldron's finding place in Daniel Bruun's report to the National Museum, June 1891 that based on the detailed reports of the finders. The two areas in the drawing represent the northern (left) and the southern area (right) of the finding place. The section where looser peat covered the cauldron's bowl is marked with an 'a', the order of numbers on the left edge stand for the measuring unit alen, which equals 0,627 m (Christensen 2005, 51f).

In the opinion of Drexel, it is unlikely that the cauldron was just placed as an offering and remained in one place until it fell apart, only to be found again centuries later. Such offerings were usually placed at holy places or sanctuaries, while the deposition in the area of the bog, which is no such sacred place according to Drexler, seems to be more of a coincident. He thinks it is more plausible that the cauldron was stolen because the precious metals have a high value. But the main argument for his hypothesis is that the cauldron was found in separated pieces, although all together in one place. The traces on the cauldron showing that

force was used to disassemble the cauldron were arranged in a very compact way, as if someone had packed it up with the probable intention of hiding the pieces. In addition, almost all the necessary main parts to put the cauldron back together were not among the other parts which is possibly a result of its disassemblment. Drexel comes to the conclusion that this silver cauldron had been stolen and then taken apart hastily. Afterwards, the loot was hidden in the bog and eventually only shallowly buried, but the person who had put it there did not have a chance to get it (*Drexel 1915, 5f.*).

I assume that Drexel referred to the place where the cauldron lay which he does not consider to be a sanctuary. It is not clear whether he interpreted bogs as either ordinary places or as sacred ones in ancient times. But the latter option is the more likely one, because it is known that the tribes of the Germanic people regarded the moors and bogs to be sacral places where offerings were made to their deities, either in the form of human sacrifices or as votive offerings. Drexel certainly knew of at least some bog bodies.

1.1 Modern investigations of the site

The National Museum in cooperation with the Vesthimmerlandsmuseum led an investigation in the Rævemose, the area where the cauldron was discovered, in 2002. Every existing information and detail about the finding place of the artefact was used so that the original position of the artefact could be located as exactly as possible. According to the source material, the spot was sited around 12,5 m north of the stone, which has been established in memorial to the finding of the cauldron. Starting from this position, several borings were made in two lines: On the first line, starting from the East and running to the West, 15 borings were undertaken, which began on solid ground and span a distance of 25 m into the bog. This line crossed the site of the silver cauldron, located 18 m away from solid ground. The second line was orientated in a northern direction from the site and holes were bored at an interval of 1, 3, 5, and 7 m. Based on Bruun's sketch, the area in the southern direction of the place was not investigated, because the peat had been removed there before the discovery of the cauldron (*Christensen 2005, 50*).

Unfortunately, the removed peat probe from 1891 could not be found in the present. Although the layers of peat around as well as underneath the site of the cauldron had likely been cut, peat sections that are still intact should exist some metres away. But this assumption has proven false, because variations in the stratigraphic levels did not occur in the probes more specifically the extracted drill cores that reached 1.5 m below the surface. Contours of peat

pits and balks were also not visible in these probes. On the surface of the bog, a different vegetation was visible in some areas, according to the wetness of the soil, but those changing plants were not tracable in the borings. On an aerial image of the bog taken in 1954, a time when the water level was low, several peat pits can be seen. The balks which separated the different pits had come down at some point, when the water rose again and reached its present day level these traces vanished. The results of these analyses lead to the conclusion that, through the peat cutting, layers up to 2 m had been either removed or destroyed through drying up and humification. Therefore, the actual surface level of the bog is below those in which the parts of the Gundestrup cauldron was discovered (*Christensen 2005, 50f.*).

The theory that the parts of the cauldron were laid on a dry surface area can be questioned according to investigations of peat cutting in the Iron Age, because several of the peat pits had been re-used either for depositions or offerings (*Christensen & Fiedel 2003, 85-87; as cited by Christensen 2005, 51*). On the draft made by Bruun, a loose section in the peat can be seen above the cauldron that is reminiscent of a hollow, which is unlikely to have emerged naturally at a later point in the formation of the peat. But the deposition of the artefact in a pit would provide two possibilities for the formation of the hollow peat: At some point the hole filled with water on which *spagnum*, commonly named peat moss, would grow on the water surface through which a loosely formed peat developed to a great degree in the lowest areas of the hole. It would also be likely that the higher sections of the peat-pit collapsed and were dropped in the middle of the hollow. But it is also possible that the occurrence of both options led to this formation of peat (*Christensen 2005, 51*).

If an artificially made peat pit is overgrown in a natural process, any traces of the former hollow are hard to recognize in a probe or a drill core, except for experts of this subject matter. It is likely that the disassembled Gundesrup cauldron was deposited in such a former peat pit, parallels for this theory are provided by several depositions and also bog corpses that were placed in such pits. But it would also be possible that a hole was prepared for the deposition of the cauldron. In this case, the area of the peat that had been cut in 1891 must have been taken from outside the hollow, because according to its consistence, the peat developed on soil that was quite dry (*Christensen 2005, 51*).

In addition, metal detectors were used to search for the lost parts of the cauldron, considering the fact that the acidity of the bog would probably affect the iron material to a great degree. Some of the used instruments were able to reach depths of up to 1,5 m and the examined section span 10 to 20 m from the actual position of the artefact's discovery. But the investigations were without success (*Christensen 2005, 51f.*).

2. The cauldron

When the plates were put back together by specialists in the National Museum in Copenhagen, they noticed that some parts were missing. These are six additional edge tubes, one plate from the cauldron's outside and all stripes made of sheet, which were used as cover for the joints and also fixed the whole construction. As each plate is shaped either inwards or outwards, researchers were able to figure out how the plates fit together. Therefore, the plates were arranged in the way that the five larger plates formed the inner side of the cauldron while the seven smaller ones were used for the outside. While the images on the inside could be placed in the probably right order according to the places as well as the traces of soldering and two nail holes, the arrangement of the outer sequences was uncertain because the eighth missing plate was part of that cycle. At the top edge of the cauldron, a ring made of iron was placed as a stabilisation for the object, which has been fixed by the half open tubes that in turn put the inner and outer plates together. In addition, two iron rings were probably added on the cauldron's outside, which served as movable handles and it is possible that those were covered in rolled silver (*Drexel 1915, 3f.*).

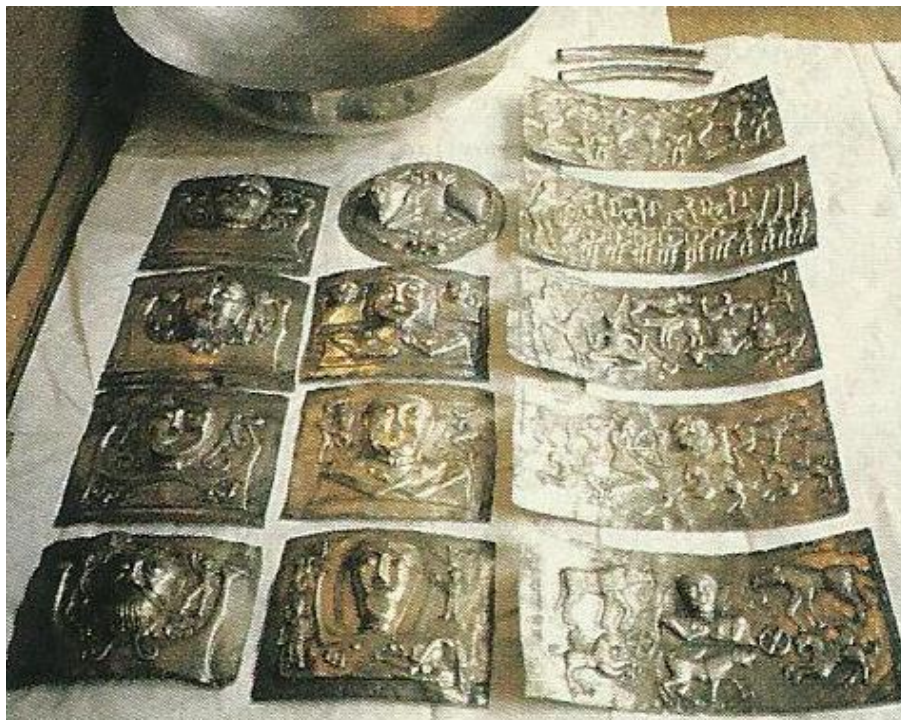


Fig. 3: The separated plates, the bowl and the rims of the Gundestrup cauldron.

The cauldron itself measures 69 cm in diameter and is 42 cm high. The plates have a common height of 21 to 22 cm but their lengths differ, because the inner ones are 40 to 43 cm long, while the outer ones are smaller with a length of only 24-26 cm. The full assembled artefact

has a weight of 8,885 kg. The cauldron was forged out of silver which is almost pure and, furthermore, the outer and inner plates were decorated with gold foil (*Drexel 1915, 4*). According to Rupert Gebhard (2012, 419), the vessel is almost 46 cm high and all the separate parts have a silver-alloy of 97 percent. The figures as the relief heads have been made with a repoussé and chasing technique, proven via traces of resin on the inner side of the reliefs (*Taylor 1992, 85*). The seven heads on the outside had their pupils filled with a blue coloured glass paste which has not remained in all pairs of eyes. The gold foil has mostly been rubbed off and other wear marks can also be found on the cauldron, which suggest a usage of the object over a longer period of time (*Drexel 1915, 3f.*).



Fig. 4: The displayed cauldron in the National Museum of Denmark in Copenhagen.

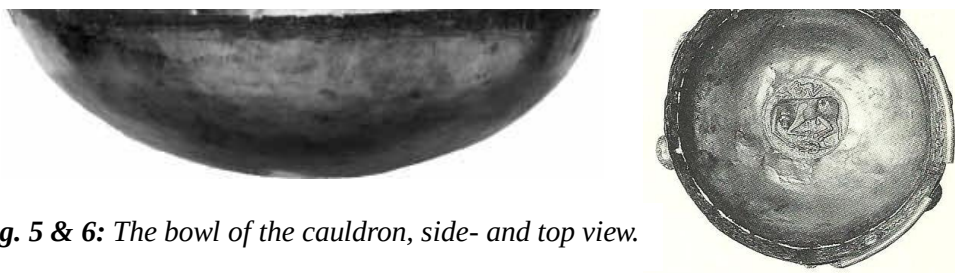


Fig. 5 & 6: The bowl of the cauldron, side- and top view.

2.1 The bowl (C 6562)

The bowl is the largest part of the cauldron and all the other separate pieces were placed inside it. Timothy Taylor (1992, 84f.) notes that the bowl was crafted from only one ingot of silver, which was certainly not easy. According to him, the artefact measures 70 cm in diameter.



Fig. 7 & 8: Lying bull and a side view of the base plate.

2.2 The base plate: The lying bull (C 6563)

The central figure is a relief-bull depicted lying on the ground. Above him there is a figure with a raised sword, whose body pose probably indicates movement. The figure wears knee-length clothing that seems to end below the chest and leaves the breasts bare and is further equipped with spurs and eventually with boots or greaves. Therefore, the figure probably represents a woman accompanied by a dog or a wolf. Another similar animal is illustrated curled up to a ball underneath the bull's hind legs. An additional carnivore rests next to it on the ground and below the bull. The background design is ornamented with vegetal elements. The plate shows signs of usage, because the horns, as well as the ears of the bull had broken off (Andersen 2005, 4). The object's diameter measures 25 cm and according to the investigations of tool traces, a minimum of three various sets of punches has been used. Based on the design of the figures and their execution they can be allocated to at least three distinct artisans. The bull and also the dog that lies in a flat pose on the ground show a remarkably great difference in comparison to the numerous figures on the other plates. The position of the human figure parallels those on the right placed figure on the plates **C 6564** and **C 6570** and these figures also show a striking similarity in the way they had been executed. The two additional depictions of dogs stand out from the other figures as well. These are illustrated proof of the very high craftsmanship of the cauldron's maker (Larsen 2005, 11-13).

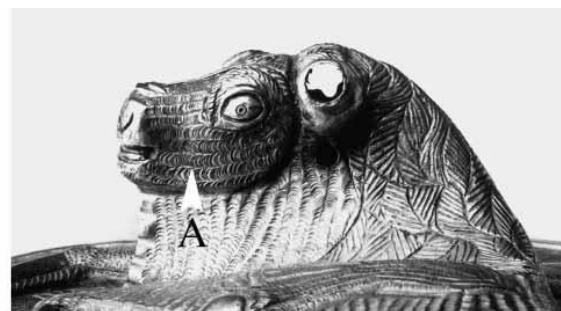
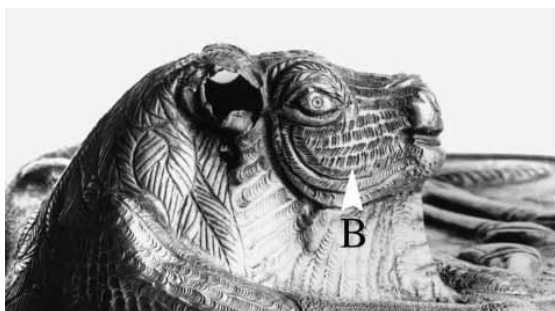


Fig. 9 & 10: Close-up view of the bull's head. The letters mark traces of different tools respectively punches (Larsen 2005, 13).

The variation on the execution of the depicted motifs can also be observed in the design of the decorative leaves, which show a different level of skills that Larsen assigns to three craftsmen, who also ornamented a part of the background of the scene on the phalera. In more recent investigations by Larsen made in the year 2002, he discovered additional tool marks, which led to the assumption that more craftsmen could have taken part in the creation of the Gundestrup cauldron. In combination with the variations in style and execution, Larsen suggests that as many as five or even six silversmiths whose skills differ could have crafted the bull plate. Therefore, he concludes that these men had worked in a workshop with a broad variety of metal working tools where each craftsman was responsible for a specific step in the production of metal respectively silver objects. One master could have been in charge of this workshop where a number of artisans worked (*Larsen 2005, 13f.*). Those silversmiths may have consisted of a group of persons who were in different stages of their apprenticeship and accomplished craftsmen.

According to Larsen (1987), the silver plate was not part of the original cauldron, but a *phalera* that decorated the bridle of a horse. The object is a later attachment to the cauldron and was used for repairing a hole on the inside bottom of the bowl. Based on the cauldron's inventory numbers, as well as on the sequence by Benner Larsen, this piece was placed before the other plates from the outside and those from the inside. But there are several different interpretations of when this plate was crafted. Taylor (1992, 84f.) supports the result of Larsen's analyses, which concludes that the plate was made after the cauldron. Rolf Hachmann (1991, 583) and Flemming Kaul (1999, 197) also note that the *phalera* was crafted later and is therefore younger.

Frank Falkenstein (2004, 75) came up with a different approach: in his opinion, it is likely that the plate is the oldest part of the assembled cauldron and was crafted before the artefact, probably as a prototype and sample item. Its positioning on the cauldron's bottom would not display the depicted relief-scene in the best way. With regard to the detailed face of the bull, a presentation in a horizontal view would be more likely, although this must not hint to a different original purpose of the *phalera*. The depiction of the bull and the largest dog in a relief-way support the intention of a vertical presentation and view (*Hachmann 1991, 610-612*). The fact that some details on the plate cannot be seen could be a result from its earlier crafting, when the size of the finished cauldron was not completely clear. The almost identical depictions of the three jumping figures on different plates could be explained with a template that was made for the figure with the sword. The skills of the silversmith who crafted the plate would have developed during the making of the cauldron (*Falkenstein 2004, 75f.*).

2.3 The seven plates on the outside of the cauldron

The order of the plates is based on their inventory numbers, which are put in brackets behind the description. They are necessary to find each specific plate in the diagrams and charts of the cauldron's technical analyses (compare subchapter 8), as well as in other references in the following chapters. The inventory numbers of two plates have already been mentioned in the previous section concerning the base plate of the Gundestrup cauldron.

The names given to each of the following plates which belong either to the sequence on the inner or on the outer side of the artefact were created by myself. They are based on the position of the bust or on significant attributes that are depicted on each plate. These creations are sometimes rather interpretative, but are intended as memorable descriptions for each plate that could be used instead of the numbered plates or their inventory numbers.



Fig. 11: The cross-armed woman.

2.3.1 Plate 1: The cross-armed woman (C 6564)

A central topless female bust with both arms placed and crossed on the chest. Furthermore, the woman's neck is decorated with a torque. Her hair is tressed in two braids while a ribbon runs over her forehead, which probably is the edge of some sort of headdress, possibly a cap. But it is also likely that the braids do not belong to the woman's hair, but are instead cloth strips or ribbons that are fixed on the headgear. Another possibility is that the top of the head is shaven, for example similar to a tonsure. The two following depictions of female busts are illustrated with the same hairstyle. On the left side, specifically on the left shoulder, a jumping or dancing figure is placed, while on the right shoulder a man is engaged with a carnivore, probably a lion. A line of prongs is placed close to the upper end of the plate which restricts the background decoration of small dots and vegetal ornaments.



Fig. 12: The Great Mother.

2.3.2 Plate 2: The Great Mother (C 6565)

The plate depicts a central-placed bust of a naked, or at least a topless, woman who is surrounded by three birds (one at each side of her head and one in her right hand), two wolfs or dogs and three smaller figures. Two of them are depicted as women in long dresses with the same hairstyle as the female bust, one of them seems to be braiding her hair. The arms of the bust have different positions. The left is bent and holds the third small, probably male figure in an upside-down position, while the right one is raised.



Fig. 13: The trinity of busts.

2.3.3 Plate 3: The trinity of busts (C 6566)

Three different busts are illustrated on this plate, a large one flanked by two smaller ones. The central bust portrays a nude woman with both arms placed on the chest and her hair bound to two braids. Above her right shoulder there is the bust of a bearded male placed with both his arms raised who also appears to be naked. On her left side, a bust is depicted in the same position as the former. Although a beard is missing, it could simply represent a younger man. Except for the bearded man, all busts wear torques, this piece of jewellery, however, could be hidden by the beard. The background has been ornamented in a similar way as on plate 1.



Fig. 14: The Dragonslayer.

2.3.4 Plate 4: The Dragonslayer (C 6567)

According to its beard, the bust represents a man with a torque who has both arms raised while his hands grab the necks of two fantastic creatures, a combination of a horse and a dragon, which are depicted in a vertical position. On his bare chest, the same motif of a man that is bitten into two pieces by some kind of carnivore, eventually a wolf, appears twice, but mirror-inverted to its likeness. The pairs are connected with a three-stripped bow.



Fig. 15: The deer hunter.

2.3.5 Plate 5: The deer hunter (C 6568)

Based on the beard, the bust can be regarded as to stand for a man. The beard style differs from the former bearded bust because the facial hair covers the whole lower part of the face, including a moustache and six locks underneath the chin. The man's arms are raised in the same way as those of the dragon slayer on plate 4 as well as those of the small busts on plate 3. Each hand embraces either one hind leg or both hind legs of a stag that is depicted in a vertical way where its head is placed close to one of the man's shoulders. The animals are mirror-inverted versions of each other. The background decoration is similar to the design of plate 1 and 3. The head of the bust has a small hole where a piece of metal has broken out.

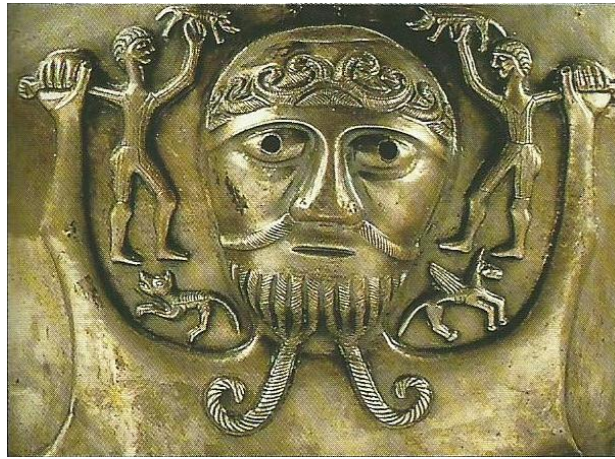


Fig. 16: The maneater.

2.3.6 Plate 6: The maneater (C 6569)

Another male bust with a beard consisting of a chin beard, a moustache and two long beard-locks is portrayed. The pose with raised arms is repeated on this plate, and the man holds two arms in his hands with the attached men, who in turn have one arm lifted in which they carry an animal that is likely to be a boar. All these smaller figures are orientated towards the big head and mirror-inverted versions of each other. While the bust appears to be naked, the pair wears a long-sleeved garment that ends at the knees and has a v-cut neck. On the bust's shoulders, two small creatures are placed, a wolf or carnivore to the right and a winged horse with a horn on its head to the left that face one of the plate's edges.



Fig. 17: The master of dance.

2.3.7 Plate 7: The master of dance (C 6570)

Once again, a bearded man with raised arms is depicted. This variation combines a full beard with a moustache, and the bust wears a torque. In the gap two male figures of equal size and clothing are shown, although their pose is different. While the left person parallels the figure on plate 1 (shown at the same side), the right person is illustrated in a standing pose, although also in profile. On the left shoulder of the bust, a small rider can be found, orientated away from the head. Its mount is either a donkey or a horse with a horn, respectively a unicorn.

2.4 The plates on the inside of the cauldron



Fig. 18: The antlered master of animals.

2.4.1 Plate 1: The antlered master of animals (C 6571)

A detailed description and a large image will follow in Chapter Two, subchapter 2.1.

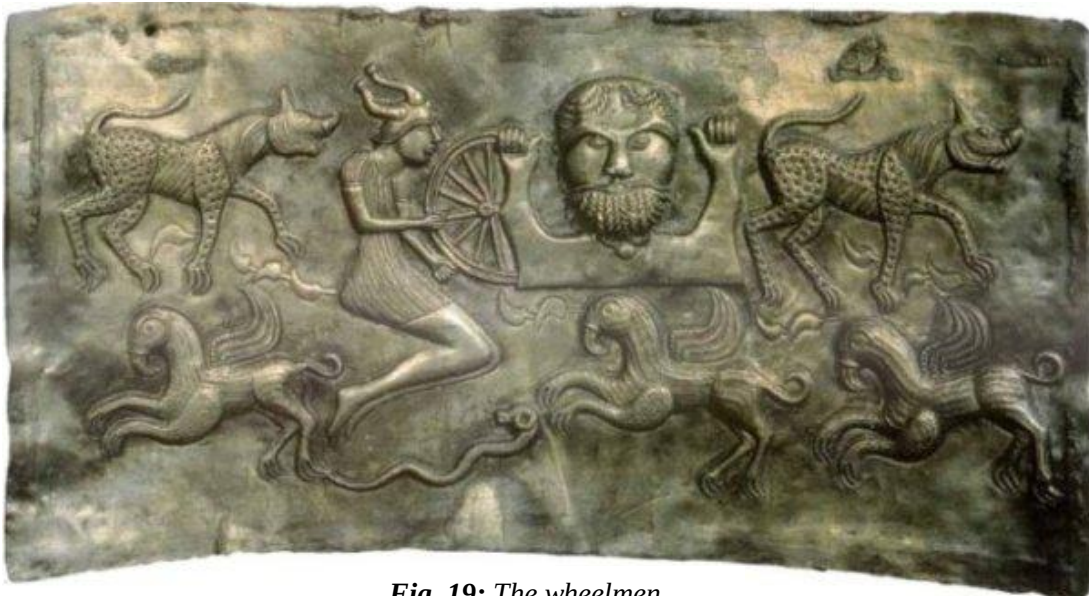


Fig. 19: The wheelmen.

2.4.2 Plate 2: The wheelmen (C 6572)

The central motif is a pair of a bearded male bust, with the arms raised in the same manner as the busts who depict men on the outside plates, and a large figure portrayed in a side view. The bust's right hand holds on to the half of a wheel with eight spokes, while the second figure, probably also a male one, holds on to the wheel with its right hand. It is clad with a horned helmet and a short garment that ends shortly underneath the hips. Three different animals ornament the plate: a carnivore (likely a leopard or a cheetah) orientated to the right side of the plate, a griffon in a running or rising pose, which faces the right side, and a snake with the horns of a ram. The first creature is repeated twice, the second one thrice. Ranks of leaves are used as background decoration.



Fig. 20: Protectress of animals.

2.4.3 Plate 3: The protectress of animals (C 6573)

A female bust is placed in the centre between two rosettes and two ranks of three leaves. Its arms are in a similar pose as those of the woman on outside-plate 3, but the right hand is placed above the left one. The woman's hair is bound in two braids and she wears a torque. The bust is flanked by a pair of elephants that are mirror-inverted to each other. Underneath two griffons are depicted, the one to the right side parallels its fellow members of the species on inside-plate 2, while the creature on the left side is shown back-to-front. Below the bust, a carnivore can be seen that equals the creatures on the former plate.



Fig. 21: The giant and the parade of warriors.

2.4.4 Plate 4: The giant and the parade of warriors (C 6574)

Close to the left edge, a large figure stands in profile holding a smaller upside-down figure close to a deltoid object that highly likely represents some sort of vessel, probably a cauldron. At its feet, a dog is portrayed in a vertical way, which could symbolize jumping. The central area of the plate is separated into two sections through a branch with leaves surrounded by many small dots: Above, four similar riders, who only differ in the design of their helmets, are

orientated towards the right edge. They form pairs and are connected with a thin vertical line that runs slightly downwards from the horse's head to the back of the rider in the front. Eventually, this detail could illustrate a rope. Below, seven warriors, of whom six are armed with spear and shield, while the last one rests a sword on his shoulder, face towards the giant. On the right side of the scene three men play the carnyx and are placed in the same direction as the warriors, although they are not placed underneath the branch. Atop of the carnyxes' heads a ram-horned snake is depicted. The warriors on foot as well as the giant (including the figure in his hands) are dressed in the same manner: a knee-length garment decorated with vertical stripes, long sleeves and low shoes. The swordsman wears an additional helmet, equal to that of the third rider (from the left). The horsemen are clad in shorter long-sleeved shirts of equal design that end at the hips and their low shoes are equipped with spurs.



Fig. 22: The baiting of the bulls.

2.4.5 Plate 5: The baiting of the bulls

A group of four different figures is depicted on this plate: a carnivore, likely a leopard or a cheetah, which is either preparing to jump or running to the left side of the plate; a large bull in the centre of the compilation, standing in a nearly static position that faces towards the right edge; a smaller topless figure with shorts in the same design as the garment of the warriors is raising a sword with his left hand; and a running dog or wolf underneath the bull. This group is repeated three times in almost the exact same way. Some minor changes concern the clothing of the centrally placed figure who wears a suit similar to the warriors on plate 4, the position of the dogs' legs and the height on which each bull is placed. Several ranks of leaves decorate free spaces in the background of the plate like the area between the legs of the bull.

2.5 Tubes of silver and a fragment of iron (C 6576)

The two tubes made of silver were discovered together with the other pieces of the cauldron. They are opened at the bottom and measure approximately 2 cm in diameter. Their length equals those of a smaller plate from the outside sequence of the cauldron. A fragmented piece of iron remained in one tube that was once part of a thin iron ring

or a rod (Andersen 2005, 4). The three objects were all assigned to the same inventory number, the separation from A to C is a later addition. The iron ring was placed at the edge of the cauldron and held the plates together so that they could be soldered. A total amount of eight silver tubes were used as a cover for the iron ring and put over it (Larsen 2005, 11, 14, 16).

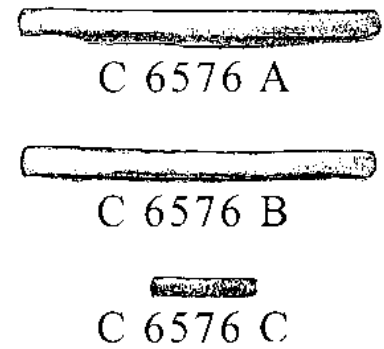


Fig. 23: Silver tubes & iron fragment.

2.6 The assumed original position and sequence of the plates

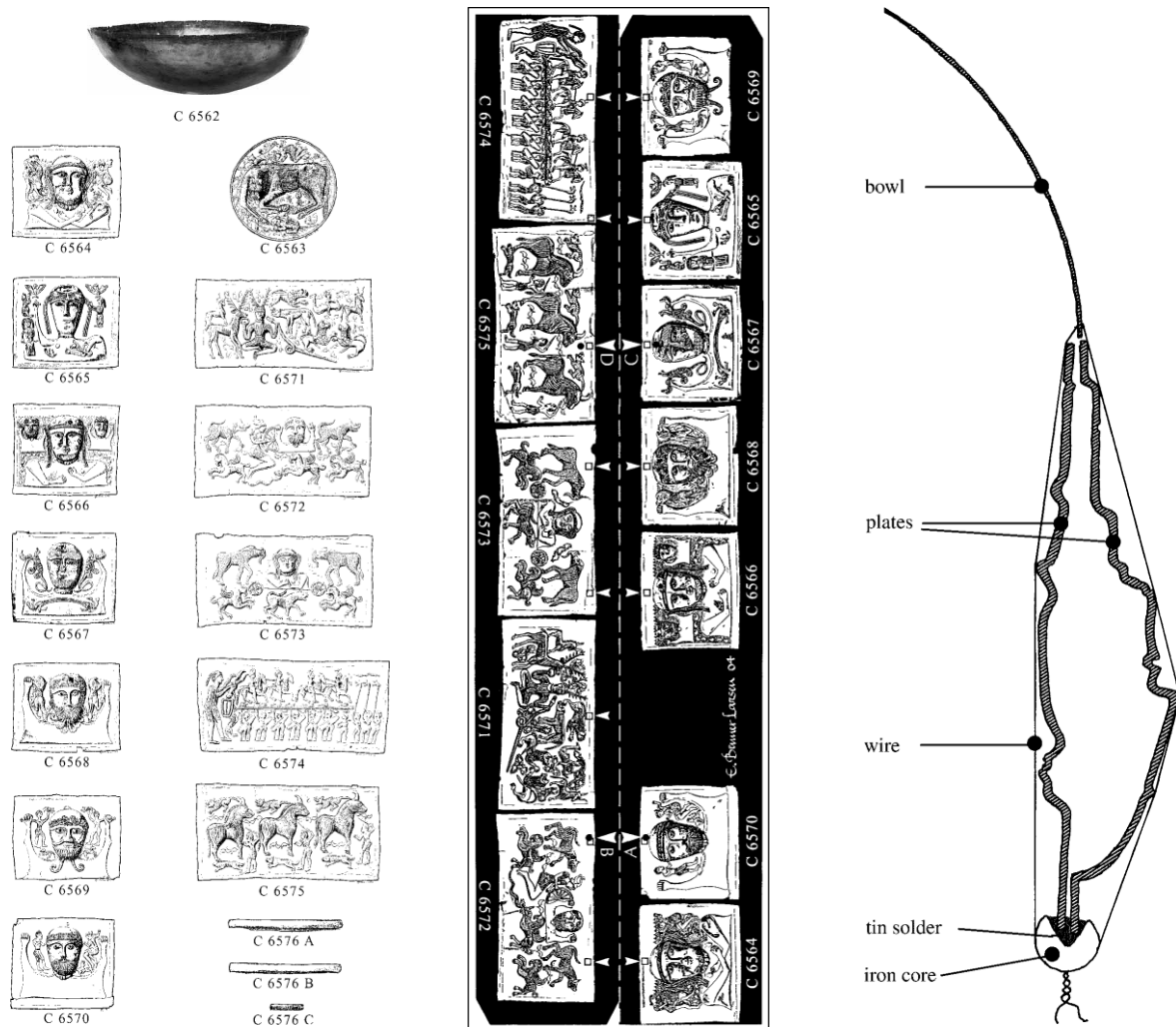


Fig. 24-26: All parts of the cauldron, the position of the plates and how they could have been fixed for soldering.

The assumed model of the original sequence as well as the position of the cauldron's plates is based on the analyses of Erling Benner Larsen. He assigned the separate parts of the cauldron to each other according to their measured size, remnants and traces of solder and also marks of a specific kind of tool: scrapers. The smaller white arrows show the accordances of the solder traces, while the larger white arrows combined with the letters point to the corresponding holes for rivets, of which one runs through the head of a male bust on plate C 6567 (*Larsen 2005, 16*).

2.7 The scenes on the Gundestrup cauldron

The scenes depicted on the plates of the cauldron can be separated into two different groups. The first one consists of the seven images portrayed as busts made like a relief on the cauldron's outside. Four portraits show heads with beards, and therefore men, while on the other two busts figures with long hair and breasts are depicted, which leads to the conclusion that these figures are women. The seventh plate has three busts on it, a large female one in the middle and two smaller ones on each side. The small bust to the right is bearded, while the head to the left is not, but does not have any visible breasts either. Therefore, it is likely that this second head shows a young man. Almost all of the busts wear a torque around the neck, except those three heads (two heads on a separate plate and one among the group of three) which have a longer beard than the other bearded relief-busts. Drexel thinks that these also wear a torque, which is probably hidden by the beard (*Drexel 1915, 4f.*).

Four of the figures have both of their arms raised and their hands closed, three either hold two animals (an upside-down deer at the hind legs and probably seahorses at the necks) or a pair of humans, of whom the big central figure grabs one in each case while the fourth man only has his arms raised and the hands closed. There is also a pair of humans on this plate, located in the gap between his arms and the head. One woman only has the right arm raised and the other placed on her chest, with which she holds a figure, another has both arms crossed on the chest, and the large bust of the trio also has its hands placed on or before its chest but not upon each other. Drexel describes the women's arm position as a typical gesture, a symbol for femininity, and, according to him, the portraits are deities (*Drexel 1915, 4f.*).

The second group is the one with illustrations on the five inner plates. In Drexel's opinion two of them are identical to the outer plates, and there is no special reason or deeper meaning that these plates are decorated with more and different figures from their counterparts. There is more space for the scene and therefore the animals, leaves and the figure were just used to fill

the gaps in the image. According to Drexel, the plate which shows a man with antlers, probably Cernunnos, also belongs to this group or category of deities, and the illustration used on him was necessary to show the whole body so that the cross-legged seated position, which is typical for it, could be seen. The two other plates of the inner side are interpreted as scenes of life and representations of sacral or cultic activities (*Drexel 1915, 5*).

The first scene shows a parade or procession of warriors separated into riders and soldiers on foot. On the left, there stands a big figure holding a smaller one upside-down in its hands, which it wants to put in an object similar to a cauldron. The position is described as if making a sacrifice or an offering. Three bulls are shown on the last plate, each of them accompanied by a man with a raised sword and a wolf or a dog. The round plate on the inner bottom of the cauldron also has a bull and a swordsman attended by a dog on it and is decorated as if seen from an aerial perspective. These two plates combined show a bull-baiting, divided into two different parts (*Drexel 1915, 5*).

What was the purpose of the Gundestrup cauldron? Drexel mentions that the cauldron is seen as a cultic object, which was used for or during sacrifices. The scene with the assumed human sacrifice on an inner plate of the cauldron was used to imagine the cauldron's purpose, and Drexel brings up the theory that human blood could have streamed into it when people were sacrificed to the gods of the Celts. Drexel's own interpretation does not differ so much from the former theory but is a more generalizing one. The cauldron, in his opinion, was indeed used for cultic acts, but as a mixing vessel. In addition, Drexel writes that the content of the cauldron would have deeply impressed everyone who viewed it with respect:

“[...] dessen Inhalt allen Respekt abnötigt” (*Drexel 1915, 6*).

Drexel probably means that the cauldron was gazed upon in amazement during a celebration or ceremony when it was filled with whatever kind of liquid. Drexel also notes that in the society to which the cauldron belonged, every form of festivity was simultaneously a form of sacral activity or had some cultic meaning. Therefore and because the feast is basically based on a sacrificial meal where it is supposed that the gods are in some way present and also have a taste of the offering, the probably religious or sacral images blend in well (*Drexel 1915, 6*).

3. The assumed time of the cauldron's construction

Drexel mentions several suggestions or theories how the artefact was dated by different academics and the span of time for the cauldrons production was almost a millennium. He

notes that most of the experts, among them archaeologists like Karl Schumacher, who assumed that there is an older object that would have influenced or inspired the Gundestrup cauldron, and also Gustaf Kossinna would support the theory which places the moment of its construction in the 2nd or the 3rd century AD. In contrast to that Georg Loeschke, a classic archaeologist, arguments for a manufacturing in the 4th or 3rd century BC, and in a similar way, the German philologist Friedrich Marx dates the cauldron in the 2nd century BC, but Drexel does not mention their arguments. The French archaeologist Salomon Reinach was convinced that this silver object had not been made before the Migration period, and therefore, a dating in the 5th or 6th century AD is reasonable. Only the Danish pre-historian Sophus Müller supposed an origin around the turn of the eras (*Drexel 1915, 2*).

Drexel dates the object to an assumed period of time from 100 BC until 50 AD and bases this determination on several different factors. He mentions an argument or a theory by Sophus Müller, which has not been taken into account so far. The cauldron of Gundestrup is not a unicum as there are other similar objects which almost have the same dating. There are several characteristics which the items of this group have in common. The cauldrons have a flat convex formed bottom and an abrupt transition from the base and the walls. Furthermore, they consist of several pieces, which are put in place through rivets, and have also a ring of iron placed on the edge to guarantee the stabilization of the construction (*Drexel 1915, 6*).

Handles were used at the sides to carry and hang up the cauldrons, either as a pair of two or as one, shaped like a bow. Several times, heavy iron chains were found alongside the objects, which were most likely used together with a tripod to lift the cauldrons above the open fire so that it could be used as a cooking vessel, but the Gundestrup cauldron was definitely not used for such a purpose. It is, however, possible that this vessel used the same installation. There is a difference, as the other cauldrons are mostly made of bronze or of different metals, with a bronze base and a wall forged of iron. Most of these objects were found in the northern parts of Magna Germania and date into the late period of the La Tène culture in general, but their usage continues until the Roman imperial period. In addition, such cauldrons have been discovered in the burial grounds in Bohemia and also in far southern territories (*Drexel 1915, 7*).

The earliest period or moment of time the Gundestrup cauldron can be dated is the beginning of the 1st century BC, and this date by Drexel is premised on the argumentation of Gustaf Kossinna, based on a specific detail on two plates: spurs. These items can be found on the riders in the parade as well as on the warrior's feet who are depicted on the round middle plate beside the bull. The earliest appearance of spurs in Central and Northern Europe can be dated

to the late La Tène Period on the basis of finds from the site of La Tène and in addition from the mountain *Hradiště u Hlinné* in Bohemia, near the village of Stradonice. One spur was discovered on the fields where the Battle of Alesia took place in the year 52 BC. In 51 BC, the spurs are mentioned in a written source for the first time, exactly in chapter VIII of Cesar's '*De Bello Gallico*', which was added by the Roman writer Aulus Hirtius. Therefore, Drexel concludes that the Gundestrup cauldron could not have been made before the shift from the 2nd to the 1st century BC (Drexel 1915, 7f.).

Another find, which can be used in a helpful way to date the cauldron, is a fragmented silver plate from a Dacian hoard that was found in the village Săliște, former Cioara, in Romania (Drexel 1915, 8). A detailed description and analysis follows in Chapter Three.

Furthermore, Drexel explains that Sophus Müller's assumed dating for the cauldron to the late Latène period had been disproved afterwards and was reconsidered because of the uniqueness of the objects. The Gundestrup cauldron does not seem to fit into the archaeological material from Gallia and Magna Germania compared to the other finds. Drexel notes that in the art of the late La Tène culture, the figures would not have been as detailed as those on the plates of the cauldron, and, in addition, its stylistics would have been different. Their sculptural decoration shows some parallels to images or illustrations that usually appear later and date back either to the Roman imperial period or the Early Middle Ages. Drexel adds an argument against the dating by Kossinna, who underlined that the cauldron is among the group of the heaviest antique silver objects, probably the heaviest artefact made from silver in antiquity at all. But silver was only used randomly in the Celtic world, and if so, commonly for small pieces of jewellery. In the Magna Germania, silver seems to appear during the reign of Augustus for the first time. Therefore, Kossinna placed the earliest possible moment of the cauldron's construction in Gallia or in Germania to the 2nd century AD. Drexel agrees with him that the artefact could have been made there, but also notes that the cauldron's place of origin is not proved yet in any way. For that reason, it is necessary to search for an answer to this question (Drexel 1915, 9f.).

4. The cauldron's cultural origins and its assumed place of manufacture

Drexel mentions varying arguments or theories concerning the place of origin of the silver cauldron. Similar to the dating of the object, several scholars assumed different places of its construction. A common opinion is that the cauldron was made near the place it was found, in

Jutland or somewhere in the North. Another theory is that the cauldron comes from Gallia because of its definite Celtic illustrations. Drexel notes that the latter thesis is not convincing, because there are almost no comparable objects from that region, neither in the same style nor in the extensive work of silver, while in the North a number of similar finds were made. Salomon Reinach was the first who brought up the theory that the cauldron's design could be a symbiosis between Celtic and Scythian design elements and, in addition, detected parallels between the cauldron's images and the Pontic style of art. Albert Voß made a definite argumentation that the cauldron is a product of Pontic craftsmen with an attempt to base his interpretation of the cauldron's images on the cult of Mithras. Oskar Wulff continued this approach and tried to prove his theory that the cauldron's illustrations show influences of early medieval art (*Drexel 1915, 2f.*).

But Drexel is convinced that the material used by Voß is not comparable and therefore useless. Wulff's attempt seems to be far better and his analyses, primary concerning the style of the Gundestrup images, are very useful, but his concluded dating for the cauldron is wrong. Both scholars came to the common conclusion that the silver artefact is the product of craftsmen that lived in the ancient region of Pontus that was located at the southern coastal area of the Black Sea in Asia Minor. For Wulff it could be possible that the cauldron's Celtic imagery is the result of influences from the tribe of the Galatians who settled in Asia Minor. But according to Drexel this theory goes into the wrong direction because it subordinates the Celtic influenced imagery (*Drexel 1915, 20*).

Therefore, Drexel himself searched for comparable images or objects to the scenes on the cauldron's plates, so that he might be able to find its country of origin. He sees the seated figure with the antlers as Cernunnos, referring to the Pillar of the Boatmen. He also assigned other scenes to Celtic mythology: the man with the wheel is Taranis (who is also sometimes identified as Jupiter) and the plate with the three heads illustrates a variation of a three-faced deity that can be found on several monuments in Gallia. The torque is another detail which connects the images to the world of Celtic gods. In addition to his search for comparable details, Drexel makes a comparison with other objects whose ornamentation has parallels to the relief decoration on the cauldron's outer plates. In Belgium, multiple vessels made of clay have been found, which almost have the same age and which are decorated with a number of six or seven busts of deities on the outside. This specific form of pottery is called "*Wochengöttervase*" (*Drexel 1915, 11*). These vases, in Drexel's opinion, are related to the Gundestrup cauldron (*Drexel 1915, 10f.*).

The stylistic connections between these Gallic vases from the Roman imperial period and the

cauldron are, or could be, the result of the usage of busts on the Gundestrup plates as models for the potteries. Another parallel to this style are several singular busts or masks made of sheet silver or sheet bronze, which also had their eyes filled with blue glass paste and which are obviously different from the design of the figures in Gallo-Roman art during the imperial period. The older design tradition of the Gundestrup cauldron was reused and imitated by these newer art objects (*Drexel 1915, 25f.*).



Fig. 27 & 28: “Wochengötttervase” from Bavay and silver-medallion in the Rijksmuseum Leiden.

According to Drexel the parade of warriors is another element that can be connected to Celtic art, because of the typical Celtic instrument named *carnyx*, the dragon trumpet, and, in addition, because of the helmets worn by the riders and by one man on foot, which are either crested with animals (a boar and a bird), some kind of horns or with a metal comb. The warriors also wear pavises with shield bosses, a form of defensive arms which were typical for Celtic warriors and which date to the late La Tène culture. Drexel marked that he did not come up with these arguments and that he had only repeated already known interpretations. The Celtic style and motifs shown on the cauldron’s plates have never been questioned. The situation is different with the numerous diverse animals that certainly do not originate in the Celtic world, but usually further south. These are the mixed or mythological creatures like the griffons, sea horses/dragons and the winged horse as well as normal ones like elephants, lions, and also a pair of a human and an animal, a man who fights with a lion and one who rides on the back of a dolphin. The common theory is that these creatures have been adapted from Roman art, and some academics support the argument that the creator of the plates with the lions and the elephants might probably have seen their real counterparts in a Roman circus (*Drexel 1915, 11-13*).

Drexel does not deny this argument as a probability because for every non-Celtic motif a parallel or a master can be found in Roman art. But in Drexel's opinion, the images chosen by the artist would be a strange compilation compared to the plentiful types which appear in the craftwork of the Roman provinces. Therefore, Drexel regards any Roman influence on the cauldron's art as unlikely, because the images or motifs that are supposed to be adoptions of Roman art had already appeared in the Greek world or even earlier in the Ionian culture. Drexel uses three medallions made of silver as a comparison, through which he tries to locate the cauldron's place of origin. The first one is kept in the '*Rijksmuseum van Natuurlijke Historie*' (National Museum of Natural History) in Leiden and had been found in Roermond in the province Limburg in the Netherlands. It is 23 cm in diameter and shows three groups: In the upper half there are two lions illustrated which are attacking a ram standing between them. Beneath them a man clasping the neck of a lion is kneeling and putting its head down. On the bottom, two carnivores are shown fighting or quarrel about prey in the form of a bull's head (*Drexel 1915, 13f.*).



Fig. 29 & 30: Silver-medallions in the Cabinet des Médailles in Paris.

The two other silver medallions measure 15,5 cm and are decorated with almost the same range of animals, but the second one has been badly damaged and has more decorations in its middle. The objects, whose origin Drexel traces back to the Kingdom of Pontus (281 BC to 62 AD) that was initially situated around the eastern half of the Black Sea, are stored in the '*Cabinet des Médailles*' in Paris. His conclusion is based on inscriptions at the edges of the medallions which mention the name **Mithradates Eupator**, whom Drexel identifies as the Pontic king Mithridates VI.², who ruled from 120 to 63 BC. The silver objects were supposed

² cf. Wikipedia: Mithridates VI of Pontus: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mithridates_VI_of_Pontus [Accessed 29th January 2018].

to be votive offerings to a temple of the goddess Artemis and are, for Drexel, obviously products of Pontic Art. Animal scenes are a characteristic of this style of art, which had been adopted and developed from older Ionic art. These motifs had almost vanished in their country of origin and its former colonies and were very rarely used there. Several animals are depicted on the plates: gryphons, carnivores with wings, gazelles (or probably antelopes) and a carnivore that has scales, in which Drexel sees a possible hyena. The beasts are arranged in the same manner as on the object from Leiden. In the upper half, two carnivores with wings attack a frightened gazelle, in the middle the hyena leaps at a gazelle and in the lower half, there are two griffins, both wanting to seize the head of a bull (*Drexel 1915, 14-17.*).

Drexel argues that the motifs had been chosen according to their purpose. The role of Artemis in the Pontic Empire was different to her function in Greece. In the Pontic Empire, she was equated with *Ma*, an ancient goddess of nature as well as a mother goddess in Asia Minor who had several names and was worshipped in a number of regions. This goddess was also the mistress of animals. The elephant, as the biggest and mightiest animal on land known to men in that time, became an attribute of the goddess and has been illustrated on the second, broken plate. There are several parallels in the selection and the design of the animals on the medallions and on the Gundestrup cauldron. Elephants, contrary or mirror-inverted as well as antagonistic beasts (herbivores and carnivores) appear on both objects and the griffons are made in a specific way, with the head of an eagle and wings whose ends form a curve. Furthermore, the fur resembles fish bones, the tails have the form of ears and the surface between the animals is abrasive and ornamented with ranks. According to Drexel, the skills of the manufacturers are not equal to each other, which can be detected especially by a comparison of the three animals on the medallion with the three beasts underneath the elephants on the cauldron's plate **C 6573**. The relief-like images on the cauldron are of lesser quality than those of the medallions, so he concludes that the latter was used by barbarians as a model to create the former. The piece from Roermond could be placed between these two objects, according to its craftsmanship (*Drexel 1915, 17f.*).

But Drexel analyses another motif on the cauldron, which he definitely can trace back to the art of the Pontic world, namely the men who hold animals in their hands. The design of the sea dragons originates in the area of the Black Sea and is a fantasized version of a seahorse's appearance (*Drexel 1915, 18*). A parallel from the northern area of the Black Sea is the depiction of a dragon-horse on a scabbard from the Kurgan of Kul Oba, which is located on Kerch, a peninsula that is connected to the Crimea and part of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea. The fantastic beast is described as hippocampus as well as a seahorse. The scabbard's

core was forged from iron and covered with gold that had been ornamented with animals, either fantastic or natural ones. The artefact dates to the 4th century BC and had been placed in a particular area of the dead king's sarcophagus (Alexeyev 2012, 178).



Fig. 31 & 32: Golden scabbard with dragon-horse/seadragon from the Kul-Oba kurgan.

The way the probable deity holds the animals is similar to Greek images of gods doing the same. The pose of the upside-down turned deer in the man's hands is designed with finer craft than the static counterpart in the scene with the antlered man, therefore Drexel theorises that the former were made after a model while the latter was the craftsman's own design. The woman between the elephants was also likely formed after a foreign southern example because of the composition of the animals surrounding her. Furthermore, Drexel understands her as a representation of the already mentioned animal goddess who is probably also portrayed as a bust on the outside plate C 6564, based on the attribute of a man struggling with a lion. The man who holding two smaller men on their arms perhaps also belongs to this

group that was inspired by models from the Greek and Ionic world, but the small boars held by the two men are definitely of Celtic origin in Drexel's opinion (Drexel 1915, 18f.).

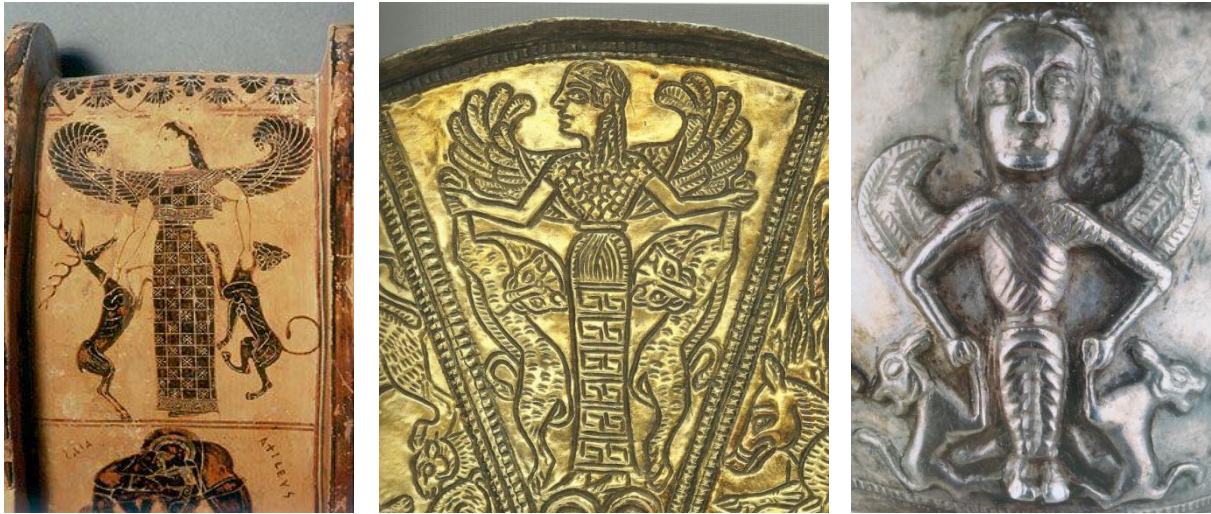


Fig. 33-35: Artemis as 'Mistress of animals', Cybele and a figure with wings which is depicted on an artefact of the Rogozen treasure.

These three depictions of winged women are similar to each other. The first illustration (Fig. 33) shows a woman with wings in a long dress who grabs the necks of a stag and a panther. This female figure is described as representing the Greek goddess Artemis in the aspect of the 'Potnia Theron', the Mistress of Animals. The image decorates the handle of a krater in the black-figure art style which has been named "*François Vase*". The object dates to around 570 BC and is kept in the 'Museo archeologico nazionale di Firenze' in Florence (Foundation of the Hellenic world: Geometric period: Gallery. [Online] Available from: <http://www.fhw.gr/chronos/03/en/gallery/cph22.html> [Accessed 30th March 2018]).

The second woman (Fig. 34) holds the front paws of two carnivores and fills one of eight sections illustrated with different figures on the reverse side of a mirror. This object was found in the fourth kurgan of the Kelermes site in the north-western part of the Caucasus (Zakubanye) and had been made from casted silver alloyed with electrum. It measures circa 17 cm in diameter and dates to the second half of the 7th century BC. The winged female is the central figure and according to the attributed panthers is described as to represent the goddess Cybele, who had mainly been worshipped in Asia Minor. The mirror belongs to the State Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg (Alexeyev 2012, 108f.).

The third image was crafted into a silver pitcher that is a part of the treasure, which was found in the Bulgarian village Rogozen. The depiction is described as a winged figure with animals (Marazov 2005, 129). According to the similarities between the images, the figure can be interpreted as female, while the animals probably represent either small dogs or foxes.



Fig. 36 & 37: Gold pendant from Tillya tepe.

The site of Tillya Tepe which dates into the 1st century BC is located in the North of Afghanistan and was discovered in 1978. The pendant with a figure flanked by two dragons, who probably wears either a caftan or a long shirt in combination with a skirt or over a dress, belongs to a pair of earrings that has been excavated in the second of six kurgans in which five females and one male had been buried. The group is described as '*King with dragons*' (Wikipedia: Tillya Tepe. [Online] Available from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tillya_Tepe [Accessed 30th March 2018]).

Kimball and Behan (2002, 182) date the site and the artefacts around 100 BC and interpret the figure as a representation of a priestess from the Saka. The piece of jewellery, which had been discovered at the burial site of a woman, shows several different cultural influences: while the design is Greco-Bactrian, the iconography derives from the Near Eastern artistic world. On the other hand, the winged animals and the dragons parallel the mixed and twisted beasts of the animal-style art of the Pazyryk culture. In addition, the woman on the outer plate **C 6565**, who holds a figure in her left arm and a bird in her right hand while two other birds fly around her head, shows similarities to the goddess Aphrodite, who is accompanied by doves. The figure who sits on the back of the dolphin is also adapted from Greek art and also the two small figures of a Pegasus and a rider left to the heads of bearded men are adoptions of Greek motifs. The first one is located next to the male relief which grabs the two smaller men, whereas the second can be found beneath the dancing figure in the gap between the man's raised arm and head. Drexel assumes that their small scale could be a result of a copy made from the designs on coins. In his opinion, the pantheon of deities illustrated on the cauldron of Gundestrup only partially originates in the Celtic world and has several influences from the Greek theotechny (Drexel 1915, 19f.).



Fig. 38: Pegasus on the obverse of a Corinthian stater, dated to from 345-307 BC.

Fig. 39 & 40: Silver didrachm from the city of Taras, in Calabria in the Italian south, minted between 380-345 BC. The obverse depicts a horseman while the reverse shows a man riding on a dolphin, probably Taras, a son of the sea god Poseidon.

Drexel sees potential in Wulff's connection between the cauldron and the Galatians, who he contemplates as its probable producers, because there are several arguments for that origin. The home region of this Celtic tribe lies in Asia Minor, where the Greek culture came in touch with the local societies, in turn influenced by eastern civilizations. The Galatians worshipped the mother goddess Cybele and Artemis, both of which Drexel interprets as the possible animal mistress on the cauldron, or to be a possible fusion of these two. The deity Ma was also represented in the Galatian pantheon. Furthermore, written sources³ from the time of Emperor Tiberius report that the Galatians sacrificed humans at least until the beginning of the 2nd century BC and that the baiting of bulls was a popular tradition among them. But Drexel brings in the question of whether the Celtic deities still had a main importance in the 1st century BC, because according to the sources, their influence and cult had almost vanished. In addition, Drexel states that, according to the arguments mentioned before, the connection of the cauldron to the Celtic world cannot be ignored. Therefore, he places the cauldron's origin far to the north, in a region where the Pontic and the Celtic world and their cultures could have met, located in the middle and lower area of the Danube basin (*Drexel 1915, 21*).

The tribe of the Scordisci settled in the region between the mouth of the river Sava and the Great Morava, which both flow into the Danube, in the first half of the 3rd century BC. The Scordisci were among the mightiest tribes on the Balkans whose wild warriors spread fear in the neighbouring regions and unsuccessfully attacked the sanctum of Delphi in a conglomerate with Thracians in 110 BC. Finally, they sacked it in the year 90 BC. Since the middle of the 2nd century BC, the Roman Republic had undertaken almost a dozen campaigns or military expeditions against this tribe. Until the tribes in the Danube region finally got

³ Register of Augustan priest of the temple in Ancyra (*Drexel 1915, 21*).

under Roman rule, the Scordisci remained a significant group. Drexel sees the description of this tribe in the sources represented in the images on the Gundestrup cauldron: as fierce and bellicose warriors who go to war accompanied by the sound of carnyxes and after having sacrificed a human. In addition, the Scordisci would drink from the skulls of their captives and victims but no further details, neither about their culture nor their religion, have been delivered to posterity (*Drexel 1915, 22f.*).

But there are absolutely no traces or sources that would prove, in any way, an influence of Greek art to the Celtic culture of the Scordisci that would have originated from the contacts with the Roman world. But connections and influences of Dacian design elements existed and, furthermore, ties of the Scordisci style to the arts and crafts of the Pontic kingdom (under Mithradates) can indeed be proven. Drexel sees this region as the place from where the Greek artistic style affected the design of the images on the cauldron. Furthermore, he understands the political situation of the Scordisci and the relationship to their neighbours as an acknowledgement to his argumentation. While they were enemies of Rome, their contacts with the Dacians were of friendly nature, whereas their connection to the Pontic Empire was an amicable relationship because of King Mithradates Eupator's relations to the Celtic tribes in the Danube basin. Mithradates hired Celtic warriors as mercenaries and the Roman historian Appian reported that a Celtic leader named Bituitus killed the king, because the aged Mithradates wished to die. In addition, he planned a combined invasion of the Italian peninsula with these Celts and, although this enterprise was never realised, it gives an idea about the established contacts between the two groups (*Drexel 1915, 23f.*).

Drexel is convinced that via such contacts the Danube-Celts could have received many silver objects from the Pontic kingdom, either as gifts or subsidies to earn their favour so that its rulers were able to call them to arms in time of need, as payment for their services in war or as spoils of war. Drexel states that contacts in trade or in politics could not be used as easy explanations of cultural influences or origins of art styles and designs. But in the case of Barbarian societies such relationships would be the only form of foreign influence(s). Furthermore, Drexel mentions one observation which might be important: The craftsman who made and ornamented the plates of the cauldron had perfect skills when it came to working on metal, which can be seen in the fine execution of the details. Albeit he has a specific range of images to engrave which seemed not to be his speciality (*Drexel 1915, 24*).

So, Drexel concludes that the tribe where the cauldron originates from was very skilled in the art of goldsmithing, but never depicted figures, or only in a very small amount. But he states that there have not been objects or artefacts discovered in the region of the Scordisci, which

date to the same period as the cauldron, whereas several silver findings that are similar in design and workmanship to the cauldron had been made in the land of the Dacians. Therefore, he assumes that the Dacian objects would be parallels to those of the Scordisci (*Drexel 1915, 24*).

Silver as the necessary raw material for the cauldron could have been found in large amounts in the home land of the Scordisci, either in the form of many silver objects gained in different ways, especially as plunder, or because of the short distance to the silver mines in Illyria, which will later become the main silver source of the Roman Empire in that region. After Drexel argues for the cauldron's origin in the Danube basin, he tries to prove his theory. The relations of the Gundestrup imagery to other objects and artefacts of the Celtic world can be explained through the pictorial world of Celtic religious scenes, which have been distributed over a large territory, probably by the druids as Drexel supposes, when the Celtic world was still independent. Remnants of this image tradition existed until the imperial period (*Drexel 1915, 24-27*).

Drexel refers to a relation between the faces, as well as the busts on the plates of the cauldron and several masks or busts from the Celtic world that had been crafted either from sheet bronze or sheet silver. Similar details between the busts and the masks are inlays of glass paste in blue colour. These artefacts originate from Gallia, but some parallels have also been found in areas which were inhabited by Germanic tribes. Drexel reasons that the objects had likely been imported there. The masks and faces are an alien element in the art style of the Gallo-Roman culture, therefore they must have been part of an older artistic style, of which some designs would have survived (*Drexel 1915, 25f.*).



Fig. 41: Gallic busts made from bronze.



Compilation of Celtic masks:

Fig. 42: Mask of a man crafted from bronze, interpreted as to represent a deity. Found in Montserié (Département Hautes-Pyrénées, France) and dates into the 1st century BC (Eluère 1993, 168).

Fig. 43 & 44: Celtic masks made of a copper alloying that have been excavated in the Swedish region of Blekinge (Blekinge County). The dating of these artefacts is placed in the period from the 1st century BC to the 1st century AD. A blue glass inlay had been preserved in the right eye of Fig. 32 (Blekinge Museum: *Beskrivning av maskerna*. [Online] Available from: <http://www.blekingemuseum.se/pages/291> [Accessed 31th March 2018]).

Fig. 45: Bronze mask from a burial mound in Kleinklein (Styria, Austria), the so called Kröll-Schmidt-Kogel. It is likely that the mask has been fixed on a chest of wood which contained the ashes of the dead (Urban 2003, 253-55). The artefact was excavated together with a pair of bronze plates shaped like hands (although two left ones) in the year 1995. The set dates into the first half of the 6th century BC and was once displayed attached on a wooden object. (Archäologiemuseum Schloss Eggenberg: *Maske aus Kleinklein*. [Online] Available from: <https://www.museum-joanneum.at/archaeologiemuseum-schloss-eggenberg/sammlungen/die-maske-aus-kleinklein> [Accessed 31th March 2018]).

Although deities from the Pontic world have been adapted and depicted on the cauldron, it is unlikely in Drexel's opinion that their meaning and function were either known or understood by its viewers. The craftsmen had chosen the certain deities merely for reasons of design. On the other hand, there are figures or probable deities on the cauldron's plates that originate in the Celtic culture, like the antlered man or the group of three people who might have been separated because the artist could not illustrate them as one three-faced figure. Beside the man who holds a wheel in his right hand, the possible Taranis, there is another man with horns on his helmet and whose knees are bent, which either illustrates a kneeling pose or a jumping one. The companion also grabs the wheel with his right hand and probably turns it. A very similar scene can be found on the scabbard from Hallstatt that might also have served as an inspiration: two men hold a wheel with eight spokes in their hands and might also spin it while a group of armed warriors and geared up riders is shown next to them. Drexel refers to another related image in a reduced form on a knife sheath from Lake Garda, where only a wheel and the hands which turns it are depicted (Drexel 1915, 27-29).

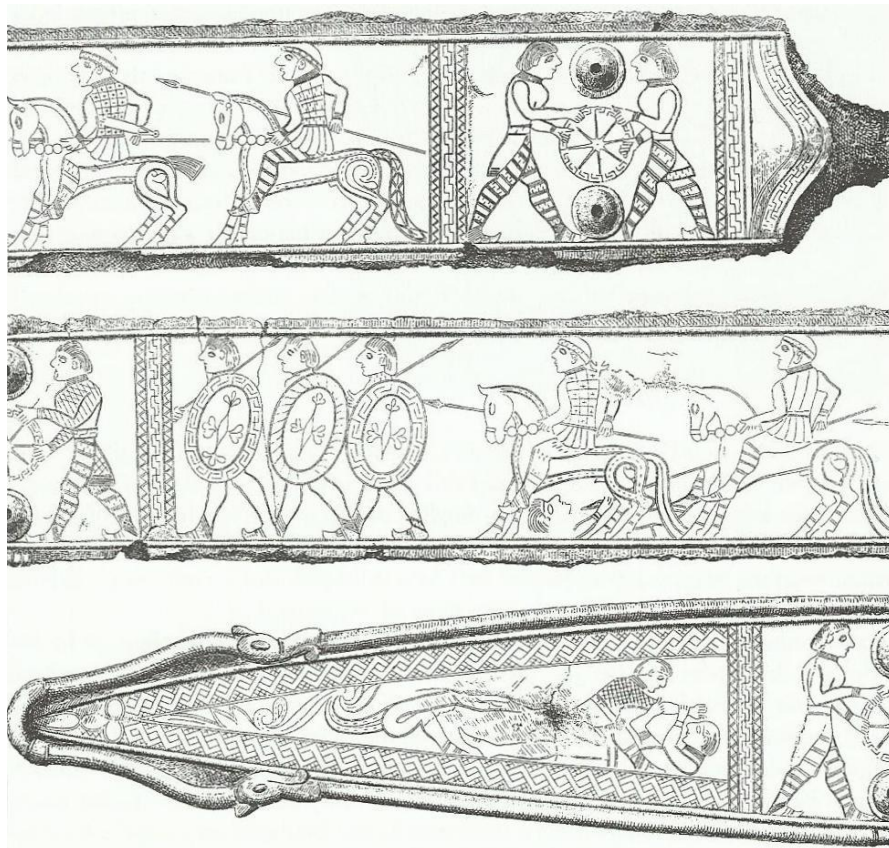


Fig. 46: Drawing of the scene that is depicted on the bronze scabbard from the grave field of Hallstatt.

In addition, Drexel assumes that the silversmith who created the cauldron arranged the images on the plates after a pattern of scenes, as wished for by the commissioner. Therefore, the craftsman was limited in the realisation of his own ideas. The plate where a human is sacrificed next to a parade of warriors as well as in the scene with the group of a bull, dogs or carnivores and a warrior repeated three times are probably those which were designed by the artist himself, but fit into the ordered imagery. According to Drexel, the static pose of the bulls and also the almost alike looking surrounding figures would reveal that the craftsman did not have an example for those figures which he could have used for his designs. He interprets the different plates as depictions of the world of gods his commissioner believed in and as festivities in which the baiting of one or several bulls played an important role (*Drexel 1915, 29*).

The round plate at the bottom also shows the motif of the bull-baiting, only in a different, an aerial perspective. In Drexel's opinion, the scene was realised in an awful way, but made to fulfil the specific aim of the varying view. Drexel refers to similar objects from ancient Egypt where the innards of objects had been decorated with plastic figures that in turn reduced its usability. This Egyptian design was adopted in Europe, where plates or discs of different use were heavily decorated with all sorts of figurines. From the Celtic world, the bronze cult wagon of Strettweg would be a comparable example, whose figures illustrate similar scenes

as the cauldron's plates: a parade of warriors and the sacrifice of animals in the form of two deer (*Drexel 1915, 29-31*).



Fig. 47-49: *The cult wagon of Strettweg.*

The limitation of the usage of objects led to a reduction of its decoration, probably proceeding from Egypt to the Mediterranean area, where finally only reliefs were used for ornamentation, and eventually also further north. The Strettweg wagon belongs to another group of objects, which developed into a different direction, whereas the actual vessel faded into the background. Drexel interpreted the cauldron's bottom as a remnant of this former, older tradition and a fusion of the ornament styles: the relief was made in an ancient Celtic design, while the half plastic figure on the inside is related to artefacts from Hallstatt (*Drexel 1915, 30f.*). Examples of comparison that originate from the Mediterranean development of this object group are two plates made from silver which were excavated in a burial in Armaziskhevi in Caucasia. The tomb was located in the so called '*burial vault of the eristavis*' that date to the 2nd and 3rd century AD. The artefacts are decorated with busts crafted as high reliefs: the woman carries a cornucopia, a horn of plenty, and is described to represent a female deity while the bearded man is supposed as an image of an ordinary human (*Mongait 1959, 241-243*).



Fig. 50 & 51: *The two silver plates from Armaziskhevi.*

Drexel refers to another specific artefact that would reflect the design of the cauldron of Gundestrup, a fragmented cauldron made of bronze, which was found near the village Rynkeby on the Danish island Funen (*Drexel 1915, 31*). The vessel with an assumed diameter of 70 cm, alike those of the Gundestrup cauldron, was discovered in the Illemose bog (*Falkestein 2004, 62*). Drexel notes that these two vessels would have always been considered belonging to the same group: a separable cauldron consisting of different parts with a cultic usage. He disagrees with the theory that the cauldron was crafted in Gallia, but the artefact could be of northern origin. There are several commonalities between the two vessels: The remaining fragment has two rings on its outside, probably used for carrying, and the relief-like face of a woman between two bulls which potentially could be cows. Drexel sees it as an imitation of the Gundestrup cauldron, although the craftsman did not understand its symbolic language, which has led to misinterpretations and wrong images. The position of the bulls is completely wrong and their pose has more resemblance with a deer. The ring around the woman's neck looks like the handle and not at all like a torque, which results from a lack of the understanding for the relevance of this ornament (*Drexel 1915, 31*).



Fig. 52 & 53: Drawing and photo of a fragment of the Rynkeby cauldron.

A smaller plate was connected with the big cauldron-fragment's inside. Two similar boars are depicted on this plate, one another, each looks like the reverse of its opponent. Plants or ranks are situated underneath each boar and between them is a ball of which the inside is separated in three sections, similar to a triskele in a circle (*Drexel 1915, 31*).

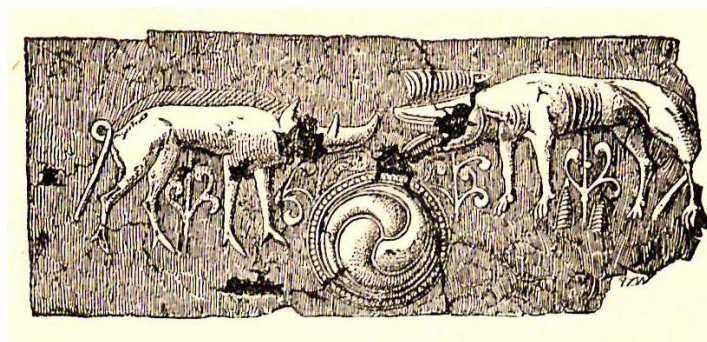


Fig. 54: Drawing of a fragmentary inner plate of the Rynkeby cauldron.



◄**Fig. 55:** Bronze basin with protomes designed as the heads of griffins on a tripod. Imported vessel from the Mediterranean world, discovered in the oppidum of Vix (Hallstatt period). The artefact is an Etruscan replica of an object of Greek provenance and dates in the 6th century BC. (Châtillon-sur-Seine, Musée du Pays Châtillonnais - Trésor de Vix: Bronze basin on tripod. [Online] Available from: http://www.musees-bourgogne.org/les_musees/musees_bourgogne_gallerie.php?lq=it&id=48&theme=histoire&id_ville=&id_gallerie=53787 [Accessed 31th March 2018]).



Fig. 56►: Cauldron made of bronze on a rack decorated with attached griffin protomes. The artefact was discovered on the Cyprian Salamis and dates around the 8th-7th century BC.

The ornamentation of the Rynkeby cauldron shows the same influences as the cauldron from Gundestrup: the bull shaped protome reassembles those on the so called “*griffins cauldron*”⁴ from Greece and similar vegetable ornaments can be found on situlas from northern Italy and on art designs on artefacts from Hallstatt. The latter have been influenced by upper Italian art, while the female face or mask originated from the Celtic world (Drexel 1915, 31f.).

Drexel's last important statement concerning the Gundestrup cauldron is the influence of designs and imagery on the art of the early Middle Ages. Similar images or comparable styles had led to a dating of the silver artefact into this period of time. Bronze sheets on helmets or scabbards from Sweden dating to the 6th and 7th century AD, illustrated with warriors, follow the depictions on the Gundestrup plates. There are also several other parallel images. Drexel states that essential influences on the craftsmanship of the early Middle Ages would come from the workshops that were situated on the Black Sea coast of Asia Minor. He explains the new ascension of motifs and designs originating in the Greek- and oriental antiquity with the end of the Western Roman Empire. The predominant art of the Greco-Roman world, which had suppressed and replaced most of the former art styles, lost its influence, while the ancient art styles had not been forgotten (Drexel 1915, 35).

This pictorial world relived in the craftsmanship of the tribes that succeeded the Roman rule and has been 'freed' then. When these different ethnic groups of people moved in and over the former Roman territories and when the wanderers finally reached their new home of choice, their artistic world amalgamated with the local ones. According to Drexel it is likely that artefacts like the Gundestrup cauldron found their way to the north via such migration movements. For example, he mentions the tribe of the Heruli, who moved from their territory in southern Hungary to their former land of origin in Scandinavia in the early 6th century. In accordance with its evolution history, Drexel places the Gundestrup cauldron at the dawn of

⁴ Greifenkessel (Drexel 1915, 32).

the Middle Ages because the designs of reliefs and imagery in this period would have their predecessor on the cauldron's silver plates (*Drexel 1915, 35f.*).

5. Various interpretations, theories and analyses

Bergquist and Taylor (*1987*) support the assumption of Drexel and other scholars that the cauldron originates from south-eastern Europe and think that the existing material will reveal the proof of this theory. The artefact could originate from the cultural world in the regions of the Bulgarian North and the Romanian South and date to a moment of time between approximately 150 to 118 BC. When it was found, the cauldron was disassembled into its components and its present-day appearance is the result of the reconstruction by the hands of Sophus Müller in the National Museum. Although the assembling of the different parts was reasonable in general, according to the form of the plates, their correct positioning relied on interpretation and cannot be arranged with certainty. Only two plates from the outside can be allocated to the ones on the inside, because both have been punctured by a pointed and sharpened object. Thorkild Ramskou (*1977 as cited by Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 109*) has doubted the placement of the round plate on the cauldron's bottom and thought it to be rather a part of an alleged lid made from wood together with pieces of the cauldron's edge, probably its handle. Müller (*1892*) stated to know the correct order of the inside plates, according to the allocation and the measurements of the tracks of solder used for the joint. Klindt-Jensen (*1961*) and also Olmsted (*1979*) supported this statement. But the explanation is invalid because a space of circa 2 cm separated the inner plates. Therefore, the former order of the scenes is uncertain and inflicts interpretations like those of Olmsted, who understood the iconographic images as narrating sequences (*Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 107-109*).

The level of skill on the decorative relief images on the cauldron is a very high and professional one. Although Drexel has explained the working process in a similar way, he did not describe some parts of its making. The used rolled silver was tempered to ensure optimal conditions to form the relief-like scenes through the usage of the repoussé technique. Afterwards, these forms were filled with pitch on the inside, which served as a stabilisation, while the outside was punched and treated with a tracer. Then, the substance was removed by melting it, several details of the plates were covered in gold foil and a number of busts had their eyes filled with glass paste or something else that would create a similar effect. The final stage was the polishing and the assembling of the different parts. Analyses with a scanning

electron microscope (SEM) by Benner Larsen (1985) recognized the application of 15 varying tools, punches to produce diverging ornaments or decorations, which can be divided into three different categories. There is no plate that was decorated by tools from more than one of these categories. The implementation of the styles and ornamentation led to the conclusion that at least three craftsmen had worked on the silver artefact (*Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 109-111*).

Drexel's argumentation for an origin of the cauldron on the Balkans has been proven to be the likeliest option. The cauldron could only have been crafted and ornamented the way it is through the techniques of crafting silver, as practised in the workshops of ancient Thrace. Not one single object made of silver from the Celtic world, on which even some similar techniques had been used, has been discovered. But in the form of a singular object, the cauldron of Gundestrup is regarded as an unicum, because there is not one vessel like it, neither among Celtic objects nor among Thracian silver artefacts. The connection to ornamented silver finds from Thrace can be made via analogies. There are several similarities between the cauldron and this group of artefacts (*Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 111*):

- The disposal and design of its iconography: faces placed on the outside of a vessel and the structure of several images or sections linked with each other through a motif or theme, which in this case is nature.
- Patterns of iconography presented in the composition of varying illustrations and figures.
- Single cultic or ordinary images, the ornamented elements as well as the handling of the background.
- The depictions on the silver vessel of particular forms of artefacts.

The development of the artistic craftwork of silversmithing in Thrace was the result of foreign influences from the Persian Empire, which had occupied and ruled the Thracian south from circa 513 to 480 BC. After the end of the occupation, this specific craftsmanship was established as a characteristic custom of the Thracian land and its people. The first vessels made from silver and ornamented with the typical elements of Persian artisan handwork found in Thrace are grave goods that date to around the middle of the 5th century BC. Eastern imports are among them, but the main body of these artefacts have been regional and native imitations. Therefore, a new, different animal style of art developed in the 4th century BC. This recent and novel way of Thracian ornamentation was engraved on drinking sets made of silver, used for wine and on defensive arms used for hunting. Through its occurrence on these

specific groups of objects, nobility or sovereignty were connected with venery, the art of hunting. The elite groups of Thrace, whose wealthiness resulted of their flocks of sheep, obviously preferred to hunt and to drink, not necessarily in that order, during their leisure time (*Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 111f.*).

Artefacts that originated from this Thracian animal style were also crafted in Dacia, which was inhabited by the Dacians, an ethnic group that was either a Thracian tribe or a relative of the Thracians (*Meier-Arendt 1980, 7*). The majority, as well as the most important objects of Dacian craftsmanship, were discovered at various sites, either as burial goods or in hoards, like in the communal Peretu and the Romanian village of Agighiol⁵ (*Florescu 1980, 35*).

The site at Agighiol is named '*Movila lui Uță*', a burial mound, which is described as the final resting place of a prince who had been equipped with several precious grave goods: five phialae (four of silver and one of bronze), two silver situlae shaped like cups, silver jewellery, several silver pieces used for decorating the horse's tack and many other artefacts. Three pieces of armoury crafted from silver were discovered in the burial mound, a helmet and a greave which were made in the repoussé technique of whom several parts were gilded. Two eyes have been illustrated on the helmet's front side as apotropaic symbols while the cheek and neck protections are decorated with circulating horsemen. The greave is part of a pair: each upper area around the knee is shaped like a female head. The second greave was chased and is also decorated with a woman's head and stylized heads of birds. Also, snakes, a rider, a man sitting on a stool with a drinking horn and a bird in his hands and a fantastic beast are depicted on the sides of the greave (*Munteanu-Bărbulescu et al, 1980, 141f.*). The eye-sockets of the female faces were once decorated with insets (*Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 112*).



Fig. 57 & 58: Burial goods and helmet from Agighiol.

⁵ Agighiol is a part of the Romanian communal Valea Nucarilor in the county Tulcea (*Wikipedia: Agighiol*. [Online] Available from: <https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agighiol> [Accessed 6th May 2018]).

A large amount of these drinking vessels were discovered in the hoard of Rogozen in Bulgaria in 1986, which contained a total of 165 artefacts that had either been crafted from silver or silver-gilt. In total, the pieces of the hoard weighed 19,91 kg and date to the period from the late 5th century to the 4th century BC. The highest objects in number are *phiale* (a Greek offering cup with neither handle nor foot), with 104 pieces of whom 71 are ornamented. These cups can be allocated to two categories: the shallow *phiale* type of Greek origin and a deep one, which was the common Thracian variant. The remaining parts are mainly jugs with one handle, several are decorated with artful figures and elements that had been worked in the repoussé technique. The ornaments on the vessels prefigure the figural decoration on the Gundestrup plates. According to their decorative elements, as well as their iconography, the vessels from the Rogozen hoard can be related to the workshops of different cultural and ethnical origins: to Persia, Greece, Thrace and the Thracio-Getic tribes (Taylor 2003, 2011).



Fig. 59-61: Vessels from Rogozen, beaker, several artefacts from the hoard and a jug.

Nevertheless, the richness of the Thracians was non-durable. While several hoards consisting of silver crafted vessels, which date back to the 4th century BC, have been discovered, it seems that these silver objects and artefacts had totally disappeared from the archaeological sites and finds two centuries later. But, at the end of the 2nd and the beginning of the 1st century BC, the Thracian artefacts made from rolled silver and designed and decorated in the same way, were found once more. We do not know where the Thracian craftsmen, who were specialized in silversmithing, or their art went in the meantime, although some possible theories exist. Some of them might have migrated to work either in Asia Minor or to one of the Hellenistic cities that were situated around the Black Sea, while others probably stayed in the Thracian land and crafted objects for varying clients (Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 112f.).

From the turn of the 2nd to the 1st century BC, there exist several *phalerae*, silver-gilt plaques that decorated the harnesses of horses or amours, which have parallels to the bottom on the

plate of the Gundestrup cauldron. There is a total amount of 16 of these objects: eleven from the village of Galiche, two from Herăstrău Park in Bukarest and three were grave goods in a burial at Stara Zagora. Although the artefacts were crafted in the same fine detailed repoussé technique, there are differences in the design as well as in the motifs. Animals were also depicted on these plates, but there is a higher focus on people, in particular on male and female busts in front of an ornamented background. There are several similar phalerae made of silver from the Sarmatians in southern Russia, found, for example, in the Yanchokrak-Melitopol' and Balaklija (*Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 113*).

Four phalerae discovered in the Aleksandropol' Kurgan, located in the region of the river Dnepr on the North coast of the Black Sea, are ornamented with illustrations of different creatures: a bull, a bird of prey, a hippocampus and a lion. The artefacts date to the 4th century BC (*Alexeyev 2012, 250*). These silver phalerae from Thrace and Sarmatia, which have been found in burials as well as in hoards, date to the period of the end of the 2nd century BC to the first half of the 1st century BC (*Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 113*).



Fig. 62: Phalerae from Galiche.



Fig. 63: Phalerae made of silver from the kurgan Babina Moglia near Tarasova-Grigor'evka (Ukraine). Each plate has 7,5 cm in diameter and dates to the Scythian period of the 4th century BC. The right object and those in the back are executed in the same way (*Rolle et al, 1991, 323*).

In addition, there are more related phalerae from Europe: The two silver artefacts from the Louvre have been described by Drexel, whose work has led to a focusing on silver phalerae which had been found in Western Europe and its Atlantic coast regions. A phalera which had been silver-gilt was discovered in the Dutch village Helden⁶. In a Roman military camp (*castrum*), a parallel object that had been silver-gilt was found, which was placed in the ground in 8 BC, at the latest. Thirteen phalerae were discovered in 1718 on the Channel island of Sark, as part of a hoard that consisted of a further thirteen coins of silver from Gallia and a Roman denarius, which dated to 82 BC. Unfortunately, the artefacts were lost afterwards, only drafts remain. While the bigger objects illustrate animals fighting each other, the smaller ones only have one animal on them, like a bull, which resembles the one on the bottom plate of the Gundestrup cauldron. Another plate has a motif of an elephant on it that carries a small castle or object on his back, probably a howdah. This image originates from the wars between Pergamon and Macedonia in the 4th and the 3rd centuries BC. According to Allen (*Allen 1971, 19*), the illustration of elephants on the phalerae has no link to Gallia or Carthago or to a coin that had been issued during the rule of Caesar. Richard Pittioni had used the appearance of elephants as a support for his theory of the cauldron's origin in the south of Gallia. The contrary is the case and the Sark phalerae originate from a workshop somewhere in the southeast of Europe (*Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 114*).

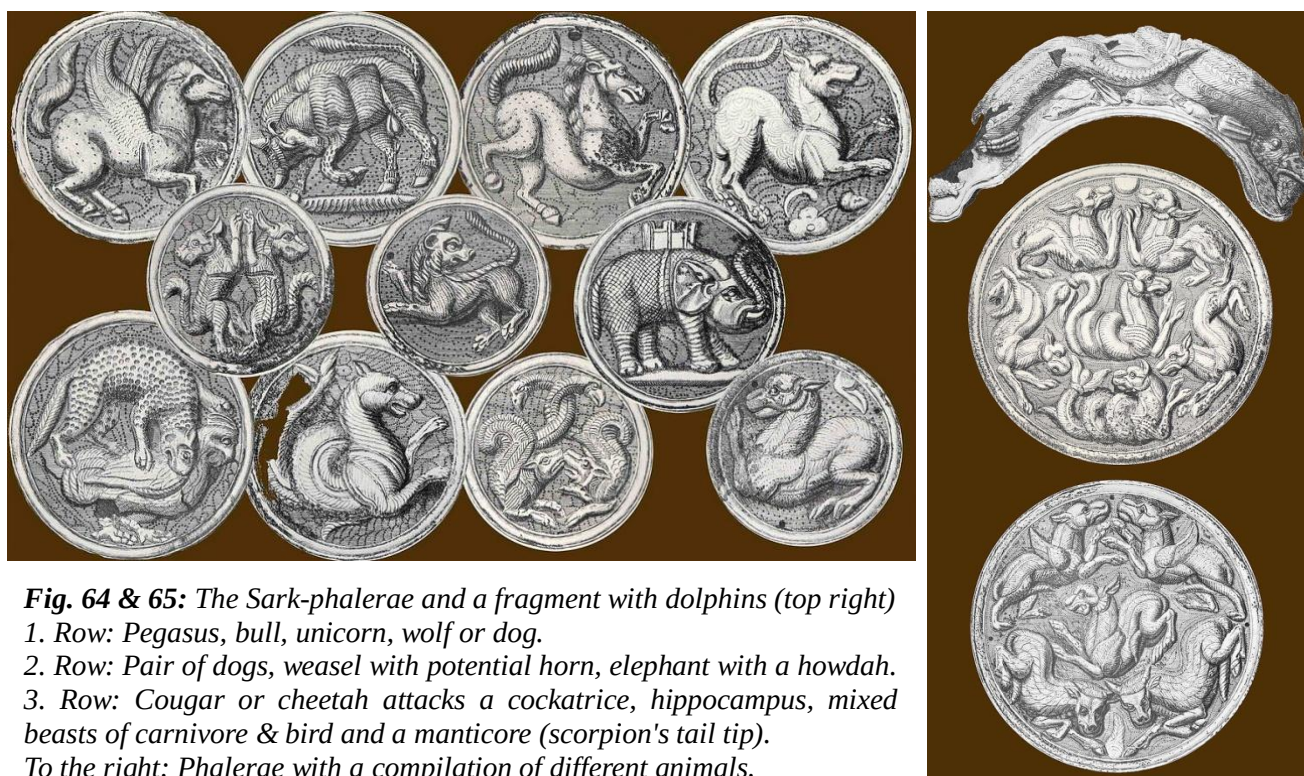


Fig. 64 & 65: The Sark-phalerae and a fragment with dolphins (top right)
 1. Row: Pegasus, bull, unicorn, wolf or dog.
 2. Row: Pair of dogs, weasel with potential horn, elephant with a howdah.
 3. Row: Cougar or cheetah attacks a cockatrice, hippocampus, mixed beasts of carnivore & bird and a mantichore (scorpion's tail tip).
 To the right: Phalerae with a compilation of different animals.

⁶ Since the 1st of January 2010 the village is combined with three others in the new founded municipality of Peel en Maas (Wikipedia: Peel en Maas. [Online] Available from: https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peel_en_Maas [Accessed 3rd February 2018]).

The depicted elephant on the Sark phalera has more resemblance with the African elephant, according to its ears, although the body proportions are wrong. The war elephants of the Punic army are assigned to the extinct species of the North African elephant⁷, probably a subspecies of the African bush elephant, which highly likely also carried howdahs or turrets. Therefore, the phalera can also be linked to Carthago and to the special coin of Caesar (*cf. Chap. 4, 7.7*). It is very likely that the phalerae spread over Europe through auxiliary troupes of the Roman army, which also consisted of several riders, a lot of which were of Thracian origin who decorated their horses with these silver plates. These artefacts could have been transferred by the cavalry units from Thrace to the other places they came to during their military services. A closer look on the Gundestrup scene with the illustration of the parade shows that the horses were also ornamented with those items. In the Western European parts, the phalerae were probably only in circulation for a small amount of time; then the objects were either smelted down or laid down in the earth as part of a hoard (*Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 114f.*). According to the used techniques, the Gundestrup cauldron is part of the handicraft of working sheet silver in the repoussé process in the older style from the 4th century BC, instead of the younger variant of the 2nd and the 1st century BC. The shape of the plate on the bottom of the object as the mainly repoussé of high quality maybe shows a connection to the

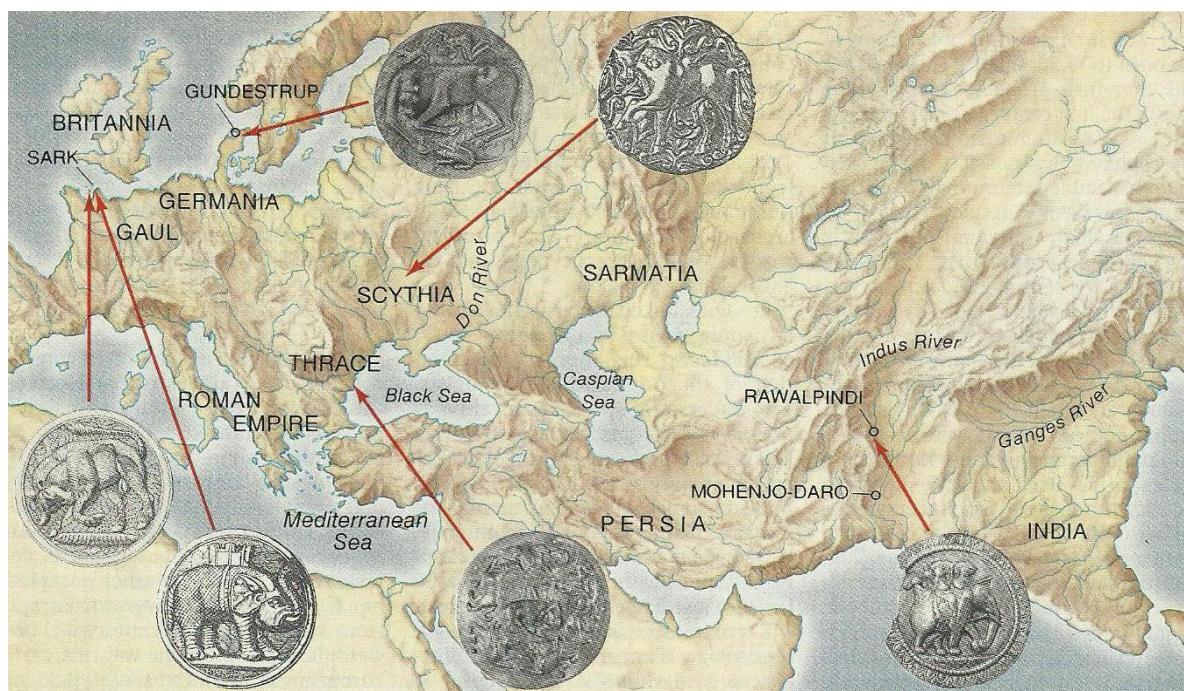


Fig. 66: Silver phalerae from Eurasia whose design indicates a common tradition of the iron-aged art style and iconography that interacted intercultural over far distances. The artefacts are allocated to different ethnic or cultural groups like the Germanic peoples, Thracians, Celts, Scythians and the inhabitants of ancient India. Phalerae from the Sark hoard, Gundestrup cauldron, Scythia, Stara Zagora and Rawalpindi (Pakistan) (Taylor 1992, 86).

⁷ cf. Wikipedia: North African elephant. [Online] Available from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_African_elephant [Accessed 1st June 2018].

younger category. The fact that some details are gilded as well as the decoration of the irises with the inseting of different-coloured glass are characteristics of the older technique (Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 115).

Other parallels to the iconography of the Gundestrup cauldron can be found on artefacts, which are assigned to both groups of Thracian objects. Repoussé sheet-silver worked bowls with gilded details from Bulgaria are also decorated with faces or masks on or around the outside, for example on objects from the treasures of Rogozen, as well as of Lukovit and also on objects that were found in the village of Strelcha. Furthermore, artefacts from southern Russia that had been decorated in a similar way were discovered in Mastiugino and in Orlovo. Accordances to images are shown on the outside of the cauldron through an analysis of the details of its iconography (Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 115).

On plate **C 6564** a female bust with crossed arms can be seen and on the right side of her head two smaller figures are depicted: a man in a short piece of cloth fighting with some kind of carnivore. Underneath them, there are some ranks of leaves. On a vase of silver from Orlovo the face of a woman is illustrated who is surrounded by the same motif on both sides. And although the images differ slightly, the scene depicts a man in a fight with a carnivore behind whom a flower grows, the motifs are similar to those on the outside plate 1. The hair of the woman is braided and she wears a slim frontlet. The pattern of the men's pieces of garment look almost alike, but are decorated in a different style. Both struggle with animals which resemble each other, and in both scenes there are some forms of herbal illustrations in the background (Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 115f.) Between the female face and each wrestling pair a small bird is engraved into the vessel, probably a dove.



Fig. 67 & 68: Drawing of the silver pitcher from Orlovo and the lion-fight depiction from the outside-plate 1.

A phalera from the Bulgarian village Galiche shows another parallel motif to one of the cauldron's plate. This silver artefact depicts the bust of woman who has several rings around her neck and on both upper arms stacked over one another. Her hair is plaited in two braids and two birds sit on her shoulders. One of the Gundestrup sceneries illustrates a very similar image: the large female bust has her hair braided into two plaits, the one to the left is combed or braided by a smaller handmaiden. The woman wears a torque around her neck and there is a flying bird depicted on each side of her head (*Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 116*). The woman's right hand, in which she holds a smaller bird that is probably a dove, is risen, while the two other birds are similar to birds of prey, according to their beaks.



Fig. 69 & 70: *Phalera from Galiche and outside plate 2 (C 6565).*

Although the related images do not have the exact same design as those on the plates of the cauldron, they resemble each other in the way they have been crafted and their iconographic features are almost equal. It could be possible that both scenes depict two varying tales or myths of a widespread story or an epic poem. But it is also likely that the illustration shows two different characters whose attributes are similar. The sections on the cauldron's inside let assume that they could refer to a potent fundamental, although subtle, theme or motif. Even though scenes and elements from the Celtic world and culture are depicted, the iconographic arrangement of the scenes does not have equivalents in the western regions inhabited by the Celts. In Letnitsa, several plaques have been found which date to the 4th century BC and whose decorative images probably show a connected tale or mythic story that has parallels to the scenes on the cauldron. There are illustrations of a rider with a beard who hunts a bear and pushes his spear into the beast and those of another rider who holds a cup or goblet up in the air. Additional plaques illustrate a man and a woman having sex and a wolf that stands on the back of a probable lamb and bites into its neck (*Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 116*).



Plaques from the treasure of Letnitsa: Fig.71: Rider hunts a bear; Fig. 72: Rider with drinking vessel, Fig. 73: Couple having sex; Fig. 74: Griffin attacks a deer; Fig. 75: Wolf attacks a lamb/donkey; Fig. 76: Woman with either a snake, a dragon or a dragon-horse.

It is likely that the animal, which the wolf attacks is not a lamb, because it is much bigger than the carnivore. Although it can only be the result of an unrealistic depiction, the animal has more resemblance with a donkey.

The sections on the Gundestrup cauldron have more added details than the scenes from Letnitsa, but the inspired concept and its realization are almost alike. The illustration of groups of horsemen or beasts depicted with a high grade of details on a plain surface are the main motifs of the palette of designs in the Thracian artisan handwork of silver-smithing. The execution of the final decorative engravings shows that there is a close connection of the cauldron to the workshops of Thrace. The traced and punched ornamentation of the animal furs is equal to those of animals depicted in the Thracian style (*Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 116f.*).

The connections of the Gundestrup cauldron via its scenes and their execution to the European southeast and the land of Thrace in a period from the 4th until the 1st centuries BC has been shown so far, but there is no continuous consistency of silver artefacts between these two dates. The question of intercultural contacts between the Celtic and the Thracian culture, through which the connection between silversmithing-techniques from workshops in the Southeast and scenes as icons from the west of Europe could be made, can be explained, based on historic as well as on archaeological sources. In 335 BC, Celtic ambassadors met

with Alexander the Great and, furthermore, Celtic tribes founded the state principality (kingdom) of Tyllis⁸ in the 3rd century in Bulgaria, as the Greek historian Polybius has noted. Ion Crișan (*Crișan 1975, 185f. as cited by Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 118*) discovered, through excavations in the village of Fântânele in Romania, that Celtic tribes had settled in the centre of Transylvania before the middle of the 4th century BC (*Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 118*).

In addition, there are comparable archaeological finds to almost every item that is depicted on the cauldron and which is supposed to belong to the culture of the Celts. For example, similar artefacts to several of the items the warriors and riders in the parade carry that are depicted on the inside plate 4 (*C 6574, Fig. 21*) of the Gundestrup cauldron, have been discovered in the following sites or locations (*Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 118-120*):

In a cenotaph of the 2nd century BC, located in Ciumești in north-western Romania, a helmet with a crest decorated with a bird made of bronze was discovered. On a phalera from Surcea, a rider is also depicted with such headgear. In the village Luncani, in south-western Transylvania, a helmet with an attached ornamental boar was found. Another helmet originates from the Bulgarian Bryastovets, close to the coast of the Black Sea, which has horns on its top that are shaped backwards. The umbo of a shield, which is not solely an artefact of the Celts, but often referred as typical part of their war gear, came out together with several spearheads in a long shape during the excavation of a pyre-grave in Durentsi. In a citadel built by the Dacians that lasted from the 1st century BC to the 1st century AD, which was discovered in the Romanian town of Costești, spurs were found among the archaeological artefacts. Furthermore, spurs which date to the 1st century AD have also been found in a grave at the Bulgarian Vinograd (*Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 120*).



Fig. 77-79: Ciumești helmet (2nd c. BC), Surcea phalera (late 2nd/ early 1st c. BC) and the Bryastovets helmet (3rd c. BC).

⁸ The exact location of this ancient state remains unsure (Wikipedia: Tyllis. [Online] Available from: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tyllis> [Accessed 5th February 2018]).



Fig. 80: The four riders on inside plate 4 (C 6574).



Fig. 81-83: Figurine of a bronze boar (10,5 cm long) from Luncani, 2nd or 1st century BC (Green 1989, 141), probably a helm-attachment; two helm-attachments made of bronze and shaped as boars from Hounslow, England (late 2nd/early 1st c. BC) and a coin of silver from the Hungarian town of Esztergom on which a helmet with a boar attachment is depicted (early 1st c. BC.).

Carnyxes are the only objects that have not been discovered or excavated in South Eastern Europe. Although it is possible that some fragmentary pieces have been found among other artefacts, like in the hoard from Săliște (Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 120; cf. Chapter Three).

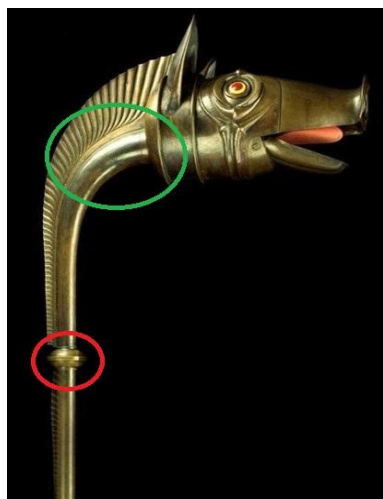


Fig. 84: Replica of the carynx from Deskford, Scotland (c. 80-200 AD).

Săliște hoard:

Fig. 85: Silver mount from Salistea. (green circle), Inv.-Nr.: VII A 215.

Fig. 86: Three silver mounts (red circle), Inv.-Nr.: VII A 196, VII A 199 & VII A 212.

Anyhow, these instruments must have been known or existent in some way in the European Southeast, because they appear on several depictions, like on a tetradrachme from Aetolia in the north of Greece, which shows an Amazon resting on a pile of war booty among whom a carynx lies. This coin from the 3rd century BC could symbolize the victory of the Greeks over the Celtic warriors, who sacked Delphi in 278 BC. Carnyxes are also represented on two victory monuments: the Romanian *Tropaeum Traiani* and the Trajan's column in Rome (Kaul 1999, 207). Further images of Celts with Carnyxes are known from the town of Pergamon in Asia Minor. These illustrations are part of a number of reliefs which were commissioned by

king Eumenes II. as a remembrance for the triumph his father Attalos I. had gained over (an army of) Celtic warriors in the year 230 BC. The garments, in which the Carnyx-blowers are depicted, are identical to the clothes of almost every other male figure on the cauldron's plates': they end above the knee, are ornamented with stripes that run vertically.

Around the waist, the men wear a wide belt with a pattern of punched dots. On a phalera from a grave discovered in Stara Zagora in Bulgaria the figure who is placed in the centre of the object wears equal clothing (*Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 120*).



Fig. 87 & 88: Silver-phalera from Stara Zagora. The left one parallels those in Leiden (Fig. 28) and the depiction of a man fighting a lion resembles the pair on plate 1 (C 6564). The right phalera is very similar to those in the Cabinet des Médailles in Paris (Fig. 29).

It is doubtful that the Cauldron of Gundestrup is really a product of the Celtic world and its culture. Scholars like Ole Klindt-Jensen (1953, 72f.) connected the design and decoration of the artefact to the chronology of Paul Jacobsthal about the different art styles of the Celts. In addition, several books, which are supposed to be popular on the subject of Celtic art and on Celtic religion made use of the cauldrons scenes as a support for their own theories and did not criticise the established interpretations in any form (*Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 120*).

Academics like Thomas G. E. Powell (1971, 202) noted that the image of the antlered man, who is supposed to be a depiction of the Celtic deity Cernunnos, would be the only figure providing any connections to the Celtic culture of Western Europe. This is also a controversial interpretation, according to John V. S. Megaw (1970, 132). Furthermore, other identifications of deities from the Celtic pantheon stagger, so it is uncertain whether the man with half of a wheel on his shoulder represents the god Taranis. Other motifs of the cauldron's iconographic program are also ambiguous. There are three snakes with the horns of a ram illustrated on different plates and this animal is not especially an element of Celtic art. Similar snakes have

been depicted in the Near East, and the greaves from Vratsa and from Agighiol were decorated with such creatures. S. Reinach referred to the figure Zagreus (who is a horned serpent in his opinion) of the Thracian mythical world and its appearance in the so called Orphic literature⁹. Another figure of ambiguity is the bull, which has several occurrences and importance in all kinds of different mythologies (*Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 120*).

Artefacts which resemble the bull on the the phalera at the bottom of the Gundestrup cauldron, as well as the depictions of bull heads on the phalerae from Stara Zagora, in the Rijksmuseum Leiden and in the Cabinet des Médailles in Paris have been found in Romania. These objects are attachments shaped like the heads of bulls from the treasure of Craivo that dates into the first half of the 4th century BC. The bulls' heads were made of silver have been and partially gilded. The mane between the horns of every bull is represented with small stripes, there is only one exception where it is formed like tufts. A whirl of hair formed of spiral-shaped lines is depicted on each bull's forehead. Around the round eyes, eyelashes are sculpted in the form of small dots. The findings measure from 3,3 to 3,7 cm in height and are stored in the National Museum of Romanian History in Bukarest (*Venediko & Gerassimov 1973, 355*).

It is likely that the missing horns and ears of the bull on the base plate were of similar shape as those from the attachments of Craivo.



Fig. 89: Attachments sculpted like bulls' heads from the treasure of Craivo.

⁹ Oxford Reference (2007). *Oxford Dictionary of the Classical World: Orphic literature*. [Online] Available from: <http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803100254923> [Accessed 6th February 2018].

6. How the cauldron could have found its way to Gundestrup

The iconographic elements and motifs on the plates of the Gundestrup cauldron are neither undeniable from the Celtic art nor from depictions that were usual in the Thracian craftsmanship. Two different theories could explain the cauldron's long journey to Jutland (*Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 120*).

The first approach is based on an origin of the cauldron in the European Southeast from where it was brought to Gundestrup. Such contacts between Thrace and Scandinavia indeed existed in the 2nd and 1st centuries BC, as it has been proven by Erik Nylén (*different works in the years 1962; 1967; 1968; 1970*) based on the craftsmanship of Scandinavian metalwork. He compared the torque from the woman, who is accompanied by two doves as well as two handmaidens, depicted on plate **C 6565**, to a torque made from gold, which he had found during his studies on the hillfort of Stora Havor on the Swedish Island of Gotland in 1961. Nylén realized that the artefact almost looked like the ornament on the relief. Furthermore, he compared the depiction and the golden artefact with other similar objects: one torque that had been discovered in Denmark and three additional ones from the Russian South. He also used berloques made of gold which have been ornamented with a sort of filigree work parallel to the decorations of the torques as artefacts or objects for comparison. So Nylén made a compilation of high quality metalwork from Scandinavia which is based on traditional craftsmanship that originated in the European Southeast (*Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 120f.*).



Fig. 90: Golden ring/torque from the Havor hoard (1st century AD); **Fig. 91:** The torque on plate **C 6565**; **Fig. 92:** torque from Cibar Varosh (today's Gorni Tsibar, 4th century BC).

Nylén was convinced that, after all, some of those artefacts have to be of Scandinavian making, because an image on a ceramic fragment he had found in Stora Havor shows a torque in a similar twisted style. When the clay of the shard was analysed, its local production was confirmed. But the inspiration for the illustration could have been an artefact that came as an

import to the North or another depiction of a torque, like on the plates from Gundestrup (*Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 121*). Other artefacts which are similar to torque-images on the cauldron have been found in Bulgaria, like the golden torque from Cibar Varosh (Cibăr-Varoš), which dates to the 4th century BC and a unique artefact, considering its decoration. The piece of jewellery measures 14,5 cm in diameter and is ornamented with arcanthus leaves in the area close to both its ends that are sculpted like plattened spheres (*Venedikov & Gerassimov 1973, 351*). Another comparable object is a torque that was discovered in Koukouva Mogila at Douvanlij and has also been crafted in a twisted way (*Molen & Kuyken-Schneider 1984, number 183 as cited by Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 121*).

Although Nylén's theory about the connexion to the Scandinavian world was a new approach in its time, it did not give an explanation for the motifs and elements from the Celtic world on the Cauldron. The second theory about the circumstances for the cauldron's voyage to Denmark is that the artefact had been brought there from its place of origin somewhere in south-eastern Europe. In that region, the cauldron had been manufactured by craftsmen of Thracian origin for their Celtic clients, who probably belonged to the group of the Scordisci, from the Lower Danube basin. It is likely that the religious ideas and concepts of the Celtic tribes and the people of the neighbouring Thrace had several similarities to each other, including parallels in their mythic worlds and their pantheons. As a result, several motifs that are depicted on the Gundestrup cauldron also appear on objects of Thracian artistic craftwork while other elements had been adapted from different cultural environments, but were executed in the specific silversmithing tradition of Thrace (*Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 121*).

The cauldron shows several parallels to the Thracian artisan craftwork for silver from the 4th century BC. Influences or elements that could be traced back to Roman art are missing, in contrast to the Gallic art world from the second half of the 1st century BC, which had been influenced by the Roman art style. Therefore, the making of this artefact happened sometime during the interval between the earlier form of Thracian silver-work in the 4th century BC and its later variant in the 1st century BC. But several small and specific details, like, for example, the zig-zag bound shoe laces of the antlered man, allow the placement of the moment of the cauldrons origin closer to the younger manifestation of Thracian silver-craftwork. This younger style might have existed over a longer period of time than the first one. The plate from Săliște and the pectoral from Durentsi, which depict shoes with zig-zag bound laces that are similar to those of the antlered figure on plate **C 6571** (*cf. Chapter Three*), were probably made around 100 BC, so the cauldron's origin can be dated to the 2nd century BC. Although the Thracian tradition of working sheet silver lived on during the period from the

4th to the 1st centuries, artefacts have not been discovered yet (*Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 121*).

Based on the assumption that the age determination of the cauldron is true, a reasonable explanation occurs, which can be related to historic events. Kurt Horedt (*1970, 141-143*) noted that the tribe of the Cimbri, who settled in Jutland, where their name has survived in the name *Himmerland*¹⁰ (*Ebert 1926, 276 as cited by Bergquist and Taylor 1987, 121*), undertook a south-aimed campaign in the year 120 BC. Several classical authors of antiquity reported that the Cimbric homeland lay in a region southward of the lower Elbe area (*Taylor 1992, 86*). They attacked the Celtic tribe of the Boii and in 118 BC, the Cimbri arrived in the basin of the Middle and Lower Danube where they assailed another group of Celts, the Scordisci (*Strabo Geographica, book VII. 2.2.*). When the Cimbri reached the Lower Danube basin, the tribe of the Scordisci had been residing at its west end for longer than one and a half centuries. In the 4th century BC, Thracian silver smiths hid their artefacts in the earth as a precaution against Celtic looters. The Craftsmen who were skilled in silver-smithing and descendants, in tradition and probably also in bloodline, from the Thracian smiths (highly likely) crafted sheet-silver as ornamentations in the repoussé technique for the progeny of the former invading Celtic warriors. It is possible that the cauldron was a commission of those patrons which had to be created before 118 BC, for which evidence can be gained through archaeological finds (*Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 121f.*).

Another possibility would be that the silversmiths from Thrace had been taken captive by the Cimbri and produced the silver cauldron for their new masters (*Hawkes, in Jope & Hawkes 1984, 93*). The fact that the Cimbri had a preferred interest for cauldrons is reported by Strabo (*Geographica, book VII. 2.1, 2.3*). A comparable artefact, which has the specific form of the Gundestrup cauldron and has been preserved (almost) completely, has not been found yet, neither among the archaeological artefacts of the Celtic- nor from the Thracian cultural environment. A critical point for this approach is (or could be) that a commissioned work by people of Germanic origin should include some iconographic elements or motifs of their mythical world, or at least we would expect this could be the case (*Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 122*). Although it is likely that the fragmented plate from Săliște (cf. *Chapter Three*) was part of a cauldron of similar construction and design like those from Gundestrup.

Whatever the circumstances that may have brought the cauldron to northern Jutland, it is likely that the artefact arrived in Gundestrup after 113 BC, because this was the year when the Cimbri came from the eastern part of Europe and charged Noreia, the capital of the Celtic

¹⁰ A peninsula and the northern part of Jutland (*Wikipedia: Himmerland. [Online] Available from: <https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Himmerland> [Accessed 7th February 2018]*).

kingdom Noricum (*Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 121*). In the same year, the Cimbri retreated, after they had been defeated by a Roman army. The tribe of the Cimbri then moved to Jutland, of which they chose the northernmost part as their new homeland, which today is known as Himmerland (*Taylor 1992, 86*). It is possible that the cauldron was already incomplete when the artefact came to its final resting place, potentially already taken apart and grabbed during sack of the Scordisci land. Furthermore, it remains unknown if the cauldron was used there, what purpose it could have served and how long the period of time could have lasted in which the object remained placed in nature under the open sky (*Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 121f.*).

7. The final place of origin of the Gundestrup cauldron?

The research and investigations of Frank Falkenstein (*2004, 85f.*) came to a different result about the cauldron's region of origin and the ethnicity of the craftsmen who produced the artefact. In his opinion, the different arguments and theories about the cauldron's origin in the eastern or western part of the Celtic cultural world in Europe are not completely contradictory to each other, as was assumed in newer works by Fleeming Kaul (*1999, 206-208*) and Garrett Olmsted (*2001, 129-131 as cited by Falkenstein 2004, 61*). The making of the Gundestrup cauldron could combine both attempts by separating between the cultural and geographic origin of the people who ordered the artefact and the craftsman who designed and produced it. Although some scholars did not differentiate between these two categories, they are relevant according to Falkenstein. Furthermore, the term origin is rather a complex construction than a simple one. Therefore, he stated that the making of a vessel like the Gundestrup cauldron can only be explained as to be a commissioned object, because of its high value, the required amount of work and the uniqueness of the artefact (*Falkenstein 2004, 61*).

Referring to the cauldron's iconography, Falkenstein identifies the customers or the patrons who ordered its making as Gauls and probably members of the religious social group of the Druids. He also interprets the artefact's purpose to be of cultic nature (*Falkenstein 2004, 85f.*). Hence, it is obvious for Falkenstein that the cauldron had a special role in cultic ceremonies and religious activities. But the used material, a soft sheet silver, as well as the large reliefs and rich ornamented plates probably reduced the mechanic load that could be impacted on the cauldron. The iconography and the sequence of the images could have been demanded by the clients, while the artisans used several additional and different motifs as decorations that filled the free areas on each plate. Drexel interprets the antlered figure as a depiction of the Celtic

deity Cernunnos, from which he concluded that the customeres who ordered the making of the cauldron must have originated from the West of the Celtic world, where this god was part of the pantheon. Falkenstein mentioned that cauldrons crafted of metal, which were made of several separate parts, are not among the archaeological finds from the eastern part of the Celtic hemisphere on the Balkans around the Carpathian Mountains. There are also no other hints or evidences that such vessels were used for cooking or ritual purposes. Therefore, an eastern origin of the artefact is very unlikely, according to Falkenstein and he prefers to locate their native land in the western part of the Celtic world (*Falkenstein 2004, 63-65*).

Falkenstein referred to the work of Rolf Hachmann (1991, 568-903), who analysed the garments and the weapons the figures are equipped with. According to these results, the equipment is based on objects from the Celtic West and the weaponry consisting of sword, shield and spear would differ from those of the Dacians, Thracians as well as the Getae. The helmets are compared to the type from Mannheim, the swords represent the bulb-pommel sword type, which dates to the late La Tène period and the saddles of the horse's harness depict a so-called horn-saddle, which was mainly used by Gallic horsemen. The clothes and also the custom of wearing torques do not originate in the European southeast (*Falkenstein 2004, 76f.*). The former subchapters have already shown that there are several comparable artefacts from the Balkans.

According to the execution of the plates and their decorative figures, Falkenstein has assumed two silversmiths of different schools and origin, whose cooperation enabled the crafting of the cauldron. He disagreed with older interpretations, like those of Olmsted (1979, 55-57) who assigned the Gundestrup scenes to four artisans, on the basis of their different design elements and the investigations of Larsen (1987, 397-399), who analysed three various sets of punch tools, which he interpreted were used by three craftsmen. The first master of Gallic ethnicity conducted the Celtic motifs and knew how to create large multiple-part vessels and the inlaying with glass paste. The silversmithing-skills of the second, Thracian master were essential. He created the Hellenistic depictions and probably came to Gallia along with Roman auxiliary troops from Thrace. Falkenstein analysed several elements of design and execution, on which he based the allocation of the plates to one of the silversmiths. The Gallic master crafted the depictions on the plates *C 6565, C 6567, C 6569, C 6571* and *C 6574*. The Thracian master made the scenes on the plates *C 6564, C 6566, C 6568, C 6570, C 6572, C 6573, C 6575* as well as the base plate *C 6563* (*Falkenstein 2004, 67-82*).

During the early imperial period, the two masters forged the cauldron somewhere in Gallia near the military areas of Upper- and Lower Germania (*Falkenstein 2004, 85f.*).

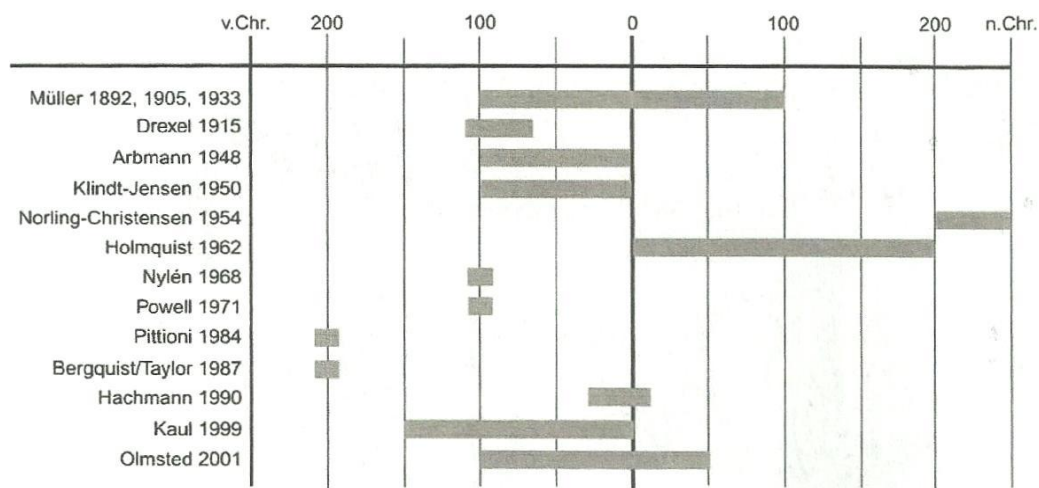


Fig. 93: Chart of the cauldron's dating by different scholars by Frank Falkenstein.

8. Technical analyses of the Gundestrup cauldron

An interesting theory about the Gundestrup cauldron was created by Timothy Taylor and Anders Bergquist in 1991, which was the result of a former, although a wrong one, approach. The attempt aimed to find and locate the place where the ore that was used for the production of the cauldron had been mined. During the research, Begquist and Taylor came to the conclusion that such results would be of no usage, because precious metal coins had often been melted and used for the production of artefacts like the Gundestrup cauldron, as well as other vessels. These coins had been made of metal, more specifically ore that originated from different places and, therefore, a definite source could not be found. Nevertheless, a new hypothesis emerged: If the cauldron had been made out of reused coins, then the object would likely weigh a multiple sum of the weight of one single coin (*Taylor 1992, 87*).

Taylor conducted several tests to prove his theory in 1991 in cooperation with Michael Vickers, who is specialised in metrology and worked at the Ashmolean Museum of the Oxford University during that time. So, the separate parts of the Gundestrup cauldron were exactly measured and weighed. Also, estimated dates for the missing pieces were included into Taylor's calculation. The reconstruction resulted in a computed weight of 9445 grams for the whole vessel and in detail 4255 grams for the bowl, which is shaped like a hemisphere. Vickers research brought forth a precise breakdown of the sum based on a coin-type from Persia, the *siglos*, which had a top weight of 5,67 grams. If this number is multiplied by 1666 and 750, it gives (almost) 9445 (9446,22; *own calculation*) and 4255 (4252,5; *ditto*), Taylor's estimated result. The techniques and standards used in the fine metalwork of Persia had a strong influence on the formation of Thracian metal- and silverwork, which developed in the 5th and 4th centuries BC. Therefore, the measure and weight units that were used in Thrace were adopted from Persia and used over a long period of time (*Taylor 1992, 87*).

8.1 The identifiable tool marks

In 1977 Erling Benner Larsen made a number of scientific tests that aimed at determining the number of different tools which had been used for the crafting and the decoration of the sixteen different components of the cauldron. This project was accomplished in cooperation with the National Museum of Denmark in Copenhagen during the renovation of its prehistoric collection and the related artefacts. Therefore, the cauldron was disassembled and Benner Larsen created a big amount of partial rubber casts from the surfaces of the different plates with silicon. On these chased worked plates a number of more than one hundred figures and busts had been crafted that depict humans, some of them might be representations of deities, and animals. The creation of the sculptural decoration happened in two steps: at first, the figures were embossed from the plate's backside and second they were precisely ornamented at the plates' front side (*Larsen 1985, 562*).

The majority of the analyses of the Gundestrup cauldron considered its iconography and its style. Based on this approach, Sophus Müller differentiated between three or probably four various people or silver-smiths, which had been involved in the artefact's production. Furthermore, he linked the individual plates to a specific craftsman. Müller's interpretation was later supported by Ole Klindt-Jensen and Garret Olmsted, although the assigning of the artisans to the different plates changed with each single scholar, according to their investigations of the motifs and elements represented in each scene and their connection to art history. The techniques that had been used for the crafting of the cauldron were only paid very minor attention in literature and detailed analyses with a technological focus had not been made before Larsen's examinations. But, according to Larsen, such investigations have an enormous potential, because by the identification of different work and tool trails, an individuality of features can be found. Through the studies the separate stages of the production process of an object can be reconstructed and, at best, several pieces can be linked to each other because they show the same tool marks (*Larsen 1985, 564*).

There are three over-categories to which the tools used for working on metal can be allocated (*Larsen 1985, 564*):

- A. **Scraping instruments**, like scribes.
- B. **Cutting instruments**, such as gravers.
- C. **Pressing instruments**, for instance punches.

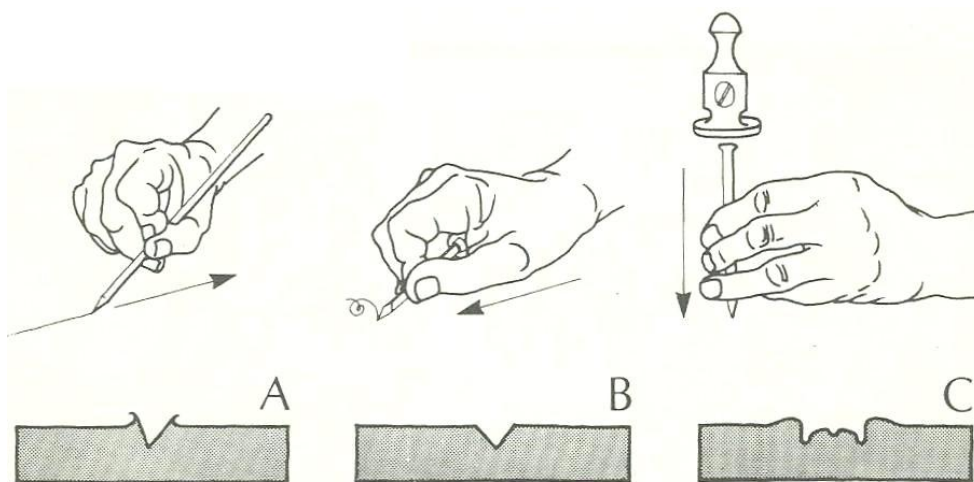


Fig. 94: Different types of tools metal-working instruments.

A tool that belongs to one of these groups will make a specific mark on the object it is used for. These small details can either be seen with the bare eye or through enlargement, while other micro-details only become visible with the help of microphotography. Pressing instruments are the tools whose recognition is the highest possible one. The reason for this is that, unlike scraping- and cutting instruments, the pressing tools do not need to be sharpened, a process that would change the geometrical shape of the metal-tool, although only to a very minor extent. Therefore, the traces of the same tool could vary if it is sharpened during the working process. Larsen states that pressing tools are very appropriate for such detailed analyses, which bases on the specific marks of tools, so his investigation focused on this group. Although scraping and cutting instruments could also be used for such analyses, a limitation (qualification) would be required (*Larsen 1985, 564f.*).

Instruments or tools used for pressing are hammers, punches and matrices as well as patrices. Most of the cauldron's ornaments were made with such pressing tools. For each work step, a distinct form of punches had been used. Therefore, for processes like planishing, modelling and matting, different punches were necessary. A specific group consists of plain and special punches and most of the figures on the cauldron's plates were made with tools of that category. For the ornamentation, the backside of the relief is filled (bedded) with pitch and afterwards the punch is beaten into the metal material with a small hammer. The instrument creates a decorative negative mark, a copy of itself which can be compared to a fingerprint, because even the smallest details of the tools can be recognized. Nevertheless, specific facilities could be required for this investigation (*Larsen 1985, 565*).

Larsen used *Dow Corning: Silastic 9161*, a silicone rubber consisting of two components, to create several casts of specific plate-sections. This casting material has two advantages because it is very precise and a release agent is not necessary for separating the substance from the metal. Through that process, the negative marks as well as the fine details of the

tools are turned into a single-coloured positive imprint. In addition, this process makes the documentation easier because varying metallic shades on the artefact disappear. In the next step, the silicon-copies are analyzed via a microscope magnified to a scale of 10-40 x. All significant characteristics are noted as well as listed and afterwards documented through photos that were created with a camera lens that can enlarge the negative of a picture up to ten times of its original size. Furthermore, an illuminating unit is connected to the exposure timer of the camera and the silicon copies are lighted from a side in a specific angle. Through this combination of light and shadow, additional details are revealed (Larsen 1985, 565f.).



Fig. 95: Areas on the inside plate 1 that have been selected for creating rubber casts of silicone. Through these casts the different types of used tools can be identified according to the punch marks (Larsen 1985, 565).

In addition, a hard lithographic film is used, which creates a tone negative with very high contrast through an emulsion that is created, if the film is over-exposed, as well as shock-developed. This form of survey documentation brings distinct impressions that are very accurate and provides ideal pictures of the details on the metal-object's surfaces. In the concluding part of the analysing process, a piece is taken out of the silicon moulds, placed on an aluminium stub and laminated with a thin layer of gold, from 300-400 Ångström¹¹, through evaporation. This process is necessary to perform an investigation with a scanning electron microscope (SEM), which reveals even the finest punch marks (Larsen 1985, 567f.).

¹¹ A unit of length. One unit has approximately the diameter of an atom which is equivalent to 0.1 nanometre (Wikipedia: Ångström. [Online] Available from: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ångström> [Accessed 4th March 2018]).

The analyses of 34 silicon rubbers from chosen parts of the silver-plates revealed a number of 15 various punches that had been used for ornamenting the figures and busts on the cauldron as well as for the making of the decorative elements. Larsen identified three diverse tool sets of pattern punches that were used on the plates. Two plates could not be allocated because no traces of pattern punches had been found in them, although Larsen notes that they probably have marks of other tools and therefore could, eventually, be linked with other plates through further analyses. Traces of identical tools from the first and the second set of instruments could be found on the front side, as well as on the back side of the plates. In addition, identical tool traces were discovered on the relief busts on the cauldron's outside that show men and women (Larsen 1985, 568f.).

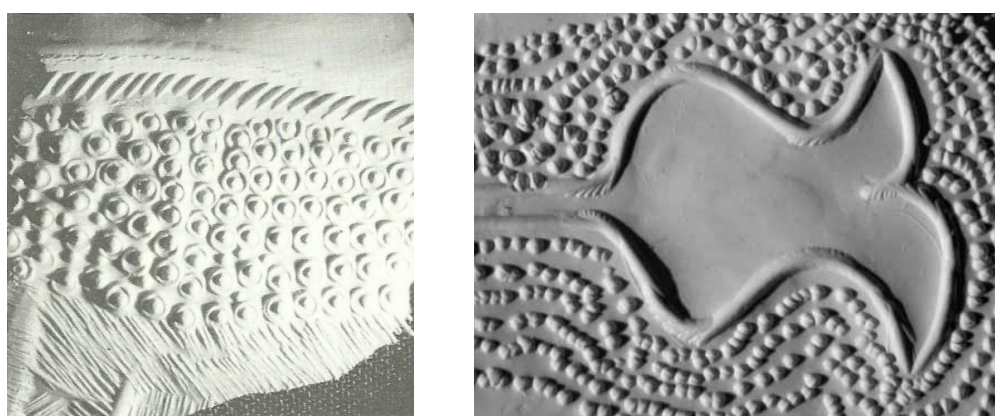


Fig. 96 & 97: Silicone rubbers from inside plate 1. Left: from zone 7 (**Fig. 95**), right: a flower that appears in similar form three times on inside plate 1 (C 6571).

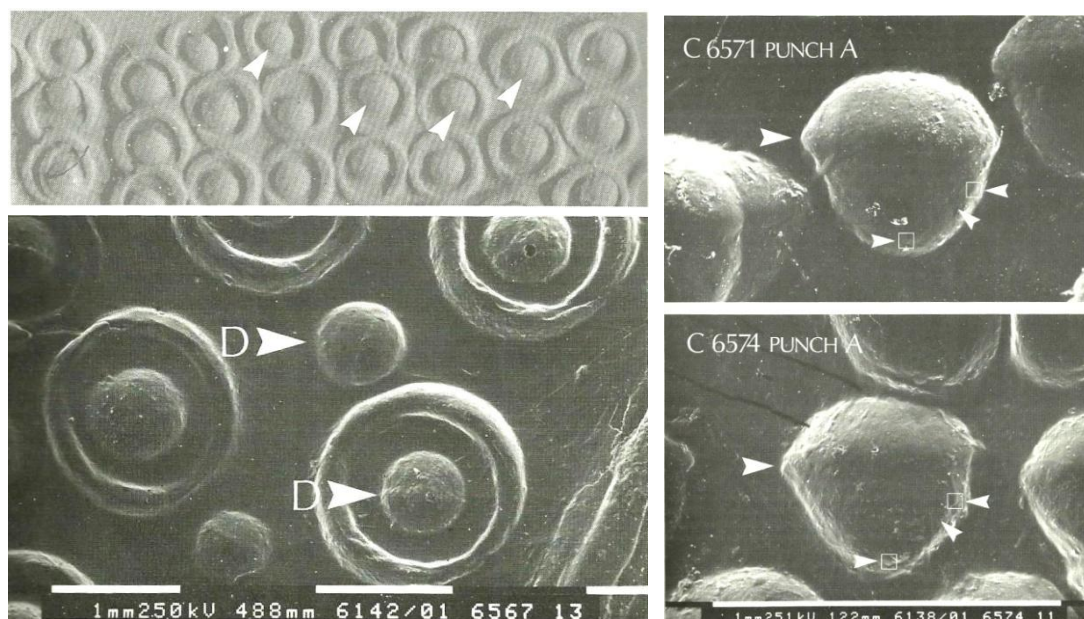


Fig. 98: Details of the silicone rubber (Optic process camera-photo); **Fig. 99:** SEM micrography of the silicone rubber, zone 7. The position of the encircled dot varies, so two tools were used; **Fig. 100:** Ornaments with the same punch tool have been executed on two different plates (Larsen 1985, 566-569).

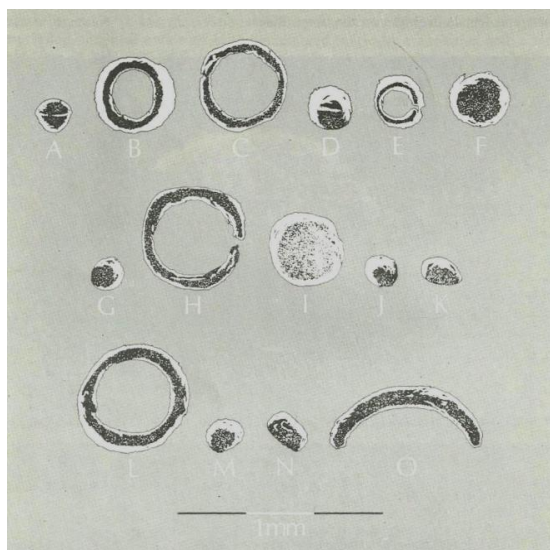


Fig. 101: Drawing of the marks of 15 different pattern punches in a precise scale that have been identified on the surface of the Gundestrup plates through SEM micrography (Larsen 1985, 570).

Inv. No.	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O
C 6571	•	○	○	•	•	•									
C 6574	•			•	•	•									
C 6567			○	•	•	•									
C 6565			○	•	•	•									
C 6572		Toolset I					•	○	•						
C 6575							•		•	•					
C 6573									•	•	•				
C 6568											•				
C 6564							•		•		•				
C 6566									•	•					
C 6563									Toolset II			○	•	•	•
C 6569												Toolset III			
C 6570															

Fig. 102 ▲: Diagram of the three different pattern punches sets that had been used for ornamenting the plates (Larsen 2005, 10).

Fig. 103: Assigns of the different toolsets to the separate plates. A comparison of Benner-Larsen analyses from 1984 and 1991 (Larsen 2005, 10). ►

E.B. Larsen 1984	Toolset	E.B. Larsen 1991	Toolset
C 6565	Toolset I	C 6565	Toolset I
C 6567	Toolset I	C 6567	Toolset I
C 6571	Toolset I	C 6571	Toolset I
C 6574	Toolset I	C 6574	Toolset I
C 6564	Toolset II	C 6564	Toolset II
C 6566	Toolset II	C 6566	Toolset II
C 6568	Toolset II	C 6568	Toolset II
C 6572	Toolset II	C 6572	Toolset II
C 6573	Toolset II	C 6573	Toolset II
C 6575	Toolset II	C 6575	Toolset II
C 6563	Toolset III	C 6570	Toolset II
C 6569	Unidentified	C 6563	Toolset III
C 6570	Unidentified	C 6569	Toolset IV
C 6562	Not included	C 6562	Toolset V
C 6576 A	Not included	C 6576 A	Toolset V
C 6576 B	Not included	C 6576 B	Toolset V
C 6576 C	Not included	C 6576 C	Toolset VI

Fig. 104: The results of Larsen's analyses compared to the assigns of several scholars according to different criteria (Andersen 2005, 8).

Inv. No.	Müller 1892 Artist	Klindt-Jensen 1961 Artist	Bémont 1979 Style group	Olmsted 1979 Artist	Hachmann 1990 Master	Olmsted 2001 Artist	Falkenstein 2004 Master	Benner Larsen 1985 Toolset
C 6565	1	1	–	1	1	2	1	I
C 6567	1	1	–	1	1	2	1	I
C 6571	1	–	2	1	1	2	1	I
C 6574	1	–	2	1	1	2	1	I
C 6569	2	3	–	3	3	A	1	Unidentified
C 6564	3	2	1	2	2	1	2	II
C 6566	3	2	1	2	2	1	2	II
C 6568	3	2	1	2	2	1	2	II
C 6570	3	2	–	2	2	1	2	Unidentified
C 6572	3	–	1	2	2	1	2	II
C 6573	3	–	1	2	2	1	2	II
C 6575	3	–	1	2	2	1	2	II
C 6563	3	4	3	4	4	B	2	III



Fig. 105: The punches from A-F from toolset I were used for ornamenting these four plates.
Outside: C 6565 & C 6567
Inside: C 6571 & C 6574
(Larsen 1985, 572).

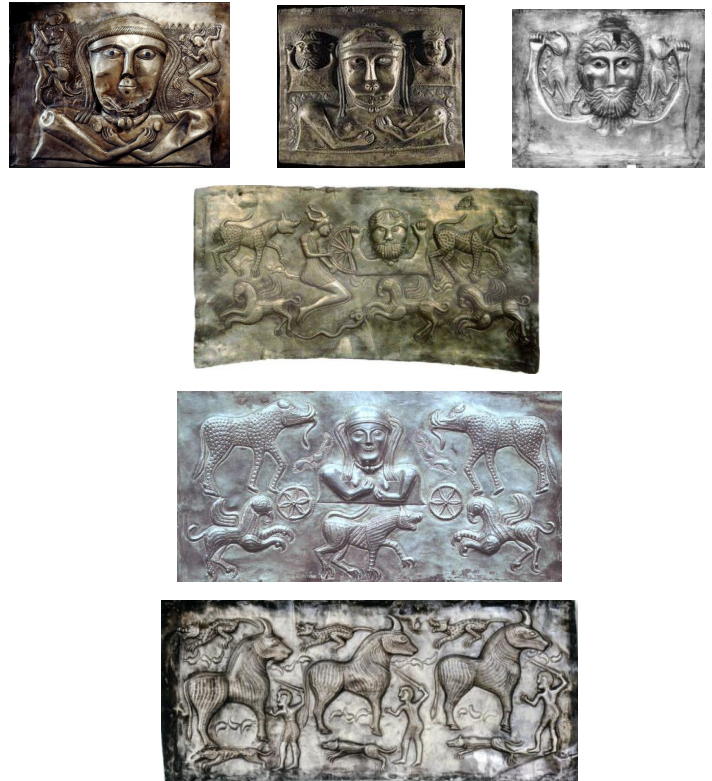


Fig. 106: These plates were crafted using the punches G-K from toolset II.
Outside: C 6564, 6566, 6568
Inside: C 6572, 6573, 6575
(Larsen 1985, 572).



Fig. 107: The base-plate was executed with punches L-O from toolset III which exclusively came to usage on the item C 6563 (Larsen 1985, 572).



Fig. 108: According to the absence of any tools marks of pattern punches, the plates C 6569 & C 6570 could not be allocated to a specific toolset (Larsen 1985, 572). Therefore, they are matched to an own set of instruments: toolset 0 (Jouttijärvi 2009, 961).

If these results are compared with the studies by Müller, Klindt-Jensen and Olmsted and their allocations of the craftsmen to the plates, a high similarity occurs. It appears that each of the artists had his own tool set with which they executed the decorations. The analyses of the different tool marks can help to approve or disprove with appraisals about the style and the iconography on the Gundestrup cauldron (*Larsen 1985, 570*).

8.2 The creation of the cauldron

The different plates of the cauldron have been connected through soldering that was accomplished with a solder, which consisted of nearly pure tin. According to Arne Jouttijärvi, this is not the usual method to put such big vessels of (precious) metal together, because normally these artefacts were combined through rivets. In addition, the metallography of each silver plate was analysed on the basis of a sample, which showed a changing amount of copper. Therefore, the plates could be divided into four sections which are equal to Larsen's categories of different tool traces. The results of nearly 1000 measurements show that the amount of copper is connected with the variation in the thickness of the original plates, or so it appears. The gold layer, which occurs on several details of the plate's scenery, was also subject of these analyses. The outcome demonstrated that the majority of adhered gilding was made mechanically. The gold-covered-parts are ornamented with marks of punches that have been placed close to each other and an interdiffusion¹² of gold and silver appears only in some sections. Hence, the adhesion of gold was only of minor quality and did not last long until it was worn down. An additional layer of gilding with a varying composition was found in some samples, so it is likely that reparations have been made (*Jouttijärvi 2009, 960f.*).

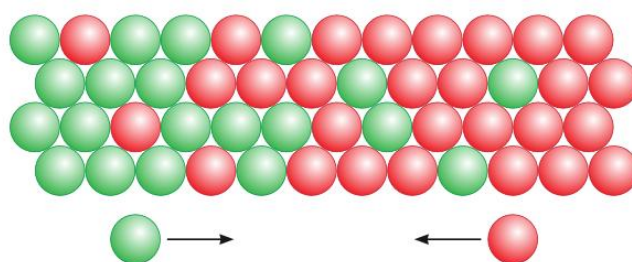


Fig. 109: Example of an interdiffusion.

¹² A **diffusion** describes the process when a net movement of molecules from an area of higher concentration or from one with a high chemical potential to an area of lower concentration or with a low chemical potential happens. This process results due to the fact that these molecules and atoms move randomly (*Wikipedia: Diffusion*. [Online] Available from: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diffusion> [Accessed 6th March 2018]).

An **interdiffusion** is a diffusion of atoms belonging to one element in surroundings of other elements. In this process the differences of concentrations between the elements are balanced or compensated (*Georg-August-Universität Göttingen. Arten von Diffusion: Interdiffusion*. [Online] Available from: <https://lp.uni-goettingen.de/get/text/7093> [Accessed 6th March 2018]).

8.3 Measurements of the different plates

The thickness-measurements of each plate were made with a spacing of 1 cm on the vertical axis, as well as on the horizontal one and in total a number of 2886 readings were made in accordance with nearly 1000 measuring points. According to the analyses, the Gundestrup plates were between 0,45 mm and 0,70 mm thick, at the moment of their crafting, the chased figures are excluded. Jouttijärvi notes that those places on the plates, which were intensively belaboured are thinner and could not even be 0,2 mm thick. These results are consistent with his expectation. The weight as well as the size of the silver-plates seems to change according to which of the two sets of tools was used at their crafting, a discovery which had already been made by Erling Benner Larsen. Toolset I was used for two outside plates, which have a higher weight, are larger in size, and, further, their maximal as well as their average thickness is higher than those for which toolset II was used. The assumption that these plates on which toolset I and II were used were produced by two distinct artisans or workshops can be proven according to these dates (*Jouttijärvi 2009, 961*).

The plates from the cauldron's inside were crafted from raw material - a silver-blank to be exact - of higher weight than those of the outside. Although the quantity of silver is higher, it does not really fit the bigger size of the object. Therefore, the plates must have been brought through hammering into a shape whose average thickness is smaller than those of the outside-plates. In addition, the heaviness as well as the average thickness do not uniformly vary in comparison of the inside plates that either have been made with toolset I or toolset II. The only difference is their size, so the plates, on which set I was used, are a bit bigger than those where set II came to usage. A large amount of plates has a larger thickness towards the edges of their vertical side than in the areas at the inside, yet seven plates have a thinner edge at the bottom. But it appears that the thickness or the thinness which occurs on the rims of the plates does not depend on the distinct craftsmen who made them, nor their position in the sequences of the plates. It is likely that this variation shows the usual process to adjust the plates in the right size so that they would fit when the separate pieces of the cauldron were put together (*Jouttijärvi 2009, 961*).

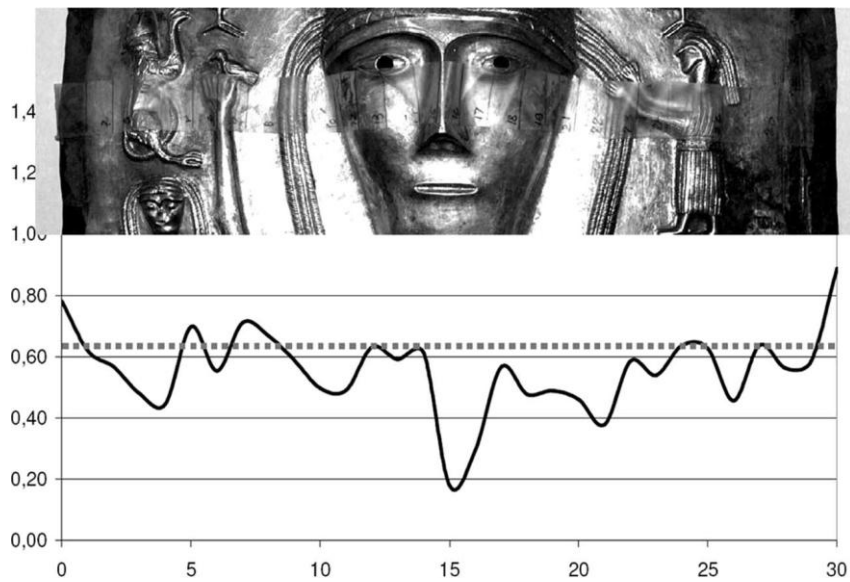


Fig. 110: The measurements of the thickness on plate C 6565.

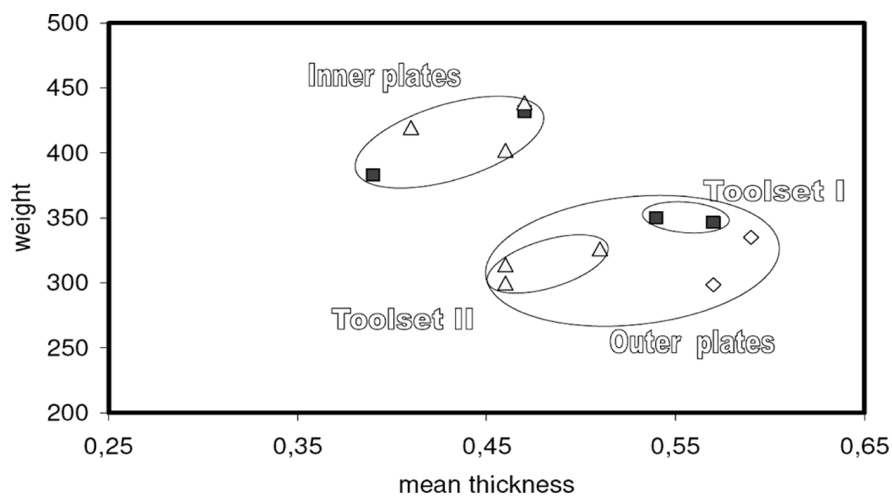


Fig. 111: Mean thickness and weight of the cauldron's inside and outside plates.

Inv. No.	Plate	Smallest thickness	Largest thickness	Top edge	Bottom edge	Left edge	Right edge
Toolset I: Original thickness 0.60-0.65 mm, group a.							
C 6567	Outer	0.34	0.80	0.66 ■	0.56 □	0.82 ■	0.82 ■
C 6565	Outer	0.29	0.71	0.55 ▽	0.47 ▽	0.78 ▲	0.89 ■
C 6571	Inner	0.23	0.64	0.39 ▽	0.37 ▽	0.53 □	0.47 ▽
C 6574	Inner	0.30	0.58	0.39 □	0.16 ▽	0.37 ▽	0.43 □
Toolset II: Original thickness 0.45-0.55 mm, group b.							
C 6566	Outer	0.25	0.66	0.67 ▲	0.60 ▲	0.87 ▲	0.62 ▲
C 6564	Outer	0.27	0.67	0.78 ▲	0.35 ▽	0.81 ▲	0.58 ■
C 6568	Outer	0.26	0.63	0.53 ●	0.53 ●	0.65 ■	0.58 ■
C 6573	Inner	0.23	0.66	0.18 ▽	0.42 ▽	0.72 ▲	0.64 ■
C 6572	Inner	0.28	0.56	0.42 ▽	0.52 ●	0.48 ●	0.71 ■
C 6575	Inner	0.32	0.51	0.47 ●	0.32 ▽	0.36 ▽	0.38 □
No punch marks: Original thickness 0.65-0.70 mm, group c.							
C 6570	Outer	0.19	0.90	0.61 □	0.26 ▽	0.63 □	0.80 ▲
C 6569	Outer	0.22	0.87	0.29 ▽	0.31 ▽	0.61 □	0.56 ▽

- ▽ = Drawn to a thickness lesser than the original thickness.
□ = Drawn and upset to a thickness lesser than the original thickness.
● = Drawn and upset within the original thickness.
▲ = Drawn and upset to a thickness larger than the original thickness.
■ = Upset to a thickness larger than the original thickness.

Fig. 112: Values of the thickness-measurements of the different plates.

8.4 The silver and its material composition

20 samples with a weight of two to four milligrams have been taken from the edges of each of the 16 silver objects that were laid in a bed of epoxy resin and afterwards grounded and also buffed. For each plate, a transversal area was investigated with an electric, as well as an optical microscope and the metal-analysing was accomplished by a SEM in combination with a wavelength dispersive spectrometer (EDS). The silver of each plate contains a different percentage of copper in the form of inclusions in the precious metal. Those inclusions were made oblate when the material was modified during the crafting and ornamentation of the plates together with their scenery. The inclusions of copper did not exist in the surface area of each plate that spans circa 100 micrometers, which could be ascribed to the many executed consecutive processes of heating and pickling to give each plate its intended form. As a prevention for errors in the results, the central area of each plate was analysed (*Jouttijärvi 2009, 962*).

Based on the amount of copper together with the assumption of the original thickness, each plate can be allocated to a specific category. The tubes (**C 6576 A & B**) that hold the plates together and the two outside plates (**C 6569 & 6570**) had the highest amount of copper with 6.5-8.5 % and are in addition the thickest ones (*Jouttijärvi 2009, 962*).

According to the used tool, sets the categories vary. With toolset 1 the ornaments of the three plates (**C 6565, C 6571 & C 6574**) that contained a percentage of copper between 3-3.5 % were executed. A comparable amount of copper has been found in a plate (**C 6567**) that was treated with toolset II and has a comparable thickness to the additional plates, which had been finished with the same toolset (*Jouttijärvi 2009, 962*).

The third category consists of the finest or purest silver-plates, whose copper-inclusions range from 1.4-2.1 %. Five of the six plates that have been worked on with toolset II belong to this category (**C 6564, C 6566, C 6572, C 6573 & C 6575**). The base-plate (**C 6563**), which had been decorated with an additional set of tools, as well as one object (**C 6567**) from the plates of toolset I and alike in thickness, have an equal copper-amount (*Jouttijärvi 2009, 962*).

The fact that the silver-composition and the thickness of the plates are almost equal, although they are divided into further subcategories according to their tool marks, could be the result of two possibilities: either each team of craftsmen was supplied with silver that already had an alloy or, what is more likely, they had their own process for making alloys. The artisans who used toolset I worked with an alloy of silver whose amount of copper was higher than those of the others. In both categories of silver-plates, regardless if they had been treated with toolset I

or II, one object can be found that has a copper-amount which is almost equal to the composition of the plates that belong to the other plate-category. Therefore, it is likely that the two different groups of craftsmen belong to the same workshop, where they have changed the silver-blanks between each other, which was either intended or happened accidentally (Jouttijärvi 2009, 962).

The silver-composition provides only little information about the place where it originated from, as well as a probable date of the artefact. Jouttijärvi's further interpretation is based on the lead isotope analyses by Baker & Waight (2005, 28f.) and by Stos (2005, 29-40) together with the ¹⁴C dating by Grootes, Nadeau and Hüls (2005, 46-50). Therefore, he locates the cauldron's place of origin somewhere in the European Northwest and dates the moment or the period of its construction sometime in the first centuries AD. Jouttijärvi suggests that, according to the region and the period of time, the silver which was used for the crafting of the cauldron could be compared to the silver or to the silver raw material that was made in workshops of Roman tradition. The amount of gold that is included in the silver could help to specify the dating because Roman silver, which has been made in the period between the middle of the 1st until the middle of the 4th century AD, usually has a gold content lower than 0,5 %. This led to the assumption that the silver of Roman production had been standardized and examined. The silver parts of the Gundestrup cauldron contained between 0.4 and 1.0 % of gold, therefore Jouttijärvi suggests that a dating of the artefact to either the 1st century AD or before that is likely (Jouttijärvi 2009, 962-964).

Sample No.	Ag	Cu	Sn	Au	Pb
C 6565 # 1B	93.90	3.09	0.24	0.52	0.39
C 6565 # 2B	94.61	3.46	0.32	0.89	0.60
C 6567 # 11B	95.68	1.84	0.24	0.30	0.35
C 6571 # 23B	94.79	3.86	0.36	0.56	0.36
C 6574 # 31B	93.81	4.88	0.34	0.46	0.22
C 6564 # 5B	96.35	1.88	0.16	0.35	0.24
C 6566 # 8B	96.17	2.10	0.19	0.46	0.28
C 6568 # 14B	91.93	3.85	0.52	0.45	0.26
C 6572 # 26B	96.07	1.39	0.17	0.52	0.20
C 6573 # 29B	95.54	1.43	0.16	0.67	0.34
C 6575 # 34B	97.15	1.82	0.23	0.49	0.29
C 6563 # 37B	96.52	1.51	0.17	0.42	0.30
C 6569 # 16B	87.48	8.18	0.76	0.64	0.31
C 6570 # 20B	90.08	6.30	1.04	0.79	0.31
C 6562 # 4B	92.16	5.18	0.18	1.01	0.55
C 6562 # 5A	93.64	4.50	0.19	0.70	0.42
C 6562 # 7A	91.93	4.62	0.15	0.41	0.15
C 6576A # 40B	90.95	7.81	0.13	0.64	0.27
C 6576B # 43B	90.93	6.43	0.86	0.45	0.15

Fig. 113: Different types of metals contained in the separate plates in percentage terms: Silver (Ag), copper (Cu), tin (Sn), gold (Au), lead (Pb).

8.5 The origin of the silver

For the conduction of lead isotope analyses some very small samples with a weight from 0,5 to 2,5 mg were taken from the parts of the cauldron (*Baker & Waight 2005, 28*). The results of these investigations indicate that the silver samples vary and neither match any objects made from silver nor ores that originate from the antique cultural region of the Eastern Mediterranean world. This suggests that the separate plates were not crafted from a single batch of silver which had been melted, but could also result from a combination of silver that originated from several different mines. Alternatively, the used silver could have been remelted from several different silver objects, whose composition of isotopes is more wide-ranging. According to the data of the OXALID (*Oxford Archaeological Lead Isotope Database*), the most similar isotopic silver structures have been analysed on artefacts of Sasanian origin, as well as on coins from the western Celtic world in today's France and Germany. Therefore, the most likely option where the silver for the cauldron came from is the amount, more specifically the accumulation of all sort of silver objects that were in use, or in circulation in the North of modern day France and western Germany (*Stos 2005, 34f.*).

A minimum of two samples was taken of every plate and almost in every case the data of the lead isotope analyses of both samples are equivalent to each other in a particular proportion or a ratio of 0, 02 %. This probably results from changing isotopes in every plate, which could occur because of variations in the used silver batches. The material for the plates of the cauldron likely came from ingots and scraps of silver that had been remelted in large amounts. Afterwards, a number of plates were crafted from one of these new batches. Of course this approach does not exclude the chance that a mine where silver ore occurs that has this specific spectrum of lead isotope structure could exist somewhere. But the former argument of a re-used silver material is the more likely one. Furthermore, the most probable option is that a large amount of the cauldron's plates or all parts of the artefact have been crafted in one workshop at the same time, possibly even simultaneously (*Stos 2005, 35*).

According to the entire spectrum of lead isotope proportions and as well as their alignments the used silver, although a combination of varying ratios that have been melted together, originate from merely two different places. This theory is supported by the circumstance that several plates, which had been crafted by the same silversmith, were made from a number of batches with a distinct alloy. Based on this hypothesis, the first amalgamated silver batch primarily consisted of metal that originated from the Taunus, a mountain range in southwestern Germany, the same place as the silver of which Roman quinars were minted. The

silver material of the other batches was identical to the one that had been used in the North of modern day France for the production of the coins of the Celtic Curiosolites. In total, five different batches from which the different parts of the cauldron were made have been identified (Stos 2005, 35-38):

1. Silver-batch: the bowl (C 6562), the master of dance (C 6570), wheelmen (C 6572), the Great Mother (C 6565), the antlered master of animals (C 6571), the giant and the warrior's parade (C 6574) and both silver tubes (C 6576 A & B) (Stos 2005, 35-38).

2. Silver-batch: the base plate (C 6563). The used silver differs from the others and could result from a melting-process in a crucible. In the first step a small quantity of scrap metal could have been melted using a crucible, while in the second one the silver that was collected at the crucible's bottom is put in a mould and shaped by hammering (Stos 2005, 38).

3. Silver-batch: trinity of busts (C 6566), the protectress of animals (C 6573) and the deer hunter (C 6568) (Stos 2005, 38).

4. Silver-batch: the baiting of bulls (C 6575) and dragon slayer (C 6567) (Stos 2005, 38).

5. Silver-batch: Manhunter (C 6569) (Stos 2005, 38).

6. Silver-batch: Woman with crossed arms (C 6564) (Stos 2005,38).

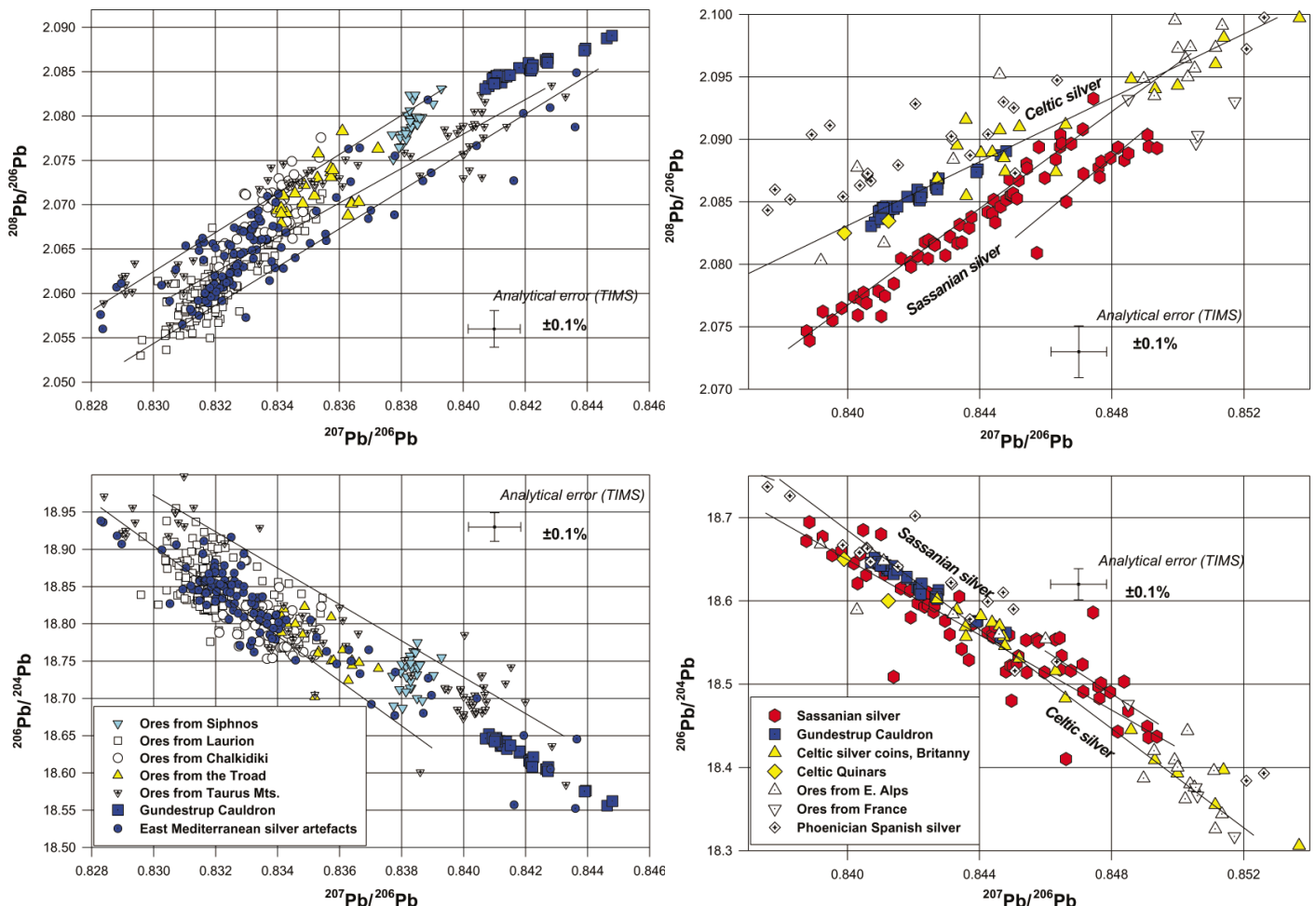


Fig. 114 & 115: Lead isotope ratios of the Gundestrup' samples compared to samples of silver ores and objects from the Easter Mediterranean region, the Sasanian Empire and European regions.

The conclusions, even from the data of the lead isotope analyses, are not irrevocable proofs of the cauldron's origin in the Celtic world, because such investigations cannot date an artefact. The hypothesis considering the place of origin of the silver material used for the Gundestrup cauldron was made on the basis of only a small number of analysed silver coins of Celtic culture. Therefore, it has to be treated with caution. Nonetheless, the outcome of this investigation strongly indicates that the artefact has been crafted from silver which was in circulation in the northwestern part of mainland Europe before the Roman occupation (Stos 2005, 38).

8.6 The gilding and two layers of gold foil

The gold foil that was used to gild the plates on the cauldron's outside has been analysed in regards to their composition and thickness on 6 of those pieces, as well as on the phalera, which was used as the base plate. The investigations demonstrated that the quality of the gilding varies. The adhesion of the gold foil was weak in several parts and it securely stuck on the surface in others. The large amount of areas that were covered with gold foil show significant punch traces in the form of closely arranged dots. This suggests that the thin layer of precious metal was fixed on the aimed spot through a mechanical method. The fact that no traces of quick silver have been found in combination with the bad quality of the gold's adhesion on the silver surface confirms this presumption. In addition, an interdiffusion between the gold foil and the silver surface did not happen, indicating that the plates were possibly not heated for the process. The irregular diffusion, however, is probably a result of the heating of the plates that happened after the combination with the soldering (Jouttijärvi 2009, 964f.).

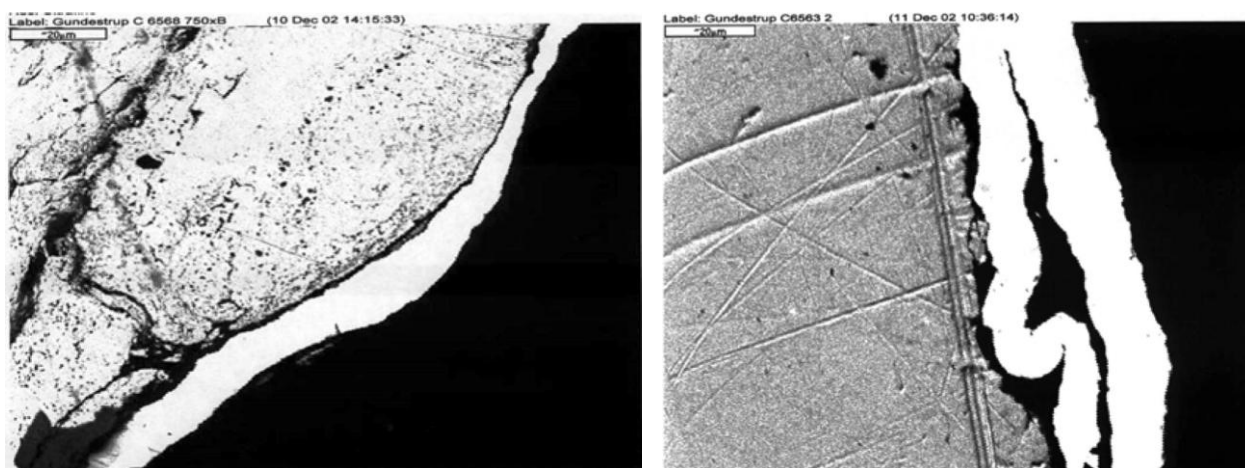


Fig. 116 & 117: The first gilding of the silver plate C 6568 and the two different layers of gold foil on plate C 6563.

An example: On the outside plate **C 6569**, the adhered layer of gold foil, as well as the loose gilding-layer have been examined. Between the two samples, a variation existed: The first one has a relatively low amount of silver (1,6 %) and copper (0,1 %) and is very thin (circa 17 micrometer (μm)), while the second applied looser layer of gilding had higher percentage of silver (3,8 %), as well as copper (0,6 %) and a greater thickness (around 30 μm). The reason for this result could be that the second layer was made as a reparation of the damaged, originally attached gold foil. The gilding of the base-plate **C 6563** parallels the former plate, because the second layer of gold foil was stronger than the first one with an increased amount of copper. Although only a few samples have been analysed, a probable variation appears between the plates that had been gilded by either the first or the second group of craftsmen. The artisans who used toolset I attached a gold foil of which the thickness (22 to 26 μm) and copper amount (around 0,3 %) were greater than those of the silver-plates which had been finished with toolset II and were 7-16 micrometers thick respectively thin with a copper-percentage of 0,1 % (*Jouttijärvi 2009, 965*).

8.7 The soldering tin

The parts of the cauldron were combined and fixed through soldering. This is an unusual method for such a big cauldron because artefacts and also vessels of comparable size were usually connected with rivets, as cauldrons (Lisdrumturk and Battersea cauldron) and situlae (Kuffern and Vače) of similar age demonstrate (*Jouttijärvi 2009, 965*). According to Larsen (1995), the assembling of the cauldron's pieces was quite a time-consuming activity. Furthermore, the execution of the soldering was rather unprofessional compared to the metalworking skills that crafted the plates. This is because the soldering tin poured out from the joints and conduits and ran over extensive areas of the silver plates.



Fig. 118-120: Rivets on the Slovenian Vače Situla (5th century BC) and the Irish Lisdrumturk cauldron (ca. 700-500 BC).

Five samples were taken for further analysis: three from the solder and two of the material that filled the eyes of the relief-busts. The results show that the soldering tin was made of nearly pure tin in every sample (*Jouttijärvi 2009, 965*). The tin that was used in the eye sockets originated from Cornwall, which supports the hypothesis that the material used for the cauldron circulated in the north-west of mainland Europe (*Stos 2005, 38-40*).

Some of the oldest forms of soldering, made with either tin or lead, were found on metal artefacts from ancient Greece and Etruria, which have been made in the period from the 5th to the 4th century BC (*Lechtman & Steinberg 1970, 5-35; Born 1991, 73-78*). On incense burners that also originate from Etruria, a solder has been discovered that consisted of unalloyed lead. The knowledge about the technique of soldering only existed in the eastern part of the Mediterranean world, but when the Roman Republic conquered these territories it spread out to the European North as well as to the West and further with the later expansions of the Roman Empire, but this method was seldomly used by craftsmen whose workshops did not belong to the Roman territory (*Jouttijärvi 2009, 965*).

The soldering alloys that were usually used in the Roman world were combinations of tin and lead that are proven at the earliest time in the 5th century BC. So, it could be possible that a pure tin soldering was either invented by the craftsmen in the Roman territory or was an adoption from somewhere else. Several soldering alloys that were used in Roman metal-workshops were mentioned in a number of written sources, which approximately match the results from the analyzing of Roman soldering alloys. But a solder consisting of nearly pure tin is rather unlikely, because the soldering-mixtures usually had a lead-amount of 5 %. The unprofessional implementation of the soldering process led to the conclusion that the craftsmen were not skilled in producing such large artefacts with this method. Therefore, they were probably local artisans who had learned this process through exchange with the Roman culture and wanted to adopt this new technique and customize it to their own craftsmanship (*Jouttijärvi 2009, 965*).

Sample no.	Sn	Ag	Cu	Au	Pb	Fe
C6566 eye #9	99.2	0.3	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1
C6567 #4	98.2	1.2	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1
C6570 eye #10	99.1	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
C6571 #1	98.4	1.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1
C6575 #2	98.7	0.6	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1

Fig. 121: Analysed samples of solders and eye-fillings.

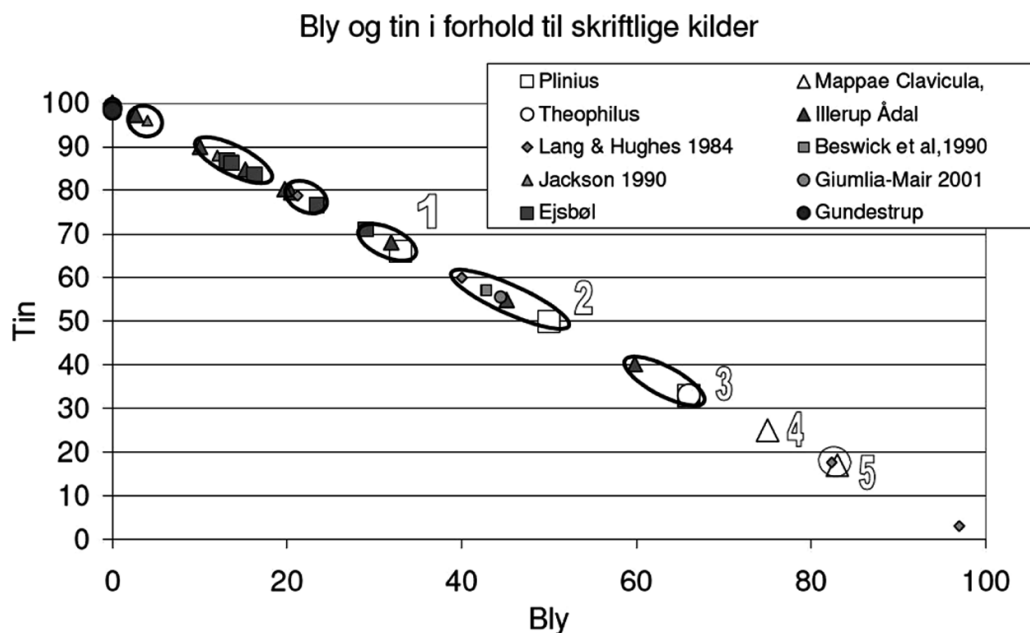


Fig. 122: Content of tin and lead in solders used by Roman craftsmen; Tin (vertical) and lead (horizontal).

8.8 The glass fillings of the busts' eyes

Four glass inlays had remained in the eye sockets of the busts when the cauldron was discovered in 1891. They can be found on the outside plates **C 6566**, **C 6567** (one each) and on **C 6570** (both). The first archaeological suppositions interpreted the eye inserts as to be of a dark colour. Modern technical analyses should prove or disprove this theory and should reveal the real material (Röhrs *et al.* 2005, 40).

The outcomes of the analyses proved that the four eyes have indeed been filled with glass, composed of a soda lime structure. Viewed through a microscope, the appearance of the eye colours is a dark purple tone and one eyeball has a thin glass stripe of an opaque white colour in it. Through the gained data, the crafting period of the glass may be limited to some point between the 2nd century BC to the 1st century AD. It is also likely that the cauldron was produced later, because the small pieces could have been recycled from other glass objects. This glass type originated from the Eastern coast region of the Mediterranean Sea, the modern day countries of Israel, Palestina and Syria. From there, the glass travelled northwards by trade where it was re-used (Röhrs *et al.* 2005, 41f.).



Fig. 123: Glass inserts on the plates **C 6567**, **C 6566** & **C 6570**.

8.9 The analyses of the beeswax

On the reverse side of several plates, a thin layer was preserved in the coves of the figures that appeared to be soil and comprised particles of charcoal, clay, diatoms and also sand with very fine grains. This thin layer was coated with a thick layer of lacquer that had been applied to conserve the metal and the thickness of this layer probably results from the application of several thin coats (*Nielsen 2005, 3*).

These small remnants of a black substance found on the inside of the four plates **C 6571** to **C 6574** (the antlered master of animals, the wheelmen, the protectress of animals and the giant with the warrior's parade) were similar to pitch. From each plate, a sample was taken that has been analysed by use of Gas chromatography-mass spectrometry. The results showed that the main components of the substance were palmitic acids, as well as stearic acids in combination with long chain fatty acids and alkenes. The elements and the proportions between them are significant characteristics of beeswax. Further components of resin or tar have not been detected (*Grooles et al. 2005, 46*).

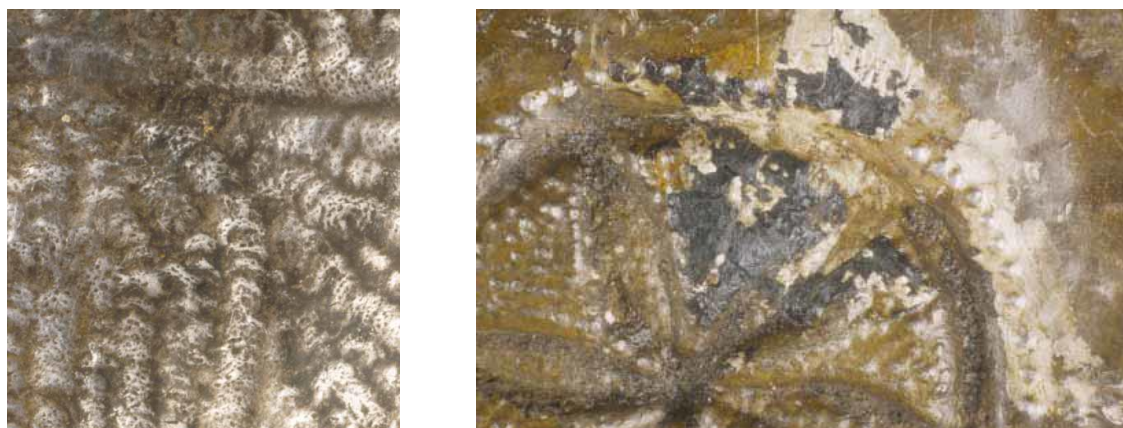


Fig. 124 & 125: The dark residuals of the beeswax on the plates C 6563 and C 6573.

The amount of organic residual beeswax varies in the range of sub-miligrams. Nevertheless, it provides the perfect material for radiocarbon dating, which can only be made through accelerator mass spectrometry, because the estimated age of the used wax is very low or very young compared to the other parts of the cauldron. This probably results from the case that the wax, which was used during the crafting of the artefact had been 'freshly' collected. This beeswax was used to support the back side of each Gundestrup plate, while the figures on the front side were decorated and ornamented with fine metal working tools in the repoussé technique. After the craftsmen had finished their work, the wax was melted out, but fine residuals of the substance were preserved on the plates. These remains have a dark, almost

blackish colour, a result of the melting procedure that was conducted over a fireplace, whereby the soot darkened the wax. But because of this soot, the analysis could give or propose an older date, depending of the age of the wood used for the fire (*Grooles et al. 2005, 46f.*).

When the beeswax was analysed with AMS ^{14}C dating, all the integretated tracks of the conservation lacquer were first removed in a chemical purification process. The beeswax-investigations came to the result that the cauldron of Gundestrup was crafted sometime in the time period between the turn of the eras or the birth of Christ and 300 AD. But the authors mention that the interpretations of these samples were not easy and therefore the results must be treated in a most cautious way (*Grooles et al. 2005, 47f.*).

The rim of iron was also analysed with ^{14}C AMS dating. A sample, without any signs of corrosion, as well as of conservation techniques, was taken for the process. The results stated that the iron sample predates the beeswax and is placed in a time period from approximately 380 to 200 BC. But these outcomes have to be treated with care, because the measuring of iron-extracted carbon with ^{14}C AMS was not a routine method when these investigations were made in the Leibniz-Laboratory in Kiel at the end of the 1990s. The analysed carbon could come from various places of origin or could have been made through the re-melting of older iron objects and also other older material could have been used, like wood and flux. Therefore, the outcomes did not provide enough proof that the ^{14}C dating of iron is as trustworthy as the dating of other materials like the beeswax (*Grooles et al. 2005, 48-50*).

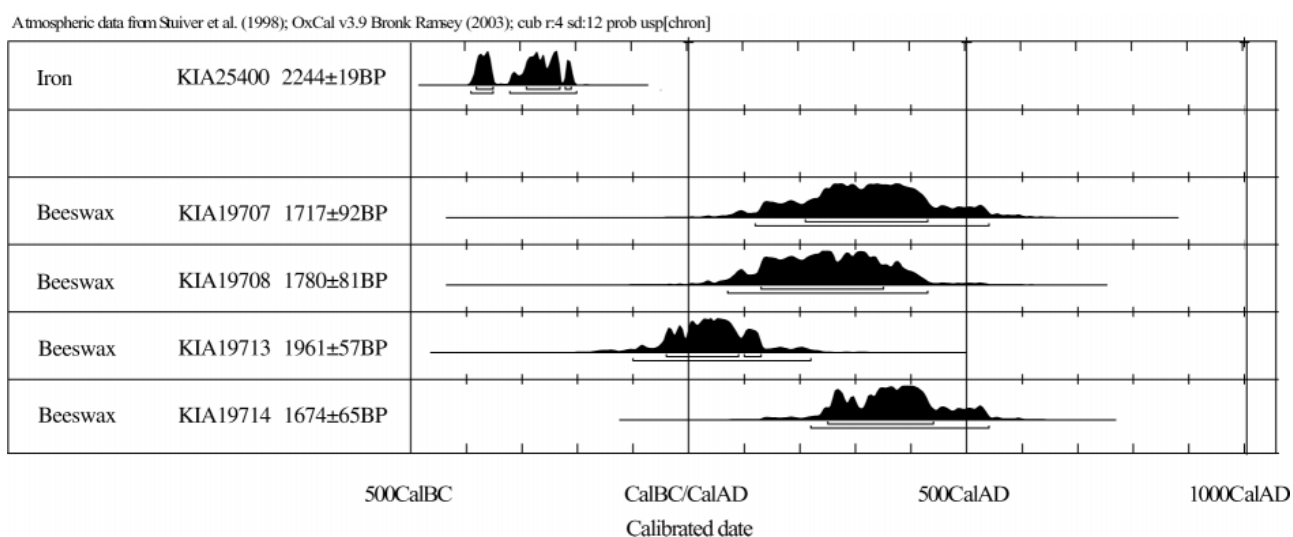


Fig. 126: Chart of datings of the samples of beeswax and the iron rim from the Gundestrup cauldron.

8.10 The EBSD of corrosion, deformation and precipitation

Through the scientific method of Electron Back Scatter Diffraction (EBSD), four samples from the Gundestrup cauldron were analysed by being imbedded in a specific resin with a conducting ability. Prior to that process, the samples were polished and etched, required preparations for a metallography. Afterwards, the taken samples were probed, wherefore a combination of EBSD and a field emission gun scanning electron microscope was used. This method offers several useful possibilities for analyzing like inverse pole figure (IPF) coloured coded maps, pole figures (PF) and IPF, boundary rotation angle maps and also coincidence site lattice (CSL) maps (Wanhill *et al.* 2003, 4f.).

Of the four samples with the numbers 361, 363, 365 and 366, only the last one differed from the others, because virtually no signs of corrosion and cold-deformation could be seen on the sample, which indicates that the final annealing heat treatment was the last working step. The three other samples had sustained corrosion damage and showed clear evidence of remanent cold deformation. The most important outcomes show a rise in the damage of corrosion in the form of cracking and an increase in remanent cold-deformation. Evidence for precipitation at grain boundaries could not be found, but corrosion-induced cracking was discovered that also had a transcrystalline property. Comparable results for the connection between cold-deformation and corrosion have been analysed on a silver vase from Egypt (Wanhill *et al.* 2003, 5f.).

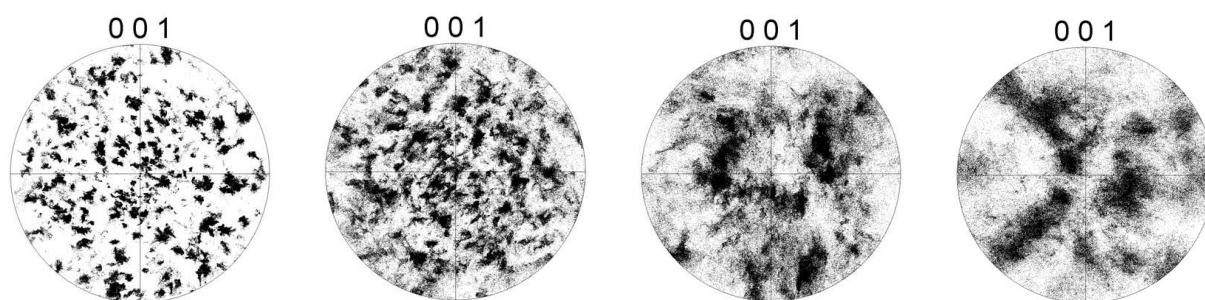


Fig. 127-130: The microstructures of the samples 366, 361, 363 and 365.

*“The present day study indicates that remanent cold-deformation is much more detrimental to the corrosion resistance of ancient silver, in casu the Gundestrup cauldron, than discontinuous precipitation.” (Wanhill *et al.* 2003, 6)*

According to Wanhill, Hattenberg and Northover, this statement is evidence that the conversation about antique silver should also involve an assessment of remanent cold-deformation. The reason for this is that objects or sections of objects that contain cold-deformation have a higher chance of corrosion-damage and are more prone to ongoing damage. Cold-deformations were usually and occur on ornaments that have been created through chasing and stamping. If these methods were used on artefacts made of sheet-metal, tensile strains could have occurred on the inside, which support a form of corrosion that is very alike to stress corrosion cracking. The following aspects are very interesting for the discontinuous precipitation in silver in archaeometallurgy: precipitate widths and morphology, a non-occurrence in samples which contained remanent cold-deformation as well as nucleation and also growth (Wanhill *et al.* 2003, 6-8).

Archaeological artefacts made of silver were mostly crafted through the combined methods of mechanical working as well as cold deformation and annealing heat-treatments. The microstructures, which developed through this process, are comprised of specific grain boundaries that can be categorised into three groups, based on approaches by Tadao Watanabe and contributing scholars in several articles from 1984 to 1994: low-angle boundaries, high-angle boundaries and high-angle random boundaries. This differentiation is important for archaeological finds made of silver of whom the largest amount will contain high-angle random grain boundaries that are high-energy boundaries. The analysed samples with evidence of cold deformation can be assigned to this category. Silver artefacts, in the archaeological context, will comprise several grain boundaries, with a susceptibility for impure element segregation, containing noncontinuous precipitation of copper, as well as a possible segregation of microstructurally-embrittling elements like lead and also bismuth. If cracks occur in the silver, then the grain size is a relevant factor. Commonly, a large grain size is harmful to the embrittlement of archaeological silver, regardless if this results from corrosion or from segregation of microstructurally-embrittling elements. The damage occurs relatively often on the surface of the artefact and does not reach deeply into the investigated sample, which is relevant for the general intactness of an object (Wanhill *et al.* 2003, 8).

The analysed samples from the Gundestrup cauldron lead to the conclusion that the harmfulness of a remanent cold-deformation is higher than those of a grain boundary discontinuous precipitation. Furthermore, the features of a discontinuous precipitation are useless for the determination of age, as well as for the authenticity of artefacts that were crafted from silver (Wanhill *et al.* 2003, 9).

9. Representativity of silver artefacts

According to Powell, one of the general factors that has to be considered when the origin of the cauldron of Gundestrup is located, is the availableness of great amounts of silver which were necessary for the crafting of a vessel of that size. Furthermore, the usage of this precious metal for such an artefact would indicate that silver was accepted as a material which could be used for aims of either ritual or profane nature. The interpretation that the cauldron originates from Transylvania or the Balkans is supported by the rich resources of silver situated in these regions (Powell 1971, 198). Powell's theory is similar to Drexel's interpretation. He considered that the material used for the Gundestrup cauldron originated from the Balkans, referring to the Dacian silver mines.

This opinion is supported by Megaw, who theorised that the natural deposits of silver in the East, more specifically in Eastern Europe, would be mirrored in general on the basis of the distribution of coins made of silver and gold (Megaw 1970, 131). The lack of naturally occurring silver in Gallia is also mentioned by the classical author Diodorus Siculus:

“Gaul is absolutely without silver mines, but has a large quantity of native gold.” (Book V, 27 as cited by Olmsted 1979, 38)

Olmsted assumes that the quote from Diodorus had probably been adopted from a text by the Greek historian Poseidonius. Only a small number of silver artefacts that can be linked to the ornament style of Gallia based on their decoration survived. Therefore, it would be harder to favour the approach of the Gundestrup cauldron's construction in the West. This silver vessel, with a weight of 8,885 kg, is the biggest European iron-aged artefact preserved today. Olmsted criticized that the argument of the precious metals used in coinage does not consider facts about the coins used in Gallia, where gold had only been the prevailing coin-metal in the years before the Roman conquest. After Gallia had been occupied and become a Roman province, silver replaced gold as the dominant material for coinage. The lack of attention to this change of 'currency' partly resulted from a missing chronological dating for the coins of Gallic mintage. Only in the late 60's, as well as in the early 70's, did academic papers aim to establish such a chronology (Olmsted 1979, 38f.).

On the basis of the Gallic coinage, it was assumed that from 80 to 50 BC, larger amounts of silver objects were crafted in Gallia. The change of material could have happened in the period between 83 to 78 BC, whereas the older Arvernian gold stater, an adaption of the Macedonian coinage of Philip II., had been replaced with a standardised coin on the basis of the Roman silver denarius. This development started in the Gallic East, but it is likely that the

change happened in the West around the same time. Several hoards have been discovered, which consisted of over ten thousand silver coins each. The Jersey-9 hoard, discovered on the Channel Island of Jersey, contained more than 12000 silver coins, although the percentage of silver in each coin was small. With an assumed average silver amount of more than one gram per coin, all the coinage combined would bring enough high quality (almost pure) silver to craft two cauldrons of equal size to the one from Gundestrup (*Olmsted 1979, 39f.*).

In addition, Caesar and Poseidonius reported that silver objects were common goods in Gallia. Strabo noted that the tribes of the Ruteni and the Gabali operated silver mines, “*Silbergruben*” (*Geographica book IV, chapter 2, 2*). This precious metal was probably also traded to Gallia from silver deposits in Hispania. Therefore, Olmsted concludes that the amount of silver in Gallia would last for the production of large artefacts like the cauldron. Furthermore, Olmsted considered the craftsmen and metal-smiths of Gallia to have enough experience on working either gold or bronze, so it is unlikely in his opinion to doubt their skills on working silver. Such objects of high craftsmanship from Gallic artisans are the cauldron of Runkeby and the silver cup found in Lyon (*Olmsted 1979, 40-42*).

But how representative are the silver objects discovered in the archaeological context? Timothy Taylor (*2001, 27-43*) created a theoretical calculation that addresses this question.

An investigation model for the estimation of the extent of ancient slave trade in the East of Europe during the Iron Age analysed the reports about the slaves who worked in Thracian silver mines. It considered the slaves' price in silver, the silver gain extracted from the mines and also the silver amount of tribute payments. The silver-quantity of the 5th and the 4th century BC, which had been mined and stored in Thrace, is known through value units. Silver was the main substance used for the Greek currency, especially coinage, as well as for the tributes charged by local rulers. The Greek historian Xenophon of Athens noted around 355 BC that the silver resources in Greece and Thrace were far from being depleted. Large quantities of this precious metal circulated in these centuries, of which some pieces had been put down and hidden in hoards. But the silver hoards archaeologists have discovered in Thrace are only a tiny part of the original number (*Taylor 2001, 30f.*).

The silver amount each mine slave could dig up in one day is calculated as follows:

Xenophon reports that slaves were lent from one owner to another for the sum of an *obol* per day for each person, which is less than one gram of silver; 1 *obol* equals 0,72 grams. One working slave must have mined a multiple sum of one *obol*, so that the lending fee would pay off. Taylor assumes that, in a silver mine with constant fluent work, one man likely dug up a minimum of 72 grams finished and pure silver per day, a hundredfold of an *obol*. For a better

understanding of the following extrapolations, this sum was reduced to 50 grams. Xenophon further noted that if a state purchased slaves for lending them to different mine owners, 1200 people would bring 12 *talents* each year (360 days) while 6000 would gain 60 *talents* for the lender. One talent equals 25,920 kg of silver, which matches 60 *minai* (432 g silver in each) or a number of 6000 *drachmai* (one piece contains 4,32 g of silver) or instead 36,000 *obols*. For comparison, the victory monument for the Greek triumph against the Carthagians at Selinus¹³ (ancient Greek city located in the north-western part of Sicily) crafted from gold had been priced with 60 talents (*Taylor 2001, 31f.*).

Thucydides, who himself owned a silver mine on the island of Thasos, reported that Seuthes, ruler of the Odrysian kingdom in Thrace in the late 5th century, had raised the tribute, which he received every year, to an amount of circa 400 talents. According to Taylor, this sum seems reasonable and not exaggerated and he interprets that this quantity paid by Seuthes' tributaries could not have exceeded 25 percent of their total annual amount of wealth, and must have been placed between 10 and 25 percent. A tribute beyond this percentage would have been untenable, regarding factors of military, politics and economics, while the lower number of 10 percent is the more likely one, according to Taylor. Furthermore, Thucydides mentions that a separate sum of gold and silver, which had, at the minimum, the same value as the tribute that had been given to Seuthes in the form of gifts, beside additional presents and tribute payments not made in precious metals. The Rogozen treasure, a hoard discovered in 1985 in the Bulgarian North-West, gives an impression as to what such a tribute payment could have contained. It consisted of 165 silver artefacts in the form of drinking vessels, of whom several had also been silver-gilt. The hoard has a total weight of almost 20 kg (*Taylor 2001, 32f.*).

Seuthes' tribute of 400 talents is equal to 10,368 kg, more than ten tons of silver and even over twenty tons, if the gifts are considered. In comparison with the mining-gain of each working slave, 10000 kg of silver would have been mined either by one person after 207360 days or by 576 slaves in one year (360 days). If the amount of gifts is added to this calculation, the sum doubles. Although this seems like a large quantity, the number of people required to mine such an amount of silver is slightly over one thousand, whereas the number of active mining slaves comprised several thousands (*Taylor 2001, 33*).

If the annual tribute of 10000 kg silver is compared to the total amount of silver artefacts that had been excavated and discovered in Thrace and that date into the 5th and the 4th century BC, which comes to circa 100 kg, the archaeological finds would equal 1 percent. Considering that the quantity of circulating silver was much higher in antiquity, the

¹³ cf. Wikipedia: Battle of Selinus: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Selinus [Accessed 29th March 2018].

representativity of silver artefacts in the record and documentation of archaeology reaches in the best case 0,01 percent. So, every archaeological silver finding contrasts ten thousand other objects that are lost. Therefore, on the basis of the modern day remaining silver artefacts, the dimensions of the iron-aged economies in Eurasia have been fundamentally underestimated (*Taylor 2001*, 33). The reason for this lack of objects is simple. As a precious metal, silver has been valuable and such objects were melted down and reused. The surviving artefacts in the archaeological context are rather the exception than the rule.

10. Possible depictions of astronomical observations and the movement of celestial bodies on the Gundestrup cauldron

Claude Maumené came up with a new interpretation of the relief scenes of the cauldron from Gundestrup, which bases on ancient astronomical knowledge and observations concerning the movement of the stars and planets that he connects with the number of plates and their design. The five plates, which form the inner pictorial sequence of the cauldron, symbolise the order of a specific time period that is similar to those of the octaeteries¹⁴, an astronomical cycle that was transmitted by the description of the ancient Greek astronomer Cleostratus (circa 548 - 432 BC). This interval is influenced by the circulation and movement of the luminaries, ie sun, moon and Venus. In addition, he refers to Paul Verdier's interpretation of the outer plates of the cauldron, which states that the illustrated scenes would be linked to the visibility of stars, orbs and constellations in the night sky as well as to the moments in time when they appear and disappear. The relief-busts would be allegories of luminaries and the positions of their arms would represent either the rising or the setting of those. The decorative elements and attached figures on each plate would illustrate a constellation of stars and where their positions can be located and observed in the sky at different moments of the day: at dawn, twilight or night. Furthermore, the attributed figures either link the luminary to the heliacal¹⁵ or the acronical¹⁶ rising or setting (*Maumené 2016*, 351f.).

¹⁴ After a period of eight solar years in the astronomical lore the lunar phase occurs on the same day of the year, with a variation of one or two additional days (*Wikipedia: Octaeteris*. [Online] Available from: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Octaeteris> [Accessed 24th February 2018]).

¹⁵ The appearance of a celestial body which can be seen in the east shortly before the sun rises for the first time again after an interval that lasts not a whole year in which the luminary was not visible (*Wikipedia: Heliacal rising*. [Online] Available from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heliacal_rising [Accessed 25th February 2018]).

¹⁶ The appearance of celestial bodies before nightfall.



Fig. 131: Heliacal rising of Sirius (on the left side), the star cluster of the Pleiades can be seen on the right side above the tree.

Maumené mentions that the quantity of the separate plates was the hint that provided the link to Venus. The five plates on the cauldron's inside would represent the planet's synodic cycles, while the eight plates on the outside would symbolize the amount of solar years. Both periods of time consist of a similar, nearly equal number of days. Furthermore, these results are equivalent to the days of ninety-nine lunar months. This coincidental compilation was the basis of a calendric model, which has been known since ancient times as the so called *octaeteric cycle*. Different source materials prove that this calendar system of eight years was known and also used in several different regions and countries like Greece, Crete, Armenia, Albania, Lithuania and also by the Yi people of ancient China (Maumené 2016, 352).

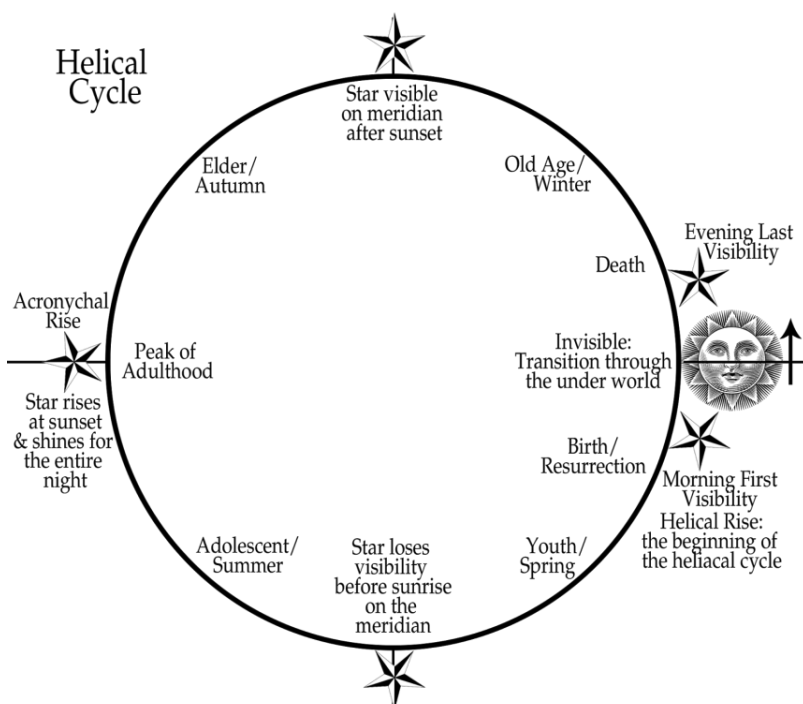


Fig. 132: The Heliacal 'life cycle' of an orb.

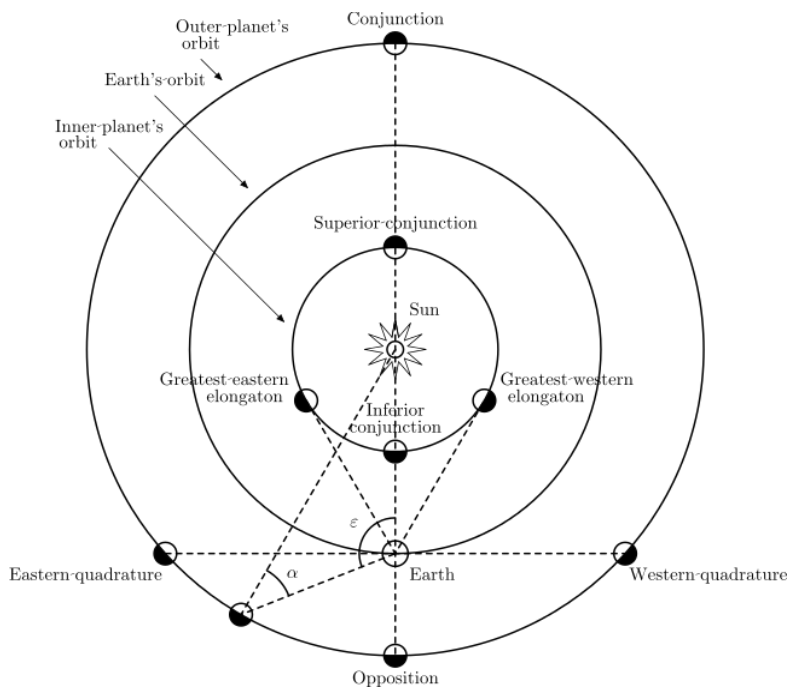


Fig. 133 & 134: Diagram of the superior or inferior conjunction of a planet and a conjunction above the Moon between the planets Mercury and Venus.

The iconographic scenes on the plates of the cauldron could have been designed as illustrations of a model of time, as well as of specific moments connected with the appearance and disappearance of particular luminaries. These representations could have served as a visualized memory aid of those special periods (*Verdier 1998, Gourdineau & Verdier 2006 as cited by Maumené 2016, 352*). On the one hand, the images on the inside of the cauldron could depict the sequences in a calendar, which are near the octaeteris and have a parallel or similar phase to the cycles of Venus, Sun and Moon. On the other hand, the images on the outside could have shown the key dates and the specific moments in time when special and succinct luminaries were visible (*Maumené 2016, 352*).

10.1 The five scenes on the cauldron's inside

Maumené analyses the scenes and their iconographic elements, as well as their details to support his theory and starts with the plates on the inside. The first object of interpretation is the parade of warriors (**C 6574**) in which he sees an illustration of a (astronomical) year with its four seasons, in accordance with the culture of the Celts and their society. Each of the seasons begins with a specific festivity, which were called *Beltane*, *Lughnasadh*, *Samhain* and *Imbolic*. According to Maumené, the four horsemen allegorize those celebrations and form pairs of which each represents the bright and the dark aspect of the Celtic year. He refers to the calendar of Coligny, where equal sequences were noted and where the year was divided

into two halves, a light one as well as a dark one. The first horseman, riding in front of the others, has an application shaped like a bird on his helmet, which could represent *Beltane*, celebrated in spring when the birds nest and the migrating birds return from the south. (Maumené 2016, 352)



Fig. 135: The bronze Calendar of Coligny (France; 1,48 x 0,9 m) describes the five years-cycle of a lunar calendar and dates in the 2nd century AD. Although Latin script had been used, the text could be formulated in the langue of the Celts or a Celtic group in Antiquity (Lehoux 2000, 63).

The crest of the second horseman in the row has the form of a boar and could symbolize *Lughnasadh*, because the animal is often connected with the Celtic deity Lugh. The following rider is probably a depiction of *Samhain* according to the horns, which can be interpreted as a possible link to Cernunnos (Maumené 2016, 352). The metal crest on the last horseman's helmet could allegorize the last festival *Imbolic*. According to a tale of the traditional folklore of Ireland, during the time of this festivity a belt was crafted from a rope made of straw, which was used to symbolically hand down the members of the family and also the cattle (Le Roux & Guyonvarc'h 1995). Based on the interpretation of these cavaliers and also the personifications of the four seasons, Maumené suggests that the repeated and equal depictions of the legs, one front and one hind leg of the horse and the right leg of the human could represent the three lunar months, which all seasons had in common. Together, they form a representation of a whole lunar year (Maumené 2016, 352).

In addition, Maumené compares the riders on the plate to a scabbard from Hallstatt, on which a scene of four men on horseback riding behind three marching warriors was engraved. He

sees a parallel depiction of the four seasons in the horsemen (*Maumené 2016, 352*). But the riders on the scabbard do not have different decorations on their helmets, although their armour varies. Furthermore, all wear lances and hold them in a lowered position, while the second aims to push the weapon in the neck or head of a man who lies on the ground.



Fig. 136: Warrior's parade (inside plate 4, C 6574).



Fig. 137: Iron sword in bronze scabbard ornamented with figures from Hallstatt burial field, grave 994 (*Kern 2009, 117*). (cf. Fig. 46)

The warriors (including the upside down turned figure that is held in the hands of the big figure) also have a special meaning and symbolize a period of eleven days, which brings the moon in synchronicity with the sun. Twelve such synodic moons and eleven additional days will give a full year. The rank of leaves between the riders and the warriors separates the temporal world from the underworld. The large person on the left could be the deity Dagda, who resurrects the fallen warriors marching towards him from the land of the dead. The depiction of the dog would also fit into this interpretation, because this animal has a chthonian, as well as a belligerent aspect in Celtic culture. One warrior wears no spear or shield, but has a sword in his right hand instead that rests on his shoulder and his helmet-crest is shaped like a boar. His position among the soldiers and this detail could represent the season-ending of Lugh. The three men who sound the carnyx could stand for the three nights of the Samhain which ended the season of battle. The fact that the boundary line does not reach or cover the players could represent that their cry for war from the underworld could come forth to the world above (*Maumené 2016, 353*).



Fig. 138: *The protectress of animals (inside plate 3, C 6573).*

According to Maumené, the plate of the female bust (*C 6573*), which he describes as a goddess, who is placed between two rosettes (each having six petals that are possible depictions of lunar months) and surrounded by five animals, symbolizes the moon.

Maumené refers to the tradition or habit of seeing deities reside in the world's North, whereby the right side stands for the East and the left represents the West. Furthermore, an imagined line which rests on the bust's shoulders would mark the horizon. The woman's arms are bent and lie on her chest, therefore the moon would not have risen, and the female figure depicts the phase of a new moon, which, for Maumené, is the ideal representation of the dark season. Each of the five illustrations of animals could stand for a month, so together they would portray half of a year that consisted of ten months. The author mentions a reference to the Chinese calendar of the Yi people, which also totals the same amount of months, of which each is symbolized by a specific animal. Furthermore, several different calendars existed that had an animal linked to each month and Maumené refers to an article of Francoise Bader (1997) who describes that animal motifs were used as an encipherment for the months of calendars in antiquity (*Maumené 2016, 353*).

Maumené does not give a detailed explanation of the animals which should represent the particular month, but such symbolism would only make sense with varying creatures. A differentiation between two months that are connected to the same animal would be difficult but not impossible, if different positions or actions depicted a specific month. For example, a lion that stands on his hind paws is associated with one month while a running one is understood as another month. But even this interpretation does not work on the plate because the elephants and griffons are designed in the same way. The only difference between the animals is that in each case, one of them is depicted in a mirror-inverted position.

The scene on the plate with the male bust holding half a wheel in his right hand (*C 6572*) is similar to the illustration on the former plate and, according to Maumené's interpretation, the two form a pair. The central man could stand for the sun, the raised arms symbolize the cardinal directions of its rising and setting. The wheel could represent the beginning of the other half of the year, which could have been divided into eight sequences illustrated through the number of its spokes. The animals could be depictions of the other five months and, therefore, this plate portrays the bright season (*Maumené 2016, 353f.*).



Fig. 139 & 140: Wheel-men and antlered figure (*C 6572 & C 6571*).

There are two things that Maumené does not mention or consider in his interpretation: the probably male figure who also holds the wheel and a snake with horns of a ram. According to Maumené's theory about the helm decorations of the riders, the attached and backwards bent horns could represent the festival of Samhain and the season that follows after it. Another function of the man could be his role as a deity, either of a specific season or because he has a function that is connected to the sun, for example like the solar chariot of the god Helios in Greek mythology. The ram-horned snake does not appear either and if it is counted to the other animals, Maumene's interpretation would not work, because the number of creatures on both plates would not be equal. Furthermore, there are also only two different types of animals beside the snake, a wolf and a griffin, which are repeated twice and thrice. The illustrations are (almost) equal, only the body of the last griffin is more bent than those of the others.

The scene with the antlered figure, probably Cernunnos (*C 6571*), among a group of eight animals in a vegetative setting could be an illustration of the cycle of the planet Venus. The number of animals could stand for the eight seasons, each consisting of 72 or 73 days, which together result in 584 days, the number of days a full cycle of Venus has. A more ordinary explanation would be to see the animals as a representation of Venusian octaeteric cycle. Another possibility is that the creatures symbolize an interweaving of eight days through which the 72 days of each of the eight seasons can be assimilated to the period a full cycle of

Venus lasts. A further alternative would be that the beasts illustrate the eight separations the Celts had for a year, including each solstice and equinox and sectioned by the four Celtic celebrations (Maumené 2016, 354).

Maumené does not specify his approach that would speak for Venus beside the calculations. Once again, he skips the ram-horned snake, but it could have been interpreted as belonging to the figure with antlers and not as an individual animal. The plate also shows animals which are alike twice, the bulls and the pair of facing lions. Although the figure on the back of the fish is also not mentioned, the simplest interpretation according to Maumené's attempt would be to see it as an additional day linked to a specific season of the year.

The plate with the thrice repeated motif of a bull, two wolf- or dog-like animals and a warrior with a raised sword (C 6575) is interpreted as to illustrate three constellations in the night sky: *Taurus*, *Canis Major* (The Greater Dog) as well as *Canis Minor* (the Lesser Dog) and the hunter *Orion*. Observed from the earth, these constellations appear to be placed next to each other and their existence and location has already been familiar to the astronomers in antiquity. Maumené interprets that the scene would illustrate the man killing or sacrificing the bull, which could symbolize an inserted intercalation of three additional months according to the octaeteries (Maumené 2016, 354).



Fig. 141: Bull-baiting (inside plate 5/C 6575).

10.2 The eight scenes on the outside on the cauldron's outside

10.2.1 The plates with female busts

The plate with the depiction of a female bust attended by several smaller figures, including two women and three birds (C 6565) has attached details that are linked to the two goddesses

Aphrodite and Astarte. Therefore, Maumené interprets the plate as a depiction of planet Venus. The small woman sitting on the right shoulder of the bust is probably another illustration of the central deity or the luminary. Based on the theory that the imagined line on the shoulders of each bust symbolizes the horizon, the figure could represent the day of Venus' ascension and first visibility. The two dogs could illustrate Canis Major and Canis Minor of which the former appears in the sky, while the latter is not visible and rests in the world beyond. The figure who is held in the left arm of the bust could portray the constellation of Orion that is also out of sight. The second woman, braiding the hair of the central placed woman, could be Berenice, a figure in the Greek mythology, who offered her hair to Aphrodite in exchange for her husband's victory in battle and his safe return back home. The sacrifice of Berenice's magnificent head of hair pleased the gods, who placed it forever among the stars as a constellation, the so called *Coma Berenices*¹⁷. Therefore, it would be possible that this plate shows the point of time when planet Venus and Coma Berenices appear (the raised right arm symbolizes the rising) in the eastern part of the sky before the break of dawn (Maumené 2016, 354f.).

This interpretation would work, assuming that all three birds are attributes of Aphrodite or Venus. The suggested double depiction of the allegorized planet would be the first and only symbolization of this kind on the plates and not really necessary, because the position and movement of the planet would be marked through the risen arm. But it could be possible that the smaller figure was aimed as a support for accenting the planet's precise position.



Fig. 142-144: Possible personifications of the planet Venus on outside plate 1-3 (C 6564- C 6567).

The plate with three busts (C 6566) could also illustrate Venus in the sequences of its *conjunction*¹⁸ (astronomical term) with the sun, either in a superior or an inferior position. The

¹⁷ cf. Wikipedia: *Coma Berenices*: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coma_Berenices [Accessed 26th Feb. 2018].

¹⁸ Two or more luminaries appear above each other in a part of the sky if viewed from the earth. This phenomenon occurs because the luminaries have either a similar right ascension or a similar ecliptic longitude. Furthermore, a conjunction is distinguished in a **superior** and an **inferior** type. In a superior conjunction, a planet is on the opposite side of the sun while an inferior conjunction refers to the planets position underneath the sun with whom the planets is located in an approximate line (cf. Fig. 133 & 134) (Wikipedia: *Conjunction*. [Online] Available from: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conjunction_\(astronomy\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conjunction_(astronomy)) [Accessed 26th February 2018].

bent arms, which are placed on the chest, could imply Venus' vanishing behind the horizon during the planet's inferior conjunction. After eight or nine days of the luminaries' disappearing in the sunset sky, Venus rises again shortly before dawn, which could be symbolized by the two smaller busts. The man with the beard probably represents the 'aged' day, the evening, while the beardless man stands for youth and therefore the new day. Maumené interprets that the small mouth of the female bust's face in combination with the cheeks, which he sees as to be a bit inflated, indicates the journey of Venus under water from its old partner to her new one. The underwater motif would be visualised by the ornamenting dots on the plate's background. The triangle-shaped line that runs directly above the heads and crosses the top of the woman's head could illustrate waves. In addition, Maumené notes that Venus' change of partners would have a mythological parallel and he refers to the work of Gricourt (2010), but gives no further explanation (Maumené 2016, 355).

It is likely that the mentioned parallel in mythology is the affair of Aphrodite with Ares, a handsome young man, although she was married to Hephaestus, an older, crippled and ugly man. Although Maumené does not describe the leaf-ranks, he could have understood them as aquatic plants.

According to Maumené, the last of the plates with a female bust (**C 6564**) is also an illustration of Venus. Her arms lay over her chest in a crossed position. Therefore, the planet is also not visible and could represent the superior conjunction. On the woman's right shoulder stands a figure that fights with a lion, a probable depiction of Heracles and the Nemean lion, which was connected to the constellation Leo in Greek Antiquity. The scene could refer to an astronomical occurrence, probably linked to the moment when this constellation can be seen at dusk for the last time. The dancing figure on the left shoulder could be Orion and the plate could show the heliacal rising of that constellation, in detail, those of its first magnitude star Betelgeuse, which is the brightest luminary of Orion and placed at the left shoulder. Furthermore, Maumené refers to another detail, the absence of nipples on the breasts of the two similar female busts, which he interprets as a hint to the planet's absence in the sky's eastern and western cardinal direction (Maumené 2016, 355).

Maumené does not mention the decorative background, which is designed in almost the same way as the other plate and which could depict also an aquatic environment. He also does not describe the similar mouth of the relief-bust, probably because he imagines the figure also as disappearing into the sea. The interpretation of the missing nipples is strange, because when the East and West are represented by the arms and shoulders it is not reasonable why such small details as nipples should symbolize the planets absence and invisibility.

10.2.2 The plates with male busts

The male busts personify the sun and varying moments in its cycle, and Maumené believes that the shape of the beard allows an order of the scenes. The man with raised arms with a sea-dragon in each hand (**C 6567**) could be the first, because his beard covers only his chin and is missing a moustache. The creature could be the dragon *Ladon*, which the goddess Hera sent to guard the apples of the Hesperides and in the lower section of the plate a two-headed dog is depicted that could be a representation of *Orhos*, a dog of Hades. Both creatures are the offspring of the titan Typhon and the female monster Echidna. In the constellation of Draco, the brightest of its stars is *Gamma Draconis*¹⁹ or *Eltanin* that is located on the imagined dragon's head and was also known as the *Dragon star* in ancient Greece. The twisted tails of the dragons could resemble the letter **Υ** in the Greek alphabet and refer to Gamma Draconis. Draco can also be seen in the sky because it orbits around the celestial pole, although its location can change from the eastern area to the western. Furthermore, in several Indo-European beliefs, this pole is supported by the cosmic tree. The scene is interpreted in the way that the man catches the dragons in the sky (*Maumené 2016, 355f.*).

Maumené does not give a detailed explanation and his interpretation is formulated like a question, although the scene, according to his attempt, likely represents the sun which captures Draco.

The second plate of the pair is of a male bust with raised arms and two figures standing on his shoulders (**C 6570**). According to the beard-style of the male relief-bust, this plate depicts the older version of the man. The dancing or jumping figure on the left side equals the one on the first plate from the cauldron's outside (**C 6564**) and probably also stands for Orion. Underneath those figure's feet and next to the male bust's head, a small rider is placed, whose mount is described as a unicorn. Such a constellation exists and can be found close to Orion, on its eastside. Although the unicorn was not mentioned in the Ptolemy's description of the known constellations, it has been part of a celestial sphere that can be traced to ancient Persia. The man standing in profile on the right side of the head is interpreted as a personification of the constellation of *Boötes*, the herder or keeper of the bear who can be located underneath Ursa Major (*Maumené 2016, 356*).

It is possible that the unicorn constellation had 'spread' from Persia and adopted by their neighbours, from where it was disseminated further. But considering this cultural exchange, it is rather unlikely that Ptolemy should not have had any knowledge or information about this specific constellation. Maumené's argumentation is linked to the knowledge of the Greek

¹⁹ cf. Wikipedia: Gamma Draconis: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gamma_Draconis [Accessed 27th Feb. 2018].

astronomy and the Persian excursus is the only one (so far). Furthermore, it is unlikely that a constellation which originates in the East was known by the craftsmen who made the cauldron, but not by Greek astronomers.

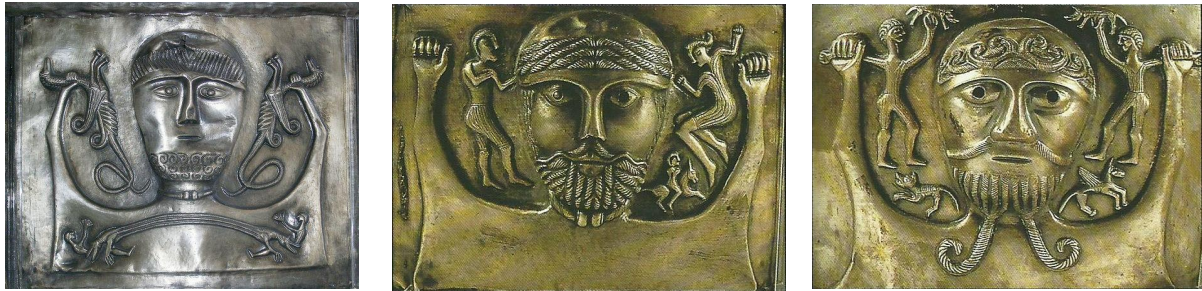


Fig. 145-147: *The Dragonslayer, the master of dance and the maneater on the outside plates C 6567, C 6569 and C 6570.*

The man holding two smaller men in his hands, who again each hold an animal in their one raised hand (*C 6569*), is related to Ursa Major. The animal is identified as a boar, which is linked to the Celtic deity Lugh and also to two social classes in Celtic society: the priests as well as the druids and the warriors. On several coins that have been found in Gallia, the boar is depicted in combination with an encircled globe and also seven additional global clusters connected with an arc. Therefore, the represented animal on the plate is associated with the constellation of the *Great Bear (Ursa Major)*. The male figures who lift the boars could again be personifications of Boötes, which is located in an identical spatial configuration in the sky. The scene could illustrate this exact same location and the shifted order of the figures might symbolize the herdsman's celestial rise that trails behind the Great Bear. The two smaller animals on the shoulders of the bust could stand for the helical rising of the constellation of Pegasus (in detail of the star *Alpha Pegasi/Markab*) and the heliacal setting of Canis Major (the binary star Sirius). These two events occur on the 3rd of February and in the period from the 28th to 30th of April (*Maumené 2016, 356f.*).

The repeated representation of the man in a mirror-inverted variant could be a possible motif for depicting exactly the same position when the two constellations appear in the East as well as in the West, which Maumené does not mention. If the central male bust symbolizes the sun, the luminary would be rising according to the raised arms. The figures in his hands could stand for the heliacal rising of Ursa Major and Boötes followed by the sun. The dog and the Pegasus on the other hand could illustrate the heliacal setting of both constellations, the dog in the western hemisphere and the Pegasus in the eastern one, because the animals are close to the horizon and when the sun rises they must sink. Maumené's description could base on astronomical observations, in which the heliacal rising of Pegasus is followed by the heliacal setting of Canis Major. But the depiction of the dog does not correspond with this

interpretation because the body is in a slightly risen position, such as the one of the winged horse, and furthermore, compared to the illustrations of dogs on the other plates, it should be the Lesser Dog also known as Canis Minor.

The man who holds the hind legs of a stag in each of his hands (**C 6568**) is ranked as the last one, because he would be the oldest male bust according to the length of his beard and could form a pair with the former plate. The attributed animals are connected to ancient Greece, where hunts were organised and deer were sacrificed to honour the goddess Artemis. The ceremonies happened during *Elaphebolion*, the ninth month in the Attic calendar, which parallels the sequence from the middle of February to the middle of March. This is also the period when the new antlers of the stags start to grow again. The common scientific consensus sees the month *Elembiu*, the tenth in the calendar of Coligny, to be the Celtic equivalent. In both names, the Indo-European origin of the term 'deer' can be found: *elen-* (*bho-*) or the Greek variant *elaphos* (*elnbhos*). In addition, a constellation of the stag was known in Antiquity and although Ptolemy did not mention this specific one, Mesopotamian sources report on the stag-constellation, which was a part of the eastern or oriental section of Andromeda and linked to α *Andromeda* (*Alpheratz*). The Latin writer Firmicus Maternus located the stag in the northern part of the constellation Pisces in the 4th century AD (*Maumené 2016, 357*).

In both variants, the constellation of the stag is located in the section in which the constellation of Pegasus is placed, in the northern direction of the Pisces. The heliacal rising of α *Andromeda* (*Alpheratz*) happens between the 3rd and 5th of February and its heliacal setting in the period from the 5th to 7th of March. The background of the plate is ornamented in the same way as the others that Maumené described as an aquatic environment. Therefore, he thinks that the plate shows the period when this constellation fades from the sky (*Maumené 2016, 357*).

The upside down turned stags indeed could symbolize the sinking of the constellation of the stag. The double-illustration, in which one stag is mirror-inverted, could represent that the constellation consists of several stars in difference to the one central orb, the sun. The raised arms of the man would represent sunrise and dawn, at which point the stags disappear.



Fig. 148 & 149: Deer hunter (C 6568) and the lying bull on the baseplate.

The plate at the base of the cauldron again illustrates three constellations that are close to each other: Taurus, *Orion*, *Canis Major* and *Canis Minor*. Orion is depicted with breasts and is interpreted as the conjunction of Orion with Venus, which happens after a period of eight years and therefore a figure of androgenic character has been illustrated. Maumené notes that the event of the conjunction could have been marked because it was connected to the cycle change of the (Celtic) calendar (*Maumené 2016, 357*).

Maumené's interpretation for the round base plate is almost reasonable according to his argumentation for the other scenes. It could be possible that the hermaphroditic warrior represents the conjunction of Venus with the constellation of Orion, nevertheless quite interpretative. But there is a third animal, similar to a dog or wolf, on the plate, which is also depicted from above like the bull and not in a side view as the two other dogs and the warrior. This animal is bigger than the dogs and has been crafted in a relief-form like the bull. Its position could represent a dog or maybe some sort of big cat-like carnivore, lying on the ground.

But the base plate is a former phalera and did not belong to the original plates as well as to its design concept of the Gundestrup cauldron. This specific artefact was attached to the vessel's inner side when reparations were made on the bowl (*Taylor 1992, 87*).

Maumené concludes that the enigma of the depicted scenes on the Gundestrup cauldron has been solved in parts, although the sense and symbolism of several motifs and images is still unclear. He notes that the artefact had been used as an object as well as a specific kind of tool for remembering the movement and cycles of luminaries and the periods in which constellations can be observed in the sky. Maumené also states that the Venusian cycle had been described in a text from Mesopotamia which is the oldest remaining collection of written astronomical observations, dated around 1600 BC. It is likely that these scientific discoveries and their lore spread from the East to the ancient Mediterranean world, where the scholars exchanged their knowledge. And from there, it probably spread into the neighbouring territories and even further (*Maumené 2016, 357f.*).

Maumené's theory provides a new, different approach for the interpretation scenes and motifs that are represented on the plates of the Gundestrup cauldron. Although he explains the basic details of his theory, his argumentation is not that consistent when he interprets and describes the scenes in particular. On some occasions his analysis seems far-fetched and not completely reasonable, because he does not mention or go into any detail. When he does so, he interprets the findings differently to the way someone would according to Maumené's own basic framework. For example, this is the case regarding the scene with the antlered master of

animals (C 6571), the wheelmen (C 6572) and the maneater (C 6569), as I have mentioned after the description of each plate. In conclusion, it seems that Maumené sees some elements in a way which fit into his theory, despite the fact that they could also be interpreted differently, according to his suggestions.

If the plates are considered to display a cosmologic system and some form of calendar, they can be compared to another object of similar iconography, although a quite older one: The Nebra sky disk. The question occurs why orbs should have been personalized, instead of depicting them as planets and stars. This bronze artefact depicts the night sky and is ornamented with stars and orbs made of gold. The crafting of the disk, more specifically its present day appearance (one golden bow has been lost), can be separated into four different steps:

1. The original bronze artefact had been ornamented 'solemnly' with the moon in a full version, as well as in its crescent shape. A star cluster is depicted between the orbs, which is interpreted as an illustration of the Pleiades. All in all, the disk was decorated with 32 stars.
2. Two golden bows are added on the edges, representing the rise and the setting of the sun.
3. Another bow of gold is attached to the disk, symbolising the solar barque or the sky barque.
4. Holes are punched in the edge at a later date. The artefact's original importance changed and it could have been fixed on a pole to carry it as some sort of banner. The point of time when the sky disk was made cannot be determined, but the moment of its placing in the ground is set around 3600 BC, according to the other 'accompanying' objects (Meller 2011, 172-174).

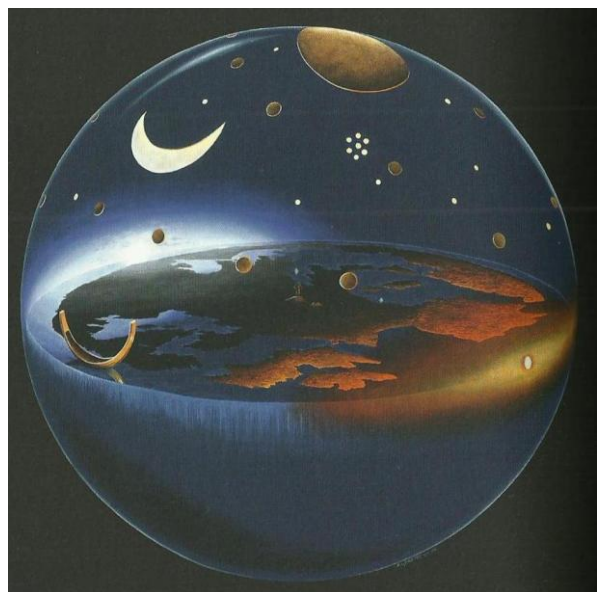


Fig. 150 & 151: The Nebra sky disk and a model of the Bronze Age cosmology based on the depictions on the disk.

- Chapter Two -

The antlered master of animals, Cernunnos and the cross-legged position



- Chapter Two -



Fig. 152: The antlered master of animals on an inner plate (C 6571) of the Gundestrup cauldron.

1. The antlered figure, the master of animals, on the Gundestrup Cauldron

One of the inner plates of the silver cauldron of the Gundestrup shows a human figure among a group of several animals. This figure has antlers on his head and is probably male, because it does not have any visible female characteristics like long hair and breasts, as the figures of women on other plates are depicted with. Furthermore, the man wears a garb that is designed almost equal to those of the warriors and the figures on other Gundestrup plates, which are supposed to represent men. The garment covers both arms and has a form underneath the neck, which is called a *V-neck* today. The garb ends almost at his knees and looks like it is made in one piece, because the stripes which accent the cloth look the same in the upper and lower part of the body, as if they would run in one line. In addition, the only separation between them is a belt or a girdle, decorated with small circles, around the figure's belly. Of course, it is also possible that the garment consists of a pair of trousers and a shirt, so the identical decoration is only a method of art. The man wears two torques, one around his neck and the other is held in his right hand. The left hand grabs a snake with two horns on its head, likely from a ram, which faces the man.

The male figure wears a pair of low shoes with laces, but his legs and feet have a somehow strange or unique position. The right leg is (almost) bent parallel to the right thigh and it looks like the man is sitting on his heel or the heel is placed before him on the ground while the tip of the toes touches the lower part of the shank. The left leg is also bent, but at a sharp angle, and the foot is almost stretched at a right angle to the leg.

The way in which the man is sitting can be seen or interpreted in two different ways: On the one hand, it could be that the bent legs should show an ordinary seated position, probably a cross-legged one, which was depicted in this specific way either to show a depth in perspective or because of a lack of skills from the maker to form a cross-legged position. On the other hand, it is possible that the man is balancing on tiptoes with his left foot. The latter possibility is the more likely one, considering the animals around the man.

The body of the snake is especially long and its shape and position are somehow strange. The man is holding the reptile shortly below its head, then the snake's body is slightly bent until it makes a loop, approximately at the height of the man's left knee. Afterwards, the animal's body goes on in a completely straight line, although not parallel to the plate's verge, until it ends some centimetres above the edge of the plate. If we draw a horizontal line right underneath the snake's tail, it is on the same level as the left toes of the man. The snake's tail was probably designed that way to show the actual ground level of the scene on the plate. The animal on the right side of the male figure also fits into this composition. A deer or a stag is standing next to the man, which is shown in a side view and orientated towards the man, just like the snake. Its head is on the same height as the face of the antlered person. The antlers look almost exactly as those of the seated figure, except that the deer has five horizontal prongs on each antler, in contrast to the man, who only has four per side. In addition, its four hooves stand on the same level or the fictional line as the left toes of the figure and the tail of the snake do.

Apart from the deer and the snake, there are seven more animals depicted on the plate. On the left and the right side a bull is illustrated, each time in profile, both animals are looking to the right. Therefore, the head of the first one to the left (behind the deer) is orientated towards the man and the other one to the right to the plate's edge. Above the snake there are two carnivores, posed sideways. On top, there is either a tiger, a leopard or a cheetah. A female lion would also be possible, because the animal's neck-area has been ornamented in the same way as those of the group of probable male lions. Right underneath a wolf or a dog is illustrated. The former seems to run or jump and looks to the right side, the latter looks calm and faces the man. In addition, its head is equal to the deer, on the same height as his face.

Between the cougar and the bull there is a fish, a large one, according to the figure it bears on its back. The fish's appearance resembles a wels catfish, and it seems that the human riding it has short hair, wears a similar garment as the antlered man and is therefore likely also male. The last animals on this plate are a pair of carnivores, in the same side view as all the others. They are definitely lions, because both have a mane on the back of the head and the neck. The lions are facing each other and standing on their hind paws, whereas the lion to the left is holding his front paw above that of his opposite. It seems that the two have opened, or are showing their jaws. Both lions' tails are bent towards each other and over one side of their bodies. The tail of the probable female lion does the same.

Although all animals are presented from a sideways perspective, the deer and the wolf are the only ones of which all four legs are visible. From the others, only two can be seen, except for the fish, of course. Over the whole scenery, tendrils of leaves are consistently worked into the metal. They have most likely been used to fill in the gaps between the figures and almost all of these are found behind, above, in front or underneath the different figures. Or, alternatively, the ranks could also show or symbolise a woody environment. But there is one exception or an exceptional tendril of leaves with three branches and seven leaves. One end is placed between the man and deer and the other two are both in the V-shaped gap of the antlers of the man and animal. Could this specific way of illustration have a deeper meaning or somehow symbolise a connection between the two figures?

Several scientists have interpreted the man with the antlers as the Celtic deity Cernunnos, the lord of animals, according to his attributes: the antlers, the torque and the snake. Although the attributes of that specific god vary, this male figure has enough of them to make a connection to the other images of Cernunnos (*cf. Subchapter 2*). But there could be more in that scenery than one sees at a first glance. The specific, unusual way in which Cernunnos sits and the leaf tendrils linking them could show a spiritual connection between the man and the deer or stag. In shamanistic cultures, it is believed that the garments and the equipment used by shamans is the manifestation of a reassignment or a back transfer to ancient forces of an animalistic pantheon, in which bears, eagles and several other birds, reindeers, elk and also moose are considered to possess the greatest power and among which several are of a female nature. Therefore, the clothes are decorated with different parts of one specific or several various animals. The blessed skin of a bear or a deer becomes the shaman's cloak, if the skin of a deer is used, it could be formed to resemble a bird's tail, along with feathers. Furthermore, the shaman could wear deer antlers on his head or on his cap, he could wear gloves which had

been the paws of a bear and his robe could be decorated with claws, teeth and feathers. The shaman, in addition, wears animal representations or symbols made from metal, which are indications for the animals which help him as well as his animal doppelgangers. During a ritual, the shaman gains the powers of his animalistic helpers through his ornate clothes, but also transforms into that animal, and will then be reborn in the creature's frame, will have its knowledge and can also turn back to the body of the spirit of the ancestor of the tribe, which is supposed to be an animal (*Jacobson-Tepfer 2015, 341f.*).

Overall, the connections to the animals via symbols, talismans or beastly parts worked into the shaman's robes as well as his entire appearance, refer to the female's life-giving power. In most examples, the clothes of shamans were made according to the types of fashion worn by women. So, the shaman appeared as a highly ornated woman, and in combination with the animal pieces, represented an aspect which consisted of half a human side and half an animal side, whereas the male aspect lacked in this representation. The process of the shaman putting on his garments turned into a metaphor for bodily change: the shaman's animal form was physically transformed or combined with other animals to gain their abilities, or at least some of them. This is shown through the different animal symbols, which are mixed in the shaman's costume and represent not only the possibility to transform, but also the nature of the shamanistic journey. So, the associated creatures symbolise the nature of the world through which the shaman has to travel, and his robe symbolises a large world or space and events in time. In addition, special preparations have been undertaken on his robes so that they could keep the energy of the spirit animal, which would result in a metaphorical transfer to the shaman (*Jacobson-Tepfer 2015, 342-344.*).

So, it is possible that the plate with scenery surrounding Cernunnos shows the shamanic aspect of this deity. The antlers could be part of a shaman's equipment and disguise him as a deer. The position in which he stands on his tiptoes could be part of a ritual, an invocation or a dance to transfer his spirit into or to become his animal avatar. Alternatively, the scene could show not a godly being, but a shaman and the animals surrounding him could depict the most powerful creatures in an imagined animalistic pantheon. The snake could refer to the chthonic world and the man riding on the fish could symbolise a journey over the world, or to another world beyond the earth. But, the repeated illustrations of the bull and the lions or carnivores are contrary to that theory.

Another possibility could be that the man on the fish depicts the central shamanic figure during the journey that follows after his entering of the otherworld, ie the spirit world (*Taylor 2018, personal communication*).

2. The Celtic deity Cernunnos

Cernunnos is a Celtic deity, ie a god associated with the Celts who is depicted with antlers, one or several torques and often accompanied by animals such as snakes and stags. The name Cernunnos is known from a stone pillar found in Paris. The so called *Nautes Parisicae* (Pillar of the Boatmen) shows, among several other deities from the Celtic world, a relief of a bearded, probably elder man with a bald head, the ears of a deer and short antlers, with a torque hanging from each antler. The name '**(C)ernunnos**', which means the 'horned' or the 'peaked one', is inscribed on the column and it is the only mentioning of that name. But on this basis of the image and the associated name, several other images have been identified as this god, according to the similar or alike attributes (*Green 1989, 86f.*).



Fig. 153: The remaining portray of Cernunnos on the *Nautes Parisicae*.

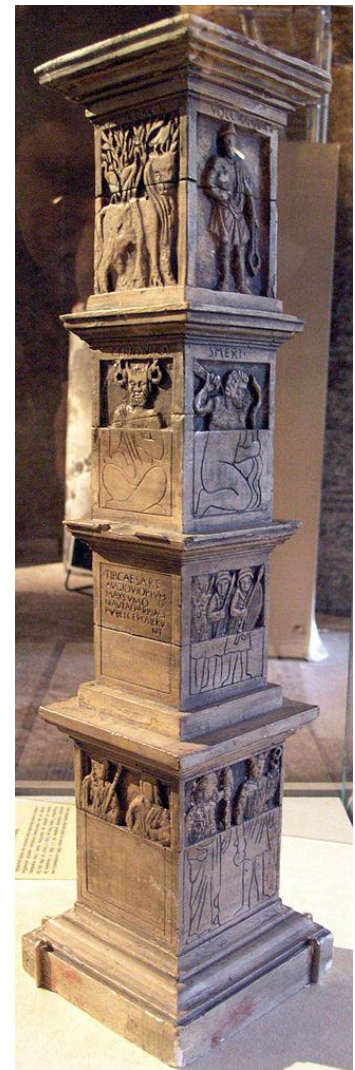


Fig. 154: A reconstruction of the *Nautes Parisicae*. Cernunnos' missing lower body is reconstructed in a cross-legged pose.

According to their art, the Celts seemed to imagine that their gods were able to change their form, were not bound to a human body and could add several features of animals to their appearance. Through such features, the image or the symbolic meanings of a god could have been improved. Similarities to such combinations are the multiplication and the triplism²⁰,

²⁰ The symbolism and the iconography connected with the number 3 which is often presented in the culture and society of the Celts (*Oxford Index (2004). A Dictionary of Celtic Mythology: triplism. [Online] Available from: <http://oxfordindex.oup.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803105745170> [Accessed 2nd October 2017]).*

which enhance something by adding an unnatural element. If an image shows an anthropomorphic figure with attributes of animals, it might be a reflection of transmutation, through which deities are able to change their form or appearance from a human to an animal and vice versa. The animal attribute with the greatest importance for anthropomorphic deities are horns, most commonly those of a bull or a ram, and antlers. Antlers occur on animals that are almost harmless to their environment. Although they can act aggressively towards each other in the rutting time, it is unlikely that these creatures would attack humans. Bulls are, in contrast, more belligerent and can be a danger. Therefore, these different animal attributes characterise the role of a god. Gods with antlers are benevolent, bring or grant prosperity and welfare, while the nature of deities with horns is frequently aggressive and warlike, while also symbolising fertility (*Green 1989, 86f.*).

The antlered god Cernunnos differs from other beings of the Celtic pantheon, which often appear in Roman times. Although the pillar on which the name Cernunnos has survived originates from the rule of Roman Emperor Tiberius (ruled from 14 to 37 AD), there is an older image from northern Italy, which dates to the 4th century BC. This depiction is a rock carving in the Camonica Valley and was probably made by the Camunians, a Celtic tribe from the Iron Age. The other petroglyphs and rock carvings there, which portray ritual scenes or deities, also originate from earlier periods like the Bronze Age and the Neolithic. Among those, there is the iron-aged image of an antlered figure in a long robe that almost reaches its feet. Both of its arms are raised and seem bent and, in addition, two torques are hanging on them. The one on the left arm seems to have a rope or a piece of cloth hanging on it. Next to the first figure, there is another significant, smaller one carved in the rock, ie a man whose arms are raised in the same manner as the first figure and is ithyphallic (*Green 1989, 87f.*). According to Green, there is also a horned serpent in the company of the two figures, but there is no other separate image or animal. Therefore, the curved line underneath the torques on the deity's left arm must or could be interpreted as the snake.

The tribe of the Camunians dwelled in woodlands, so it is likely that the stag was an important quarry and source of food. Deer-carvings also occur in Val Camonica and could have been made because of rituals associated with the seasons and fertility. The growth of deer antlers in the spring and the loss of them in autumn was perhaps a symbol for the fertility circle of nature or of the earth. The rock carving of the antlered figure is, so far, the oldest depiction of the supposed deity, which will be later named Cernunnos. It has several attributes, which are common characteristics in the images of the god made in the Romano-

Celtic period: antlers, torques and a horned serpent. These attributes symbolise fertility and are significant for the later Cernunnos (*Green 1989, 88*).

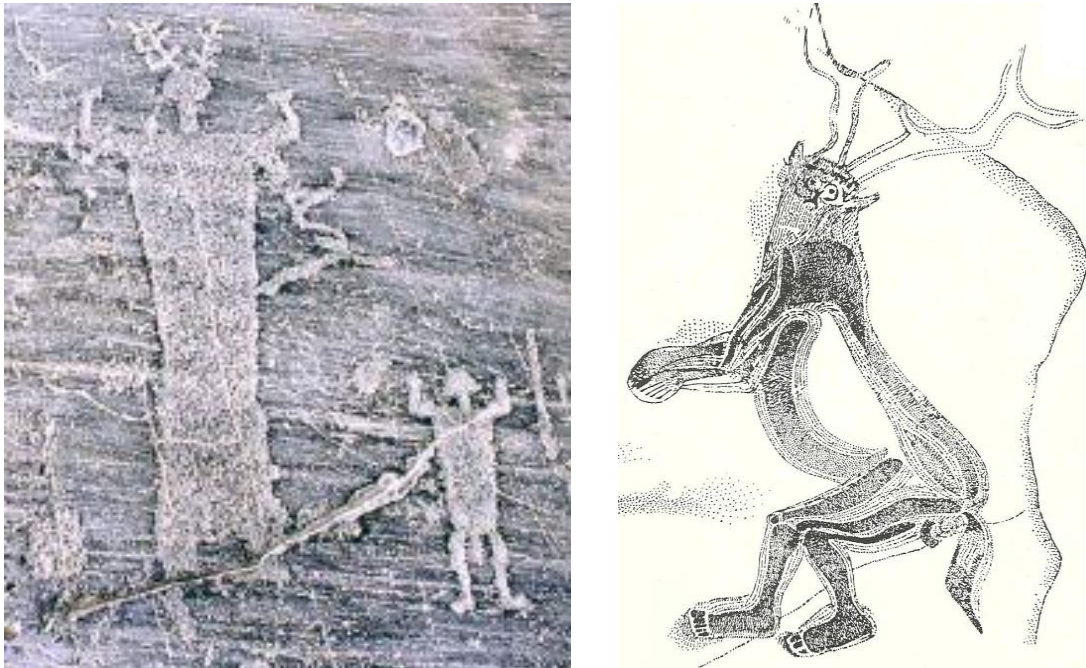


Fig. 155 & 156: Petroglyph of an antlered figure in Val Camonica and a Magdalenian rock carving painting of a male figure with antlers and fur from the 'Grotte des Trois-Frères' (Cave of the three brothers).

But there are older examples of anthropomorphic, horned and antlered figures with the characteristics of humans and animals. One of the oldest illustrations is a rock carving from the 'Cave of the Trois-Frères' in the Pyrenees, near the commune of Montesquieu-Avantès (Ariège département) in the southwest of France. It dates to around 13,000 BC, into the Upper Paleolithic period of the Magdalenien (*Gimbatus 1995, 176*). The image depicts an anthropomorphic stag with the body, the head and the antlers of a stag, but human limbs, as well as male genitalia. This hybrid figure could either represent a man who wears the skinned fur of a stag along with the antlers or a man who changes into a stag and vice versa. Another possibility is that the depiction symbolizes a shaman, dressed in the skin of his animal avatar. *Gimbatus (1995, 176)* interprets the figure as a godly being and a patron of nature, while *Taylor (1997, 134)* describes it as a probable sorcerer.

Two other Bronze Age rock-paintings that originate from Siberia also resemble the appearance of Cernunnos (*Charrière 1974, 21*). Both of them were made with ochre. The first figure has three horns, similar to a comb or antlers, and the position of its limbs is reminiscent of a ritual, a balancing act or a dance. The second figure has two small horns and it appears to be holding two rings, similar to torques, which could also portray claws, in its hands.

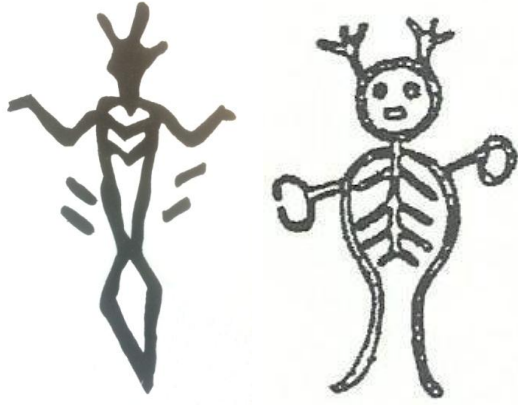


Fig. 157 (left): Bronze Age rock painting made with ochre from in island in the Russian Bratsk Reservoir

Fig. 158 (right): Bronze Age rock painting of a horned figure of anthropomorphic character from Siberia.

According to Flemming Kaul (1999, 207f.), the antlered figure on the Gundestrup cauldron could be the oldest of the representations that have been assigned to or identified as Cernunnos. Although this deity was mainly found on sculptures or statues from Gallia, it could have originated from ancient Thrace. Falkenstein (2004, 64) noted that the known depictions of Cernunnos can be placed in a territory that spanned from the Atlantic coastal areas in the Gallic West to the eastern regions of Gallia that are bordered by the rivers Rhein and Rhone. Eastwards of that line, a similar deity with antlers and similar attributes cannot be identified with certainty in the rest of the European Celtic world. The only exception would be the petroglyph from Val Camonica.

But there are some images of antlered figures from Central Europe that can be linked to Cernunnos, like a figure on a gravestone that has been found in the Slovenian region Bela krajina. One side is ornamented with illustrations of warriors and animals, which are compared to the warrior's parade on the Gundestrup cauldron, according to the arrangement of the scene that is separated with a bar in the middle and the probable sacrifice of a human in the lower section. This sepulchral stone is dated to the 2nd century AD, based on the depictions of fibulae on the warriors. The figure with obvious antlers on its head on the other side wears a tight fitting garment and carries an animal in its left hand, which is reminiscent of a Gallic parallel, a statue whose arm encompasses a boar (Petru 1961, 46).

Said figure is made from limestone and sculpted as a pillar that represents a long haired human with a torque, probably a male deity. The object dates to the 1st century BC and was found in Euffigneix in north-eastern France (Eluère 1995, 113). The antlered figure is not depicted in the usual sitting pose that can be found on other representations of Cernunnos, but in a standing position instead. Similar illustrations of standing antlered figures are known from Val Camominca and the French commune Le Châtelet, where this variant of Cernunnos was already discovered in 1772 (Petru 1961, 46). The right hand of the probable Cernunnos is raised and could hold a torque, which cannot be seen because the surface of the stone has broken off on the right edge of the monument.



Fig. 159 & 160: The tombstone (2nd cent. AD) from Bela krajina and the human shaped pillar from Euffigneix (1st cent. BC).

Another figure of Cernunnos is portrayed on an altar in the Hungarian city of Székesfehérvár that originated from the Roman period. The supposed represented deity is depicted with a garment that resembles a tunic and a torque decorates its neck. It cannot be said with certainty if antlers or horns grow from the head of the figure (Kaul 1999, 208).

More evidence for the existence of the antlered deity in Central Europe can be found in the inscription of the name '*Jupiter Cernenus*' on a wax tablet that was found in Pesth, a former city in Hungary, which is now part of the capital Budapest. Based on this inscription, as well as the figure of a bull on the altar from Reims, the antler-god Cernunnos and his cult is connected to the deity Zeus in the Cretian aspect that is linked to the bull. Relief ornaments in the shape of bull masks or bull heads, the so called bucrania, are also represented on the statuary group from Saintes. The hanging torques on the antlers of Cernunnos on the Parisian pillar of the boatmen are interpreted as sun symbols, which is another parallel to the character of Zeus. As a result, the figure of the antlered deity could originate from the Zeus of Crete (Hastings 1921, 453).

The supposed Thracian origin of Cernunnos by Kaul is based on several details of the depiction on the Gundestrup plate **C 6571**. The clothes of Cernunnos are similar to those of the man who kills a lion, probably Heracles, on the phalera from Stara Zagora. A figure that wears the skin and the antlers of a deer, likely a cultic dancer, is illustrated on a gem from the Hellenistic period, which demonstrates that such figures could have also been assigned to religious rituals in Hellenistic culture. Cernunnos could represent the master of animals who brings peace to the realm of the beasts, a motif that could have been influenced by aspects of the character Orpheus. According to Greek mythology, the origins of the singer lie in Thrace, where he was either a deity or a hero (Kaul 1999, 206, 208). The talented musician Orpheus is also described as to have ruled as a Thracian king (Grabner-Haider & Marx 2005, 111f.). When Orpheus sang and played music, the animals of the wild came to listen to him and his

music generated calmness and peacefulness. The interpreted motif of a deity that is able to enchant animals with his melodious singing is supported by another figure in the scene, the man who rides on the dolphin. Kaul identified the source of this depiction in the story of Arian of Lesbos, as several other scholars did before him. When Arian travelled on a ship, it was attacked by pirates who captured him. But he started singing and a dolphin came to his rescue on whose back Arian escaped. This additional element in the iconography could have underlined the meaning of the theme the artist intended to show. Based on the myth of Orpheus and his wife, the nymph Eurydice, the character also acts as a mediator between the three worlds in some way: those of the dead, those of the living and the celestial one (Kaul 1999, 208).

Hybrid animals decorate different artefacts of Thracian silverwork. Elements of these mixed creatures are large-sized antlers, eight legs and a goat beard. According to Kaul, these fantastic deer-beasts symbolise either a mediator deity or a creature that conducts people into the world beyond. Although the origin of the antlers can be linked to the Thracian art as well as those of the Black Sea area, the 'classic' Orpheus in Greek mythology cannot be connected to a deer. But the antlered Gundestrup figure could be the outcome of various different influences. A figure from the Greek myth that can be regarded as a parallel to Orpheus is Hermes, who is able to journey in the underworld, which corresponds with the mediating role. Hermes' attributes of a ram and his staff that is decorated with wings and twisted snakes can be linked to the ram-horned snake of Cernunnos (Kaul 1999, 208f.).

The origin of this hybrid animal can be located in East- or Southeast Europe, where the oldest European representation of a snake with a ram's head predates its equivalents in Western Europe by up to two hundred years. It decorates the handle of a *kantharos*, discovered in the Slovenian city of Novo Mesto and is dated towards to the end of the 3rd century BC. In the Hellenistic period, snakes with horns ornamenting arm rings were found in the Bulgarian Yakimovo grave from the 1st century BC and the Akhtanizovka Treasure in the Ukraine, probably local adaptations from the *Kétos* ring type that originated from ancient Greece. The ram-headed snake can also be linked to two deities: the horned Zabuasius from Thrace attributed with a snake and Zagreus from Greece who can appear as a snake with horns and partly parallels Orpheus and Hermes. Thrace was the centre of Zagreus' cult (Kaul 1999, 209). According to Bober (1951, 18), the stag deity could have resulted from the anthropomorphization of a beastly divinity, whose roots were lost in the time when the ancestors of the Celts lived as nonpictorial nomads, ahead of their settlement in Western Europe or the Italian North.

2.1 A golden plate with an antlered figure

During my search for depictions of the Celtic deity Cernunnos, I found a plate made of gold, which is ornamented with a motif that has been worked in the repoussé technique. The artefact depicts the upper part of a human figure: arms, shoulders, chest and the head from which the antlers, as well as the ears of a stag come out. Each antler is bent towards the edge of the plate. The arms and hands are shown equal to each other: they are raised and stretched, while the fingers encompass the lower edge of a circle, which contains a swastika or a sun wheel. The symbols are mirror-inverted to one another. Around the neck, the figure wears a pendant, amulet or some kind of talisman. The figure's mouth is depicted opened, but its face has been a bit battered and there are three small holes over the figure's forehead.



Fig. 161 & 162: Plate of gold with an antlered figure, obverse and reverse.

Nevertheless, the authenticity of the object has to be questioned and needs to be treated with great care, because the source of the plate is slightly dubious. When I came across the front photo of the plate during my Google search, I followed the website linked and was redirected to eBay. There, the plate was listed under the title “*A very rare gold Celtic phalera with Cernunnos. La Tène. Circa 1st C BC*” with the following description:

“A very rare gold Celtic phalera with Cernunnos, the horned/antlered god of Celtic polytheism. A round, sheet gold plaque with repoussé technique, depicting the Celtic god of polytheism Cernunnos. Half-figured, with antlers, holding a torque in each hand. Around his neck he is wearing another torque. Nothing is known about the god from literary sources. Speculative interpretations identify him as the god of nature or fertility. We assume that this plaque is a “phalera” or harness decoration, although it could also have been applied to a ritual vessel. Solid gold. Repoussé technique. La Tène culture. Circa 1st C BC. Ex private

collection (EU). *WEIGH: 6,55 grammes ; DIAM.: 5,7 cm.*” ([Online] Available from: <https://www.ebay.com/itm/A-very-rare-gold-Celtic-phalera-with-Cernunnos-La-Tene-Circa-1st-C-BC-/201138167900?roken=cUgayN> [Accessed 15th March 2018]).

This announcement of sale was made by an antiques dealer from Brussels, Belgium and offered for a price of £ 6000, approximately € 7508, according to an exchange rate from August 2014 (*Finanzen.at: Euro - Britische Pfund (EUR - GBP) - Historische Kurse.: <http://www.finanzen.at/devisen/historisch/pfundkurs>* [Accessed 14th May 2018]). Based on the actual exchange rate, the plate would cost about € 6800 (*Wiener Börse: Wechselkurse. [Online] Available from: <https://www.wienerborse.at/marktdaten/wechselkurse/price-list-currencies/waehrungsrechner/>* [Accessed 14th May 2018]). The offer ended on the 8th August 2014, it is unclear whether the golden plate was sold or the offer withdrawn, but it is likely that the object was sold.

As the plate belonged to a private collection, it is difficult for an outsider to track the source of the artefact, because there are no further details mentioned about this collection. Therefore, it can only be speculated how the item ended up there. The collector might have been a hobby archaeologist who did excavations himself or had done research about his homeland for a local association. Another possibility could be that the person bought all sorts of different findings or archaeological artefacts from several sources, of which some could have been dubious. The collector could also have acquired the item from a person who undertook illegal excavations, either aware or unaware about its origin. In the latter case, the buyer could have acted as a concealer. The unspecified source supports this theory. Furthermore, selling artefacts of illicit excavations over eBay with a fake proof of origin is common practice.

Another possibility is that the plate is not authentic, but a modern production, for example from the second half of the 19th century. But the execution, as well as the condition of the object is in accordance with its age and supposed origin. My advisor, Timothy Taylor who I consulted for this artefact is also convinced of the artefact's authenticity (2018, *personal communication*). The plate could have been used as decoration, the small holes were possibly used to fix the object somewhere, although this is rather unlikely, because of their irregular placing. The object is very alike to a phalera, but has no sculpted edges. The depiction of the antlered figure provides a link to Celtic art, therefore the plate could be a Celtic imitation or crafted by foreign craftsmen, who were either neighbours to the Celts, like the Thracians, or who travelled to Celtic territories, like Gallia or the lower Danube basin, as Taylor (1992, 84-89) and Falkenstein (2004, 57-88) assumed for the silversmiths of the Gundestrup cauldron.

2.2 Female deities with horns

Although horns have usually been used as an element associated with maleness, because they symbolized virility and an aggressive behaviour, this 'headgear' was not an exclusive attribute of male deities. Such special decorations were also used for goddesses, although to a smaller extent. This pinnacle of animal symbolism occurred on female deities as a variation of horns in all forms of art. Antlers were common ornaments, however representations with the horns of bulls or goats were also found on occasion. These elements represented the connections of the deities to the animal kingdom and its creatures. The element of attached antlers or horns to a goddess symbolizes that she is able to change her human form and transfer the fertile aspects of bulls and deer to herself. A parallel to this motif are the images and representations of deities with wings, which gain the animal's ability to fly (Green 1989, 27).

Statues and figures of goddesses that bear antlers on their heads have been found in Gallia, similar to the depictions of the Celtic deity Cernunnos. In Clermont-Ferrand (Département Puy-de-Dôme) and Besançon (Département Doubs), bronze statues of goddesses with antlers were discovered, illustrated in a cross-legged seat holding a horn of plenty (*cornuacopiae*) each time. The motif of a female deity with horns has also been pictured on pottery objects at the settlement Richborough in the county of Kent in the southeast of England. The artefacts were of local production and therefore the images date into the 1st century AD. The common symbolism of these iconographic depictions is the representation of fertility and unique animalistic features that are used to expand the limited abilities of human nature (Green 1989, 27).



Fig. 163: Bronze statuette of a horned woman from Clermont-Ferrand who is supposed to be a goddess.



Fig. 164: A statuette made from bronze that is shaped like a woman with horns. (British museum)

3. An ambiguity of genders on the Gundestrup plates?

Timothy Taylor (1997, 215-218) supposed that the scenes of the Gundestrup cauldron could include several figures, which were depicted androgynously. He argues for his theory with the reliefs of the busts and the probable deities on the plates of the cauldron. The men or male gods are shown with beards, while the women or female goddesses probably have bare breasts and long hair braided in two pigtails. The sitting figure with the antlers, possibly Cernunnos, whose body was illustrated in full, is missing a beard, therefore its sex is undeterminable and the figure is seen as androgynous. Taylor sees the person as a representation of a specific individual character, someone who is intersex or whose sexual features and abilities could be multifaceted. The figure's corpus could have amalgamated three varying forms of nature: man, woman and animal. According to Taylor, it could be some kind of shaman who has reached a changed condition of the conscious mind, which he gained through guiding the sexual energies in the body, obtained or stimulated by practising an early form of Tantric Yoga. Furthermore, the jumping or dancing figure behind the bull on the bottom plate of the cauldron (the probable phalera) who is illustrated with bare breasts and a sword raised in its left hand, could also be of androgynous nature. Taylor describes it as a possible illustration of the Scythian Enarees (Taylor 1997, 215-218).

There are several arguments in favour of Taylor's theory or interpretation and also a number of points which speak against it, if we take a closer look at the images and motifs on the plates of the Gundestrup cauldron.

3.1 What would speak for the interpretation of depictions of a "third" gender

There could be more figures of intersex character or of androgynous nature on the plates. A closer look on the busts and the big figures reveals that there are four other depictions of humans who have neither, according to Taylor's categorisation, the typical male nor female attributes, but seem to be of importance or having a special function.

3.1.1 The figure with the helmet and half a wheel

The first figure can be found on the inside plate 2 (C 6572). It is the character with the helmet decorated with horns or applications that are curved and probably turned back. It has his right hand on the half wheel, while the left one is placed closely underneath and could support it.

The human wears an almost similar garment to the antlered figure, with the exception that it ends right underneath the shoulders and does not cover the arms. Its feet are bare and in a cocked position, reminiscent of a jumping or dancing activity. Considering Taylor's approach (1992, 88), the figure could perform some kind of ritual and, therefore, has a special role in society, which could have been combined with certain unusual abilities. The conduction of this, perhaps in some way, cultic function could connect the figure to the role of the antlered figure.



Fig. 165: *The wheel-turner.*

3.1.2 The giant with the cauldron

The second figure with neither beard nor breasts and braids is the tall person, ie the giant, who is depicted in front of the parade of warriors and riders on the inside plate 4 (C 6574). The figure holds an upside-down turned man in its hands above a vessel, likely a cauldron. The person wears exactly the same clothing as the antlered individual, including the same type of low shoes with laces bound in a zig-zag crossed way. The character's hair is bound to a ponytail or turned into one long braid, optionally it could be wearing some sort of cap on its bald or shaved head, whereas the hair is turned into some decorative tail. Furthermore, its feet are also raised and do not stand on an equal level. This detail connects the figure to the other two. I assume that this individual either sacrifices the probable man in its hands, or puts him into some kind of liquid that could give him some sort of extraordinary powers.



Fig. 166: *The giant.*

There are comparable examples of deities with magic cauldrons from Celtic mythology, although several of them have been transmitted in the Celtic myths from Ireland and the British Isles. It cannot be said with certainty when these myths were created and established. A cauldron which possesses magical powers was an important aspect or characteristic in Celtic mythology. Cauldrons served as sacrificial vessels and also as a tool for oracles, through which the will of the gods was delivered to men. Furthermore, the cauldrons contained drinks that could heal men who had been wounded in battle. The magical cauldron represents abundance and is given to the humans by their deities and ancestors (Grabner-Haider & Marx 2005, 146).

The god Dagda ruled over the Celtic pantheon, the seas as well as the stars and was the patron god to warriors and priests, who provided sacrifices for the god's magic cauldron. Furthermore, they took care of an object, which gave limitless food to the humans. The god Manannan protected the seas and the dead and also cooked meals for the other gods that made them immortal in his magic cauldron. He could also bestow the warriors with invisibility in battle. Bran, a divine hero, was also in possession of such a cauldron with magic abilities, which brought dead warriors back to life the next day if they had been thrown into it, but they lost the ability to speak. The mythic King Arthur stole the gods' magical cauldron and took it for himself (*Grabner-Haider & Marx 2005, 147f., 151f., 157f.*).

A more far-fetched, similar example would be the tale of Achilles, whose mother Thetis made him invulnerable (in one variant) by bathing him into the underworld-river Styx. It would be possible that this myth was known in ancient Thrace and in the Middle and Lower Danube basin.

3.1.3 The third relief bust

The third person is one smaller bust among the group of three on the plate **C 6566** that could illustrate a three-faced deity, according to Drexel. On its left side, there is a bust of a bearded man, who has both of his arms raised in the air. In the middle of the plate, a large female bust is situated, who holds her arms bent in front of her chest, with braids and breasts. On the right side of the scene stands another bust, a beardless figure with short hair and no breasts, whose arms are raised in the same way as those of the man. It could be possible that this individual represents an androgynous or



Fig. 167: *The third bust.*

intersex person: Therefore, the plate could depict all ways of being or all forms of human nature: the female sex, the male sex and a combined third sex. In addition, the group could also represent the three major aspects or characteristics of the Celtic pantheon. A male god, eventually of war and a female goddess in the centre, symbolizing the maternity aspect. The represented system of belief was probably based on a matriarchic order. The third “transvestite” maybe symbolizes the shamanic or cultic aspect, combining both sexes in their body.

3.1.4 The figure on the base-plate

The figure on the phalera, which was used as the bottom plate of the cauldron, is depicted next to the relief of a lying bull and wears a garment which is decorated with a fish bone-pattern that reaches from the knees to the chest as well as the breasts. Although the garment covers the individual's belly, the chest is free and the breasts are visible. Maybe the piece of cloth pushes or supports the breasts. A similar way of fashion where the garments stabilize women's breast but leaves them free is transmitted from paintings and statues of the Minoan civilization. The figure's arms are not covered and both are slightly raised, while the legs are also bent in a way that is reminiscent of dancing or leaping: the left leg is placed before the right one and both feet are bent almost vertically, so that the toes point downwards.

The figure's lower legs are not covered, alike to those of several other figures on different plates, so these body-parts are probably bare.

The martial or warlike aspect is underlined by the spurs the figure wears on both feet. Considering this detail, it could be possible that the figure wears long boots which reach the knees, although it is rather unlikely that such footwear existed in the Celtic period. The left hand holds a sword and the figure's position was definitely arranged in accordance with the bull in the middle. The figure's head is depicted in profile and its hair runs out into a short ponytail, or it could also be a decorative feather instead. The character's upper body is shown in a frontal perspective, while the lower one is again shown from the side.

The pose of the figure resembles that of (almost) all the other figures of which the bodies are shown in full on the cauldron. This way of depicting the body with head and legs in side view while the torso is shown from the front is reminiscent of the illustrations of people in ancient Egypt.

A closer look at this specific figure reveals that its shoulders are scratched or marked with small carved lines. I would have missed this detail, but my advisor Timothy Taylor (2018, *personal communication*) made me aware of it and suggested that the lines could depict animal fur and therefore, the figure could be parallel to the illustration of the antlered human, as it represents the same three aspects or characteristics: the male, the female and the feral or animallike. The interpretation is reasonable. The figure could represent some specific religious or sacral role and aims to sacrifice the bull during some kind of ritual activity.



Fig. 168: The base-plate figure.



Fig. 169: Minoan Statuette of a woman made of faience from Knossos, that is described as 'snake goddess' and dates c. from 1750 to 1490 BC.

3.2 What would speak against the interpretation of depictions of a “third” gender

There are several points which speak against Taylor's interpretation:

Although the beard is a characteristic of male busts, it does not appear on the smaller figures. None of them have facial hair, regardless of the scene or plate they are depicted in. If the beard would be such a typical attribute to present maleness, it seems likely that the faces of the other men would also be ornamented with one. Furthermore, there are two figures stylized as women on the plate of the woman with the birds (*C 6565*). Both are smaller than the centrally placed bust. The one to the left is definitely a woman, because she has the same characteristic details as the female in the middle: two braids, one at each side of her head, and breasts. Although hers are not bare, but outlined on her clothing, designed as a long dress. The second small and probably female figure stands to the left of the bust's head and holds one of the braids in her hands. This figure is shown from the side with only one tail and has no visible or outlined breasts. Both of her arms are placed in front of the body to hold the braid, through which her chest is hidden. According to the long hair and the dress, I suppose that this figure is also female and could represent, together with the other handmaiden, cultic followers or some sort of priestesses or maybe they could be the children of the woman in the middle.



Fig. 170 & 171: Women on plate *C 6565* and male warriors and riders on plate *C 6574*.

Even though the small figures have no beard, a lot of them can be doubtlessly identified as men. The first of these illustrations can be found in the parade. It is clear that all of them are depictions of Celtic warriors, either mounted or on foot, according to their shields and the helmets with decorative applications in the form of animals. Antique sources report that Celtic warriors were male and although it could have happened that women joined the fight, it would be more of an exception than the rule. Furthermore, the three individuals who play the carnyx can also be regarded to be of male sex.

The plate with the three bulls (*C 6575*) in a row has three similar figures with raised swords crafted into it. While the first and the last are shown topless and wear only short trousers, the one in the middle apparently has similar, one-piece garment like the warriors, the riders and

other figures on the cauldron. His clothing ends right underneath the shoulders and does not cover the arms. The hair of the figures was designed in a short way, they show no sign of a beard and have no breasts either. Compared to the scene with the warriors, these three individuals represent men, either in the function of beaters or drivers for the bulls or in the function of warriors who fight the bulls or of merely hunters instead.

The illustration of the figure on the phalera (**C 6563**) is most likely a woman fighting a bull or hunting and chasing it, supported by a dog above her and perhaps by the two other dog/wolf-like creatures underneath the bull. Another possibility could be that she aims to sacrifice the animal. A different, but also potential origin of the warrior woman could be that she was supposed to be an Amazon. It is likely that their myth was known in the Middle and Lower Danube basin as in Thrace and with certainty in the Pontic kingdom. The simplest explanation for the interpreted fur on her shoulders could be simple scratches, resulting from an occasional damage of the plate, although damage on this particular place is rather unlikely. Another, more likely possibility could be that the supposed breasts are not part of the figure's body, but of her equipment and could represent the design of a breastplate with stylized breasts or pectoral muscles. Furthermore, the armoury could also cover the shoulders.



Fig. 172 & 173: Warriors on plate C 6575, **Fig. 174:** female warrior on the base plate, **Fig. 175 & 176:** male figures on plate C 6564, **Fig. 177:** One man from plate C 6569, **Fig. 178 & 179:** Probable depictions of men on plate C 6570.

In addition, on four of the cauldron's outside plates, a pair of smaller figures that are likely men are placed in three cases on both sides of either a male or a female bust (**C 6564**, **C 6569** & **C 6570**), while the last ones can be found underneath the bearded man who holds two upside-down turned sea dragons in his hands. The figures are both in the jaws of predatory animals, probably wolves, which bite and eat them or have killed them, both men are shown in two pieces where the legs and the torso have clearly been separated by the carnivores. Merely the forward body-halves of these animals are illustrated, then they change into a curved line that connects the two beasts.



Fig. 180: A double-headed beast that tears apart probable male figures (C 6567).

The figure of the woman with the sword on the bottom of the cauldron repeats itself on two plates in the exact same body pose, with an almost identical position of the arms and a very similar hair style. There are some minor differences: these two characters wear a garment that covers the chest and ends like a t-shirt, right under the shoulders, although the short sleeves of one seem to be a little bit longer than those of the other, and do not carry arms. The first one is placed on the right side of a female bust (**C 6564**) and it looks like it may be dancing on her shoulder, the toes are placed in the air. To the right side of the woman, there stands a man whose tip of the right foot reaches her shoulder. The man has his right hand placed on a predator, which is probably attacking him and the man tries to free himself from the beast's embrace. Another option would be that the animal is jumping up to the man because it is happy to see its master again and wants to welcome him.

The depiction of the second dancer can be found to the left of a male bust (**C 6570**), in the space between arm and head. Since the character has no visible breasts and since there are no outlines on his garment that would mark them, it can obviously be identified as a man. To the right side of the big man's head, a smaller individual is placed sideways. Its arms are tucked up, while the left hand touches the large head in the middle. This character is topless with shorts that cover its knees and probably male: It seems as though he is whispering into the bust's ear, which can, however, not be seen and the smaller figure would have been placed too high, above the ear level. But the scene could induce the viewer to think of a modern allegory, where the good and the bad side of a person's conscience is represented by a little angel and a small devil, on the shoulder or beside someone's head, giving advice.

The last pair of smaller individuals is situated on each side of a bearded man's bust, who grasps each of the men's arms (**C 6569**). The men wear shirts with long sleeves and a V-neck as well as trousers that end shortly above the knee. Lines inwrought at the males' waists speak for two different pieces of clothing, which have both been decorated the same way. Although they have neither beards and nor breasts, nor long hair, an interpretation as men is debatable. The free arm of each man is raised and almost stretched. The tips of their hands touch or support even smaller animals above them that at first look similar to wolves and dogs. But, a closer look reveals that the animals have a comb of hair on their backs that runs to the head and, furthermore, their faces are too big for hounds or wolves. The only animals to whom these details fit are boars, which are depicted in the Celtic art in an equal way. Therefore, these animals on the plate are such.

4. The Scythian Enarees and other similar groups

The special band of metal- and silver-working craftsmen could have been similar to other people or groups which had fulfilled some sort of cultic, ritual or religious functions in their particular society, like the Enarees of ancient Scythia. The Greek authors Herodotus and Hippocrates reported about male members of the Scythian culture, who wore women's clothing and read omens and divined other portents. Furthermore, they acted as mediators for disputes and other controversies (*Taylor 1992, 88*).

Herodotus mentioned the Enarees in the first and fourth book of his *Histories*. The origins of the Enarees are ascribed to a punishment of Scythian warriors by the goddess *Aphrodite Urania* for the sacking of her temple in the town of Ascalon²¹ in Palestine, which in antiquity was a part of ancient Syria. Aphrodite infected those Scythians with a female sickness, which changed them and made them become the Enarees afterwards (*Histories I, 105*). In addition, Herodotus noted that two different forms of soothsayers in the Scythian society had existed: The first group used rods of willows to tell fortunes, while the second group consisted of androgynous people, the Enarees. Those viragos claimed that their gift to foretell had been given to them by the goddess Aphrodite and for doing that they used the bark of the lime tree. The Enarees wrapped their fingers with bark and, while removing it, they predicted the future (*Histories IV, 67*).

In the Eurasian Iron Age, several similar social groups or people with a similar function are detectable. Individuals with specific skills and functions existed in a number of different cultures. Beside the Scythian shamans, the Indian yogis fulfilled similar tasks and the Gallic druids as well as the Thracian seers had a resembling social status (*Taylor 1992, 88*). According to the evidence, archaeology has provided for several of the characteristics Herodotus' had reported about the Scythians, it is likely that the Enarees also existed. The Scythian tongue belonged to the Iranian languages, which are part of the Indo-Iranian group of languages that in turn belong to the family of Indo-European languages. Therefore, the etymological meaning of the term 'Enarees' can be reconstructed through similar words of languages from the Indo-European linguistic family. In Sanskrit, the expression *nara* stands for 'man', thus word-constructions like *a-nara* and *e-nara* can be translated as 'without manhood' (*Taylor 1997, 211*).

What Herodotus described as 'female sickness' could base on permanent damage to the male genitalia that resulted from a long time of riding, sitting in the saddle and the bumping of the

²¹ Today's Ashkelon in the south of Israel.

horse. The first sign of this defect is the occurrence of blood in the sperm, followed by the inability to ejaculate or to get an erection. Therefore, the 'bloody semen' is very likely to match the mentioned female sickness. Beside these bad effects riding has on the testicles, this practice also affects the anal region. In his scriptures, John Arderne²² reported that he operated on knights with anal fistulae, holes that appear in the area of the anus and the rectum as a result of reduced blood circulation and muscles that are affected by a partial atrophy. The affected men had fought in the Hundred Years War (lasted from 1337 to 1453) and spent a period of several years in the saddle (not consistently) during the many campaigns. Herodotus reported about a Scythian campaign that took 28 years. Present day parallels of this 'sickness' occur on professional cyclists and on men in Australia who travel through the outback in Land-Rovers which causes a lot of jolting. In Australia, this defect is also called 'geographer's balls' (Taylor 1997, 210f.).

There are several parallels from all over the world, for example in North America, where the word *berdache* described men who wore women's clothing. It is possible that those persons lived in a committed, durable relationship with another man that were considered to be of heterosexual nature in their social-cultural group, equal to other married couples. In a modern understanding, it would be interpreted as a homosexual relation (Taylor 1997, 211f.). According to the society and cultural beliefs of the Native Americans, these people are not considered androgynous men or transvestites, but instead to possess and combine two different spirits or souls in their bodies, a male and a female one. Therefore, they are called *Two Spirits*, while the term *berdache* is regarded to be discriminative, because it originates from a borrowed Persian word that described male prostitutes or lust slaves (Smithers 2014).

A similar model of relations is known from the so called "*Amazons*" from the Amazonas. A transformation to a *berdache* happened in a ritual, as well as in a physical procedure and is known in detail from the Native Americans who lived in the plain regions. There, the concerned boys, who had not reached puberty, rode on horses without a saddle till the testicles were permanently damaged. This procedure led to a change resulting from the unfolding of feminizing hormones. Comparable examples to transvestic people like the *berdache* are known as *mahus* in Polynesia, as *hijras* in India and as *castrati* in the Europe of former centuries. Such people also existed in African or Asian regions. On several occasions, there was probably some force or violence involved to change the biological sex. Shamans, who act in a comparable transvestite way, still exist in today's Siberia (Taylor 1997, 211f.).

²² A surgeon from England who lived in the 14th century, from 1307 to 1392, and is regarded as to be among the so called 'fathers' of surgery (Wikipedia: John Arderne. [Online] Available from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Arderne [Accessed 28th March 2018]).

According to Herodotus, the specific functions of the Enarees included their ability to make prophecies. Therefore, this group could not consist of mere male homosexuals or epicene men. Although the Enarees crossed or changed their social gender, they did not transform or turn. Furthermore, becoming a fortune teller or a prophetess was not the same as the feminization of a man (Taylor 1997, 212).

In addition, another parallel existed in Ireland, although several centuries later. The Irish bards of the late antiquity and the early Middle Ages who celebrated the deeds and qualities of their kings in songs and poems were men, but it is reported that these singers and poets were considered to be of female gender, to represent a female antagonism to the masculinity of the king. Compared in an ethnic aspect, there is a parallel between bards and craftsmen who forged metal and silver, because both lived and stayed secluded from the regular people of society. Their social standing could be compared to the cast system of India, where those smiths would form an own or special class (Taylor 1992, 88).



Images of possible Enarees:

Fig. 181: Figure on felt wall hanging from the Scythian Pazyryk kurgan nr. 5. The depiction shows no attributes that can be defined as to be clearly male or female, like a beard, breasts or long hair. The long garment, the shaven head and the specific headgear could be interpreted as to represent fashion of a ritual or cultic nature. Therefore, the image could illustrate a Scythian Enaree.

Fig. 182: Detail on a Scythian gold belt-plate from Siberia. The figure resembles the illustration of the former one. (cf. 5.2.3)

Fig. 183: The reconstructed clothing of the dead in the Sokolova Mogila kurgan.

Fig. 184: Figure clad in a long dress on a plate from the Letnitsa treasure. Taylor (1997, 215) describes it as androgynous. Compared to the depicted women in long dresses on another plate of the treasure (Fig. 76), the figure has neither been attributed with breasts nor a typical male characteristic in the form of a beard.

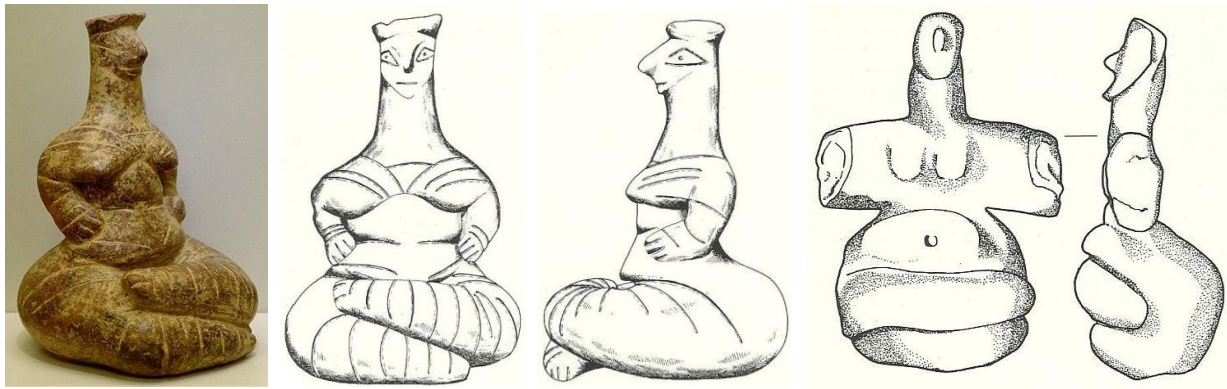
5. Cross-legged positions and their possible meaning

Although it is highly likely that the way in which the legs of the antlered man on the plate on the Gundestrup cauldron are depicted present an act of balancing on the toe, it could alternatively show a cross-legged position. The final depicted version could result of the artist's inability to depict such a position. This interpretation is linked to other statues and figures from Gallia and the Celtic world that portray an antlered man similar to the image of Cernunnos, and usually they are identified as representations of this deity. In fact, there are several examples of figures, figurines, as well as statues from several cultures and periods which display this specific position and are described, depending on the interpretation, either as deities or as ordinary embodiments of humans.

5.1 The Aegean Neolithic period

The earliest human made artefacts that represent a cross-legged position originate in Crete and date back to the Neolithic Period from 6000 to 5500 BC. It is a 14,2 cm figurine from the site of Kato Hierapetra (*Gimbatus 1995, 126*). The object is shaped like a chubby woman with a long neck. The neck goes over into a head of the same size. The figure has modelled breasts, whose hands are placed on both sides above her hips. Her right leg is bent and rests on the ground, while the left one is placed in the same position behind it and lies across the first one. The shoulders, the wrists and the legs are decorated with engraved stripes.

The figurine (*Fig. 147-149*) made from clay is described to be the representation of a snake goddess who has the upper body, especially the face, of a human, while her legs show characteristics of a snake symbolized with encrusted lines of white colour. Furthermore, it is noted that she sits in a yoga pose (*Gimbatus 1995, 126*). To interpret this position as a yoga figure is not really a convincing argument because it is very unlikely that even the earliest form of yoga existed in the Neolithic Period, and neither did a forerunner on the island of Crete. Although the position of the feet is, somehow, reminiscent of a seated position in yoga, it is neither the Lotus seat, nor a regular cross-legged seat in a modern understanding. This depiction of the crossed legs could result from the artist's lacking skills to do otherwise, nevertheless the intention to depict a cross-legged position is visible and understandable. In addition, it is not certain that the figurine is a representation of a deity, but if it should be, the cross-legged position could be understood as to have a sacral or ritual meaning.



Cross-legged figurines: Fig. 185-187: Kato Hierapetra, Fig. 188: probably found on the isle Amorgos.

Another Neolithic figurine of which the making can be dated into the same period of time was either discovered on the island of Amorgos or on one of its neighbouring isles in the Aegean Sea. The object is 20,3 cm high and crafted from marble. The description and the interpretation of the object is similar: a snake goddess who is a combination of a snake and a human, whose sitting position is identified as a figure of yoga. Her limbs could have the shape of snakes and she is wearing a mask that could bear a nose as a human feature. Besides, other human characteristics are mentioned, like those which appear on the previous figurine, where additional eyes and a mouth are modelled that would have more of a resemblance with snakes than with humans (Gimbatus 1995, 126).

Saul Weinberg (1951, 121-133) described the position of the figure's legs as merely a seated pose. In addition, he notes that the first figurine is one of the finest examples found in the Aegean and has further details like engraved hair, which can be seen on her headpiece, as well as on the back of her head. Weinberg mentions a total number of seven figurines in this style of which two are made of clay, four of marble and the last one of stone. These objects would form a specific object group, according to their distinctive feature of folded legs, within the category of female statuettes on which *steatopygia*²³ is presented and whose origins can be traced to Greek prehistory. Furthermore, Weinberg lists five additional figurines that have a leg position which differs, but is quite similar. (Weinberg 1951, 121-133)



Fig. 189-192: Four of the additional cross-legged figurines described by Weinberg.

²³ A genetic characteristic in which additional layers of tissue develop on the buttocks as well as on the thighs (Wikipedia: *Steatopygia*: [Online] Available from: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steatopygia> [Accessed 11th March 2018]).

5.2 The Eurasian steppes in the Iron Age

There are several examples for artefacts that date back to the Iron Age, where a seating position can be found where the legs are crossed. Although these items are assigned to several different object groups, all of them can be assigned to death and therefore to a cultic or ritual act in human societies.

5.2.1. Mirror from the Sokolova Mogila kurgan, Ukraine

In 1974 a kurgan that was part of a small necropolis which consisted of tomb groups from the Bronze Age and the Scythian period was excavated. The burial site is located in the south-western part of the Ukraine, more precisely in the west of the village Kovalevka on the western bank of the river Southern Bug. Among the local people, this kurgan with a height of 6,5 m and diameter of 70 m was called *Sokolova Mogila*, which means the '*kurgan of the falcon*'. The burial mound was either erected in the Copper Age or in the Bronze Age. The kurgan included a total number of 26 burials from different cultures and time periods. Such a secondary burial was excavated near the centre of the mound and included the skeleton of a woman of Sarmatian ethnicity, who was between 45 to 50 years old at the time of her death. All her grave goods were found in situ; therefore, the burial has not been robbed. Among the findings there are several imported objects, like



Fig. 193: Bronze mirror from the Sokolova Mogila kurgan.

gems from the Italian peninsula and a golden fibula of the late Latène-type. On the basis of these artefacts, the burial could be dated to a period between the 1st century BC to the 1st century AD (Kovpanenko 1991, 221-225).

One of the objects was a mirror, 15 cm in diameter that had been placed next to the head of the dead. The object is made from massive bronze and has a semicircular bulge on the back. Its stylistic type can be linked to the Suslov culture and its handle is decorated with a gilded silver figure in the shape of a man whose feet are shown in a cross-legged position. The man wears a long garment with several folds and probably some kind of tunic underneath, from

which the sleeves can be seen, as well as trousers. Furthermore, he holds a drinking horn and has a beard along with a moustache. The figure is probably depicted with shoes with laces that are bound in a zig-zag running way (Kovpanenko 1991, 222-224).

The social role or function of the woman is interpreted as to be some form of priestess or soothsayer, a hypothesis based on several grave goods that symbolized fertility like a phallus, shells of Cypraeidae (representing a vulva) and the figurine of a woman giving birth (Kovpanenko 1991, 226). According to the number of imported artefacts and the symbols of fertility, Taylor came up with the theory that one of the Enarees, as described by Herodotus could have been buried there. In addition, he describes the position of the man on the mirror handle as a lotus seat and that the horn stands for a vessel, which was used in drinking rituals (Taylor 1997, 214). Therefore, it is possible that the seated position could have a deeper respectively a specific meaning.



Fig. 194 & 195: Necklace crafted from gold that has been found in one of the Kobyakova kurgans.

5.2.2 Torque or necklace from a Kobyakova kurgan, Russia

In the lower region of the river Don in the south of Russia, one of the Kobyakova kurgans contained the burial of a woman who had died in her middle ages. The dead female is also described to have once fulfilled the role of a priestess and is dated in the late phase of the Sarmatian culture (Davis-Kimball & Behan 2002, 76). In detail, this burial was excavated in kurgan Nr. 10 and is dated to the period from the 1st to the 2nd century AD. (*Realms Of Gold: Treasures of the Sarmatians: Jewelry belonging to a Young Sarmatian Queen. [Online] Available from: <http://realmssofarthenovel.blogspot.co.at/2013/06/treasures-of-sarmatians-jewelry.html> [Accessed 11th March 2018]*).

For her afterlife, the woman had been equipped with imported goods, like a mirror crafted in a Chinese workshop during the Han period and bracelets made from gold and decorated with

turquoises, which are probably of Kazakh origin. Furthermore, a bottle decorated with stamped gold ornaments that was produced by artisans of Greek origin in the Kingdom of the Cimmerian Bosphorus was excavated. But the most interesting object is an artefact described as a torque made from casted gold, which was likely produced somewhere in the northern regions of today's Iraq (Davis-Kimball & Behan 2002, 76f.). Regarding the design of this piece of jewellery, it should be characterized either as a neck ring or as a necklace because it can be closed, which is normally an impossible thing to do with torques.

The necklace shows fighting sequences between men and beasts, which are separated by a figure placed in the centre of the object's front side that can be identified as male according to its beard. The man sits on some form of chair, which has (arm)rests on both sides. He wears an outerwear with long cleavage and waved sleeves, which represent either a half-opened shirt or a form of an overcoat, probably a caftan. In addition, the man is depicted with trousers and thin boots with a strap around the ankles as well as headgear that reminds of a turban. He holds a drinking bowl or cup with both hands that rests in his lap, where a sword is also placed in a horizontal way. The seated position where the right leg is crossed above the left one is significant. The drinking vessel, in combination with the crossed-leg position could symbolize some kind of a drinking ritual.



Fig. 196: Scythian gold belt plates from Siberia.

5.2.3 Belt plates from Siberia, Russia

The State Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg keeps many gold artefacts which belonged to the horse people who once lived in the steppes that are today part of the southern territories of Russia. Under the rule of Peter I., several gold artefacts were purchased for the personal collection of the czar. A large number of these artefacts came from plunderings of the ancient

kurgans, which happened in the 17th and the 18th century and were traded by grave robbers (Alexeyev 2012, 17f.).

Among those items of unknown origin is a pair of belt plates made of gold that date back to the 5th or the 4th century BC. The moment the objects were 'excavated' by grave robber is estimated to be during the first quarter of the 18th century. The golden artefact with a size of 12.3 cm in height and 16.3 cm in length shows a bas-relief that has been casted and embossed. On each of the objects' back sides unmistakable traces of organic material were discovered and, furthermore, a vertically shaped loop has remained on which the belt was fixed (Alexeyev 2012, 34). The plates were designed as ornamental scenes which are mirror-inverted to each other.

The depictions show a group of three figures under a tree and two horses. The bridled animals stand either on the left or on the right side of the plate and are almost directly behind each other, so the only parts that can be seen from the animal in the back are its head and legs. The halter of the rear horse is tied to a tree, while those of the anterior one is held by a man who sits on the ground. Next to him, on the other side of the tree, is another figure, placed on the plate's edge, which is also presented in a seated position. It is illustrated in a long garment, probably a coat or a gown, with a shaven head and a hat or cap on top, with a tail hanging at the back that reminds one of a fez. Its sex cannot be assumed, because obviously the figure has neither male nor female characteristics. Both of its hands are placed on the head of a third individual, another male figure that lies in a horizontal position on the ground. His legs are placed over the first man's lap, while his head rests in the lap of the second figure. The man wears trousers, shoes and a long sleeved shirt or tunic that reaches over the waist. The clothing of the man in the back is partly hidden, but he is likely clad in the same fashion arrangement. His right hand grabs or holds onto the figure with the hat. In the branches of the tree a quiver filled with arrows and a bow in a gorytus hang over one another.

The sitting man in the middle of the scene is depicted in a cross-legged position, although it is partly hidden by the second lying man. In addition, it would also be possible that the third figure has taken up the same pose and it could probably have placed the man's head in the lap formed through that position. Based on this pose, it is likely that the man is either close to the point of death or gravely sick. In both cases, he would seek the care and assistance of the figure. The illustration is interpreted as being of religious character and to represent the major motif in the pictorial art of the ancient world: life and death. The indefinable figure is seen as a female divinity associated with the earth and its growth. Therefore, the tree could symbolize the tree of life. The figure could represent a personification of the Great Mother who has a

dualistic aspect of giving life on the one hand, but is also connected with chthonic forces, as well as the land of the dead on the other. In the social structure of archaic cultures, a wedding was strongly linked to the conceptual ideas of funerals and death rituals (Alexeyev 2012, 34f.). Herodotus noted a common habit among the Massagetae: if a man wanted to have intercourse with a woman, he hung up his quiver at the front side of his wagon. Afterwards the couple would frankly engage in sexual activities (*Histories I*, 216). It could be possible that the quiver on the gold plate is a hint to that practice and hence the man's position could symbolize his death, through which he enters a consecrated relationship, ie a ritual marriage with the Great Mother. This conjunction could have been believed to grant the dead an afterlife, through which he enters an everlasting cycle of death and reincarnation (Alexeyev 2012, 35).



Fig. 197 & 198: Belt plate detail and felt wall hanging from Pazyryk kurgan nr. 5.

A similar motif was discovered during the excavations of the kurgans in the valley of Pazyryk in the Altai mountains. The investigations of these burials were started in 1929 by a team under the leadership of Michael P. Grjaznov, a younger colleague of Sergei I. Rudenko, who mandated the former with the excavations of the kurgans. In the years from 1947 to 1949, Rudenko continued these investigations himself (Barkova 2007, 118f.). Under the leadership of Grjaznov, the first kurgan of the Pazyryk burials was excavated (Jacobson-Tepfer 2015, 1). In Kurgan Nr. 5, a felt wall hanging was excavated, which is decorated with a repeating motif: A rider before a figure in a long robe with a large cornered hat or cap who sits on a chair and holds a branch that appears to bloom in one hand. Rudenko describes this figure as a female

deity (*Rudenko 1970, plate 154*). The felt hanging measures circa 30 m² and the scene is shown six times, separated into two lines with 3 motifs running across. According to a suggestion of Grjaznov, this felt piece could have once been used as shielding for the dead, while the funerary ceremonies were conducted (*Jacobson-Tepfer 2015,1. Gryaznov 1950*).

Jacobson-Tepfer interprets this specific figure on the plates as well as on the felt hanging as a woman who has a connection to the land of the dead. The design of the pair of plates depict the steamer of the woman's headdress to be linked with the branches of the tree, as if it is aimed to represent a connection between the human and the plant. The quiver hanging on the tree could represent that the dead man will not use his weapons anymore. This interpretation is associated with a common practice and belief among several groups of people in Siberia, in which shamanism is still practised. The shaman crafts his drum from a tree that is either the tree of the clan or one that symbolizes the tree of life. After the death of the shaman, his drum will either be destroyed or put up on a tree, which is located in the depths of the forest. The depiction is also interpreted as to stand for the dualism of the end of life and the rebirth into a new one (*Jacobson-Tepfer 2015, 2f.*).

The illustration on the Pazyryk felt hanging represents the woman in a larger size than the rider in front of her, which could portend to her diversity in comparison to the male horsemen. The branch in her hands could also stand for the tree of life. Its shape is described as a combination of lines which are either formed in a linear way or like arches and curves and could possibly stand for the vigour and energy of rejuvenescence. In addition, the branch resembles the deer's antlers, whose ends turn into buds, which could symbolize their annual renewal and hence regeneration. The orientation of the woman to the right side facing the rider could stand for her association with the East, which was believed to be an origin of life and regeneration associated with the rise of the sun. On the other hand, the rider would look westwards. This is understood as the end of life, connected with sunset. His horse could carry him to the afterlife. Several horses were discovered in the Pazyryk kurgans, as well as in other Scythian burials. The animals were sacrificed after their master's death and buried with him as grave goods, so that they could serve their master again in his next life.

During the excavation of kurgan Nr. 5, the bodies of nine horses were found in the burial chamber (*Jacobson-Tepfer 2015, 1-3*).

There are several elements and details in both scenes that are portents to the characterization of the woman. The dimension of her figure and her dignified appearance in the first picture, with one raised hand could hint to speaking, which could probably either be an advisory, a demand or an assurance to the horseman before he begins his travel to the world beyond. The

correlation between this woman and the man, either depicted riding or lying on the ground, in combination with the symbolized tree of life could suggest reading the woman as a warden of the path into the land of the dead. However, this interpretation has to be treated with caution (Jacobson-Tepfer 2015, 1-4). Furthermore, Jacobson-Tepfer mentions that other parallels to the scene of a male rider who comes before a sitting figure that is interpreted to be female, were discovered in the kurgans of Chertomlyk, Karagadeuashkh and Merzdana which are also of Scythian origin. The motif was illustrated on several plaques that were used as clothing-decoration, although some details vary, like the object in the woman's hand that is either a branch, a mirror or a libation cup instead. According to Jacobson-Tepfer, the role of the woman can obviously be characterized as a warden of the route into the realm of death (Jacobson 1993, 78f.).

5.2.4 Bone urn from Koi-Krylgan-kala, Uzbekistan

In the Kyzylkum Desert²⁴, in the region of Khoresm, lies the site of Koi-Krylgan-kala, whose name means “*fortress of dead rams*” and which was excavated in the years from 1950 to 1953. There are several other similar buildings in the same region that are described as fortresses, like the site called Toprak-kala, located around 40 km south-east to the former monument. These strongholds were agricultural settlements with several individual houses. Koi-Krylgan-kala consisted of an encircling wall, in which nine towers were integrated. In the middle of this circle, a circular house with two levels was built that measured 42 m in diameter and was described as a citadel. The house was surrounded with a breastwork, honeycombed with many small looped holes. In the centre of the building, a court was located that is also of a circular shape and whose diameter was 31 m broad. In the court, several dwelling houses and outbuildings had been constructed. On a large earthen vessel (*khum*) that was once used for wine there was an inscription in an antique Khoresm script, probably the name of its owner, which can be dated into the 3rd century BC. Several similar fortresses in the region are dated to the period from the 4th century BC to the 1st century AD (Mongait 1959, 266f.).



Fig. 199: Bone urn from Koi-Krylgan-kala.

²⁴ Its territory is today part of three states: Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan.

In the region of Khoresm, many high-quality pottery sculptures were found, crafted with a pottery wheel, moved with a foot pedal. Several different forms of clay statues were also discovered in the fortress of Koi-Krylgan-kala, especially urns in the shape of quadrangles that were decorated with figures in half life size on the top, depicted in a seated position. In a settlement site nearby the fortress a bone-urn made of clay, which was crafted in the shape of a life-sized man, was found during the excavations (*Mongait 1959, 266f.*). The figure is depicted in a sitting-position that has been designed cross-legged, both lower arms are missing. It appears that the figure is wearing a shirt or a tunic that reaches slightly over the hips, trousers and probably boots. Also, a belt has been sculpted and a necklace with the pendant of a ram, which could represent a plate attached to the garments.



Fig. 200 & 201: Pedestal made of copper with a cross-legged figure holding a drinking vessel.

5.2.5 Pedestal from a kurgan in Zheytsu²⁵, Kazakhstan

One of the kurgans in the region of Zheytsu contained a copper pedestal as a burial good that is perforated and which measures 21 cm in height. A flat plate with a low rim is placed on the top of the pedestal that is decorated with two figures made of bronze: a horse, which faces a human sitting on the ground. The item served as an incense bowl, a type of artefact that is a common find in the region around the Kazakh town of Almaty. This object originated in the culture of the Saka and probably had a cultic function and could have been important for

²⁵ A historic term which means 'seven rivers' for a region in Central Asia, located in the southeast of present day Kazakhstan (*Wikipedia: Zheytsu. [Online] Available from: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zhetysu> [Accessed 12th May 2018]*).

sacral activities. The perforated pedestal with the figural ornamented plate dates to the period from the 4th to the 2nd century BC (*Samašev 2007, 168*).

The bronze figure of a human was sculpted in a sitting position, likely cross-legged. The person is clad in a long garment, probably a caftan, which partly hides the legs. Compared to the former figures that were represented in a similar pose (especially **Fig. 195**) it is likely that the figure represents a man that had been designed cross-legged. The right arm is slightly bent, while the hand rests on the right leg. The left arm is angled, it forms almost a right angle, and holds what appears to be a drinking vessel in the left hand. The figure is not very detailed, facial features are missing, which could also have worn off over time. If such particulars had been sculpted once, they were not very detailed.

Although the illustrations of the cross-legged pose could be described as a merely ordinary position, every one of the mentioned artefacts from the Eurasian steppes can be linked to a ritual context, either based on the depiction or on the context of their finding. Therefore, the images of the cross-legged poses can also be interpreted to symbolise a specific cultic position or to be connected with some kind of cultic activity. The five objects can be allocated to two categories: drinking and death.

The modelled figure on the handle of the bronze mirror from the Sokolova Mogila kurgan as well as the figure on the necklace from the Kobayakova kurgan can be understood as to represent drinking rituals. A libation²⁶ is a form of ritual activity which is connected with liquids. When the ritual is performed, the substance is poured over a sacred object, either at cultic, ie sacred places or at secular ones. According to Taylor (1997, 214), the bearded man on the mirror handle is supposed to be portrayed in a ritual pose. The central figure on the necklace from the Kobayakova kurgan can also be associated with a ritual form of drinking. One possibility would be a form of toast dedicated to some higher power. The copper figure on the perforated pedestal from Zheytsu can also be assigned to the drinking category, while the object itself was once used for cultic activities or for some sort of ritual.

The Siberian belt plate and the bone urn from Koi-Krylgan-kala relate to death and the passage to the world beyond. The head of the dying man is placed in the lap of a cross-legged figure, probably an Enaree, and the upper parts of his legs are placed on the lap of a man in a tailor's seat. While the cross-legged pose on the plate is rather a secondary detail on the plate, it is a primary one on the man-shaped bone urn, probably a portrait of the deceased.

²⁶ cf. Wikipedia: Libation. [Online] Available from: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Libation> [Accessed 8th April 2018].

The motif of a resting man with a drinking vessel in his hand remains a frequent depiction in the art of the steppes and can be found on several statues that were sculpted from stone of which some are represented in a cross-legged pose (**Fig. 203 & 204**). Stone statues of the Turk Period (6th to 8th century AD) are prevalent in Eurasia and such sculptures are known from Mongolia, the south of Siberia, the Altai Mountains/Peak Altai, Tuva, Kazakhstan and also from the autonomous Chinese province of Xinjiang. This group of figures can commonly be found in the valleys around river basins and in landscapes that are often spacious and have a scenic or pictorial effect on the viewer. Generally, the offering sites, which were of quite complex nature, were formed and represented by one or two of these stone sculptures. On several occasions, the number of statues exceeds a dozen sculptures that represented the high elite, whereby the site is interpreted as to be a sacred place of men respectively warriors who achieved extraordinary heroic deeds. The main amount of stone statues was erected in an eastwards direction, towards the rising sun (*Amartuvshin & Badma-Oyu 2016, 35-40*). The few stone sculptures of the Uighur period (8th to 10th century AD) were found in the western part of Mongolia and are depicted with both hands holding the drinking vessel (*Amartuvshin & Badma-Oyu 2016, 160*).



Stone statues from Mongolia:

Turk Period (6th-8th century AD): Fig. 202: Ikh Turganii Gol, Bayan Ölgii aimag, Mongolia (*Art history/Esther Jacobson Tepfer Personal Wep Page. [Online] Available from: <http://pages.uoregon.edu/arhist/jacobson/653A.htm> [Accessed 13th May 2018]*).

Fig. 203: Statue (160 cm) from Shiveet tolgoi, Khashaat soum, Arkhangai aimag (Mongolian administration division: an aimag is subdivided into several soums).

Fig. 204: Statue (177 cm) from Bürdiin adag (Tsorgiin am), Erdenemandel soum, Arkhanagai aimag.

Fig. 205: Statue of the Uighur Period (8th-10th century AD, 180 cm) from Tsagaan khöshööt, Bayannuur soum, Bayan-Ölgii aimag.

Fig. 206: Statue of the the period of the Mongol Empire (13th-14th century AD, 124 cm) from Senjmandal, Erdenetsagaan soum, Sükhbaatar aimag.

5.3 The Balkans

5.3.1 Plate from Romula, Romania

In the year 1961, an artefact was found in the sand bars on the riverside of Teslui, a side arm of the river Olt in Romania. The object is a square-shaped plate made from lead and measures 93 mm in height and 90 mm in breadth, with a thickness of 2 mm. The item has been a bit damaged on the lower edge. Its origin can be traced to the Roman city of Romula²⁷. The plate illustrates a scene, which has been heavily decorated with figures and other ornamental elements and has been described as a unique artefact (*Tudor*



Fig. 207: Lead plate from Romula.

1961, 342). At least one similar plate with different figures and without a cross-legged pose has been found in Romania (*RGM, 1980*). The first row on the top of the plate depicts a sequence of seven individual figures, four of them are busts that are placed to the left, as well as to the right edge of the plate. The first of these busts has an aureola and is described as a representation of the deity Sol, followed by two male busts who wear Phrygian caps. The last one is a personification of the moon decorated with two horizontal crescents, one on the top of its head and the other on the shoulders. Between two busts, a smaller figure is placed each time. From the left to the right side a man orientated to the right side is illustrated carrying either a vase, a vessel or a bag followed by a standing eagle, shown in profile, also orientated to the right side and completed by an almost equal second male figure who looks to the left side. Between each of the seven figures there is a large embossed dot (*Tudor 1961, 342f.*).

The second and largest sequence is separated from the first one through a line, which is similar to a rope in its shape. On the left, as well as on the right side, two riders are placed that are almost equal in shape and style, except that they are mirror-inverted to each other. The men's garments are described to consist of a close-fitting tunic that reaches the waist, over

²⁷ Also known as Malva. The city was founded under Trajan and developed in the 2nd century AD from an older settlement with the same name and has been populated by the Dacians. Today the village of Dobrosloveni is located on the area of the ancient Romula (*Wikipedia: Romula. [Online] Available from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romula> [Accessed 13th March 2018]*).

which they wear a *chlamys*²⁸ that flies behind each of them. Furthermore, the men are outfitted with Phrygian caps and have *calcei*²⁹ on their feet. Both figures are described to be illustrated with their right hand raised and over the head of each horse a snake is placed (Tudor 1961, 343). Instead, the two men raise both of their hands. The left rider holds the snake in his outstretched left hand, while the right one makes a fist with only the forefinger or the middle finger raised, which forms a hook. The right horseman shows the exact same position back-to-front.

Both horses are equipped with saddles and bridles. Each of them is stepping on a man on the ground, who is lying on his back and is interpreted as to be either dead or dying. The body pose of these figures changes along with their clothes, the one to the left has also a Phrygian cap on his head. In the middle of the scene between the riders a female figure is depicted that Tudor characterises as a goddess who stands in behind a so called Delphica table³⁰, on which a fish is placed. The female deity wears a veil on her head and a pleated dress that could be seen behind the table. Both of her arms are stretched, while her hands are placed under the mouth of the horses as she wants to feed them. Beside each of the figure's body halves a six-beamed-star is placed that could symbolize the morning star Lucifer, which is equivalent to the planet Venus. Also, a raven is placed in the right corner of the scene (Tudor 1961, 343).

The interpretation of the woman is not correct, because she does not stand behind the table, but sits on the object, which is more likely to be seen as a pedestal. The mentioned veil could also be seen as hair, probably braids, instead. The seated position of the woman is highly likely to be cross-legged and in combination with her outstretched hands, the figure could be represented in a mediating activity. Underneath is another sequence, segregated from the former with the same designed line. From the left side to the right side a head and a bull in profile can be seen that are orientated to the right, a crater in the middle with a vertical snake on each side, a lion who faces the vessel and a dagger. Between this row and the last one, there is a similar dividing line, but a thinner one. The first motif in the array of the final row cannot be identified, but subsequently three rings or circles are placed, which Tudor suggests could stand for loafs of bread with a horizontal line above each. The following objects are three tripod candleholders with an oil lamp on the top of each and finally a tree branch behind in which Tudor spots another eventual object in the shape of a disc (Tudor 1961, 343).

²⁸ A short cloak which was used in Antiquity for activities such as riding and travel. It probably originates either in Thessaly or Macedonia, from where the cloth spread over the ancient world.

²⁹ The common footwear of citizens in the S.P.Q.R and the Roman Empire.

³⁰ An ornamented piece of furniture in antiquity.

5.4 Gallia: The Celtic and the Celto-Roman world in the Iron Age

In Gallia, figures that are depicted cross-legged are portrayed on reliefs, as well as in the form of statues or statuettes and can be divided into two categories: warriors and deities. The majority of the latter is supposed to represent Cernunnos, according to the illustration shown on the *Nautes Parisicae*.

5.4.1 Supposed images of deities

Based on the spreading of the Cernunnos motif and his image on several forms of sculptures, it appears that the highest popularity of this deity occurred in the central area of northern Gallia. Furthermore, a worship of this god also existed in the region of Charente, which lies in the West of today's France, in the city of Saintes³¹ and also in Britain. Several depictions of Cernunnos show him in a position where he sits cross-legged (*Green 1992a, 59f.*). The distribution of sculptures representing Cernunnos increased in the Romano-Celtic period (*Green 1992b, 232*). A large amount of sculptures represent the deity in a combination of Roman and Celtic or Gallic fashion or fashion elements.



Fig. 208: Depiction of antlered man on the Altar from Reims (ca. 30-100 AD).



Fig. 209: Relief from Vendœuvres with a horned figure accompanied by two boys (2nd cent. AD).

5.4.1.1 Altar from Reims

In a relief-scene on an altar from Reims that measures 1,30 m in height, the central figure of an antlered man was described as Cernunnos, who is accompanied by two other figures,

³¹ The city was founded around the year 20 BC by the Romans under the name Mediolanum Santonum (Wikipedia: Saintes. [Online] Available from: <https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saintes> [Accessed 14th March 2018]).

which portray Roman deities: Apollo on the right side and Mercury on the left (Green 1989, 92; 1992a, 59f.). While Apollo is attributed with a lyre, Mercury holds his stave (*caduceus*) in the right hand and a purse or probably a waterskin in the left. He is also equipped with a small bag he carries on the left side and wears a *chlamys* and a winged cap. Between them, a bearded man sits cross-legged on a pedestal.

On his head there are two knobs, which are definitely the roots of antlers, although those are not visible because they have not remained, the structure of the background reveals where they had once been. The man wears a torque and a bracelet, as well as an armlet on the right arm. According to the antlers, the torque and the beard the figure likely portrays the Celtic deity Cernunnos. His upper body is almost bare except for a piece of cloth that probably belongs to a toga, which is tied over the left shoulder. Furthermore, the god wears trousers, as the folds on his legs indicate, and has boots on his feet. In the figure's style, elements from the Gallic and the Roman world are combined, a common appearance in Gallo-Roman art. With its left hand, the figure supports a bag or a sack, which lies over the crook of his left arm, while Cernunnos uses his right one to share the bag's content that pours over his right leg and also over the platform in front of which a bull and a deer are fed from the stream. Therefore, the small pieces are likely to represent grain or corn. Above the god, a rat is placed in the gable (*tympanum*).

According to Miranda Green, this animal could represent a chthonic characteristic of Cernunnos (Green 1989, 92). The stone sculpture is dated in a period from around 30 to 100 AD and kept in the 'Musée Saint-Remi' in Reims (Livius: *Reims, Altar of Cernunnos*. [Online] Available from: <http://www.livius.org/pictures/france/reims-durocortorum/reims-altar-of-cernunnos/> [Accessed 30th May 2018]).

5.4.1.2 Relief from Vendœuvres (Département Indre)

A similar scene was illustrated on a relief that was discovered in the commune of Vendœuvres, which is located in the centre of France. Three figures are depicted on this relief, of which one is interpreted to stand for Cernunnos, but the image differs from the former ones. The special element in this scene is the age, because all three figures are presented as youths, specifically as young boys. The central boy with antlers sits cross-legged, while to his left as well as to his right side a slightly older boy stands in a balancing position on a snake and holds on to one of the figure's antlers. The reptiles have no ram horns and their faces are shaped like those of humans. Green interprets these elements as a reversal of the symbolised zoomorphism of Cernunnos (Green 1992a, 60).

As the relief was partly damaged, several details and characteristics of the scene are slightly difficult to identify. I would interpret the age of the figures in the exact opposite way, based on their size and visible facial features. Therefore, the youth in the centre would be the oldest one and the two smaller children, which are naked and obviously boys, younger than him. The so called Cernunnos is portrayed, besides the antlers and the cross-legged seat, with a torque, which lets us conclude that the figure could indeed represent the Celtic deity. In addition, he wears a *sagum*³² (a Roman cloak) over tunic that is bound with a girdle and has a bracelet on the right arm. Furthermore, both hands of the figure are placed on an object that rests in his lap, which is either a bag or a sack.

The accompanying boy on the right side carries a semicircular item in his outer hand that is reminiscent of a torque, while the outer hand of the boy to the left is placed on the head of the serpent that is supposed to have a human face. Although the reptile's head is proportionally large and damaged, it looks more like the one of an ordinary snake. The snake in the right lower corner of the scene is definitely not portrayed with the face of human, because its reptile head is clearly visible and devouring its own tail. Hence, the creature symbolises the *ouroboros*. Finally, only the figure to the right side stands completely on the snake, the one to the left has his left foot placed on the animal, while the other one rests on a pedestal.

The relief dates in the 2nd century AD (*Balkancelts: Cernunnos and the ram-headed serpent*. [Online] Available from: <https://balkancelts.wordpress.com/tag/cernunnos-vendoeuvres/> [Accessed 30th May 2018]).



Fig. 210 & 211: Statuary group from Saintes, front side and back side.

³² cf. Wikipedia: *Sagum*: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sagum> [30th May 2018].

5.4.1.3 Statuary group from Saintes

According to Miranda Green, a sculpture from Saintes shows two depictions of Cernunnos in a cross-legged pose, one on the front side next to a woman and another smaller one on the backside together with the heads of bulls (*Green 1992a, 60*). The avers of this statuary group depicts a complete female figure in a long dress on the left side who sits in an upright position on a piece of furniture which cannot be seen and whose head is slightly damaged on the left side. She holds a filled horn in her left hand that should probably represent a horn of plenty and also an additional item in the right one, which can be barley recognized, but could be a whip.

To her right, a figure is sculpted cross-legged and placed on the ground and although it sits lower than the woman, the shoulders of both are on an equal level. The figure is missing a head because this body part has broken off and is wearing what seems to be a toga and perhaps a tunic underneath. It also has shoes that appear to have been designed after a Celtic model with a zig-zag binding, but could likewise be Roman sandals. Because sexual characteristics such as breasts are absent and in combination with the woman, it is highly likely that the figure represents a man who holds a torque in the right hand and another indefinable object with his left that is reminiscent of a fruit. An additional torque is depicted on the remaining part of the man's neck.

The reverse of the sculpture was decorated with three small reliefs: the figure on the right side also wears a long dress and possibly represents a woman, while the one to the left holds a cane and has no visible clothes. Both stand on a pedestal, the left one is decorated with a bull's head. Between them is an additional, broader pedestal with an ornament of two bull heads. The figure on it is sitting in a cross-legged pose and both hands are placed on or in its lap. Its right hand embraces an object that could have been a torque once, but this is hard to determine, because the relief-figure has been damaged. As a result, the head is missing, alongside a large area of the chest.

The only indications that could be used to interpret the sitting figures as Cernunnos are the torques, which cannot be confirmed with certainty for the smaller figure, and the cross-legged pose. But, according to the details, it is not even sure which sex the figure should represent. An obvious detail instead is the combination of style, as well as design elements from the Roman and the Celtic world. According to Miranda Green (*1992b, 232*), the time of the making of the statuary group is dated in the Romano-Celtic period.

5.4.1.4 Statuette from Bouray (Département Essonne)

A statuette made of bronze, which dates to a late phase of the pre-Roman period, has been found in the commune of Bouray-sur-Juine. The artefact has the shape of a young, short-haired man in a cross-legged pose who is naked and wears a torque around his neck. But there are no feet at the ends of his legs, instead they are depicted like the hooves of a deer. The figure is interpreted to represent a male deity, who is connected to the imagery of stags, because of his animal feet (*Green 1992b, 231*). The height of this sculpture measures 45 cm and it is displayed in the 'Musée des Antiquités Nationales' in St-Germain-en-Laye. A similar depiction has been found on a stele in the city of Beaune, on which Cernunnos is also illustrated with the hooves of a stag (*Green 1989, 90f.*).

The arms of the sculpture are missing, but even without these parts of the body, it can clearly be recognized that the figure's legs are too small in proportion to its body. In addition, the eye sockets, in which once other items had been inserted that served as eyes (maybe small orbs of glass similar to the glass-pastes on the plates from Gundestrup), are empty or hollow. In the present, the statuette is displayed with a white stone (or a shell?) that serves as an eye on which a blue dot has been painted.



Fig. 212: Bronze statuette from Bouray.

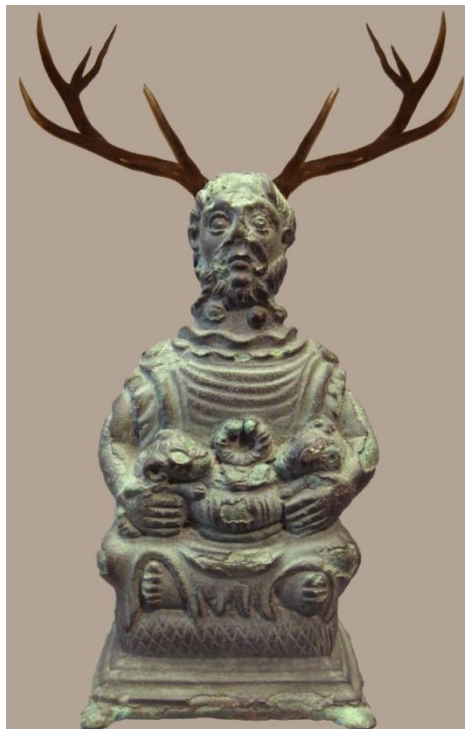


Fig. 213-216: Statuette from Étang-sur-Arroux: original figurine, statuette with reconstructed antlers, side view and back view.

5.4.1.5 Statuette from Étang-sur-Arroux (Département Saône-et-Loire)

The bronze sculpture shows a bearded man in a long robe, likely a toga, who sits on a pedestal in a cross-legged position. He is decorated with a torque around the neck and a second, smaller one is placed approximately in the middle of his upper body. Some of his fingers hold a vessel, likely a pot, that rests on his lap and is filled with small pieces or orbs that probably represent corn or some sort of food. Two serpents with the horns of rams came forth on each side of the man's body, their heads are close to the content of the pot, as if the animals want to eat from the content. In addition, the reptiles are very short and their tails look very much like those of a fish.

On each side of the man's head a smaller face or head can be found immediately above the ear. This detail probably represents that the man is triple-headed, which is a random characteristic in the illustrations and imagery of the Cernunnos. Furthermore, the figure was once decorated with antlers. According to these attributes, the man is interpreted as a depiction of Cernunnos. Green suggests that the pot could contain either fruits or puree or porridge (Green 1989, 90-92). Based on the number of details which occur on other depictions of Cernunnos, it is likely that this statuette also belongs to this group. The statuette belongs to the 'Musée des Antiquités Nationales' in St-Germain-en-Laye (Bober 1951, 23).



Fig. 217 & 218: The Silver cup from Lyon with the supposed depictions of the deities Cernunnos and Mercury.

5.4.1.6 The silver cup from Lyon

The cup from Lyon was crafted out of silver and is dated to the Augustean period, approximately around the year 12 BC. The artefact was decorated with a relief scene that is interpreted to depict the deities Cernunnos and Mercury. The former was illustrated resting on a couch, while the latter is portrayed sitting at a table where he counts money. A tortoise is placed next to the deity that was associated with Mercury (Green 1989, 88). The god is shown

topless and holding a piece of cloth with his left hand, which could belong either to a cloak, probably a *chlamys*, a *sagum* or a *himation*³³, or some form of toga that could also cover his upper legs. It appears that Mercury wears trousers and his garment could be a combination between local and foreign fashion. He is accompanied by a boar, whose snout touches his shoulder and a bird that could be a raven. The supposed Cernunnos is also topless and decorated with two torques, one around the neck and one in his right hand, while the left one holds a cornucopia. Resulting from the damage of the artefact, the figure's head cannot be seen. The lower body is also partly missing, which appears

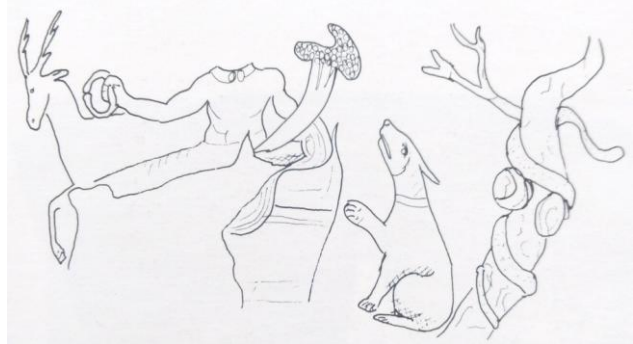


Fig. 219: Drawing of the probable depiction of Cernunnos.

to be wrapped in garment. The figure is surrounded by a stag, a hound and a snake in a tree. Although this scene does not depict a cross-legged pose, a similarity to the depiction on the Gundestrup plate is mentioned by Olmsted (1979, 42), who also states that the artefact has been crafted in Gallia and is proof of the skills of the local craftsmen. Therefore, it supports the argument that the Gundestrup cauldron could have been made in the Celtic West. The silver cup is displayed in the '*Musée gallo-romain de Lyon-Fourvière*' in Lyon.

All the examples from Gallia have been interpreted or described to be either a male deity or the deity Cernunnos. Based on the depiction on the Nautae Parisiaci, the deity's attributes of antlers and ears as well as other body parts of a deer, torques and a beard can be used to identify Cernunnos on other artistic works. Only the central figure on the altar from Reims has all these attributes in common with the original illustration, but in a more widespread analysis, it is very likely that the depiction with antlers on the relief from Vendœuvres should also represent this deity. To interpret the two cross-legged figures on both sides of the statuary group as Cernunnos could be possible, but the only attribute of Cernunnos is the torque, which is not a unique item to him.

The fact that the cross-legged pose has become one of the deity's characteristics probably results from transmissions of this pose from other figures that are interpreted to depict Cernunnos. The second of the bronze statuettes could stand for this deity if the remnants of the antlers can be seen on the man's head, as it is described by Green. If they are not, the figure could still represent Cernunnos, but could also be another member of the Celtic

³³ A piece of clothing from ancient Greece that is wrapped round the body and served as mantle.

Pantheon, which might have been influenced by those of the Roman world. The pot on the lap could be another transferred attribute. The bronze sculpture of a young man only has the torque as a clear attribute, the hooves could also represent another aspect of nature. For example, the statuette could be a faun or satyr who combines Celtic and Roman elements. It is highly likely that images of specific figures change over time through different influences, through which they gain new attributes and characteristics. Therefore, also Cernunnos succumbs to change and his appearance develops, but it is unlikely that his main attributes would disappear from his image.

5.4.2 Statues of supposed warriors

The second group of figures from Gallia that are depicted cross-legged are statues and steles of warriors. Several of those sculptures have either been found in the Celtic oppidum of Roquepertuse, near the Provençal city Velaux or on the Entremont plateau, also a Celtic oppidum close by the city Aix-en-Provence.

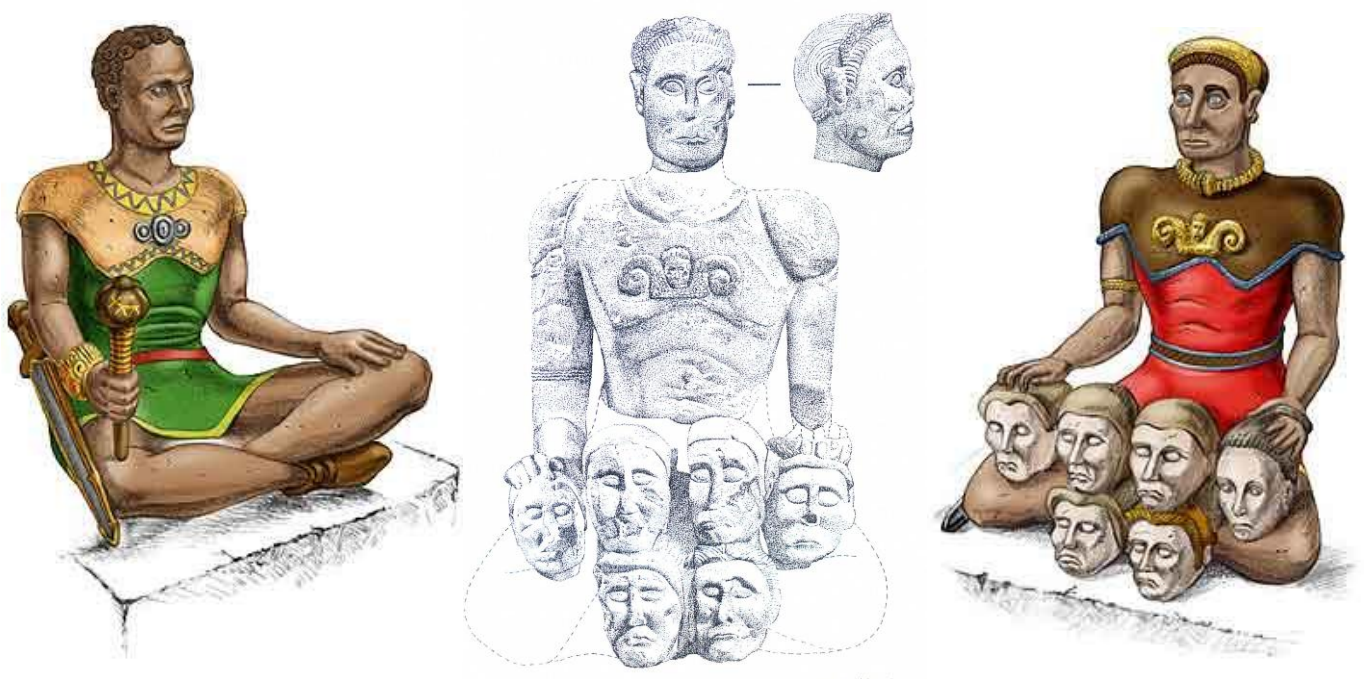


Fig. 220-222: Warrior statues from Entremont, Reconstructions and fragmented statue.

5.4.2.1 Statues from Entremont

Stone sculptures had already been found on the plateau of Entremont in the 1810's. The first fragment, which belonged to a figure of a seated warrior, was discovered in the year 1877. While a farmer prepared holes for planting trees, he dug up a limestone fragment shaped liked four heads of humans placed next to each other. Several more fragments should follow that

formed a group of statues in a cross-legged pose that are almost life-sized and decorated with a number of severed heads.

During the Second World War, when France was occupied by Nazi Germany the deployed German troops erected several buildings of military purpose in 1943 on the area of the plateau. During these construction works, the soldiers uncovered a cache in which several stone fragments of statues were found, of whom many were trophies of severed heads that decorated the statues of the warriors. It is due to the efforts of Fernand Benoît, who was the director of the Archaeological district of Provence in the years around the discovery, that the objects were kept in the city Aix-en-Provence. Straight after the Germans retreated from Provence, Benoît organised several excavations of great extent on the Entremont plateau, through which a large number of these fragments of former stone statues were discovered. A great amount of the current state of research bases on this excavating campaign (Armit 2012, 175).

The sculptures have been destructed to a great degree, which could result from an intended demolition process. Although a large amount of fragmentary pieces has been found, not one warrior statue could be reconstructed with into its original form. But, based on the appearance of a number of different pieces or fragments that are similar to each other in form and size, like the upper bodies and the heads of the statues, as well as the severed ones, the original shape of the statues can be assumed with relative certainty. According to the separate pieces, eight obviously individual torsi could be determined, and it is likely that a fragment of the shoulder belonged to an additional ninth upper body. This suggests a total amount of at least 9 different statues, to which five separate heads can be allocated that are portrayed with their eyes open. Even though the parallels in design, size, body position and also the used material can be determined, a clear assignment of the heads to their original bodies is almost impossible (Armit 2012, 175).

The fragments of the sculptures were neither in situ nor discovered in their original correlation. Furthermore, the mass of these pieces were found in a stratigraphic layer near to the level of the ancient main road that had been constructed at some point in the decade of the 120's BC. It is likely that the demolition of the sculptures happened when the oppidum was besieged by Roman soldiers (Armit 2012, 175f.). This attack happened under the command of Gaius Sextius Calvinus in the year 123 BC and resulted in the destruction, as well as in the abandonment of this Celtic fortification on the plateau of Entremont (Wikipedia: Entremont (Oppidum). [Online] Available from: [https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Entremont_\(Oppidum\)](https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Entremont_(Oppidum)) [Accessed 17th March 2018]).

For all the warrior figures, the same material was used, a limestone that could easily be worked on, which was likely chosen to assure that smaller details could also be shaped without any special tools or great effort. The origin of this limestone could be traced to the nearby plateau of Célon, where stones are still quarried today. In addition, the state of the statues' surface did not show any signs or hints of weathering, which led to the assumption that the sculptures must have been placed in a sheltered area like in the inside of buildings. But, a harder form of limestone was also found on the site, from which the pillars and also the door lintels had been crafted. Therefore, the Celtic craftsmen must have known the qualities of different variants of limestone, at least to some amount (*Armit 2012, 176*).

The motif of warriors in a cross-legged position is a common occurrence in the iconographic pictorial world (or spectrum) of the region around the Entremont plateau. The sculptures have an ornate harness and a variation of hairstyle, although a beard or a moustache cannot be found on any of the warriors' faces, which is described to be a typical characteristic of Celtic warriors by several authors from antiquity. The hair of two figures is decorated with tight curls, which resembles the hairstyle in Greek art, nearby parallels to the warriors' hair are presented on Massilian coins that date to the 2nd century BC. The coiffure of two others has been designed with a decorative band around the temple that lifts the hair up a bit, while another warrior statue is equipped with a helmet that tightly fits and has guards for the cheeks, as well as for the neck. Remnants of paint have been discovered on several of the fragments, which prove that the sculptures had been completely painted once. Likewise, it is possible that not only the areas and details on the surface of the statues had been coloured, but also that additional details were depicted on the warriors with the aid of paint (*Armit 2012, 176-179*).

Furthermore, the similarity of the warriors' heads obviously appears in the executed design of their facial features, but nevertheless all differ from each other. A specific detail are the eyes, because the eyeballs of the warriors are surrounded with shaped lids, the decapitated heads miss these. Based on the remaining details on the torsi, the sculptures have been ornamented with breast-plates and additional shoulder plates. The latter pieces of the armour are considered a part of a flap that also stretches over the chest-area and is ornamented with a designed brooch made of metal (*Armit 2012, 179f.*).

In addition, the sculptures wear a sword along with a scabbard on the right side of their bodies. The figure, whose armour has been best preserved, has many small drill holes all over its body, which probably represent chain mail or could stand for a sort of leather protection or animal skin instead. But, compared to a parallel find of an upper body from Fox-Amphoux (Département Var), a site of almost equal age, on which the sculpted chain mail is of finer

quality, this option is the more likely one. A development in the design of armour is visible in comparison between the warrior-depicting-statues from Entremont and those from Roquepertuse (and also from Glanon). The Entremont-sculptures were decorated further with stone crafted jewellery: torques, one armlet on the right upper arm as well as rings and bracelets (*Armit 2012, 180*).

The upper arms of the figures are shown close to the body, while the lower arms are outstretched and the warriors' hands, always the left one and sometimes also the right, are placed on decapitated heads that rest on the knees. Additional trophy heads, which differ from each other, have been placed in the laps of the sculptures. Some figures had a drill hole on their right hands which had been made to insert items made of iron like a sceptre or a wand. According to the sculptures' back, which was neither designed nor worked on, it is very likely that the figures have been put in front of a small wall or another background, probably a chair or a throne made from wood. The backside of the warrior's heads was executed like the rest of the head (*Armit 2012, 180f.*).



Fig. 223 & 224: Upper body fragments from Entremont, **Fig. 225:** Trophy-heads fragments from Entremont.

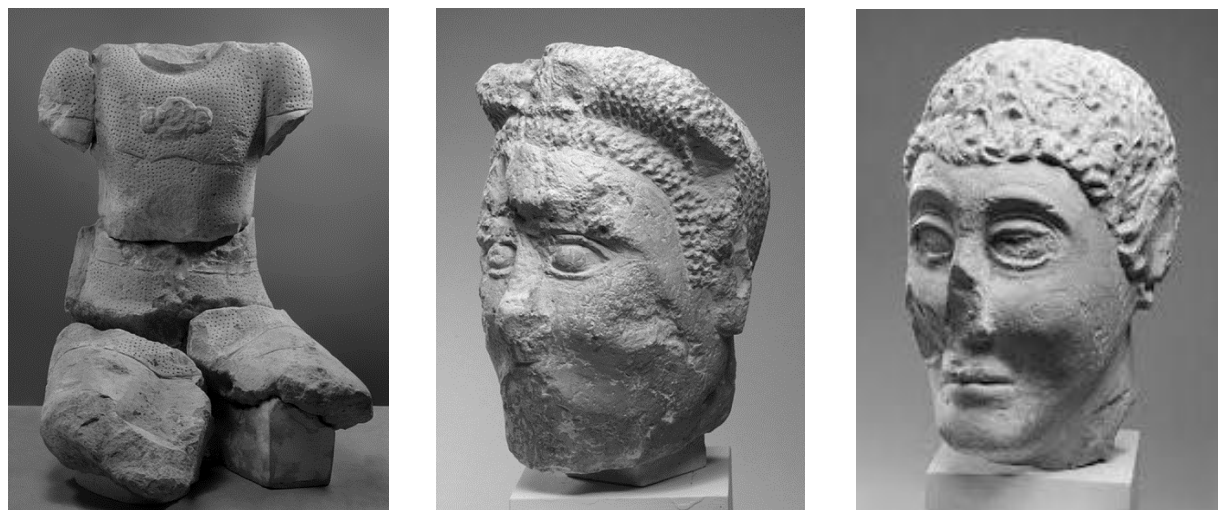


Fig. 226: Statue from Entremont whose armour is interpreted as to represent chainmail.
Fig. 227 & 228: Heads of warrior statues from Entremont.



Fig. 229: Statue from Le Carla, fragmented (A) and reconstructed (B).

5.4.2.2 Statue from the oppidum of Le Carla (Département Bouriège)

The most similar statue to the figures from Entremont is a fragmented sculpture, which was found the first time around the year 1920. The three separate pieces were discovered in pits that had been dug up in alluvial deposits in a valley called '*Devant la Ville*', which is situated underneath the oppidum of La Carla Bouriège. But the fragments had been put back in the ground, where they were excavated again in the year 1950. The preserved fragments measure approximately 55 cm in height if they are combined, the missing head had probably been lost in the period between the two discoveries of the sculpture. All in all, the whole statue is in a very bad condition because its surface has been scoured to a large amount (Armit 2012, 182f.). Several of the typical attributes from the Entremont warriors are not depicted on this statue, like armour, any sort of weapon or a bangle. Instead, the figure is clad in a simple tunic and wears a bracelet on the right wrist. Furthermore, it has a long beard that is formed into several braids. A trophy head was also sculpted in the lap of the male figure. The reconstructed head results from the memories of the local inhabitants, who described that the missing head had worn some sort of a bicorn headdress, which could also be a type of helmet instead. Based on this detail, a comparison with other statues was made that wore a similar helmet and therefore this sculpture dated to the 5th century BC. But, according to the statues' several parallels to the Entremont-sculptures, Armit thinks a similar dating to be the more likely variant (Armit 2012, 183f.).

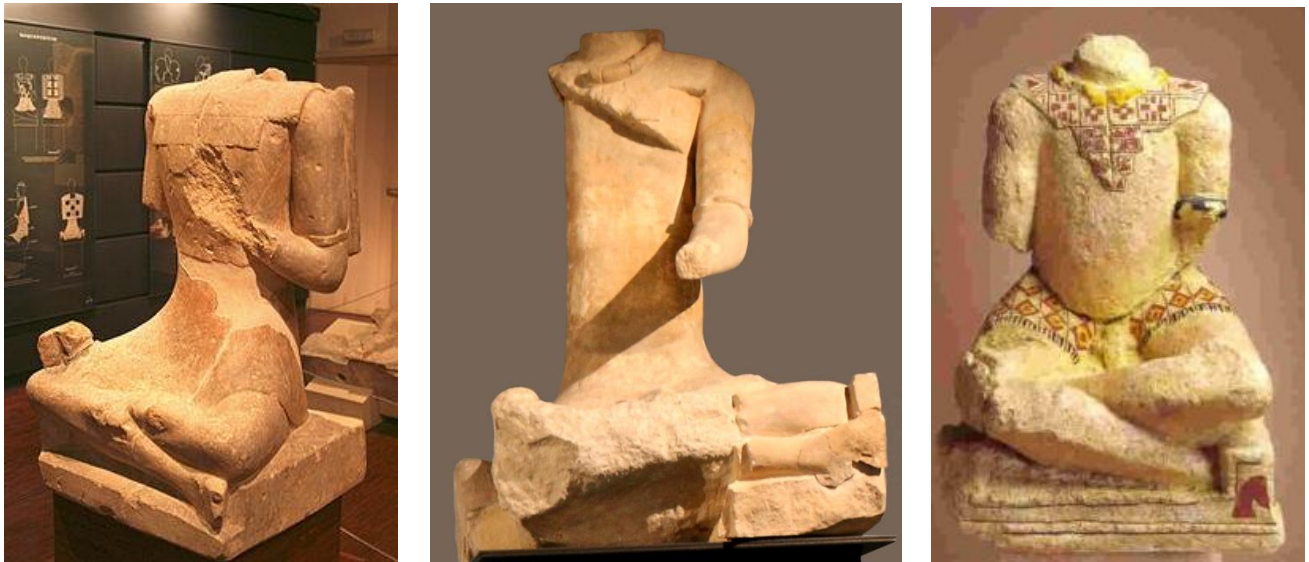


Fig. 230-232: Statues from Roquepertuse (A and B) in their present day condition and a reconstruction with painted details.

5.4.2.3 Sculptures from Roquepertuse

Sculptures of seated warriors in a cross-legged pose have also been found in the oppidum of Roquepertuse in southern France, close to the Provençal city of Velaux. The oldest artefacts by far in the area of Roquepertuse are stelae of different forms, measurements and craftsmanship, which date to the Bronze Age and have been crafted in local workshops, either from soft sandstone or limestone. The surface of the stelae is mostly plain, but a number of these objects were ornamented with engravings of horsemen, beasts and other items. It would be possible that some of these stelae could have represented people or should remember them. A decorative shield is worked into some of stelae, which suggest that the sculptures could have been conceptualised as images of warriors. This theory is supported by a similar stele from the oppidum of Sextantio (Département Hérault), which is ornamented with different engraved weapons (sword, spear and shield) and Bronze Age-stelae from the Iberian Peninsula. Although the Roquepertuse-stelae show no ornaments of weapons, possibly they also represented warriors and, therefore, could be forerunners of the iron-aged and cross-legged warrior statues (*Armit 2012, 132f.*).

The sculpting of the sitting male figures probably predates the buildings of the sanctuary that had been erected on a terrace of the plateau over the course of the 3rd century BC. This interpretation is based on the garment the statues are shaped to wear, a tunic of short cut, underneath a characteristic breastplate of which the backside was stiffened with an additional square shaped plate placed on the back of the neck. During the 5th century BC, this form of armour was typical in the northern part of today's Italy, as well as in several additional European regions. For example, a small bronze figure of a cross-legged warrior had been placed as decoration on the edge of a flagon also crafted from bronze, which was found as a

grave good at the German Glauberg and dates to around the middle of the 5th century BC. Furthermore, the armour and the clothing were ornamented with a square-pattern that had only been shallowly worked into the surface of the stone, which was very likely colourfully painted. According to the parallel findings and the decorative geometric pattern, the Roquepertuse sculptures were dated to the 5th century BC (Armit 2012, 133).

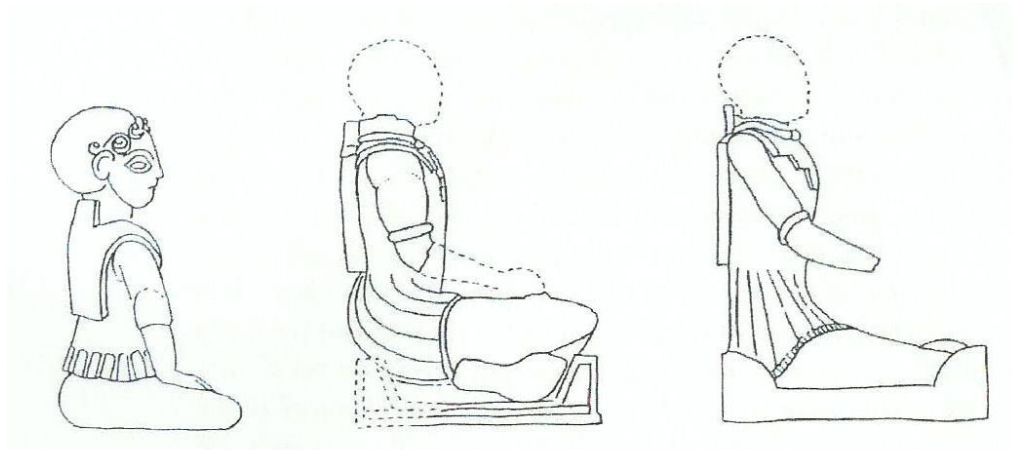


Fig. 233: Similar figures of cross-legged warriors (from left to right): Glauberg, Glanon and Roquepertuse.



Fig. 234 & 235: Bronze beak-spouted jug (Schnabelkanne) from the German Glauberg, decorated with a warrior figure in a cross-legged pose.

On the basis of the fragmentary pieces, a total number of ten sitting warrior sculptures were displayed once on the plateau of which merely two had been preserved in a nearly complete shape. The scale of the sculptures is a bit smaller than life-size and designed in a cross-legged pose sitting on a pedestal that, according to Armit, could represent a cushion because the edges of one are bent slightly upwards. The highly skilled craftsmen, no less than two different persons, crafted the figures in a slender shape and tortuously cut them in stone. The heads of both figures are missing, as well as the lower arms, either partly or complete, but while the upper body of the first warrior (A) is complete, the second one (B) misses the right

half of it. Warrior A has the left arm bent and placed on the chest, while the right one rested on its knee, as the remaining hand indicates, in which an iron stub has been preserved. Another commonality between the figures is an armlet on the left upper arm. Although only warrior B wears a torque, warrior A could have originally also possessed such an item. Otherwise, the design of the former is almost alike to those of the latter (*Armit 2012, 134*).

The raw material used for the statues was a smooth limestone that can easily be worked on from the nearby area of the present day village of Coudoux. Although this type of stone is likely to erode fast if it is exposed to wind and weather, the surfaces of the warrior statues does not show any sign of erosion. Therefore, the sculptures must had been placed in a sheltered area, either in some construction with a roof, possibly a shrine, or, as Armit suggests, in a hollow in a rock, which might have developed naturally, but had been artificially expanded. In addition, Armit notes that the sitting position of the statues had been interpreted to be 'Buddhist' by Benoît (1955), a characterization also made by scholars like Gilles (1873) and Déchelette (1914) before, which could result from the calm pose the figures are portrayed in. But, according to newer research and approaches, it is very likely that the statues represented warriors. Three discovered fragmented pieces shaped like scabbards from the beginning of the 2000's support this martial interpretation. Although Armit mentions that the warrior depictions could also be connected to some sort of deity or priest, he prefers the more secular definition (*Armit 2012, 134-137*).

Bober mentioned a different theory about the sculptures from Roquepertuse and interpreted them as representations of priests that could be, according to their cross-legged pose, somehow connected with Cernunnos. The pillars in the portico of the sanctuary in Roquepertuse have alcoves, in which sculptures of trophy heads had been placed. The surfaces of the pillars were decorated with painted ornaments in the form of animals, plants and further elements. Bober described these decorations as fitting for Cernunnos, who would be a deity with a chthonic character on the one hand and a fertile one on the other. Therefore, he interpreted the sanctuary as to having been dedicated to the deer god. In addition, he mentioned that Reinach proposed dating these sculptures to the 5th century BC (*Bober 1951, 24*).

The cross-legged figures from Roquepertuse are definitely no singular sculptures and quite a common depiction in the French south. No less than three parallel statues portraying warriors were discovered around 45 km away in the Northwest of the plateau, at the sanctuary of Glanon. These warrior figures are represented in an equal pose and with similar customs. The only difference is that one of them is depicted with a short tunic, which covers only the upper

half of its thighs and reveals a phallus. Although statues of cross-legged warriors (or fragments of them) are known from several sites located in the South of France, an ityphallic figure is a rarity. Armit concludes that the sculptures from Roquepertuse and Gallon were likely displaced in a natural surrounding which has been slightly adapted, like the rock niches. Furthermore, a number of similar figures demonstrates that the iconography became more homogenous. Such a development could result from a specific level of formalisation in the imaginary spectrum connected with religion which could also suggest that systems of belief, religion as well as rituals formalized in a similar way in this region (Armit 2012, 134-137).

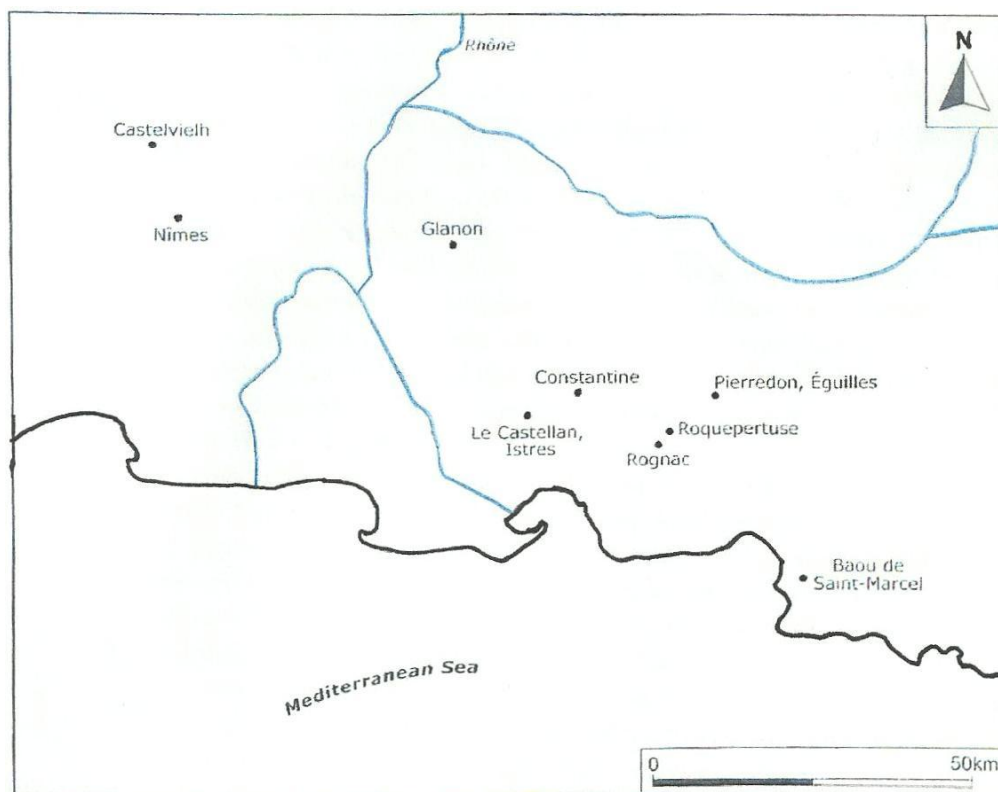


Fig. 236: Map of sites in southern France where statues of cross-legged warriors have been discovered.

6. Literary sources from antiquity about the cross-legged position

In the *Geographica*, the historian and geographer Strabo reported that the inhabitants of Gallia Belgica, the people who live close to the sea, lie or rest on the ground. When the people of this Celtic tribe eat, they sit on cushions either made of or filled with straw; Strabo only describes them as straw cushions (*Geographica*, book IV, chapter 4, 3.) Diodorus Siculus also mentions that it is a common habit to sit on the bare ground, instead of pieces of furniture like a chair or a stool (Bober 1951, 21)³⁴.

³⁴ Bober refers in the article to *Diodorus* 5. 28. 4.

According to sources from Graeco-Roman antiquity, sitting on the ground was a frequent practice among the Celts. Therefore, a cross-legged pose would be a convenient as well as a usual position. The motif of the cross-legged Cernunnos could result from the intention to portray a substantial indigene aspect of divineness (Green 1989, 89).

7. The possible origin and development of the cross-legged position

The origin of the cross-legged pose, or the so called tailor's seat, has been the topic of several diverse debates, which also aimed at explaining or figuring out the appearance of this specific seat depiction in the Gallo-Roman art. Phyllis Fray Bober (1951, 21) refers to two essays by Robert Mowat from 1881 and 1883 who argued to re-name this position as "*posture gauloise*" (Bober 1951, 21), instead of the former terms Indian- or Buddhist position, which were commonly used in the 19th century. Mowat based his argument on the descriptions of Strabo and Diodorus, from which he concluded that the evolvement of this position in the Gallic world happened completely independent from any other cultures. Friedrich Drexel (1922, 20) supported Mowat's attempt and supposed that a craftsman of Greek origin could have designed the motif of a cross-legged Cernunnos, because he associated this specific sitting pose with the 'barbaric' Celts. Furthermore, he interpreted that the antlers of the Celtic deity could have been adopted from Actaeon³⁵, who was turned into a deer. Also, scholars and archaeologists like Pierre Lambrechts (1942, 60) and Paul Jacobsthal (1944, 6) agreed on Mowat's theory (Bober 1951, 21).

But to create a theory for such a transmission only on the basis of a characteristic feature that is supposed to be ethnological, is unacceptable in Bober's opinion and according to the conditions of art history. Especially, because a cross-legged pose does not only occur on illustrations or sculptures, which are supposed to portray the Celtic deity Cernunnos. In addition, the assumed oldest depiction of Cernunnos, the petroglyph from Val Camonica, is not depicted in that specific sitting pose. Alexandre Bertrand (1880, 31; 1882, 322) was the most enthusiastic supporter of the theory that this cross-legged seat developed from a culturally Indian influence, either a directly or indirectly. Bertrand connected the position, not only to the pictorial world of India, but supposed that it could have been practised during particular mystical activities or rituals. These rites could have later been established in Gallia,

³⁵ During a hunt Actaeon surprised the goddess Diana while she was bathing in a grot with several nymphs. As a punishment she turned him into a stag which was killed by Actaeon's own hunting dogs (Ovid, Book III, 68-71).

although Bertrand does not mention an approximate period of time (*Bober 1951, 21f.*).

In 1881, an article by the French celtologist and ethnologist Henri Gaidoz was published in the journal “*Revue archéologique No. 1*”, which addressed coins of Bactrian origin that date into the first century BC. Their face designs depicted the rulers of the Indo-Scythian Kingdom³⁶, like the founder Maues (around 90 to 60 BC) and several successors, in a sitting position that can clearly be identified as cross-legged. Gaidoz suggested that these coins could have been the medium through which this specific position spread or travelled from India to Gallia. He had found a Celtic parallel, which he believed to be an immediate copy of the Indo-Scythian coins (*Bober 1951, 21*). This image is on the Obverse of a coin that is linked to the Celtic tribe of the Remi, who settled in Gallia and whose name can be connected to the city of Reims. It was described as an illustration of Cernunnos sitting in a squatting-pose and holding a ring in his right hand, while the object in the left cannot be identified. Mackenzie noted that it could probably symbolize first fruits (*Mackenzie 1928, Plate VI*).



Fig. 237: Coin of Azes I. (ca. 57-35 BC), **Fig. 238:** Coin of Azes II. (around 35-12 BC), **Fig. 239:** Coin from the Celtic Remi, Obverse (unknown date), **Fig. 240:** Coin from the Celtic Remi, Reverse.

Bober does not agree with Gaidoz' attempt, regarding it as to be too farfetched, because Gaidoz interpreted the image of a boar with a snake on its back on the reverse side to be a transformation of the illustration of an elephant on a coin from Bactria. According to this theory, the elephant changed into the boar, while its trunk became the snake (*Bober 1951, 21*). Bertrand's approach of the cultural influence from India was continued by several other scholars in the following decades. The most important contribution was the work by Hans Berstl (1924, 165-190 & 99-106), who described the cross-legged pose as a yoga depiction. He supposed that this motif spread to the western hemisphere around the turn of the millennia and the beginning of the Common Era. His theory based on illustrations he had found on several artistic works and therefore 'traced' the journey of this motif. According to Berstl, the

³⁶ The Indian-Scythian kingdom established in the North of India including territories of present Pakistan and Afghanistan and lasted from around the middle of the 2nd century BC until the 4th century AD (*Wikipedia: Indo-Scythians*. [Online] Available from: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indo-Scythians> [Accessed 25th March 2018]).

cross-legged motif has been depicted on several terracotta objects of Graeco-Egyptian origin, which also would have been distributed in Gallia and would have supported the spreading of this position. Therefore, it would be likely that this motif had been adopted or copied from the foreign terracotta (Bober 1951, 21f.).

Several statuettes from the late Hellenistic period, as well as from Roman culture also portray a cross-legged pose in different variants. Examples for such figures are mourning women (*"Klagefrauen"*, Bober 1951, 22), sculptures of women who are frequently shown holding fruits, either grapes or a pomegranate, or depictions of the deity Isis, nursing her son Horus. Parallels to these categories of sculptures were also found in the workshops of Gallic artists. These terracotta-works are not products of a very high artistic quality and could be characterised mainly as folk art, although it is highly likely that the cross-legged pose was also used for illustrations of a more monumental size, like for the Greek and Egyptian mystery cults of the goddesses Demeter or Isis. In addition, Bober refers to a painting in a building in Pompeii, in the so called *Casa dei Dioscuri* (house of the Dioscuri), where the goddess Demeter is portrayed next to a spring in a seat position, which could be a cross-legged variation. This illustration is described as *'Die irrende Demeter'* (Errant Demter) (Bober 1951, 22-24). It bases on the name with whom Ludwig Curtius (1929, 317, Fig. 181) designated this specific mural painting.



Fig. 241: Modern statuette of Isis nursing baby Horus. The figure is sculpted in a variation of a cross-legged position and made of gypsum stone, around 18 cm high. This figure shall only serve as an example of comparison what the cross-legged pose of Isis that is mentioned by Bober (1951, 21) could look like, although the sculpture might not be based on an ancient model.

Fig. 242: *'Statue of Kurtil'* (ca. 2500 BC) sculpted of greenstone. The figure is 37,5 cm high and has been found in Tell Al-'Ubaid in southern Iraq, close to the temple of the Sumer deity Ninhursag. The sitting position with folded hands is described as to represent a gesture of praying. The word Kurtil has been engraved behind one of the statues shoulders, a man of this name is known as an official of the city of Uruk. The British Museum. Collection online: statue. [Online] Available from: http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=368453&partId=1 [Accessed 9th April 2018].

Fig. 243: Probable cross-legged depiction of the Roman cult of Isis. The central placed woman might represent the Egyptian deity.

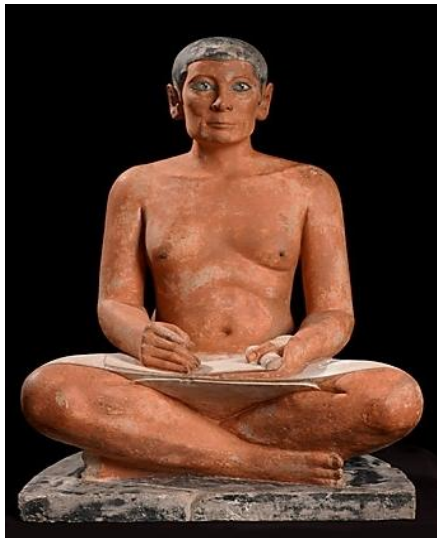


Fig. 244: The limestone sculpture 'Le scribe acroupi', the squatting scribe, discovered in the Egyptian necropole of Saqqara. The statue dates in the period from 2600 to 2350 BC (either the 4th or the 5th dynasty); 53,70 cm high, 44 cm long and 35 cm wide (Louvre: The Seated Scribe. [Online] Available from: <https://www.louvre.fr/en/oeuvre-notices/seated-scribe> [Accessed 30th May 2018]).

Fig. 245: The fresco 'Die irrende Demeter' (Errant Demeter) or 'Donna che porge da bere a un viandante' (Woman who gives a drink to a wanderer) in the Pompeian 'Casa dei Dioscuri'.

In addition, Bober notes that - even if Berstl's theory that the figurines from Egypt had developed from a motif of Indian origin is left beside and even without considering the evidence that a cult of Isis existed in Gallia, as well as in the German Rhineland - there is proof that the cross-legged pose attributed to Cernunnos had emerged from cultural influences that were older than Egyptian impacts. Bober based this statement on the cross-legged statues from Roquepertuse. Relating to these figures, Salomon Reinach (1912, 64-66) supposed that the squatting position appeared in the art style of the Celtic world and also in those of ancient India, because the motif was based on an older model from the Ionian archaic art. Furthermore, Reinach was convinced that depictions of Imhotep, the Egyptian god of scribes, would have affected the cross-legged pose in the Celtic world. Bober sees neither links nor parallels in the conception, purpose and character of scribes from ancient Egypt and the Celtic deity Cernunnos (Bober 1951, 22-24f.).

Nevertheless, Bober agrees with Reinach's supposition of a cultural influence from ancient Greece. For example, the swastika is a common and widespread symbol in the Geometric period of Greek art, which also commonly appears in the art style of the Latène period. In addition, the theory of Reinach is strengthened by several small artefacts that had been discovered in territories located in the East, which were under the hegemony of the Greek culture. These artefacts depict either a cross-legged position or a variation of it. But terracotta

findings from the isle of Cyprus, in the region of Cyrenaica, as well as from the area of Carthage under Punic rule suggest that the cross-legged pose in the Ionic art resulted from an influence or an adoption of a Phoenician prototype (*Bober 1951, 24f.*).

The sculptures from Cyrenaica frequently depict a varied cross-legged form that has been adapted from Egypt, in which the right leg is shown in the 'usual' horizontal pose, while the left one is placed in a more vertical way. According to Reinach, parallel examples for this modified cross-legged pose from Carthage are the relief of a cross-legged woman, who has either grapes or a dove in each hand, and a number of stelae that depict a naked child with a combination of disc and crescent in its hand. An epigraph on one stela allows to categorise these sculptures as votive offerings. But, regardless of the time period, there is no known statue from the monumental sculptures of ancient Greece which would portray a tailor's seat. Furthermore, Bober mentions that the occurrence of the cross-legged pose (in a hieratic aspect) in the oldest dynasties from Ur has been proven through documents. And beside this, sigils from Mohenjo-daro, as well as from Harappa, which will be analysed in chapter 3, the cross-legged position has also been depicted on Sumerian sigils. These artefacts date into 3rd millennium BC, and the illustrations of this specific position could exemplify the motif's dissemination in the Indo-Sumerian art spectrum (*Bober 1951, 25*).

Bober supposed that the cross-legged position from the sigils had been adopted by the later Indian art until it was adapted in the 1st century AD for official depictions of Buddha, for whom it became a characteristic attribute. This near-eastern art tradition or art style might have been the basis from where the cross-legged motif disseminated to ancient Egypt and also became a part of the Phoenician-Ionic art spectrum, where it was probably associated with the Orient. Bober concludes that the sitting pose of Cernunnos obviously did not originate from the Indian subcontinent, but from somewhere else. In addition, he notes that archaeological investigations of the Galatian kingdom, founded by the Celts in the 3rd century BC, could give an explanation for the connections between the Indian and Gallic art of the late La Tène period, as well as eventual movements of art motifs and styles from the western hemisphere to the eastern one (*Bober 1951, 25*).

Another theory concerning the origin of the cross-legged position supposes that this position is a development of motifs from the eastern part of the Mediterranean world. From there, two routes have been considered, on which the position could have 'travelled' to Gallia: either via the colonies established by the Greeks in the south of today's France, like Massalia, or via the contacts between Celtic tribes, who settled near the Black Sea and their relatives living in the West (*Bober 1951, 27*).

8. The Buddha and his sitting positions

The total amount of sculptures and representations of the Buddha, the former Siddhārtha Gautama, depict him in a number of different positions as well as with various gestures. But the main part of these diverse positions appeared on the relief-ornaments of different stūpas, while the poses of full statues, also referred to as sculptures in the round, encompass a smaller number of possibilities (Schuhmann 1996, 209).

The most common way to represent the Buddha is a sitting position, which can occur in two different forms. In the first variation, the *pariyāṅka*, the lower legs are placed close towards the body and lie over one another whereby the right lower leg is placed above the left one in a reverse position to it. The second possibility is the *padmāsana*, the lotus position. In this position, the lower legs are crossed, both feet are placed in the lap and the soles of the feet are turned upwards. The right lower leg is placed in front and the knees are bent so that they can be placed on the ground (Bober 1996, 214f.). Therefore, the seat pose of the Buddha is not a mere cross-legged one, but follows a specific design or arrangement of the legs and feet. Nevertheless, in a simplified way, Buddha's sitting positions could be described as cross-legged and there are indeed some sculptures of Buddha in this specific position.



Buddha statues in different sitting positions:

Fig. 246: Buddha sculpture in the *padmāsana*/lotus position made from red sandstone sparkled with white stains from Ahicchatrā, Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. The object measures 72,5 x 47 x 12,5 cm and can be dated to 110 AD. It is kept in the National Museum in New Delhi (Klimburg-Salter 1995, 126).

Fig. 247: Bodhisattva figure in a cross-legged pose made from grey shale from Takht-ī-bahāī in Pakistan. The sculpture is 70 cm high and 35 cm broad can be dated about the 4th century AD. The figure belongs to the Völkerkundemuseum in Vienna (Klimburg-Salter 1995, 169).

Fig. 248: Buddha stone sculpture in the *samādhi* seat from Tolvila/Anurādhapura in Sri Lanka. It is 176 high and dates approximately in the 6th century AD. The sculpture is displayed in the Sri Lanka National Museum in Colombo (Boisselier et al. 1978, 143).

9. The Buddha and the deer

A similarity between Buddha and the antlered deity Cernunnos is that the former is also connected with a deer. Bodhisattva who became the Buddha later was incarnated as a deer of golden colour in one of his former lives. This episode is named *Ruru-jātaka*, but there are several other stories about previous incarnations. Once, the golden deer saved a man from drowning in the river. But the rescued person unthankfully told his king the location of this special deer so that he could hunt it. Instead, the deer told the king about the incident. He went on to venerate the animal. The golden deer is depicted in two different places, which represent all three stages of the story: at first the deer carries the drowning man on his back out of the river and second, when the king hunts it with bow and arrow which symbolises at the same time the third stage that is illustrated through the king who also appears twice, and his followers who venerate the animal (Boisselier et al. 1978, 25).



Fig. 249: Bodhisattva in the incarnation of a golden deer. The scene dates to the 2nd century BC and is depicted on a railing of a stupa in the Indian village of Bhārhut in the state of Madhya Pradesh.



Fig. 250: The Dharma wheel flanked by two deer.

A common motif in Buddhist art is the symbol of the *dharmachakra* (wheel of lore) that symbolizes the first 'turning' of the wheel through Buddha when he taught his lore to five of his former fellows in the Ispatana deer park (Schuhmann 1996, 218f.). The deer flanking the wheel refer to this location and stand for the harmony of nature as well as the fearlessness of the realm of the deity and its aspect of purity. The deer also represents renunciation according the everyday changing of its nocturnal resting place (Beer 2003, 62).

10. Probable parallels between the master of animals and Buddhism

The Danish prehistorian Japetus Steenstrup (1895) compared the iconography and the motifs on the different plates of the Gundestrup cauldron with depictions and elements of Buddhist art. For example, he saw similarities between the vegetable ornamentation on the vessel, which also adorn the background of the master of animals on plate **C 6571**, and the decorative leaves of the *figus religiosa*, also known as bodhi or pipal tree, in the artistic world of Buddhism (Steenstrup 1895, 331).

Donald Alexander Mackenzie (1928), a journalist, folklorist and an author specialised in the areas of religion, mythology, as well as anthropology, was convinced that the depiction of the antlered figure provides a link to Buddhism which could have been brought to Celtic Europe by missionaries:

“An important relic of Buddhist missionary effort among the Celts in pre-Christian times is that important archaeological find, the silver bowl of Gundestrup [...]. [...] All over the plaque are lotus symbols depicted in triads. The artistic craftsman has depicted the god squatting cross-legged in one of the Buddhist postures to be seen on Indian Buddhist stones. There can be no doubt as to the Buddhist character of the figure. The eyelids droop, or are closed, and the face is tranquil : the god appears to be meditating, with intense absorption, on some mystic doctrine. The form of the mouth suggests that he is repeating a Sūtra.”
(Mackenzie 1928, 43f.)

According to Mackenzie, several additional parallels to Buddhism can be found in the figures which surround Cernunnos and could symbolize specific Buddhist elements. The lion is a typical motif in Buddhist iconography and also tales about men who ride on the back of fishes exist in Buddhism. The two carnivores that are depicted mirror-inverted to each other in the right lower half of the plate, could represent “wonder dogs” (Mackenzie 1928, plate IV), a particular variant of dragons (Mackenzie 1928, 44, plate IV).

In addition, the ram-horned snake, whose body forms a small loop in the middle, is compared to a *makara*, a creature who carries a deity or can take its shape, which is also depicted with a similar curl (Mackenzie 1928, 44). Makara is a demon of the sea in the form of a crocodile, which later changed its shape into a dolphin (Grabner-Haider & Marx 2003, 280). Based on this interpretation, Mackenzie identifies the snake as a *nāga*, a deity in the shape of a serpent that can confine water but is also a bringer of rain. The creature appears in Hindu as well as in

Buddhist mythology. In the latter, one nāga sustains each cardinal direction which is referred to as king of the East etc., while the nāga of the West *Virūpāksha* is the god of the four kings (Mackenzie 1928, 44f.).



Fig. 251 & 252: The deity Varuna rides on Makara (dated between 1675 and 1700) and a nāga representing a guardian at the Thai temple Wat Dok Eung in Chiang Mai.

According to these parallels, Mackenzie was convinced that the depiction of the antlered figure, ie Cernunnos shows several influences of Buddhism that allow an identification of this Celtic deity as the main god of the world in the belief of a single cult of Buddhism. Based on two of Cernunnos main attributes, the torque and the snake, Mackenzie noted that the main influence for the depiction on the Gundestrup cauldron originated from *Virūpāksha*, the god or heavenly king of the West in Buddhism, who is represented by holding a serpent in his left hand and a caitya³⁷ in his right one. The caitya symbol was replaced by a torque, which is probably a motif of sacred nature that stands for



Fig. 253: *Virūpāksha*, the Buddhist heavenly king of the West.

the sun. Mackenzie concludes that the Gundestrup image of Cernunnos does not represent the Buddha, but could be instead a depiction of the Buddha of the West in the Northern branch of Buddhism (Mackenzie 1928, 45f.).

³⁷ Either a sacred place or a sacred object in Buddhism that were in the beginning believed to be native places for spirits of the earth. As a result, trees, either single ones or in groups as well as stands of small size were regarded as caityas. (Encyclopædia Britannica: Caitya. [Online] Available from: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/caitya> [Accessed 16th May 2018]).

11. The sitting position of the antlered figure: a spectrum of interpretations

During the history of research about the Gundestrup cauldron, the sitting position of the antlered figure, the master of animals on plate **C 6571** and the supposed Cernunnos, has been described and interpreted in various forms by many different scholars. Several scholars assigned the pose to one of the three following categories: cross-legged pose, Buddha seat or yoga/yogic pose.

Sophus Müller (1892, 23) described the antlered figure as sitting in a pose with the legs pulled up to its body. Friedrich Drexel (1915, 10) stated that the supposed Cernunnos is sitting with the legs placed under his body. Phyllis Fray Bober (1951, 14) noted that in this seated position, the legs of the antlered figure are crossed under its body, which is designated with several terms like '*accroupi*' (the French word for squat), tailor's seat or as a Buddhist sitting posture. On several occasions Bober repeats these different denotations. Heinz Mode (1959, 68) regarded the sitting posture of the supposed Cernunnos, whereby the legs are crossed under the body, as a position from India. Garrett Olmsted (1979, 160) called the figure's seated position cross-legged. Miranda Green described the position in several different works as to be cross-legged (1989, 88; 1992a, 59; 1992b, 231f.), which is the common attitude of the deity in the Gallo-Roman art (Green 1989, 88). Rolf Hachmann (1990, 827) referred to the seat as a position which is a characteristic of Cernunnos and of cultic or ritual nature. Morten Warmind (1999, 200) interpreted that the figure is squatting.

Donald Mackenzie (1928, 43f.) mentioned that Cernunnos could be squatting in a cross-legged pose that could be equal to a position of Indian Buddhist art. Frank Falkenstein (2004, 63) noted that the Celtic deity is depicted in the sitting position of the Buddha. Gerald Unterberger (2011, 295) also described that the antlered figure is illustrated in the posture of the Buddha, whereby the legs are placed beneath the body. Unterberger referred to this depiction as a classic pose of yoga that would not have been confined to Cernunnos.

Timothy Taylor (1992, 88) interpreted this specific position as a part of a ritual practice of yoga. In a later work, Taylor (1997, 215-217) stated that the posture would appear to be cross-legged in the beginning, but a closer look reveals that the figure hovers or balances on a single toe, a practice which he connected to a more difficult position of tantric yoga. John L. Murphy also (2011, 77 & 85) mentioned the interpretations of the pose as a yoga position by former scholars and noted that it is related to the context, if the depiction on the Gundestrup cauldron is regarded as to represent a yoga figure.

- Chapter Three -

The hoard of Săliște



- Chapter Three -



Fig. 254: The artefacts of the hoard of Sălișteana (from left to right with the inventory number of the Collection of Greek and Roman Antiquities):

- 1. Row:** a fragmented silver-gilt plate (VII A 217), three shield-fibulae (VII A 200, VII A 201 & VII A 204/205), a horn-shaped fragment (VII A 215).
- 2. Row:** two bow-fibulae (VII A 211a & b), a necklace (VII A 203), three silver mounts (VII A 196, VII A 199 & VII A 212), four bangles (VII A 195, VII A 198, VII A 207 & VII A 209).
- 3. Row:** a necklace/torques (VII A 213), three rings (VII A 208, VII A 210 & VII A 216), 11 pendants (VII A 197) and a broken necklace or torque (VII A 214).

1. The finding

In the year 1820 a hoard was discovered in the village Cioara/Csóra (German/Hungarian) in the Southwest of Transylvania, today's Sălișteana in Rumania (Gschwantler 1981, 228). The village is located between the Romanian towns Orăștie (Ger. Broos) of Sebeș (Ger. Mühlbach) (Wollmann 1982, 92). In 1820, the village was situated in the Hungarian hereditary lands of the House of Habsburg and therefore part of their empire.

The finder of the artefacts was a man named Stefan Mologyetz, who reported his discovery to the Administratio Zalathensis, which wrote the first document concerning the hoard of

Săliște (Scheden³⁸ of the Collection of Greek and Roman Antiquities (CoA) about Csóra/Săliște of the Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien (KHM), copy of a letter of Rudolf Noll³⁹ to Hans Norling-Christensen, 21st of June 1957⁴⁰; in the following sections this reference will be shortened). The finding consists of 31 objects made of silver and rolled silver, which has been gilded. The items of the hoard have a total weight of 747 grams and are dated to the 1st century BC (Gschwantler 1981, 228).



Fig. 255: Location of the village Săliște.

2. The purchase of the objects from the Săliște-hoard

A document⁴¹ from the 4th of March 1821 describes the procedure of purchasing the silver objects from the Transylvanian Csóra (Săliște) by the “k. k. Münz- und Antikenkabinett” (imperial and royal cabinet of coins and antiquity) the forerunner of the “Antikensammlung” (department of antiquity) in the “Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien” (museum of art history) in Vienna. It notes that the pieces of jewellery crafted from silver were of great interest for the

³⁸ A *Schede* (pl. *Scheden*) is a file or a collection of records of the documents or archive materials of a museum. The word derives from a term or a word of Greek or a Byzantine origin.

³⁹ Honorary Prof. Dr. Rudolf Noll became the head of the collection of Greek and Roman antiquities in the Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna on 1 January 1958. Since 1963 he was the director of this section until his retirement on the 31 December 1971.

⁴¹ Reference number (*Aktenzahl*): Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien, Archiv des Münz- und Antikenkabinetts, Nr. 896 ex 1821.

subject (who had found the objects) because they would definitely belong into the Migration period when the land of Dacia had first been occupied by tribes of Barbarians. Furthermore, it is mentioned that the artefacts would only be of minor quality. The subject (the finder) has selected, according to the will of the sovereignty, all those artefacts, which had been preserved in a good condition. In the document, the former total weight of the objects in the hoard is indicated with 3 Mark⁴², 3 Lot and 1 Quint of which the chosen silver artefacts weighed 15 $\frac{3}{4}$ Loth (*Scheden of the CoA/KHM about Sălișteea, letter of Noll to Norling-Christensen, 21st of June 1957*). This equates a total sum of 1074,377 g, of which the bought items weighed 799,802 g, while the rest of the hoard that had not been purchased composed of 275,255 g (*Scheden of the CoA/KHM about Sălișteea*).

The first entry in the inventory of the museum was made in 1821, when the objects of the hoard were purchased by the “k. k. Münz- und Antikenkabinett” and can be found in a register (started in 1819) which lists all the objects in the collection of that time. The artefacts were linked to one of the groups of people or tribes which had come to Transylvania during the Migration period and had settled in that region (*Scheden of the CoA/KHM about Sălișteea*).

The hoard itself is incomplete. When the artefacts were purchased, only the objects which had been better preserved were chosen. This was a common practice at that time. Further information about the other items is unclear, the only information that exists about them is the fact that the missing parts made up around a quarter of the hoard's total weight. Noll notes that because of the Second World War, some of the finds from Sălișteea were not available, although they are probably be irrelevant and of less importance. Among these artefacts are several pendants made of silver, either twisted like wire or shaped like a stick that belonged to a chain. But Noll states that copies of these objects would exist. The other ones are metal mounts from the end of a strap with a pair of rivets and metal mounts of sheet shaped like a tube (*Scheden of the CoA/KHM, letter of Noll to Norling-Christensen, 15th of March 1955*). When the artefacts from Sălișteea were taken for inventory on the 31th of January 1968, the total weight of the hoard came to 747,050 g. As a result, objects equivalent to 52,032 g were lost in the in the Second World War (*Scheden of the CoA/KHM about Sălișteea*).

A compendium about the silver and gold objects from Antiquity in the Viennese k. k. Münz- und Antikenkabinett, written by the Austrian archaeologist Joseph von Arneth 1850, noted that the hoard of Sălișteea had been discovered in 1821 and contained 64 objects (*Arneth 1850, 79*). Although Arneth described the relations of the finds, he did not date them or link them to a cultural environment (*Wollmann 1982, 91f.*).

⁴² A historic unity of weight in the German speaking countries. 1 Mark = 16 Lot = 64 Quint = 280,644 grams.

But Arneth erred in the year of the hoard's discovery. In the correspondence between the curator Dr. Rudolf Noll and the Danish archaeologist Dr. Hans Norling-Christensen from 1955, the first mentioned that according to the inventory of the KHM the objects from Sălișteana had been purchased by the former cabinet of Antiquities in 1821. The years of the hoard's purchase also have been confused by other authors like Eduard Sacken and Friedrich Kenner (1866, 339f.), as well as by Volker Wollmann (1982, 91f.).

3. The artefacts

The elements of the hoard today are stored in the “*Kunsthistorisches Museum*” in Vienna and are displayed there as part of the antiquity-collection (Antikensammlung) in hall XVII in showcase Nr. 02 (*Database of the Collection of Greek and Roman Antiquities of the Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna*). The hoard contains the following objects in order of their inventory number:

- ❖ A bangle made of silver-wire (VII A 195) diameter: 5,7 x 6,4 centimetres, weight: 10,8 grams. The ends are overlapping and bent around the ring. Through that the size of the object can be changed (*Gschwantler 1981, 230*).
- ❖ A silver-mount (VII A 196) height: 0,7 cm ø: 3 c., wt. 4,8 g
The piece was worked in the repoussé technique. Its shape is similar to a button and has two holes where it can be fixed with rivets on a random subsurface. The elevated hole in the middle has a circle of prongs on its inner side. The use of the object is unclear (*Gschwantler 1981, 229*).
This piece as well as two other ones that are alike could have belonged to a carnyx once (*Begquist & Taylor 1987, 120; Taylor 2018, personal communication*).
- ❖ Five silver pendants: two smaller and three bigger ones (VII A 197) length: 2,7 cm - 4,8 cm, wt. 1,79 g - 3,6 g
The objects were forged and have two different sizes. They are shaped like a pen with an eyelet formed by a piece of silver wound around one end (*Gschwantler 1981, 230*).
- ❖ Six pendants crafted of silver (VII A 197) l.: 3,1 cm - 3,5 cm, wt. 0,9 g - 1,82 g

These pieces of two different sizes are twisted and shaped like screws (or spirals) and forged with eyelets on both ends (*Gschwantler 1981, 230*).

- ❖ A bangle made from silver-wire (VII A 198) ø: 5,9 cm, wt.: 9,83 g
The object equals the first bangle (195) (*Gschwantler 1981, 230*).
- ❖ A silver-mount (VII A 199) ht: 3 cm, ø: 3 cm, wt.: 4,38 g
Is equal to object 196 (*Gschwantler 1981, 229*).
- ❖ A silver fibula (VII A 200) l.: 9,8 cm, wt.: 24,4 g
A fibula of the shield type made in one piece. Its plate is shaped like a bow and decorated with two centred lines of fishbone-ornaments. On the upper end, half of a spiral is placed with a string on the top, the other half with the attached needle is lost (*Gschwantler 1981, 229*).
- ❖ A silver fibula (VII A 201) l.: 10,8 cm, wt.: 29,31 g
A fibula of the shield type, fragmented in three parts and recombined through modern soldering. Similar to object 200 but with a varying ornament punched as skewed lines at the edge of the piece. Also, half of its spiral along with the string and the needle is lost. One part of a pair (*Gschwantler 1981, 229*).
- ❖ A part of a necklace made of silver-wire (VII A 203) l.: 44,7 cm, wt.: 149 g
A so called foxtail-chain (*Fuchsschwanzkette*), whose appearance looks like it would have been braided. This form is a developed type of the hook and eye-chain, where the pieces had been placed in a radial arrangement. The clasp of the chain is lacking (*Gschwantler 1981, 229*).
- ❖ A silver fibula (VII A 204/205) l.: 10,8 cm, wt.: 37,37 g
A fibula of the shield type, broken into two pieces and made whole again in modernity via soldering. Its needle has been lost. Makes a pair with 201 (*Gschwantler 1981, 229*).
- ❖ A bangle made from silver (VII A 207) ø: 6,4 cm, wt.: 22,73 g
The object equals the first bangle (195) (*Gschwantler 1981, 231*).

- ❖ A ring made from silver-wire (VII A 208) ø: 1,6 cm, wt. 3,48 g
The spiral shape of the piece of jewellery has been convoluted five times (*Gschwantler 1981, 231*).
- ❖ A silver bangle (VII A 209) ø: 5,5 cm, wt.: 10,2 g
The objects equals the form of the first bangle (195) (*Gschwantler 1981, 231*).
- ❖ A silver-wire ring (VII A 210) ø: 2 cm, wt. 3,65 g
The artefact is shaped like a four times convoluted spiral (*Gschwantler 1981, 231*).
- ❖ A fibula forged of silver (VII A 211a) l.: 7,4 cm, wt.: 36,18 g
The object is of the Late Latène type. The upper end, which includes the needle is shaped like a spiral and the string is bent over it. The bow of the object has an ornamentation of a fish-bones-pattern and punched squares. Part of a pair (*Gschwantler 1981, 229*).
- ❖ A silver-forged fibula (VII A 211b) l.: 7,6 cm, wt.: 36,02g
This fibula is also from the Late Latène type and looks like object 211a, with whom it forms a pair (*Gschwantler 1981, 229*).
- ❖ A silver-mount (VII A 212) h.: 0,7 cm, ø: 3 cm, wt.: 5,09 g
Similar to object 196 (*Gschwantler 1981, 229*).
- ❖ A silver torque (VII A 213) ø: 14,5 cm, wt.: 58,97 g
The object was shaped from twisted wire and can be closed by inserting a hook into an eyelet (*Gschwantler 1981, 230*).
- ❖ A torque made of silver (VII A 214) ø: 21,1 cm, wt.: 32,89 g
Made in the same way as object 213. The artefact consists of two separate pieces, of which the ends do not fit into each other (*Gschwantler 1981, 230*).
- ❖ A silver mount shaped like a horn (VII A 215) ø: around 7 cm, around 8,5 cm including the edge, wt.: 93,86 g

Crafted in the repoussé technique. The object has several damages in its hull or body and in addition its edge is torn and does not have its original form. There are four holes for rivets. Because of no parallel objects to this piece, there are several interpretations. It could be the tube of a spout or the handle of a vessel (*Gschwantler 1981, 229*). Another possible interpretation is that the artefact is one half of a shield's handle (*Scheden of the CoA/KHM about Săliște*).

Timothy Taylor suggested that this object could be a fragment of a carnyx and also the three mounts (VII A 196, VII A 199 and VII A 212) could have been part of such an instrument (*2018, personal communication; Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 120*).

- ❖ A silver ring (VII A 216) ø: 1,6 cm, wt.: 3,29 g
Similar to object 210 (*Gschwantler 1981, 231*).

- ❖ A fragmented plate made from rolled silver (VII A 217) l.: 16,9 centimetres, b.: 14,2 centimetres, wt.: 149,5 grams.

The fragment is allocated to the object-group of edgings and described as a silver plate decorated with a figural relief worked in the repoussé technique. It has been punched and was fire-gilded. The design and the execution of the depicted figures are described as crude. The fragment consisted of five separate pieces, which had been equalised and soldered in 1934 by master workman (“*Werkmeister*”) Dovřak (*database of the Kunsthistorisches Museum collection of Greek and Roman antiquities & inventory of the collection of Greek and Roman antiquities, started in 1819, 482*).

The plate is decorated with two relief figurines of humans. The outline of the scene was decorated with a bead and reel ornamentation, which has only been preserved on the left side of the object, although small remnants of it can be seen on the top, as well as on the bottom. The irregular, sharp edges/rims on the right and on the left side of the plaque look like they could have been cut. On the right side, there is a strip of metal, which is 'interrupted' by missing metal pieces that had broken off (“*verbrochen*”), but has a smooth surface, and there are two rivets and one empty hole that was also obviously meant to be for a rivet. This strip of metal overlapped and served as a connection to another plate, which was fixed by the rivets (*Gschwantler 1981, 228*). The edges on the top as well as on the bottom are not in place and it is likely that they had also been fixed or combined with the same method, using a system of rivets (*Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 117*).

4. The fragmented plate from Săliște

This silver artefact is the most interesting object of the hoard and the illustrated depiction shows a lot of ornaments and details. Through these elements, the plate can highly likely be linked to the plates of the Gundestrup cauldron.

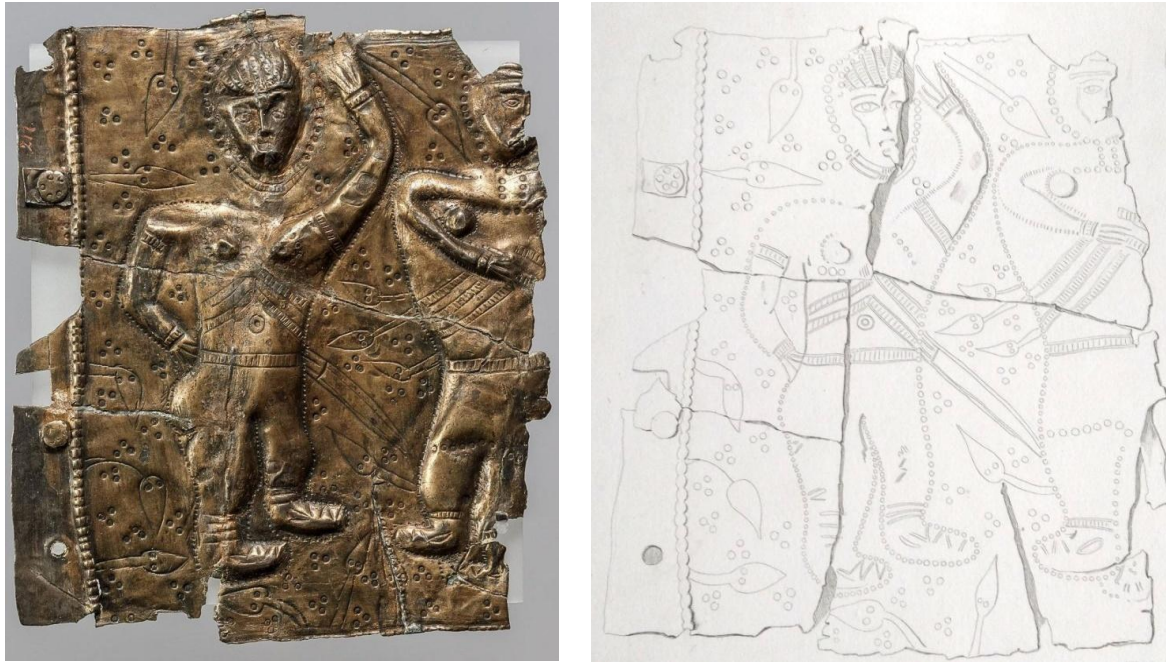


Fig. 256 & 257: The fragmented plate which has been among the artefacts in the Săliște hoard.

4.1 The scenery

The scene on the plate depicts two human figures, the first one is almost at the middle of the plate, whereas a part of the second one is cut off by the right edge. Around and between them are plants in the form of leaves, punched and traced, in total there are thirteen such decorative ornaments. The shape of the leaves is described as lance-leaf, “*lanzettförmig*” (Gschwantler 1981, 228). The two persons have half round headpieces, which are bent in a vertical way and could either be caps or helmets. Both figures have shoes with laces, which have been knotted several times crossed over each other. This particular way of binding shoe laces in a zig-zag way also occurs on the Gundestrup plate **C 6571**, which shows the antlered master of animals whose shoes are tied in the same manner. This shoe style occurs very rarely and the mentioned two examples are among the few artefacts from Europe as well as the Near East on which a scene with this detail has been depicted. Another illustration of this particular detail appears on a fragment from Durentsi (Bergquist & Taylor 117f.). The shoes of the man on the mirror handle from Sokolova Mogila kurgan were probable designed in the same way.

Furthermore, both figures wear girdles around their waists and trousers. The lower end of the trouser legs is marked or made differently on each figurine. In addition, around the body of each person, except the head, there is an outline worked into the silver surface marked by a lot of small lines in a horizontal or slanting position, probably made with a small punch.

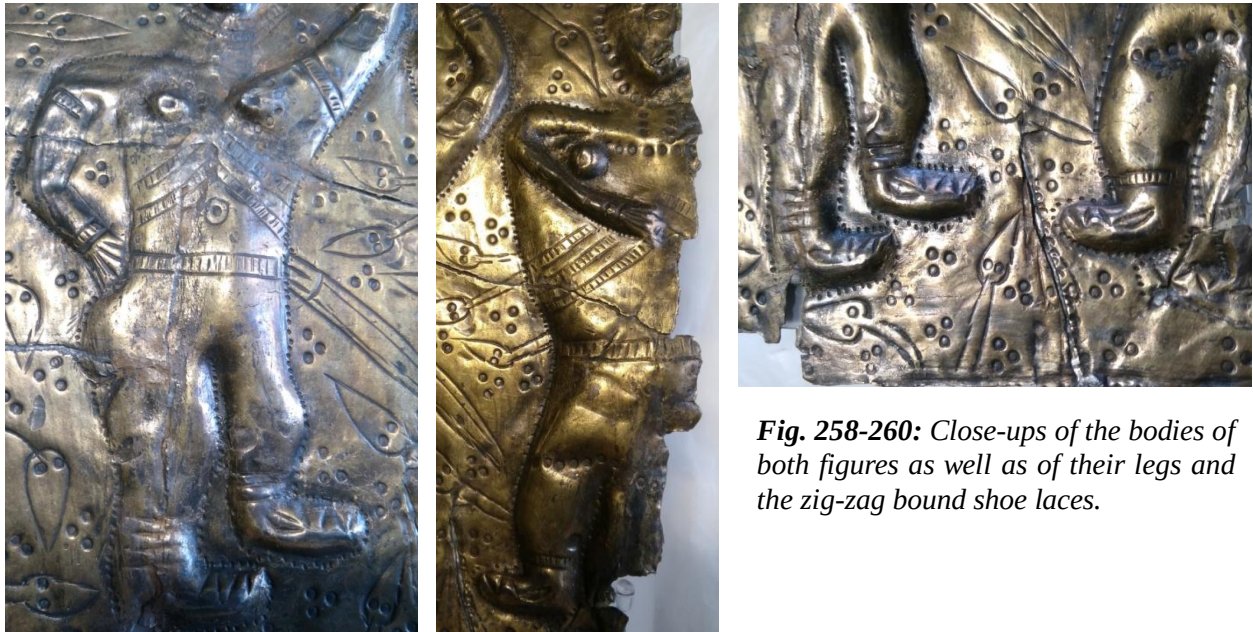


Fig. 258-260: Close-ups of the bodies of both figures as well as of their legs and the zig-zag bound shoe laces.

4.2 The figure on the left side

The figure to the left has raised its right arm to the height of the headgear, the hand is either almost closed or makes a fist. The right hand forms a fist and is pressed against its waist but could also be held behind the body. Its feet are not placed next to each other, but are a bit shifted. This position could be either part of a ritual or a dance. The person has four horizontal lines in the area of the ankle on the right foot and three on the left one, which could be either straps or shoestrings to fix the shoes. Although it would be possible that these strings are only the end of the laces, they are not connected to them on the relief.

A closer look to the body reveals that the human figure is topless because its bellybutton can be seen and is marked with a punched dot and surrounded by a small circle. The mouth is also opened, so the person depicted could be singing or chanting, for example. The nipples are characterised in the same way as the bellybutton and marked with dots. The space around these dots is raised higher, which obviously represents breasts, therefore the figure is female. Each breast is circled by several punched dots. The woman has bracelets and rings on her arms as well as two decorative stripes underneath her chest or on the sternum, which are

ornamented in the same way as her jewellery and form a peak. So maybe the bracelets are not suchlike and instead, the lines could illustrate body painting or tattoos⁴³.

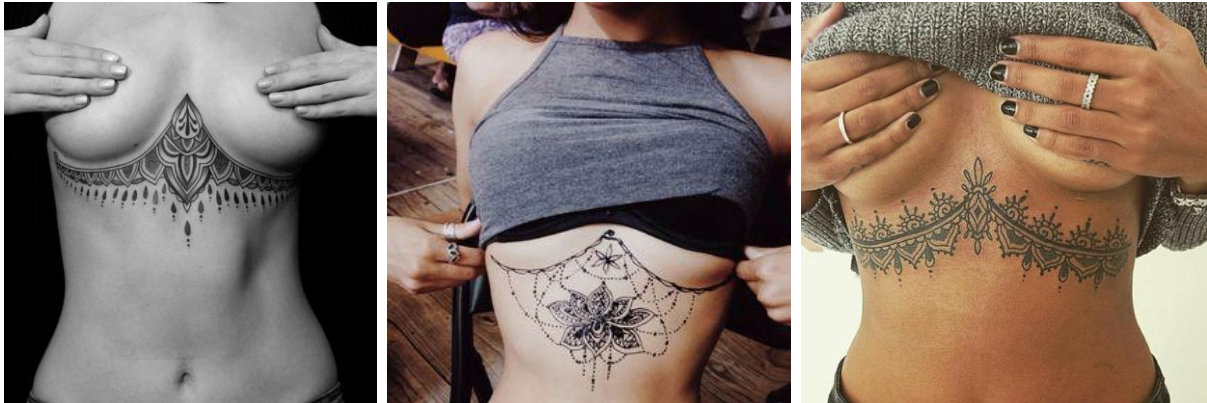


Fig. 261-263: Examples of different female sternum tattoos.

More stripes are beneath the woman's chin on her neck and could either show a necklace or be the straps of the helmet. Her head and face are surrounded by an outline of small punch-marked dots which pass over into the stripes or straps. Together, they form the shape of an egg or an ellipse around the woman's head. The headpieces and possible caps, as described by Bergquist & Taylor (1987), are more likely to represent hair. Compared to the depiction of the antlered man on a Gundestrup plate, the design looks very similar and is also illustrated through lines that run parallel from the back of the head to the front. The artist's intention for this design could have been to represent skeins of hair, braided hair or plaits.

On the left side of the woman or in the space between the two figures, a shape can be seen that does not fit into the other vegetal scenery. It looks very similar to the lower half of a scabbard or like the upper end of a sword. The idea might occur to the viewer that the leaf above, next to the raised left hand of the woman, could also be a weapon, in particular the head of a spear and a part of the shaft so that she attacks the figure in front of her from behind with it. But the left hand, which would hold the spear, would be in the wrong place, forming a sharp angle between the shaft and the arm, so it would be impossible to hold the weapon in that way. Furthermore, it is designed equally to the other leaves: a thin stem, either straight or slightly bent, running out into tear-shaped leaves, marked with two punched dots in the lower and broader end.

The detailed outline, which surrounds the figure's shape is interrupted several times, like on the left side of the body, through the arm which rests on the waist, the outline then continues along the outside of the arm, while in the triangle-shaped free space between the arm and the body only a simple line is used for the accentuation of the outline. Furthermore, the outline of

⁴³ Today such tattoos are named *sternum tattoos* or, in a more colloquial way, *underboob tattoos*.

small lines ends scarcely before the right side of the figures' neck, which is also not outlined in the usual way, but with a simple line instead. Regarding the original breaking lines of the fragment and its former smaller pieces, it could be possible that these small punched lines disappeared when the pieces were restaured and combined to one fragment through soldering. But this process would only explain the missing dots on the left side of the neck, where the course of the soldering-line is. In addition, the outline is also interrupted underneath the right heel because of the fragmentation and the restoration. Also, at the inner side of the figure's left leg, the outline almost stops at its crotch, while on the right side it continues till to the crotch. Although there would be enough space to finish the marking of the outline, it could have been intended that the left outline overflows into the right one.

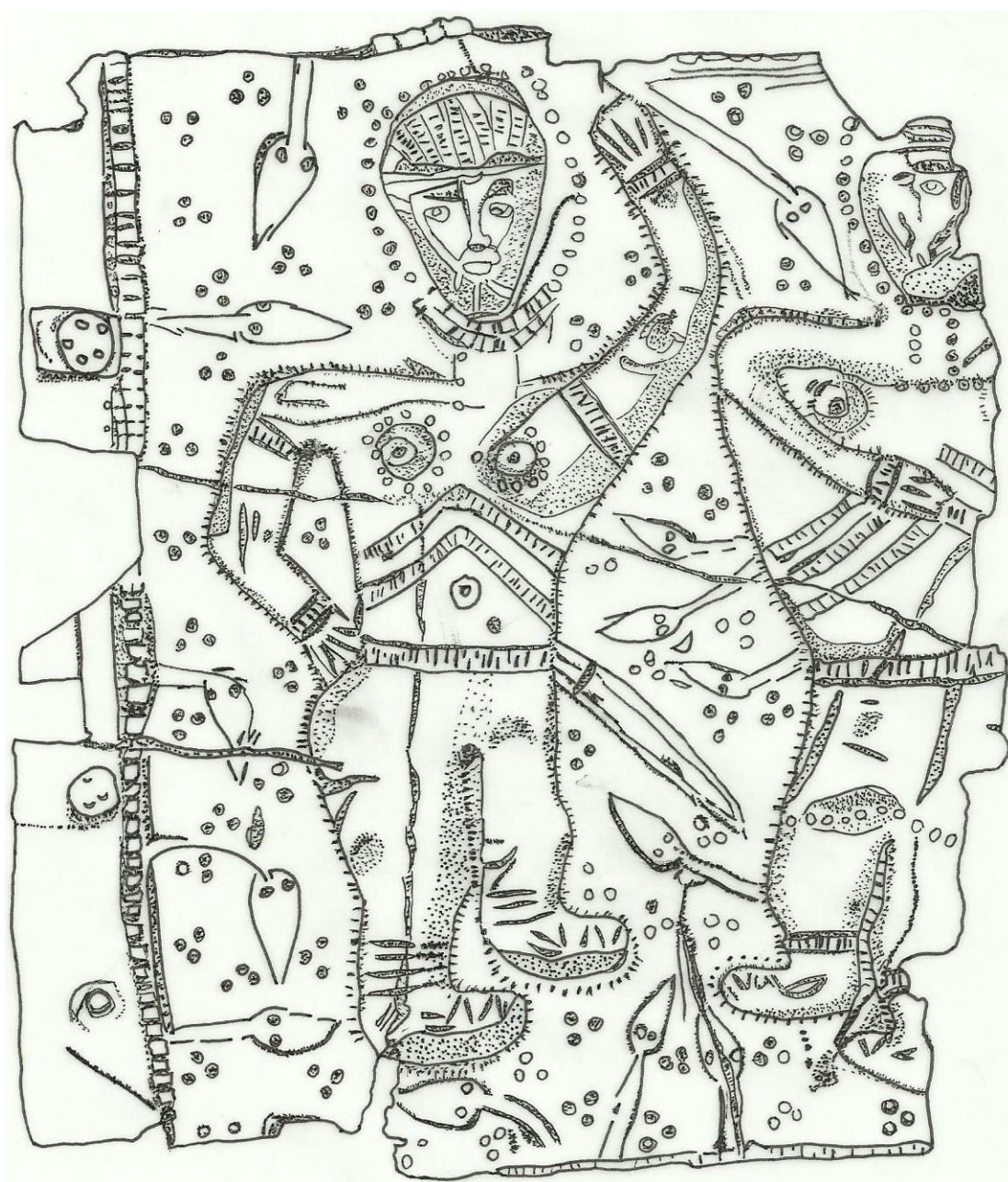


Fig. 264: Drawing of the fragmented silver-gilt plate from the Săliște hoard.

4.3 The figure on the right side

Because the second figure to the right is cut apart by the left edge, its left leg, arm and half of its face including the upper half of its head are gone. On its head, three horizontal lines or forms are visible that could either belong to the assumed headgear or be part of its hairstyle. For example, it could be a ring of hair or a braid or plait encircling the head. Although the whole mouth of the figure is lost because of the fragmentation, the remaining right side lets assume that it was formed in a similar way to those of the first figure: opened and either singing, screaming or chanting.

The figure is also topless and shows one breast, encircled by several small and fine lines or streaks, which indicate that this is also a depiction of a woman. Although the second or the left breast is not visible, a part of the encircling outline is recognizable. The female figure wears similar jewellery and body painting or tattoos to the other woman, although she only has a bracelet around the wrist and three lines on the right side of the sternum, instead of two, but on the left half of the sternum there are only two of these lines. The first and the last line on the right side end in the middle of the chest. The woman's arm is placed across her body and the hand lies on her chest, either closed to a fist or opened, and is placed on these decorative stripes, while her hand could hide the connection of the right middle line and the second line on the left.

The right leg is clearly recognizable and the foot points to the right. The left leg is only partly visible because of the fractured right edge, but stands close to the right one. The figure only has one line above each shoe marked or ornamented in the same way as the girdle or belt around the waist, but is either the edge of the shoe or the hem of the trouser legs.

Furthermore, the left foot stands slightly below the right one and is bent up in a slant position. Therefore, the position of the woman's body is similar to that of the other female figure to the right. Unlike the other three feet in this scene, it seems that this one is not relief-like and enched from behind in the repoussé technique. But there are two breaking lines above and underneath the foot, the upper one is about five millimetres, while the lower one measures around eight millimetres. So, it would be possible that the actual flat state results from the damage and fracture of the right edge.

The remaining head of the woman is also surrounded by a number of punched dots, which form a close end underneath the chin. On each side of the chin, there is one vertical line of dots attached, of which the left one is placed beside the right clavicle and the right one next to the left clavicle, which is not there anymore. Those dots could mark the outline of the neck,

but it would be very thin according to that form, and they are edged on the body with a horizontal line that is also made of punched dots and rests between the upper ends of the breasts. An equal line row of punched dots runs over the trousers in a horizontal orientation, approximately in the middle of the legs.

The outline of the figure's silhouette, in the detail the part of it which has remained, runs continuously around the outer side of the depiction. The right arm, placed on the upper body, is also outlined with those marks, but not completely. On the upper side, it stops at the angle underneath the clavicle and on the lower side, it stops some millimetres before the outline marking the silhouette. Furthermore, both sides of the hand are marked with the outline, but not the fingers, because of one of the decorative lines on the chest, which is directly beside the hand. In addition, there is only one singular outline to indicate the gap between the figure's legs. Groups of three punched dots can be found all over the fragmented relief as decorative elements.

5. Similarities between the images on the plates from Săliște and Gundestrup

By comparison of the images of the antlered master of animals (**C 6571**) on the Gundestrup Cauldron with the two figures depicted on a fragmented relief from the hoard of Săliște, several parallels occur:

1. The two scenes are decorated with vegetable elements in the form of leave ranks, which could refer to a woodland surrounding each scene.
2. Both show main figures in the form of humans, which are central to the scene. Although this argument is a bit uncertain concerning the fragmented plate, it can be supposed that the two women are the main motive on it because on the right side the scene clearly ends and the missing part could show either other humans, at least the lost rest of the second woman, or maybe animals.
3. The laces of the shoes are tied in the same form, a zig-zag way. This style very rarely occurs in depictions and images.
4. The poses of the figures suggest a special activity, either of profane or of sacral nature. The former could be a dance, some kind of game, maybe a pursuit and an ordinary seat with crossed legs on the floor or a possible acrobatic balancing act. Arguments for

the latter are a form of ritual (maybe included in a dance) or an invocation and mediation, a yoga related position and a possible ongoing shamanistic journey.

5. The pieces suggest a cultural environment that is either Celtic or has cultural contexts to the Celts because the style and the outfit of the figures are obviously of Celtic character.
6. The two different plates are worked in the repoussé technique from the same material, silver. In addition, they are either in full or partly silver-gilt.

Timothy Taylor (2018, *personal communication*) interpreted the scene as to represent androgynous figures that would be symbolized by combined attributes respectively characteristics of women (breasts) and men (sword). This is also a likely possibility and would be the seventh parallel between the plate from Săliște and the Gundestrup plate **C 6571**.

Although the fragmented object from Săliște is almost flat and not as bent as the plates of the Gundestrup cauldron, it is possible that the artefact was once part of a cauldron or a large metal vessel which consisted of several separate plates and parts just like the vessel from Gundestrup (Taylor 2018, *personal communication*). Flemming Kaul (1999, 207) also noted that the plate could have belonged to a cauldron. The flatness could be the result of the modern-day reparations and the expected bending could become visible in the middle of the plate in the section that is missing. The theory about the cauldron is supported by a quote from Arne Jouttijärvi who notes in relation to the soldering of the Gundestrup plates that this procedure was the regular method of fixing separate parts of vessels and cauldrons of such a large size. The usual way to do that was with several rivets (Jouttijärvi 2009, 960). Two such rivets and an additional hole for another one have preserved on the left side of the fragment.



Examples of vessels whose separate parts had been connected through rivets:

Fig. 265: The Battersea cauldron (800 to 600 BC), discovered in 1891 in the Thames in the London borough of Battersea. The artefact had been made of a copper alloy.

Fig. 266: The Situla of Kuffern (475 to 425 BC), made of bronze and excavated in 1891 in a burial of a supposed warrior, that dates from in the Austrian village of Kuffern.

Fig. 267: Bronze situla from the Hallstatt burial field. (Drawing by Georg Ramsauer)

Fig. 268: Bronze bucket from the Hallstatt burial field. (Drawing by Georg Ramsauer)

6. Another object of comparison from Durentsi

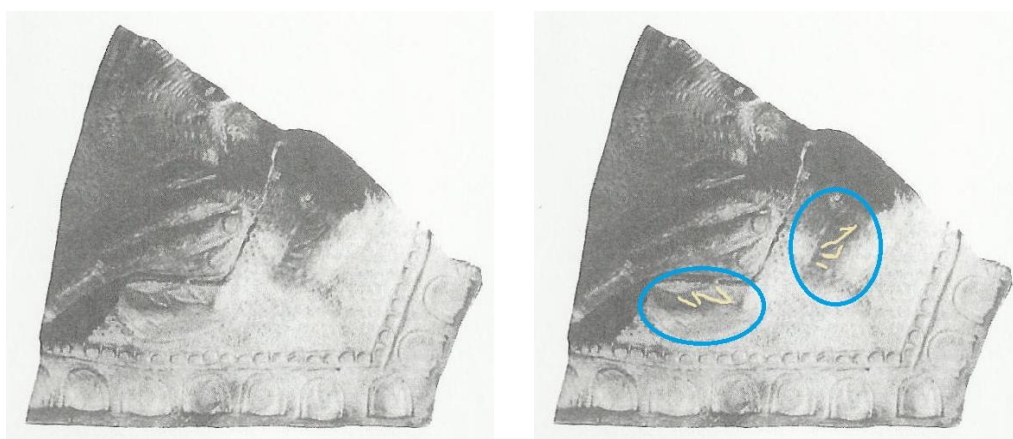


Fig. 269 & 270: Fragment from Durentsi, the zig-zag bound shoe laces are marked in the right picture.

There is another example or piece of art which has the zig-zag bound shoes on it, a fragment from Durentsi, Bulgaria, which was found among other objects in 1984. The artefacts were discovered during the excavation of a barrow and are all damaged and broken, which is the result of a burning on the pyre, probably together with the corpse. Afterwards, the remains were collected and placed in the tomb. The object of interest is a fragment from a *kantharos*, worked in the repoussé technique and silver-gilt. Its style or design looks like a Thracian piece of art and shows one of the front paws of a carnivore, which is raised to snatch the legs of a figure, highly likely from a human who wears shoes decorated with laces bound in a zig-zag way. There is another fragment from that *kantharos* which belongs to the scene and depicts more of the animal's body and another of its paws, likely one of the back ones. According to Bergquist and Taylor, the plate from Sălișteea and the pectoral from Durentsi were probably made around 100 BC (Bergquist & Taylor 1987, 118, 121).

7. Descriptions, interpretations and datings about of the plate from Sălișteea

7.1 Johann Michael Ackner, 1857

Johann Michael Ackner⁴⁴, an archaeologist of German descent who lived in Transylvania (Siebenbürgen) and co-founded the German studies in this region, valued the hoard of Sălișteea as to be of a certain importance, among other silver objects and jewellery of Dacian

⁴⁴ cf. Wikipedia: Johann Michael Ackner: https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johann_Michael_Ackner [Accessed 20th Feb. 2018].

craftsmanship. The origin of the objects had not been clarified when Ackner described the hoard in 1857. Therefore, the dating and integration into the archaeological chronology of Eastern Europe was not an easy task for Ackner, who interpreted them to be of Roman origin. He believed that the objects had been found in another village by the name of Csora, *Nagy Món. Újfalu* in the comitatus *M. Szolnoker*, where a monogrammed spoon made of silver had been found that has been dated to the period of the Roman emperor Alexander Severus (222-235 AD). But Ackner's interpretation was not only wrong considering the finding place, also the dating of the silver spoon was incorrect, which he changed to the 4th-5th century AD (*Wollmann 1982, 91f.*).

7.2 Egil Petersen, 1893

The archaeologist Egil Petersen had already seen possible similarities between the depictions on the plate from Săliște and on the Gundestrup cauldron in 1893 (*Hachmann 1991, 721*).

7.3 Paul Reinecke, 1902

The German prehistorian Paul Reinecke supported Petersen's theory and considered it a likely comparison (*Reinecke 1902, 88 as cited by Hachmann 1990, 721*). Reinecke also noted that the plate can be dated around the beginning of the Common Era, but according to the crude execution of the primitive human figures, the artefact equals the objects of phase D of the late Hallstatt period, approximately from 650 to 475 BC. But the vegetable background decoration heavily differs from this older art style (*Reinecke 1902, 88 as cited in a transcript in the Scheden of the KHM about Săliște*).

7.4 Friedrich Drexel, 1915

Drexel mentioned the plate from Săliște too, and referred to it as an aid to date the cauldron of Gundestrup because the object's dating is, according to the author, (almost) the same. Drexel noted that the connection between the two objects had been proposed by Egil Petersen before, but was barely noticed among experts. The plate was probably part of a Dacian hoard, which also included fibulae, rings for necks and arms, jewellery and coins made of silver, and is dated around the beginning of the 1st millennium, before the campaigns by Trajan and the following conquests. Drexel interpreted the figures on the plate in a

different way (compared to my interpretation and those by Timothy Taylor): the left one wears weapons and is therefore masculine, although it has visible breasts. To Drexel, the right figure seems like more of a woman, although her garment is the same as the one of the other figure. In addition, he describes the decorative lines on the chest as ribs. In his opinion, the figures could be the earliest illustration of Dacians, but it is more likely that the plate is rather a little bit younger than the slightly older cauldron (*Drexel 1915, 8-10*).

I disagree with Drexel's explanation about the depicted figures on the plate. In my opinion, it is a strange conclusion, that a figure with obvious breasts is considered to be a man because it also has weapons. This is based on the traditional idea that everyone wearing weapons, either as a form of grave goods or on images, is automatically a man (*cf. Gat 2000, 21-31; CNN: Iconic Viking grave belonged to a female warrior. [Online] Available from: <https://edition.cnn.com/2017/09/14/health/female-viking-warrior-grave/index.html> [Accessed 23th May 2018]*). To assume that the second figure who wears clothes that look exactly like the ones of the other person, rather appears as a woman because it wears no visible weapons is a strange implication. And it could be possible that the stripes are ribs, but, in my opinion, this is unlikely because they are worked identically as the other decorative lines on the figures' bodies, which are most likely tattoos, body paint or some sort of jewellery. If these stripes should represent ribs, then they could have been used to show that the women are thin or skinny. But I am not convinced of this explanation.

7.5 Nils Åberg, 1917

Nils Åberg, an archaeologist from Sweden, specialised in prehistory, dated the plate from Săliște to the 3rd century AD. This chronological allocation was made orally and is mentioned by Rudolf Noll in a letter to Hans Norling Christensen from the 15th of March 1955 (*Scheden of the KHM*).

7.6 Eduard Beninger, 1935

Beninger disagreed with Drexel's dating of the plate, which would be too early in his opinion. He set the creation of the artefact to at least the first centuries AD, in detail probably into the Antonine period (138 to 180 AD). Furthermore, he notes that a detailed publication of the other objects of the hoard would make a more precise dating possible (*Beninger 1935, 40*).

7.7 Holger Arbman, 1948

Holger Arbman (1948, 114) connects the plate of Sălișteea to two objects from southern Russia of a more rugged style. He cited one artefact as a reference, a plaque made of gilt silver, which had been found on in the Siverskaya Stanitsa (a Cossack village) on the peninsula of Taman in the Black Sea. The object dates to the 2nd century BC and is ornamented with two mythological scenes that have been illustrated in a design similar to the art style of ancient Persia. The rider on the carnivore, whose head is very similar to those of humans, is interpreted as to symbolise the triumph of Dionysos, therefore the beast could illustrate a panther. The second pair of figures is seen as a representation of Athena who defeats a giant. The plate is kept in the State Historical Museum of Russia in Moscow (*Rostovtzeff 1922, 137; plate XXVII*). Arbman further refers to Drexel's description that the figured reliefs on the Sălișteea plate would not have been crafted in a fine technique and therefore are only of lesser quality. The figures differ from those on the Gundestrup plates according to the sense of style, in the way of their depiction and also in the position as well as in the movement of their bodies (*Arbman 1948, 114*).



Fig. 271 & 272: Plates from the Siverskaya Stanitsa and from Sălișteea.

7.8 Wilhelm Holmqvist, 1961

When the Swedish archaeologist Wilhelm Holmqvist visited the *Kunsthistorisches Museum* in September 1961, he proposed a dating of the fragmented plate into the 3rd century BC,

although he was not sure when he should place or date the object in the beginning (“*nach einigem Schwanken*”) (*Scheden of the KHM about Săliște*).

7.9 Garrett S. Olmsted, 1979

Olmsted referred to the similarities between the position of the male figures, whose whole bodies are depicted, on the Gundestrup cauldron and the illustrated figures on the plate from Săliște, using the older Hungarian name Csóra. The depictions of one and a half figures are interpreted as representations of men and the design of the one 'full' figure is compared to the images of people in the art style of ancient Egypt, because, while its feet are oriented to the side, the upper body is shown from a front view. This position and form of illustration is also used on several of the Gundestrup figures, especially those of the figures' thighs and its butt, like it is mentioned by Drexel. Olmsted notes, that the male individual is depicted in a 'bulkier' way on the Săliște-plate and its design differs in several details: the figure is small, stocky and its body proportions contrast those on the cauldron. Its shoulders are almost absent and its thin arms resemble tentacles (*Olmsted 1979, 67*).

7.10 Kurt Gschwandtler, 1981

Gschwandtler described the hoard from Săliște in 1981, together with all other objects of Dacian origin in the collection of antiquities in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna. He noted that the figures wore the same garments and that their bare upper bodies were ornamented in the same way with marked ribs, accented and formed breasts and engraved belly buttons. The figure to the left is of male sex, because it carries a sword and also wears more pieces of jewellery. Furthermore, he remarked that the second figure is seen as a woman in some interpretations, although he stated that there would be too few differences between both figures for such a distinction. In addition, Gschwandtler underlined that the fragment was unique, because there has been no parallel artefact among the Dacian treasure troves (so far). He also mentioned that the style of the object had already been linked to the plates from the cauldron of Gundestrup in the last century and referred to the fact that the plate could have been part of a similar vessel or cauldron. The plates of the Gundestrup and Săliște differ in the way they had been fixed. While the former was soldered, the latter was attached via rivets (*Gschwandtler 1981, 228f.*).

7.11 Rolf Hachmann, 1991

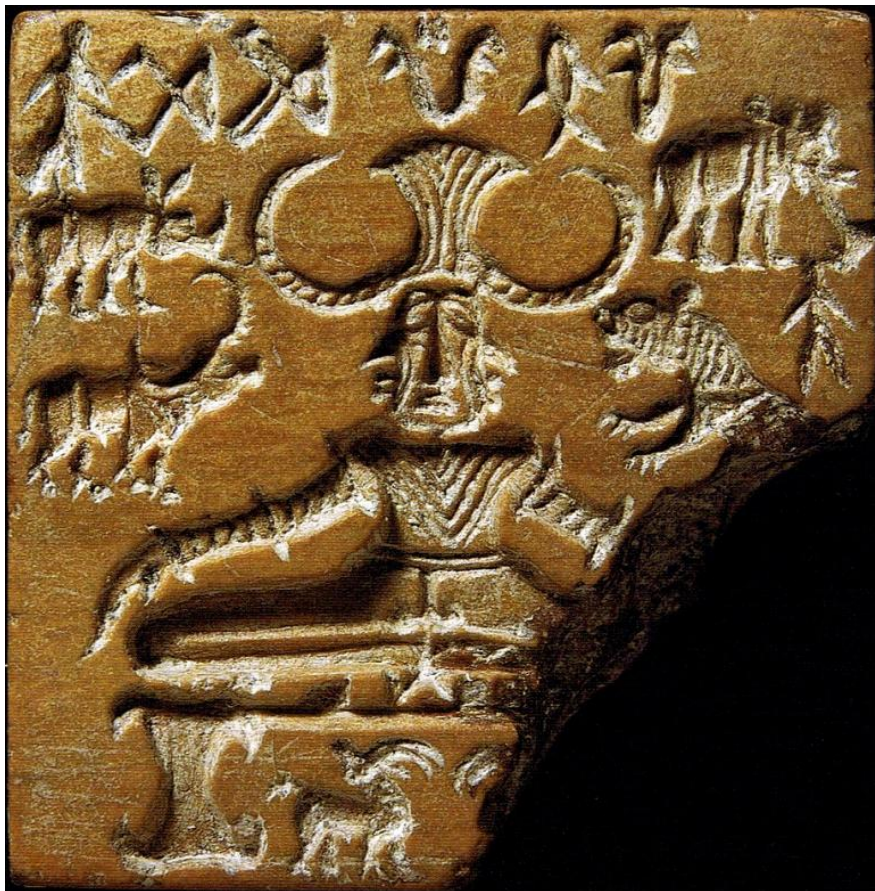
Hachmann stated that the most likely option of the plate's former function was a mount which, according to its flat form, once decorated either a box or a chest or probably the body of a wagon or carriage. Hachmann considered the object to be unique in the whole area of the Carpathian Mountains, according to its shape, the techniques used in its crafting, as well as its ornamental scene. He claimed that this statement would be a fact which would appear more clearly in present times (in 1990/91) as it did when Friedrich Drexel (1915, 8f.) mentioned this silver plate in his studies about the Gundestrup cauldron. Furthermore, Hachmann noted that, based on this fact, a comparison of the plate with the vessel would have a specific meaning that he assumed to be a negative one (*Hachmann 1991, 721f.*).

Hachmann interpreted the left figure on the plate as a depiction of a man, based on the supposed sword, but disagreed with Drexel's theory that the second figure also represents a woman, because in this case the fashion of men and women would not have differed in the society the object originated from. Therefore, both representations can be identified as men. The plate from Săliște and the plates of the Gundestrup cauldron would only have a few things in common, ie solely those similarities that can also be found on other silver objects with images of humans, in particular on artefacts made in the pre-Roman Iron Age. The only specific parallel, which Hachmann could find between the two scenes from Săliște and Gundestrup are the vegetable ornaments. But this would not prove a probable connection, because these elements were based on the art of the Mediterranean world from where it spread to different directions and developed several variations (*Hachmann 1991, 722f.*).

According to Hachmann, the silver plate cannot be used to date the cauldron and cannot provide information about its place of origin either. Neither the technique nor the design or iconography of the plate would have had any influences on the artefact. But if the object category of cauldrons with a rim made of iron is used as a starting point for the dating of both objects, then they are close to each other in a chronological allocation. Hachmann noted that the plate can be dated into the first century BC. This age determination is based on the work of Kurt Horendt (1973, 127-168 as cited by *Hachmann 1991, 723*) who, in his own classification, assigned the hoard of Săliște to the intermediate category of silver treasures from Dacia and to a period of time which approximately spans from 75 to 25 BC (*Hachmann 1991, 723*).

- Chapter Four -

The sigils of the Harappa Civilisation with depictions of pre-yogic positions and parallels between Indian and European image motifs



- Chapter Four -

1. The Harappa Civilisation

In the 3rd millennium BC, the so called Indus Valley Civilisation or Harappa Civilisation developed in the Indus Valley, a region which today belongs to the territory of Pakistan. But the distribution area of this ancient culture reached, in its eastern extent, a territory between the Indian states of Haryana in the North and Gujarat in the West, while the western extension of the Indus civilization extended to the Afghan part of the region of Baluchistan. It can be estimated that several dozen cities or towns once existed in this area. The process of the settling of people in the Indus valley began around 7000 BC, from where the cultural formation developed in stages until it climaxed in the development of the Harappa Civilisation around 4000 BC. This high civilization reached its zenith in the period from 2600 to 2000 BC, the Mature Harappan period is dated from 2600 to 1900 BC. The Harappa Civilisation is known particularly for two categories of finds: ceramics and sigils (*Shinde & Willis 2014, 1f.*). In 2012, a total amount of 2000 sites, which can be assigned to this culture, were discovered, but only five of them had been cities, while the rest comprised solely villages (*Kaur 2012*).

In the early 1920s, the Indian government carried out excavations at two major sites of the Harappa Civilisation, Harappa in 1921 and Mohenjo-daro in 1922 (*cf. Marshall 1931*). These investigations under the management of the British archaeologist Sir John Marshall led to the discovery of the Harappa Civilisation that was previously unknown and the two sites are among



Fig. 273: Map of the Indus valley with Harappa sites.

this culture's biggest cities (*Encyclopædia Britannica: Sir John Marshall. [Online] Available from: <https://www.britannica.com/biography/John-Hubert-Marshall> [Accessed 18th May 2018]*). Another city that can be assigned to the biggest cities from the Harappa Civilisation is Rakigarhi, where several excavation campaigns have been run in the last years (*Kaur 2012*). At the site of Mohenjo-daro, a sigil made of faience was found, which shows a person that has some resemblances to the illustration of the antlered master of animals, the

supposed Cernunnos, on the Gundestrup cauldron (C 6571). Such similarities are the horned appearance, the attributes in the form of accompanying animals and the seated position, which reminds one of a meditative pose or some kind of yoga figure. These parallels were already recognized by Friedrich Otto Schrader (1934, 189-192).

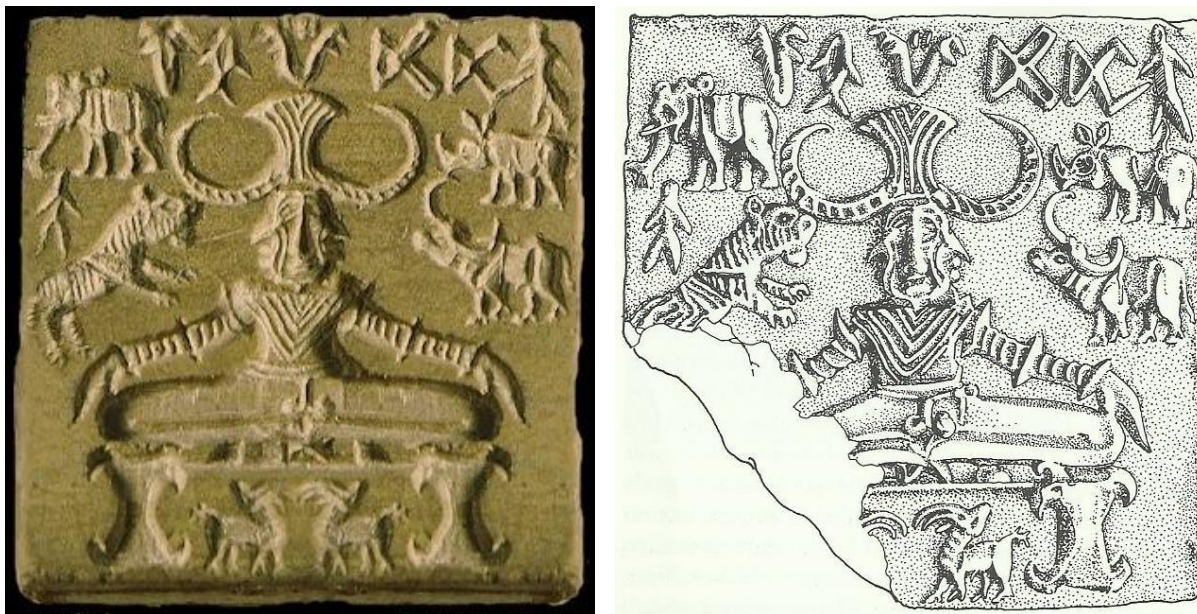


Fig. 274 & 275: The sigil from Mohenjo-daro with a horned figure which is surrounded by animals. Both versions are mirror-inverted, the one to the left is a reconstruction of the sigil while the right one is a negative copy.

2. A sigil with a horned figure in a possible yoga position and animals

This specific sigil was found in 1927 at the site of Mohenjo-daro. The bottom corner of its right lower side is missing and has been broken; an uneven break line is clearly visible. Therefore, the image is a bit damaged on its right side. The depiction shows a figure who sits on a piece of furniture, which could be a bench, some kind of podium or even a throne. The position of the legs is not the usual cross-legged pose. If it was supposed to illustrate such a pose, the artist was not very skilled. The lower legs are bent so that they are in a parallel position to the upper legs. This could show a seated position, where the lower legs are either in front of the upper ones or underneath them. But, compared to the other fine details on the sigil, it is very likely that the depicted position illustrates the seating pose the artist had in mind. The figure's feet are crossed with or over each other. In addition, the figure is shown ithyphallic and wears some kind of band or girdle around the waist. Both arms are stretched and end circa on the height of the knees, the thumbs rest on the knees and the palms as well as the fingers are a bit stretched. The arms are decorated with several bracelets and bangles. A number of lines which form an upside down triangle are shown on the chest of the male figure

and could either be a singular or multi-chain necklace, but also a collar. The man's face has a big nose and it appears that he has long pointy ears, which hang down, all in all the face looks very similar to a mask. His head is covered with a headgear, which becomes broader to the top. On the bottom of the headpiece, two horns, obviously from a bull or a buffalo, spring forth or are fixed on it.

The man is surrounded by four animals, two on each side. On the right, an elephant is shown above a tiger and on the left side a (water) buffalo stands underneath a rhino. All animals face the man, except the elephant. In addition, further figures can be found on the sigil: probably an antelope in front or underneath the seat of the man and two stick figures, one on the right side, between the tiger and the elephant, and another on the top corner to the left, beside five different symbols. It cannot be said who the man is, should be or what his task was. The meditative position might refer to some sort of priest, yogi or perhaps a deity. It is likely that the animals are somehow connected to him, maybe because the man is a protector of nature or divinity of the flora, as well as the fauna and also for fertility, which could be symbolized by the phallus. The four animals could symbolize this aspect of nature.

2.1 The interpretation of John Marshall

According to John Marshall (1931), the figure on the sigil displays a male god, who is an early form or a '*predecessor*' of *Shiva*. He links that assumption to several, in his opinion, obvious characteristics of the depicted man. Marshall sees the features of the face not as a mask or something else, but as three different faces with a possible forth at the back of the head, which cannot be seen. The historic *Shiva* was illustrated with a different number of faces, either one, three, four or five and furthermore the three eyes of the deity are part of (almost) every portrait of him. The four-faced deity can look in all four cardinal directions and can also watch over the universe with its four quarters. Another reason for the three faces could be either a combination or a fusion between cults of other deities into this specific figure, therefore representing the case that the deity is now three faced. The idea of a triad or a trinity is an ancient concept in India and, in addition, also has deep roots in Mesopotamia, even before the time of the *Āryans*. In India, this conception gained a philosophical component at the earliest point in the historic period. So, the horned deity could be an image of such an early form of trinity, but Marshall prefers the theory that the many faces of the god represent his ability to oversee all things that happen. Later, the depicted ability was transformed into the *trimūrtis* of the gods *Shiva*, *Brahmā* and *Vishṇu* (Marshall 1931, 52f.).

Marshall interprets the way the man is sitting as a typical pose of yoga: both heels are pressed together, his toes face down and his knees rest on the throne he sits on. This sitting position indeed resembles a yoga pose. Shiva in particular is the supreme master of all yogis, who practises asceticism and mortifies himself, therefore he is also named *Mahāyogī*. On the one hand, the practise of yoga should achieve a fusion or unification with the divinity through concentration and mental self-discipline, but on the other hand its aim was also to gain magnificent powers. The roots of yoga in India reach deep and far back in time. It originates under a population earlier than the Āryans. The beginning of Shaivism⁴⁵ also dates back to that time. Yoga gained its importance as a part of the Indo-Āryan religion in the so called Epic Period (Marshall 1931, 53f.).

Another aspect of Shiva is his aspect as the lord of animals, *paśupati*. The four animals positioned around and towards him could symbolise this character. The name or the word *paśupati* changed its meaning over time, in historic times that term referred to cattle with Shiva as its lord. Analogous to this idea, '*paśu*' was used for humans as a metaphoric idea, in which men are the herds with Shiva as their herdsman. In the Vedic hymns, the meaning of *paśu* changed and referred to the animals of the jungle, but it is possible that the function of Shiva has been modified and he could have been regarded as the master of all animals in that time. The Vedic god *Rudra* was also addressed as *paśupati*, but was combined and recognized with the cult of Shiva. Therefore, it is possible that this was one of the reasons for the identification of these two characters (Marshall 1931, 54.).

Marshall thinks that the two horns on the headpiece also have a special meaning, which emphasizes the importance or the rank of the figure. Parallels to these horns also decorate several other figures on sigils and terra-cotta masks from Mohenjo-daro. Therefore, it is very unlikely that the horns are only mundane and are not somehow significant in sacrality, either as a symbol for a deity or for a priest or a worshipper of it. Comparable examples of such horns from the same time can also be found in Babylonia and in Sumer. There, the horns were used to signify a deity, as well as kings and priests, who were considered to be either an incarnation or a representative of the gods. The horns should not be understood as an attribute of only one deity nor as a connection of two divinities to each other. Nevertheless, this specific symbol of divineness from the period before the Āryans did not vanish completely and persisted in a changed form in the Vedic period. Marshall thinks that the horned headdress transformed into the shape of a trident, Shiva's specific *triśūla*, and could link the figure on the seal with the god. But the trident-symbol was also used by other religious groups. It

⁴⁵ A main tradition of Hinduism which sees Shiva as the highest, absolute entity and a transcendental personification of Brahman.

represents the *triratna*, the Trinity of the three jewels, in Buddhism, for example (Marshall 1931, 54f.).

Marshall sees, beside the four animals on both sides of the figure, two deer or ibexes underneath the seat of the supposed deity. These creatures look almost alike, except that their heads turn away from each other, and their horns point to the middle of the scene. Two similar deer can be found on many images of Shiva from the Middle Ages, in particular when the god is depicted as *Dakṣiṇāmūrti* (a guru of all sorts of knowledge) or as *Yōgadakṣiṇāmūrti*. There is also a parallel to Buddhism, because in the *dharmacakra* scene, two deer are shown beneath the seat of Buddha. They symbolize the deer park where the first sermon took place. This scene was widespread in the early days of Buddhist India; therefore, it could be possible that Shaivism adopted that motif from Buddhism. But this specific scene is older and it is likely that the Buddhists themselves borrowed it from a previous culture (Marshall 1931, 55.). In Marshall's opinion, the figure depicted on the sigil shows several attributes of the historic Shiva and thence could be a prototype of or for this deity. There is no known name for that figure, which has been transmitted over the millennia. Marshall mentions a theory that the name Shiva originates from the Dravidian language and means “red”, which could be true or false. Nevertheless, it is unrealistic that the epithet of Shiva (equal auspicious) in Sanskrit, which had been created by the Āryans, resembles his primordial name, according to phonetics. Although there is a possibility that this epithet could have been used as a euphemism to prevent the wrath of the deity. For example, in ancient Greece it was common practice to call the *Erinyes Eumenides*, which means “the kindly”. It could be possible that the figure from the sigil, which has several things in common with Shiva, also resembles him in another aspect: as a deity of destruction and terror, of malicious spirits and demons who can be pleased by blood sacrifices. In addition, there exist multiple similarities between Shiva and the Vedic god Rudra, the cult of the latter amalgamated over time with the former. The hymns describe Rudra as a benevolent god, who is sage, helpful and it is simple to invoke him. On the other hand, he can be terrible and several hymns attend to calm his fury (Marshall 1931, 55f.).

To Marshall, another important question occurs: is the portrayal on the sigil an image of a real cult idol or does it simply show an anthropomorphised figure of a deity like the population could have imagined it? A deity's imagined human form is not automatically the shape of people's worship. Several deities could be worshipped in form of a *baetylus* (stone idol) on the one hand and could be imagined as to be humanlike in character on the other. For example, such a practice is still common in present-day India where usually anthropomorphic imagined

deities are also worshipped in an abstract, nonpictorial way, like Shiva in the form of a *lingam* and Vishnu as a *Shaligram*. Marshall recommends that awareness is necessary to avoid false interpretations, like to mistake symbolic images for cult idols. He argues that the figure on the sigil definitely shows a cult idol according to the image's stylization and its implemented details. Finally, Marshall concludes that in the culture of Mohenjo-daro the deities would have been illustrated in an anthropomorphic way, but that a worship of idolized symbols was also practised (Marshall 1931, 56.).

2.2 Criticism on Marshall's interpretation

The interpretation of the depiction on the sigil from Mohenjo-daro has been criticised in a number of approaches by several scholars. Friedrich Schrader (1934, 191f.) disagreed with the interpretation of the three faces. The supposed noses could be strands of hair, decorated with jewellery which is still common in India. Thomas McEvelley (1981) notes that Marshall's theory has been broadly approved over a period of time that spanned over two generations. Mircea Eliade (1958, 355 as cited by McEvelley 1981, 46) supported Marshall's thesis that the practise and the concept of yoga could have originated in the Indus valley, because the image on the sigil shows a specific yoga pose. Furthermore, the idea that this illustration could show a figure who practises meditation is also encouraged by Mahadeo G. Bhagat (1979, 99 as cited by McEvelley 1981, 46), who also interpreted the facial expression of a male bust as a meditating condition, which would prove that this practice was in use during this time period. Bhagat also saw the person as a celestial or god-like yogi in a state of meditation (McEvelley 1981, 46). Joseph Campbell (1962, 170 as cited by McEvelley 1981, 46) described the figure as a representation of a yogi of divine nature who would practice meditation.

McEvelley states that this argumentation could not really be proven. The similarity of the figure's pose to an actual yoga position could portend some practice of yoga in the ancient culture of the Indus Valley, but it does not show clear evidence for meditation. According to McEvelley, Marshall's conclusion included several uncertain points. The figure's characteristics Marshall used for his interpretation could have been misunderstood and are less clear for McEvelley. A comparable three-sided headgear is not part of Shiva's usual iconographic depiction in India, although the deity has a connection to a bull (McEvelley 1981, 46). There are several other deities or divine characters who are also connected or associated with a bull. A common name for the Buddha is "*bull of the Saykas*" (McEvelley

1981, 46) and the trilateral headpiece is similar to *triśūlas* from Buddhist scenes at Sanchi. Furthermore, these images are far older than any parallels in Shaivism (McEvelley 1981, 46). In addition, in Hinduism the *triśūla* is not an attribute which is solely assigned to Shiva. It is also a symbol in the form of a weapon of the goddess Devī who fights a demon in the shape of a buffalo. The Indian archaeologist K. N. Sastri (1965), who was part of the team that made the excavations in Harappa, came up with a completely distinct interpretation for the tripartite headpiece (McEvelley 1981, 46):

“The fan-shaped crest rising from the centre of the buffalo's horns on the god's head is itself a symbolic representation of the fan-shaped foliage of the conventionalized pipal tree emerging from a seed vessel resting on the altar.” (Sastri 1965, 57)

Sastri supported his approach with several references to depictions of pipal⁴⁶ leaves that had been illustrated between horns on burial urns, which were excavated at Harappa. Almost all cults or religious movements of India, like Buddhism, Jainism, Saivism and Vaisnavism consider the pipal- or bodhi tree to be a sacred plant. Furthermore, Sastri's argumentation interprets the figure as man. Another motif on the sigil also appears in Hinduism as much as in Buddhism, the throne with deer. This object is connected with Buddha and with Shiva to the same extent (McEvelley 1981, 46f.).

Ernest Mackay (1948, 53) related the mentioned bust with apparently half-closed eyes with similar figures or statues made from clay that had originated from the cities of Kish and Ur in the ancient region of Sumer. He is sure that connections or contact between the culture from the Indus valley and these Sumerian city states existed. Therefore, it is possible that the said sculpture is merely an imitation or probably an imported object, which would make the theory about its meditating condition obsolete and brings up the question if the Sumerians had known a practice similar to meditation. Herbert P. Sullivan (1964, 115-125) provides another point of view of the bust's original intended direction of view, which is supposed to be focused on the tip of its nose, cannot doubtlessly be reconstructed, because the shells, which were once inserted in the eyes, are lost (McEvelley 1981, 46).

Sullivan also has questioned Marshall's description that the person on the sigil has three or four faces. The man could also have the head of an animal instead of a human one, or a mask shaped in that way, probably those of a Brahman bull or eventually those of a tiger. The attribute of three or four faces is not solely assigned to Shiva. Several other characters have

⁴⁶ Pipal leaves can be found on the *Ficus religiosa* or sacred fig which is also named bodhi tree. Wikipedia: *Ficus religiosa*. [Online] Available from: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ficus religiosa> [Accessed 10th Feb. 2018].

been depicted with the same numbers of visages, like the god Brāhma or Rāvaṇa, an antagonist of Shiva who is illustrated in this appearance on the Kailāsanāth Temple, cut into rock at the caves of Ellora⁴⁷. This characteristic also appears on iconographic scenes of Jainism, for example the motif is used for depictions of the *tīrthaṅkaras*⁴⁸, as a symbol that they preach in all four cardinal directions (McEvilley 1981, 46).

An arrangement of several animals surrounding a yogi or the illustration of a person in a yoga position is a common motif in the iconographic images of the *tīrthaṅkaras* in Jainism. On the pillars crafted during the reign of Aśoka, which have been ornamented with Buddhist elements and scenes, four animals represent the cardinal directions (McEvilley 1981, 46).

Although Marshall interpreted the figure on the sigil to be ithyphallic, he also noted that the supposed penis could belong to a girdle or a band bound around the person's waist, of which the end forms a tassel. Sullivan (1964, 115-125) supports the second possibility because the phallus did not become an attribute of Shiva before the 1st century BC. He also notes that several of Marshall's descriptions, which defined a number of objects as lingas, disagree with the interpretations of the same items by other scholars. Furthermore, Sullivan speaks for a completely different interpretation, which sees the sitting person rather as a woman than as a man, resulting from the comparison of the sigil with other iconographic images on artefacts from the Indus valley. Therefore, he comes up with the suggestion that the depiction does not show a prototype of Shiva, but a variant of the great goddess who is represented with the icons of a tree and a tiger. This approach would suppose that a religious or cultic system of belief had existed in the Indus cultures in which the central sacral figure was some kind of mother goddess (McEvilley 1981, 46f.).

Based on McEvilley's article and the mentioned supposition by Sullivan, Taylor came up with a different interpretation. In his opinion, the figure has an androgynous character: a man with clearly visible genitals who wears the jewellery and costumes/garments of a woman according to the common (cultic/sacral or religious) regulations that had existed in the Indus Valley Civilization (Taylor 1997, 217). This depiction is comparable with the antlered master of animals and the supposed Cernunnos on the Gundestrup cauldron that could have been influenced by these older motives, according to several similarities between these two illustrations of different origin (cf. Section 7.1).

⁴⁷ A complex of a number of caves as several temples, monuments and also monasteries of Buddhism, Hinduism and Jainism hewed into rock. The whole place became an UNESCO World Heritage site in 1983 (Wikipedia: Ellora caves. [Online] Available from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ellora_Caves [Accessed 11th Feb. 2018]).

⁴⁸ A Jaina saviour who teaches the spiritual ways of the righteous path, the dharma (Wikipedia: Tirthankara. [Online] Available from: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tirthankara> [Accessed 11th February 2018]).

3. The group of sigils with depictions of possible yoga poses

The sigil with the horned figure is not the only one from the Indus Valley Civilization that shows a possible yoga pose. It is part of a group of six such images, two from Harappā and four from Mohenjo-daro. An Indian scholar named Ramaprasad Chanda was the first one who came up with a theory in 1929 that there could be a possible connection between the Indus Civilization and yoga. He related it to a bust from Mohenjo-daro, which probably shows a king or a priest whose eyes are not completely open but half closed. Chanda saw a possible meditation condition in that expression, where the eyes are focused on the point of the nose as it is proposed in the *Bhagavad Gītā* as well as in other works about yoga. In addition, he suggested that the yogic origin could lie in the Indus valley and from there it could have developed into historic movements of yoga. But, several other religious concepts, like Jainism, could also have their roots in the Indus Valley. While Chanda's theory was generally with open ends, John Marshall limited this approach to a concept of a prototype of Shiva, based on the sigil from Mohenj-daro with the cross-legged horned figure. But this sigil is not unique. The five other sigils from the Indus Valley, which also depict possible yoga position or figures, vary from each other in illustration and attributes (McEvilley 1981, 44-47).

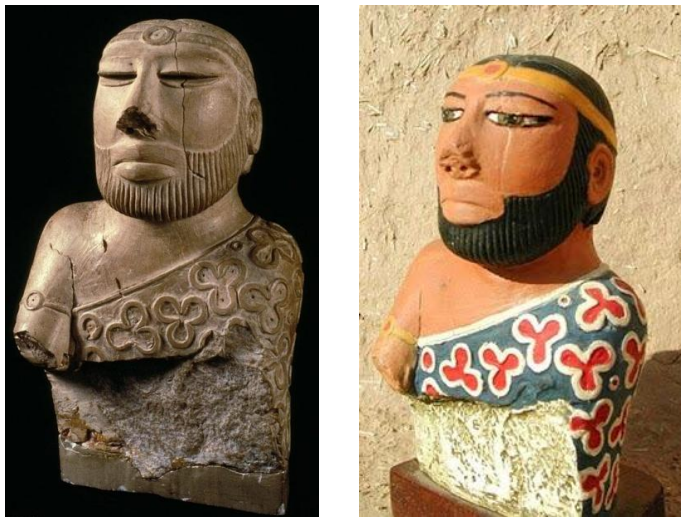


Fig. 276 & 277: Bust from Mohenjo-daro, original artefact and a reconstructed and also painted sculpture.

3.1 The other possible yoga-depictions from Mohenjo-daro

Of the four other images from Mohenjo-daro, two are also represented on sigils and the other one has been stamped on an amulet (McEvilley 1981, 47). According to John Marshall, the amulet or tablet has been made of blue faience and the depicted scene is more likely a representation of a deity, rather than a person of royalty, based on the figures on each side worshipping it (Marshall 1927, 61).

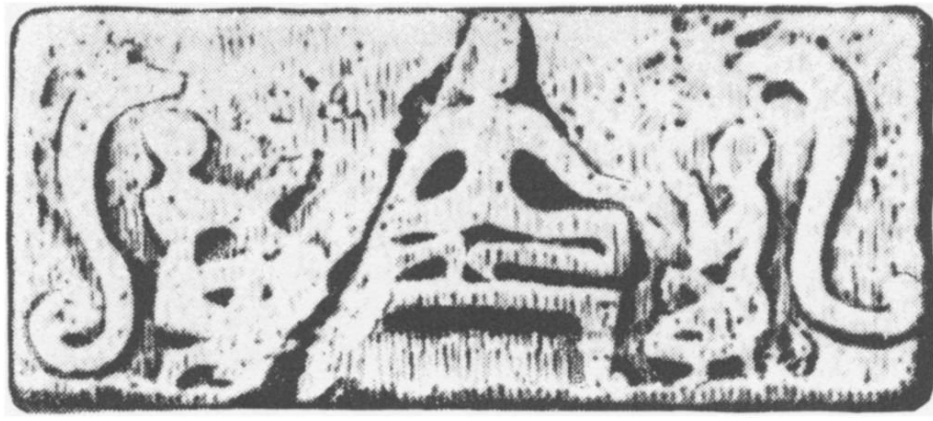


Fig. 278: The amulet with the second depiction of a yoga pose from Mohenjo-daro.

3.1.1 The second depiction of a yoga pose

The amulet or tablet crafted from blue faience shows a slim figure from the front on a platform in a squatting position whereby the legs are turned outward, who sits on the heels of its feet, its arms are slightly bent, but also stretched so that the wrists lay on its knees and the hands are either put on the legs or stretched over like the hands of *paśupati*. The sex is not marked in any form and therefore unclear. On each side, a person kneeling is depicted from the side. It seems to be bald and it raises its hands in a begging way, pressed together with almost opened palms like forming a bowl. Behind both of them, a snake rises, which reaches above the figure in a form similar to the letter S, either in the usual way or mirror-inverted.



Fig. 279 & 280: The third yoga depiction on a sigil from Mohenjo-daro (original and negative imprint).

3.1.2 The third depiction of a yoga pose

The second sigil has more parallels with the first image. There is also a figure in front view on a platform whose legs are bent sideward in front of the body, and the soles of the feet are pressed together. It is not ithyphallic, and it appears that the figure wears some kind of either a slip or tanga. Another possibility would be to interpret the marked genital area as vulva, because there are roundings on the figure's chest, which could be intended as breasts or some

kind of necklace or collar. But this interpretation is unlikely, because then the small lines, which run from the 'vulva' and form an ankle, would make no sense. The figure's arms are stretched, decorated with rings, similar to those of the horned figure that is surrounded by animals, and its hands are lying on the knees. The head could be formed either as one face or possibly two, which look to the right and to the left. The person wears a headgear shaped like a U with an extension that could either be a plant or a flower or some kind of feather. In addition, the hat is decorated with horns, which are smaller in shape to those of a bull and more similar to a boar's tusks. There are letters on the top of the sigil, some sort of hieroglyphs, like on the first example.



Fig. 281 & 282: The fourth yoga-depiction on a sigil from Mohenjo-daro (original and negative imprint).

3.1.3 The fourth depiction of a yoga pose

The third and last sigil from Mohenjo-daro is fragmented and depicts a figure in a squatting position, which is almost alike to the previous ones, placed on the ground without a platform or something similar. The person's heels are put against each other and its legs are before and underneath the body, while the heels are used to sit on them. The figure appears naked, only wearing something that looks like a thong, and its belly button is marked with a dot. The arms of the person are bent, ornamented with rings and bracelets and the forearms rest on the upper legs, while the hand palms lie on the knees. The face is not very detailed and, therefore, hard to identify, but it seems that on that sigil the figure only has one face. Alternatively, the lines could depict some kind of mask. The headgear consists of two horns on each side, which overflow into a line bent at the top that appears to be some sort of a plant, flower or tree. A decorative stripe runs from the side or the back of the figure's head, which may represent a piece of cloth or hair. There are letters or hieroglyphs on this sigil, too.

3.2 The probable yoga depictions from Harappā

The two images from Harappā differ from the motifs of Mohenjo-daro, but symbols of fertility are also used for the depicted scenes (McEvelley 1981, 47). The illustrations are depicted on a double sided sigil (Jansen 1986, 42).

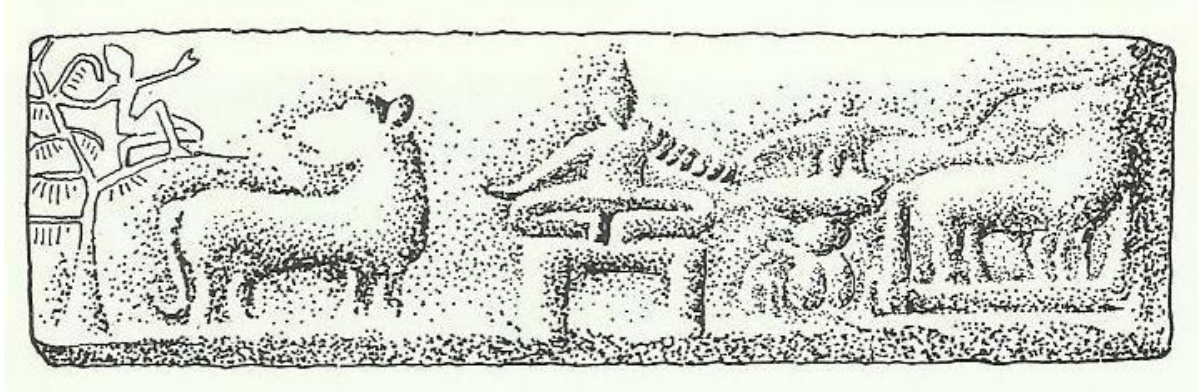


Fig. 283: The first depiction of a yoga pose from Harappā.

3.2.1 The first depiction of a yoga pose

The front side shows a seated figure on a pedestal or a bench in the middle of the scene, although the lower legs might not touch the top of the pedestal. The soles of its feet are pressed together and it seems that the person sits on its heels and balances on tiptoes. The figure's arms are stretched, the right one is lower than the left and its hand is bent out of the straight line the arm would make if it were stretched. The left arm is raised slightly higher and decorated with jewellery, apart from that, the figure seems to be bare. Its face is not stylized in any form and it does not wear a similar headdress as the other figures from Mohenjo-daro, but there is a small object on the figure's head that could either be some sort of hat or hair with a knot like the one Buddha wears.

A tree is illustrated on the right side of the central motif with another figure placed on one of its limbs. The figure's right arm grabs a branch, while the left one points upwards, probably to the sky, and the figure's face is also oriented in the same direction. Underneath the limb, a large carnivore whose head turns back to the figure in the tree stands, which is smaller than the person on the pedestal. McEvelley describes that motif as a “*tree-with-deity-and-tiger icon*” (McEvelley 1981, 47). Jansen recognises the tree as an acacia and sees the man in it as a probable hunter who plans to attack the tiger from above (Jansen 1986, 42).

On the left side, we can see an animal with long horns, probably a goat, surrounded by a fence. The goat's head is raised and looks to the left side. Jansen interprets it in another way and thinks that the goat looks towards the sitting figure (Jansen 1986, 42). But in this variant

the horns would be in the wrong place, on condition that the horns are really such ones and not part of the fence surrounding the animal. Between the sitting figure and the goat, another object is placed that reminds of some sort of sculpture, which could also be a tree trunk or a plant. The sculpture is the more likely option, because it seems to be built out of stones and therefore could also be a cultic icon, like an *ovoo*⁴⁹. Only the squatting figure is shown from a frontal view, the other one in the tree as well as the animals are illustrated from the side.

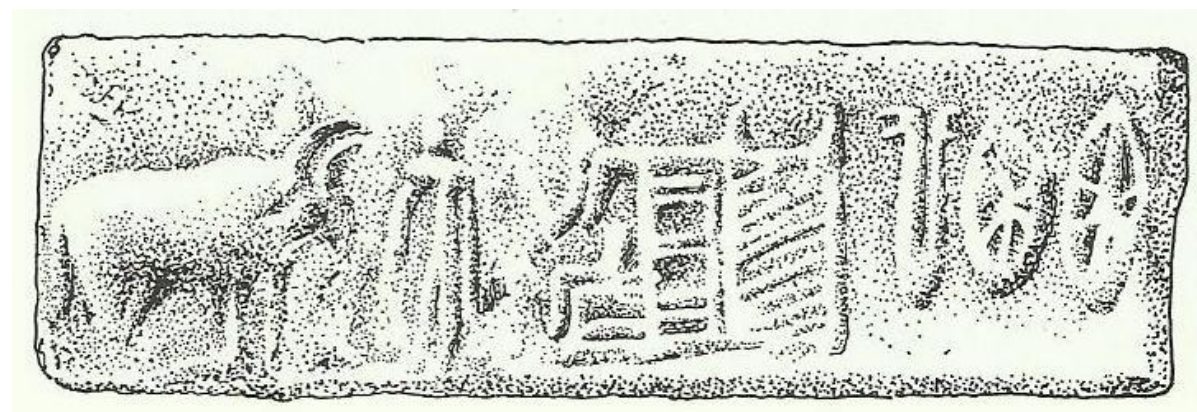


Fig. 284: *The second depiction of a yoga pose from Harappā.*

3.2.2 The second depiction of a yoga pose

The second field shows an illustration of a standing bull on its right side, depicted in profile, in front of whom a simple slender manikin stands, which faces the animal and appears to be passive. The figure seems to be tall, because the top of its head ends at the same level as the pointed end of the bull's curved horns. Its left arm leans against the body and holds something in its hand that seems to be a small square or trapezium, while the right arm is stretched away from the body, but is not raised. These two figures could show a bullfight either in an upcoming contest, in the beginning or anytime during the contest. McEvelley describes it as *"the motif of the contest with a bull"* (McEvelley 1981, 47). Behind the man stands some sort of a box or a cage, like in a rodeo show. It is made of grids which consists of two parts. The right part is marked with six horizontal lines ordered in three pairs of two. Its left side contains several lines which run obliquely, and there are two extensions similar to cones or horns. In addition, there is a third in front of the box on the left side, which could be some sort of hook, hinge or lock for the cage.

Behind the cage, there is another figure placed which is illustrated from the front side and sitting on a pedestal, but it is partly concealed by the box-construction, so that only the figure's right side can be seen. The figure is also made in a very simple way and shown in a seated position, the visible leg makes a square angle over the right edge of the pedestal.

⁴⁹ Shrines, sanctuaries or cultic sites for the spirit or the deity of the mountain. They are formed to piles made of stones or sticks (Jacobson-Tepfer 2015, 323).

Although the left one is partly hidden by the box it seems that the lower leg is tucked up to the body so that the left leg forms a bow. The figure's arm is almost stretched, and a bit bent so that barely it reaches above the knee. On the left side, behind the box there are three letters or hieroglyphs, as on the sigil from Mohenjo-daro. According to Jansen, the bull is a zebu, which bows its head in front of the standing man. In the area between them, there is a stake with three forks. In addition, Jansen interprets the box as a possible house (*Jansen 1986, 42*).

Jansen mentions another sigil, which is shaped like a prism and has three different sides with varying scenes, although no image or photo of this sigil is shown. The first images show a figure, which is described as a deity with a jewellery on its right arm. The second field depicts a tall and strong man and a bull, who are in a fight. And in the third scene, a figure in a seated position similar to a yoga position is illustrated (*Jansen 1986, 42*). Marshall came up with the theory that the scenes, which show fights between animals like buffalos and tigers against men, served as an image or symbol that should protect a person from these wild creatures. Such illustrations or sigils could have been used as talismans and have probably been regarded as sacred amulets (*Marshall 1931, 71*).

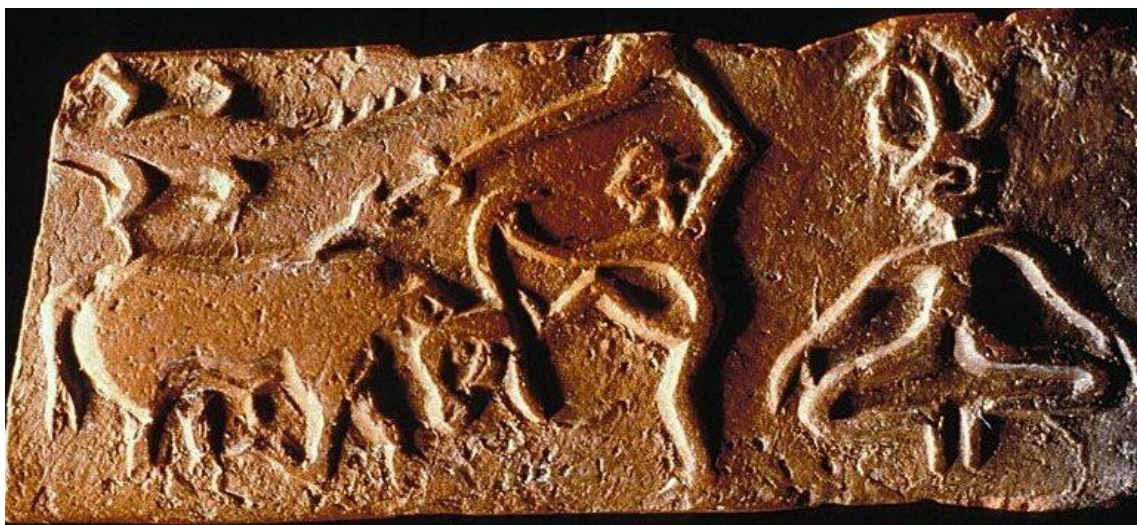


Fig. 285: The third depiction of a yoga pose from Harappā.

3.2.3 The third depiction of a yoga pose

During my research, I found an additional image of a figure in a yogic seat position on the internet, which is depicted on a platelet made of terra cotta that has been found in Harappa. The shaped scene shows a bull with long consistent horns, probably a water buffalo, and a tail with a forked end on the right side. The bull's head is bowed and it attacks a figure in front of him. That figure is shown in profile, with a face that looks to the buffalo. It is slender and wears no visible clothes or decorations on the body. In addition, the person presses its right

foot and arm against the bull's head and carries a spear in its left hand, which is raised and aimed at the animal's back, as to spear the beast with the weapon or to throw it onto the animal, maybe the weapon has already been thrown. Another possibility could be that the figure drew the spear, which has a thin sharp head that runs out into two downward directed spikes, from the bull's back. Underneath the head, there are two upward pointing tips on the pole of the spear, similar to a cross-guard of medieval hunting weapons like a boar spear. Above the bull, there is another animal with a round, almost ellipse shaped body and four short, bent legs with claws or finger-like extensions. A long line with prongs on it emerges from its head, which leads to the conclusion that the animal most similar to that image is a crocodile⁵⁰.

The left side of the scenery shows an illustration of another human figure designed in the same slender way as the hunter and again nearly naked. Its upper legs are bent sideways and from the knees the lower legs form a horizontal line, which is only interrupted by the feet, which make a right angle. The soles of its feet are pressed together and it balances on tiptoes. If we compare the seated figure to the hunter's leg next to it, which stands on the ground, it appears that the figure hovers above the ground. Also the hooves of the buffalo are lower than the figure's tiptoes. Of course, it could be possible that there is no deeper intention behind it and that the position is only a result of perspective. It could also be that the artist accidentally placed the figure too high. Anyway, the gap between the figure's legs runs over into a vertical line, which stops shortly underneath. The arms of the figure are stretched out and its hands form two upside down V's, the thumbs splayed out and resting almost on the knees, while the other fingers are nearly straight and held in the air. The head of the figure has no sculpted face but a central mark that seems to be an x and it wears a headgear which is decorated with three horns, one at each side and one in the middle. The middle horn could also be a branch or a plant and bends to the horn on the right side. Above these two horns, there is an object, which appears to be a star.

There's a dot on the figure's chest, which could represent a gem or a star, comparable to Vishnu's divine jewel *Kaustubha* (Shinde & Willis 2014, 5).

According to the website's description, the headgear has a branch in the middle from which three possible branches or leaves sprout (Harappa: Molded tablet 89. [Online] Available from: <https://www.harappa.com/slide/molded-tablet-0> [Accessed 18th Jan. 2018]). Alternatively, these could also be buds.

⁵⁰ The animal should be a gharial, a crocodilian that belongs to the so called *Gavialidae* reptile family (Harappa: Molded tablet 89. [Online] Available from: <https://www.harappa.com/slide/molded-tablet-0> [Accessed 18th Jan. 2018]; cf. Wikipedia: Gharial: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gharial> [Accessed 18th Jan. 2018]).

The scene on the platelet described above also has a backside, but this illustration steps out of the line, because it does not depict an image of a probable yoga position. Instead, the picture shows a slender manikin as a naked woman, who is shown in a fighting scene between two tigers, of whom she grabs each by the throat. Underneath her an elephant is walking and above her is the symbol of a probable wheel, although it is shaped like an ellipse, with six spokes. The whole scene is shown in a vertical way in contrast to the other illustration, which is arranged horizontally (*Harappa: Molded tablet 90. [Online] Available from: <https://www.harappa.com/slide/molded-tablet> [Accessed 18th January 2018]*)).

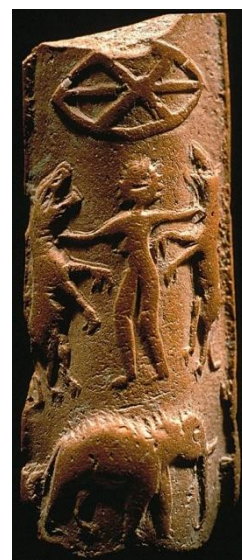


Fig. 286: Backside of the platelet.

3.3. A copper plate of the Harappa Civilisation

More than 200 tablets and wafers made of copper and small in size were found at various sites assigned to the Harappa Civilisation. These items were decorated with depictions and a number of glyphs of the so called Indus script. Based on many similar images, which probably resulted from copying, the tablets were interpreted as a kind of token. Nine additional copper plates that originated from the Harappa Civilisation belonged to two collections of private persons from



Fig. 287: Horned figure in yoga pose on a copper plate.

Pakistan. These objects date to the period from 2600-1900 BC, the Matura Harappa phase. The 'Pakistani' copper plates differ from the other ones, because they are larger, resilient and were ornamented with fine engraved mirror-inverted characters of the Indus script, as they appeared on many sigils, although the impression would not have the same quality as the thicker glyphs on the sigils. A theory suggested that these unique plates could have been used for printing, which has been put to the test. The results were convincing. Therefore, the artefacts could be the most ancient printing plates worldwide, whereby the oldest printed art would originate from the Indus Valley (*Shinde & Willis 2014, 2, 7-10*).

One of the plates (63,9 x 56,1 x 5,5 mm; weight: 135,8 g) depicts a horned figure in a yoga pose between a plant and a goblet, as well as 34 glyphs, comparable to the aforementioned yogic figure. The dot on the chest could symbolize a gem (*Shinde & Willis 2014, 5f*).

4. The spectrum of possible yoga positions on the sigils from the Indus Valley

The images on the sigils from Mohenjo-daro and Harappa with depictions of possible yoga positions have been compared to yogic figures, practised in the present by McEvilley. He states four similarities that all the images have in common (McEvilley 1981, 47f.):

1. All figures have their heels pressed together.
2. The torso is placed directly onto the combined heels so that there is no space between the body parts, although there could be a little support in the form of a pad, which could be on the back so that it is not visible for the viewer.
3. The knees seem to be curved out so that they form a right angle, at least it appears like that to the viewer.
4. The knees are bowed to a very low level so that they nearly touch the pedestal. McEvilley mentions a possible assistance underneath the knee of the horned figure that is surrounded by animals and supposed to be *paśupati*, which would be visible if the image is enlarged (McEvilley 1981, 48)).

McEvilley is wrong in No.1, because not all figures have their heels together, between *paśupati*'s, there is a small space because his feet are crossed over. Also, the right leg of the person behind the house in the bullfight scene hangs over the base and points to the ground.

It seems that the details of the figures have been executed very carefully and are not randomly selected, as if a specific ritual was supposed to be expressed in the correct form on every part of the figure. If the images would just show a simple sitting pose, they would not be (almost) completely alike. McEvilley emphasises that the depicted position is not a usual way to sit, like the everyday position of the Indians, where they squat on the heels. And although there are other poses of sitting figures in Indian art, the sigil images differ from those. The illustrated seats are not impossible to do and can be performed by an experienced yogi. But what are those specific yoga figures we are looking for (McEvilley 1981, 48)?

McEvilley notes that this seated position is specifically significant, because it either depicts an *āsana*⁵¹ (the interpretation of Marshall) or another pose of ritual character, but, alternatively, a fusion of both would also be possible. Nevertheless, there have only been few attempts to

⁵¹ An *āsana* is a group of figures in yoga in which the yogi's body is in a reposing pose and can also sit during performing it (Wikipedia: Asana. [Online] Available from: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asana> [Accessed 19th January 2018]).

identify a figure of today's *āsana* similar to the image on the sigil. In addition, there was no interpretation at all of possible connections of the images to yoga, although it was assumed that the figure is in some state of meditation. This position also does not occur on other, later icons of deities, illustrated practising mediation, like Buddha, Mahāvīra and, of course, Shiva. McEvilley refers to a yogic position that is very similar to that on the sigils, which is described and performed by B. K. S. Iyengar⁵² who named it *mūlabandhāsana*: the yogi sits on his bottom, his upper body is erect and he leans on his arms, one at each side behind his body. The upper legs rest on the floor or are some centimetres above it, while the lower legs make a strange angle in front of the body and are slightly raised, so that the feet are pressed together on the heel and on the ball of the foot. The tiptoes now reach the ground and leave a small space between the soles of the feet. McEvilley notes that the position on the sigil could be reached with this figure, if the yogi is sustained by a pillow or something else from behind, whereby his genitals could be placed on the combined heels (*McEvilley 1981, 48f.*).



Fig. 288 & 289: Example of a *mūlabandhāsana* yoga position, also called root lock pose and a variation of this figure.

Another possible yogic figure is the *Gorakṣāsana* as it is described by Dharendra Brahmachari⁵³ with the following advice how to perform this figure:

“Sit on the ground and bring the soles of the feet into contact. While holding the feet together with the hands, move forward and squat on the feet so that the knees touch the ground on either side. Then the hands should be placed on the knees. The spine and the neck are kept erect.” (*McEvilley 1981, 49*)

⁵² An Indian teacher of yoga who founded the so called “Iyengar Yoga” style (Wikipedia: B. K. S. Iyengar. [Online] Available from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/B._K._S._Iyengar [Accessed 19th January 2018]).

⁵³ A famous yogi.

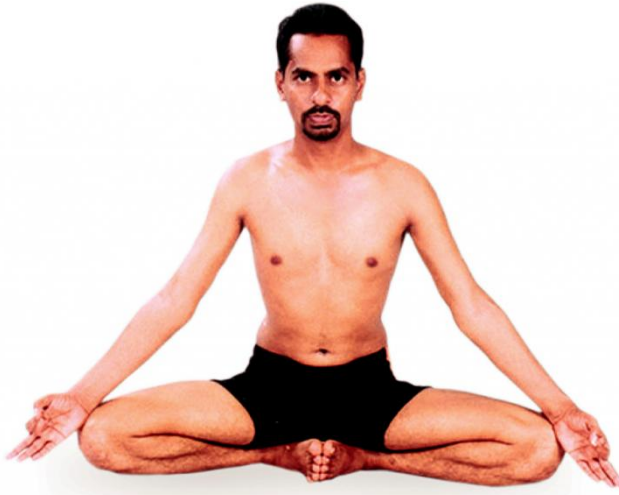


Fig. 290: Example of a Gorakṣāsana yoga pose.

In that variant of a yoga figure, McEvelley also sees one possible pose, which is comparable to those on the sigils, except that the feet do not point downwards, which could be a problem caused by foreshortening. According to him, there are also a number of diverse names for almost similar figures that represent various styles in the literature dealing with yoga, as in the *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā*⁵⁴. The description of Brahmachari, which almost neatly fits to the images on the sigils, should eliminate possible doubts that the pose is not a particular yoga figure and most certainly somehow related to an *āsana*. The figure probably shows a kind of predecessor of it, but can be linked to the tradition and history of yoga in the Indus Valley (McEvelley 1981, 49f.).

Furthermore, McEvelley designs a chronology of the *mūlabandhāsana* to show a possible continuity from the period in the Indus Valley until today. After the images on the sigils, he found traces of this yogic figure in the *Ākārāṅga*- and the *Kalpa Sūtra*. These are two of the oldest Jaina texts in which the squatted position with united heels is mentioned. In McEvelley's opinion, the hypothesis by Marshall to see the figures on the sigils as prototypes of the Hindu deities Shiva and *paśupati*, would fit better to *Pārśva*⁵⁵, who was a teacher of Jainism. The story goes that *Pārśva* gained the protection of two snakes upstanding at his side, when he reached an omniscient state, the so called *kevala*. Although other supernatural teachers or deities like Shiva, Vishnu or Buddha are also depicted with snakes, *Pārśva* is the only one among them who is illustrated with a snake accompanying him on each side. In addition, on some sigils from the Indus Valley, figures of a Jaina pose named *kāyōtsarga* could be illustrated, which aims to ease the poise of body, whereas the corpus is brought in an

⁵⁴ A handbook written in Sanskrit about the hatha style/form of yoga from the 15th century (Wikipedia: *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*. [Online] Available from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hatha_Yoga_Pradipika [Accessed 19th January 2018]).

⁵⁵ *Parshvanatha* or *Parshva* is in Jainism the 23rd among 24 teachers named Tirthankaras and predecessor of the founder of Jainism *Mahāvīra*. He is also the earliest sage which is in general appreciated as a historical person. He should have shaped four of the five Jaina bindings and therefore some see in him the actual founder of Jainism (Wikipedia: *Parshvanatha*. [Online] Available from: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parshvanatha> [Accessed 20th January 2018]).

upright position while the arms are kept rigid and a little bit away from each side of the body (McEvelley 1981, 51f.).

McEvelley mentions that *Rishabha*⁵⁶ and the founder of Jainism *Mahāvīra* are, beside *Pārśva*, the only teachers in this religious lore, whose stories are considered by scholars to contain at least some historical facts. When Jainism was formed by *Mahāvīra*, it was influenced by many cultic habits and different forms of a religion that had spread from the Indus Valley. The author refers to another pose, the *Utkaṭāsana*, which is described as a special squatting position in the so called *Pāli Canon*⁵⁷. Thereby, the feet's soles are placed solidly on the ground and the body lowers down, while the heels are minimally raised until the thighs can be laid or placed on the calves and the back muscles of the thighs are six or more inches above the ground. McEvelley sees a possible comparison to the images on the sigils in that figure, with the only difference that the figures have been depicted with their knees completely at the sides. The people who practiced these figures are called *Ājīvikas* in the *Jātaka tales*⁵⁸ and were a group of ascetics during the time of the Buddha Siddhartha Gautama. *Mahāvīra* was a disciple of *Ājīvikism*, which belonged or was influenced by the ancient traditions of yoga that probably originated in the Indus Valley. Although Jainism and Buddhism are movements which base on this older system, they reformed and changed it (McEvelley 1981, 52-54).

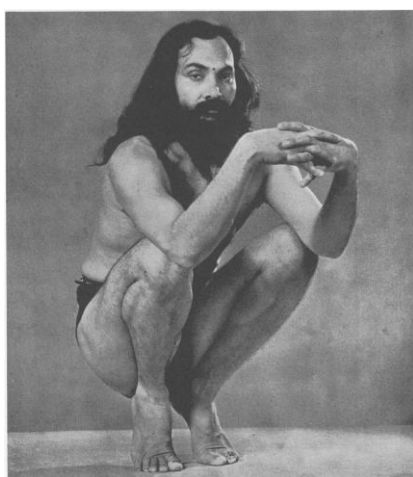


Fig. 291: *Utkaṭāsana* pose, **Fig. 292:** *Jatila Utkaṭāsana*/difficult chair pose, **Fig. 293:** Probable variation of this position which was described with “#mulabandhasana”; cf. 'balancing butterfly'.

⁵⁶ The first *tīrthaṅkara* of Jainism (Wikipedia: *Rishabhanatha*. [Online] Available from: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rishabhanatha> [Accessed 20th January 2018]).

⁵⁷ The *Pāli Canon* is the oldest collection of coherent traditions about the discourses of Buddha Siddhartha Gautama written in the Pali language (Wikipedia: *Pāli Canon*. [Online] Available from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pāli_Canon [Accessed 20th January 2018]).

⁵⁸ These tales tell about the former lives of Buddha and the virtues he shows in these different forms of being (Wikipedia: *Jataka tales*. [Online] Available from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jataka_tales [Accessed 20th January 2018]).

McEvilley criticises the theory of Marshall concerning yoga, because it is based on a wrong premise. The fact that yoga consists of one homogeneous tradition is an argument by those who support the theory, that the entire yogic evolution happened completely in the Aryan culture.

But according to McEvilley it would be obsolete to identify the pose on the sigils with a similar or an identical *āsana*. It is more likely that the pre-yoga, if there has been some early form of yoga in India before the dawn of the Aryan culture, went through broad changes when it was adapted by the Aryanised Indian culture. At the very least two different paths of yoga have developed: one that was totally shaped by the Aryan community and the other which only had a few Aryan influences or none at all. Possibly the main differentiation between these two branches is that the tradition of Aryan yoga is mainly celibate, while the other, non-Aryan one is strongly combined with sexuality. The widespread expanse of a celibate aspect of yoga and the organization of monasteries in the time of Buddha and *Mahāvīra* might have come along with the change from a former matrilineality to a patrilineality with the spread of Aryan culture. This change of paradigms involved a transformation of the aim of practicing yoga (McEvilley 1981, 56).

The aim of the two different forms of yoga also varies. In the Aryan influenced *Rāja* yoga, the yogi tries to achieve a *mokṣa*, which is the liberation from the reincarnation cycle, whereas in the yoga form of *haṭha*, that has not been influenced by the Aryans, the practitioner wants to achieve *śidhi*, whereby he gains magical energies. The former is based on a male focused ideology, the latter on a female one. The magical powers in *haṭha* could manifest in different ways: the body becomes invulnerable, the yogi will be immortal or acquire different forms of sexual energy, through which he will turn into a *kāma-deva*, a god of sex, whom no attractive woman will be able to resist. Instead they fall for him and in addition all yoginis (female form of yogi) will love him. So, while in the Aryan branch of yoga someone is self-responsible for the karma and the observance of ethic rules or concepts (*yamas and niyamas*) through which an improvement in the yoga practice should be achieved, the other non-Aryan yogic branch bases on the idea that someone's deeds will result in magic powers (McEvilley 1981, 56f.).

The appearance of the *mūlabandhāsana* in history based on iconography and documents, which lead to the most likely conclusion that this figure originates from the haṭha-yogic tradition and was not influenced by the Aryans. The fact that this figure can be found in the Indus valley proves or somehow encourages the theory. The yogi Svātmārāma⁵⁹ described

⁵⁹ A yogi and sage who probably lived in India in the fifteenth and sixteenth century in India and assembled a guide for yoga named *Hatha Pradipika* (Wikipedia: *Svātmārāma*. [Online] Available from: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Svātmārāma> [Accessed 21st January 2018]).

that, to perform that figure, one should proceed in the following way (McEvilley 1981, 59f.):

“Pressing the perineum⁶⁰ with the heel and raising the Apāna, the anus is to be contracted. This is known to be the mūlabandha [...] Pressing the anus with the heel, one should repeatedly contract the perineum with force [...]” (McEvilley 1981, 60)

Doing this procedure stimulates a feeling of nerves that will proceed from the lower end of the spine, which shall bring the energy of the lower body, the so called *apāna*, to flow to the upper body and combine with the energy named *prāṇa* there. Stimulating and collecting the body's heat is only a part of the role of *mūlabandhāsana*, because in the sexual practice of yoga it is used, probably combined with another form named *maithuna*, to stimulate the flow of sexual energies. This is a process separated into three stages, starting by stimulation, following by accumulation and finally concluding through retention. But there is also a fourth phase to this procedure. During the *mūlabandhāsana*, the energies or bodily fluids *citta* (mind, imagination, ideas etc.), *prāṇa* (the nerve's energy and the breath) and *bindu* (sperm) are collected, as well as stopped and afterwards canalized via the spine, the *nāḍī* (channel) to the head where a lotus in the skull is imagined to be. This involution exercise called *ulṭā-sādhana* is the essence of the performing of *haṭha* or *kuṇḍalinī*, the acquiring of sexual energies. This stream gains the godly body, the so called *deva-deha*, its vast spectrum of powers. All yogic texts announce that the person who is able to move the fluid or energies of the body in this way is no man, but a god and the aim of most of the figures and practises in the tradition of *haṭha* yoga is to acquire the condition of the *ulṭā-sādhana* (McEvilley 1981, 60-62).

The theory by Thomas McEvilley is plausible and his argumentation (almost) reasonable. Although he is mistaken in generalizing the feet positions of the figures on the sigils, he has shown that there is a connection between the Indus Valley and modern day yoga through figures and the yogic branch/tradition/school of *haṭha*. A parallel yoga pose or figure of modern times to the depictions on sigils from the Harappa Civilisation is the so called 'balancing butterfly'. From a squatting position, the knees are turned outwards while the balls as well as the heels of the feet are put together. Afterwards, the hands are placed on the knees (YOGA PRACTICE GUIDE: Strike a Yoga Pose: Balancing butterfly. [Online] Available from: <http://yogapracticeguide.blogspot.co.at/2014/10/strike-yoga-pose-balancing-butterfly.html> [Accessed 19th May 2018]).

⁶⁰ The perineum is the section of the human body that lies between the genitals and the anus.



Fig. 294-296: Different variations of the 'balancing butterfly' yoga pose.

5. The Hindu deity Shiva

Śiva or Shiva is one of the main gods in Hinduism, whose origins can be placed in the agricultural society of India's native population. He is bound to the earth and accompanied by a bull named Nandi, whose nature can change from calm and peaceful to destructive fury. This aspect is very similar to Shiva himself, whose character is inconsistent, a god that could be as kind, as he could be disastrous and someone who practices meditation as well as ecstasy. Although Shiva is the master of the universe on the one hand, he prefers places on earth like the mountain Kailāsa and the city of *Vārāṇasī* on the other. The *Vedas* tell that the former name of Shiva was *Rudra*, which means 'the terrible', but when the number of people who worshipped him grew, he was given a new name. From then on, he was called *Śiva*, the friendly, or alternatively also *Śaṅkara*, the saviour. The name, combined with its contrary meaning, was probably chosen to please the god and acted as a prevention against his wrath. Shiva is the personification of *tamas*, the materially grave condition of being, that is one of the three main characteristics in the philosophic concept of *Sāṃkhya*. The two others are the perspicacious intellect or *sattva*, turned into the deity of *Brahmā* and *rajas*, the active way of shape, personified in *Viṣṇu*. The three states are the determination of everything and should always be in balance (Schuhmann 1996, 100f.).

In the *Liṅgapurāṇa*⁶¹, it is said that Shiva can take 28 different forms, in which he can appear as he wishes, in contrast to Vishnu, whose forms are the result of following incarnations. Shiva's varying appearances are ordered into five different aspects (Schuhmann 1996, 101):

⁶¹ A text of the Hindu tradition of Shaivism, one among eighteen (Wikipedia: *Linga Purana*. [Online] Available from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Linga_Purana [Accessed 24th January 2018]).

1. *Maheśamūrti*, the great lord who rules the world.
2. *Anugrahamūrti*, who shows favour to man and beast.
3. *Bhikṣāṭanamūrti*, the wandering ascetic beggar or yogi.
4. *Nṛttamūrti*, the dancer.
5. *Samhāramūrti*, the one who destroys.

Shiva has a dualistic aspect, because, in his role as destroyer of the world, he is also the harbinger of a new one. Shiva will prepare the following world and lives on beside the end of the world as an eternal being (*Śadāśiva*), who rules the universe (*Viśvanātha*) (Schuhmann 1996, 101).

The interesting aspect of Shiva is his role as a yogi who practises asceticism. The caves of the Himalaya are the place Shiva has chosen for his life in asceticism and meditation, where he sits topless, his upper body painted with white ash. The god is also the lord of the mountains (*Girīśa*) and the great yogi (*Mahāyogin*), who got rid of all his emotions. The aim of Shiva's meditation and asceticism is to bring peace of mind and wisdom; a process which Shiva will not interrupt despite every distraction. For example, there is an episode when the god is annoyed by the love deity Kāma(deva), who plans to let lust arise in Shiva so that he will desire his wife Pārvatī and pause his meditation. But, instead, Shiva burns the nagging god to ashes with a beam of fire emerging from his third eye (Schuhmann 1996, 109f.).



Fig. 297: A stone statue of the meditating Shiva in a cross-legged pose, representing the aspect of the Mahayogi, the lord of all yogis

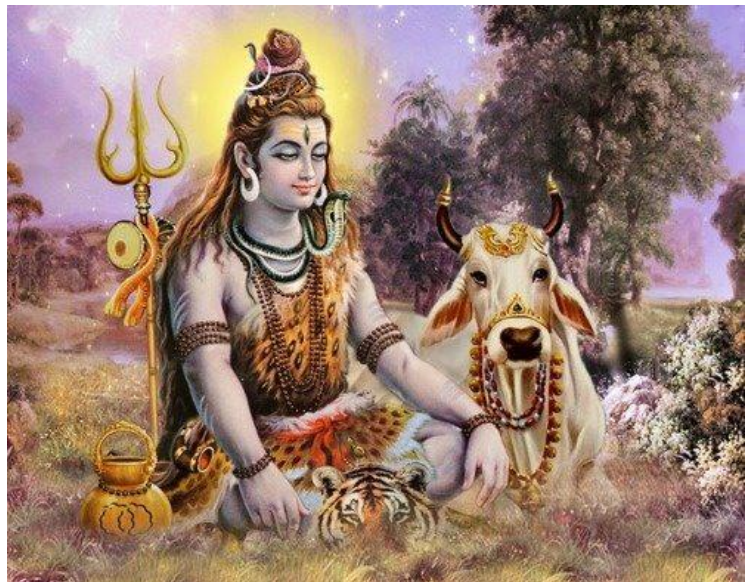


Fig. 298: Shiva depicted cross-legged and accompanied by the bull Nandi.

Shiva has a bull named Nandi as a companion, which can also represent or symbolize the god if it appears alone. In front of all main entrances to the temples, which are devoted to Shiva, a statue of the bull, represented in a lying position, is placed and its head is turned towards the building (*Schuhmann 1996, 61f.*). Nandi is supposed to be of gigantic size and symbolises male potency, which would always create the world anew. An alternative depiction of this animal is to show it as a hybrid creature, which has the body of a burly man and the head of a bull (*Bauer, Dümöt, Golowin 1980, 70f.*).

6. Connections between the Indus Valley and Mesopotamia

On the 20th of September 1924, John Marshall's first statement concerning the excavations at the site of Mohenjo-daro was published in the news magazine *'The Illustrated London News'*, in which he noted the spectacle of these new discoveries. One week later, a commentary by the archaeologist Archibald Henry Sayce, who was specialised in ancient oriental studies, was released in another issue of this magazine. It compared the sigils from the Indus Valley-cities of Harappa and Mohenjo-daro with finds of the same type of the Proto-Elamite period (ca. 3100 to 2600 BC) from the Mesopotamian city of Susa. The engraved objects from both cultures were considered to be very similar, almost identical, according to their size and shape, as well as the depictions of *'unicorns'*. Sayce noted that even the pictograms and the numbers on both groups of sigils would be alike, as if the artefacts had been crafted by the same artisan. The sigils from Mesopotamia are dated in the 3rd millennium BC, in the period between the rule of King Manistusu (lasted from 2275 to 2260 BC) and the third dynasty of the city of Ur (from 2112 to 2004 BC). As a result, Sayce was convinced that, from the 3rd millennium BC, contact between Mesopotamia and the Indus Valley had existed, which would change the ideas about the origin and the age of the Harappa Civilisation (*Jansen 1986, 22*).

The next issue of the *Illustrated London News* was published on the 4th of October 1924 and contained a research study by Cyril J. Gadd in cooperation with the Assyriologist Sydney Smith, for which they compared several different groups of objects from Mesopotamia and the Harappa Civilisation. The scholars interpreted the bulls that are depicted on the sigils of the Indus Valley as to obviously be of Sumerian origin, especially if some minor details like the horns (because of the single horn visible in profile, these bulls are also described as *'unicorns'*), the neck as well as the folds of the hide in the area between neck and the shoulder

of the animals would be very similar to the bulls of the Mesopotamian pictorial world (*Jansen 1986, 22*).

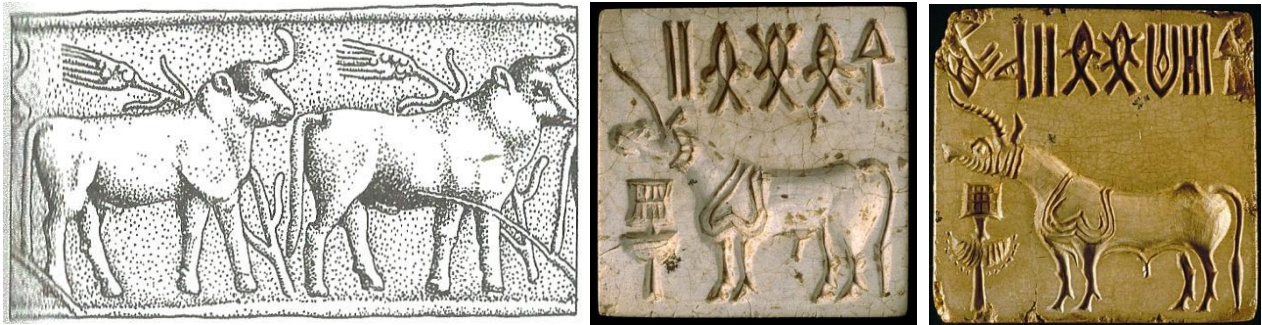


Fig. 299-301: *Sigils with depictions of bulls, the 'unicorns' of Sumerian origin and from the Harappa Civilisation.*

In addition, Gadd and Smith stated that the characters of the scripts from Mesopotamia as well as the Indus Valley also show parallels. Additional similarities were noted in sculptures made of terracotta in the shape of humans and animals, which were produced at sites of the Harappa Civilisation and in the city of Ur. The scholars came to the result, that the cultures of Mesopotamia and the Indus Valley were closely related and that the latter could have probably developed from the former one. This approach disagreed with the hypothesis of John Marshall, who assumed that the Harappa Civilisation had developed independently (*Jansen 1986, 22f.*).

Otto Schrader (1934, 192) noted it would be a known circumstance that relations and connections between the city of Mohenjo-daro and Mesopotamia had indeed once existed.

7. Similarities in the depictions on Indian as well as on European sculptures or artefacts and the relief-figures on the Gundestrup cauldron

For his article in the journal '*Scientific American*' (March 1992), my advisor Timothy Taylor searched for images or illustrations, which are comparable to the depictions on the iconographic plates of the Gundestrup cauldron. Therefore, he looked on objects that were either made of precious metal or another metal material and on the images and iconography depicted on these artefacts. But, other media of representation were also used for that investigative comparison, like the sigil with the horned figure that is surrounded by animals from Mohenjo-daro. Taylor recognised several parallels and similarities, which occur between figures and scenes on the Gundestrup plates and illustrations from India that have also been

interpreted as representations of deities. The similarities between the probable depiction of Cernunnos on the Gundestrup cauldron and the figure of a horned man, Mashall's supposed *paśupati*, on a sigil from the city of Mohenjo-daro were already recognised and described by Friedrich Otto Schrader (1934, 185-193).



Fig. 302 & 303: The sigil from Mohenjo-daro and the antlered figure on Gundestrup-plate C 6571.

7.1 A pair of a horned and an antlered figure in a yoga pose

There are several parallels between the depictions of the horned figure on a sigil from Mohenjo-daro and the antlered figure on the Gundestrup plate:

- 1.) Both depictions have been described or interpreted as representations of specific deities, *paśupati* and *Cernunnos*, based on their appearance and posture.
- 2.) Both figures have animal headgear, either the horns of a water buffalo or the antlers of a stag. The animals, to whom these horns 'belong' in each case is placed to the right side of the person.
- 3.) In both scenes, the central figure is surrounded by several animals of carnivore as well as of herbivore nature. Three of the accompanying animals of the horned figure are orientated towards it, while the fourth one faces the opposite direction. The beasts which were directly placed around the antlered figure were depicted in the same manner, the creature which has its back turned towards the seated figure is placed in the same place, only its nature changed from a herbivore (elephant) into a carnivore (a tiger, a leopard, or either a female or male lion). Therefore, each figure can be interpreted as a master of animals.

4.) Each figure is ornamented with jewellery. While the Mohenjo-daro figure wears a collar and several bracelets and bangles, the Gundestrup figure carries two torques.

5.) Both figures wear a belt around the waist which is an additional parallel in their fashion (Schrader 1934, 191).

6.) Both figures could either be allocated to the male sex or could be interpreted as to represent an androgynous character.

On the one hand the obvious phallus of the Mohenjo-daro figure and the clothing of the Gundestrup figure that looks similar to those of the other depictions of warriors on the cauldron (cf. Chapter 2, subchapter 3), support the attempt to interpret them as men.

On the other hand, Sullivan (1964-65, 115-125) mentioned the similarities between the fashion of the Mohenjo-daro figure and those of women from the same culture. Talyor (1997, 215-218) described the depiction on the sigil as a “*Tantric transvestite*” (Taylor 1997, 217) and further argued that the antlered Gundestrup figure represented an androgynous individual, based on the lack of particular attributes in the form of a male beard or female breasts.

7.) Both figures are shown in a seated pose that has a high resemblance to a modern yoga figure. The most accurate comparison for the Mohenjo-daro figure would be either a *Gorakṣāsana* or a *mūlabandhāsana* yoga pose (cf. Fig. 287 & 288), although the position could also represent the *balancing butterfly* (cf. Fig. 292-295). The most likely parallel for the antlered Gundestrup-figure would be a variant of a *Padangusthasana*, a toe stand.



Fig. 304 & 305: The horned master of animals (mirror-inverted reconstruction) on a Mohenjo-daro sigil and a woman performing a *Gorakṣāsana* figure.

Fig. 306 & 307: The antlered master of animals or Cernunnos on the Gundestrup cauldron and a man doing a yoga pose that is called toe stand.

8.) In the left upper corner of each scene, an animal is placed, which has an empty space between the lines that are running from its head. On the Mohenjo-daro sigil, the ears of the rhinoceros form this 'slot', while on the Gundestrup cauldron, such a hollow area can be seen between the horns of the bull. The ears of the rhino are too large compared to the rest of its body, a detail which could have influenced the portrayed shape of the bullhorns that differs from the horns of real bulls. The rhino's large-sized ears are a specific characteristic of the illustrations of this animal in the pictorial world of the Harappa Civilisation. But this attribute was also found on the depictions of rhinos from different sites in Mesopotamia, which became an important aid for the dating of the Harappa Civilisation (*Schrader 1934, 190f.*).

9.) Another possible similarity is the small depiction of a simple human figure above or on the back of the tiger, which Schrader (1934, 191) compared to the probable man that rides on the back of a dolphin. But he also stated that this parallel could be mere coincidence.

Schrader (1934, 192) noted that some of the resemblances between the two depictions could have happened coincidentally without any deeper meaning. If the similarities are reduced to the most obvious and undeniable ones, two parallels remain: the animal that is the real life equivalent to the horns or antlers of the human figure is illustrated to the right lower side of the central person and the animal which is orientated in an opposite direction to the figure on its upper left side in both cases. But even then, Schrader is not convinced to consider these facts a mere coincidence. Although it is almost impossible that the craftsmen who forged the cauldron had seen or known the sigil from Mohenjo-daro, the motif could have travelled from the Indus Valley to Europe via several copies, adaptations and adoptions. Such an interlink could have been provided through the connections or relations between Mithradates (probably Mithridates VI) the ruler of the Kingdom of Pontus, and the Celtic tribes that settled in the middle and lower Danube basin. It would be possible that one of the gifts, which the Pontic emissaries gave to the Celts could have shown a similar image, either a copy or an adaptation, as those from the Harappa Civilisation (*Schrader 1934, 192*).

7.2 The transition westwards and probable Persian influences

Schrader (1934, 191f.) interpreted the depiction on the sigil as a possible deity and referred to the trade relationships between the cities in Mesopotamia and those of Mohenjo-daro, through which the image could have 'travelled' westwards. Under the reign of the Akkadian king

Naram-Sin⁶², the Mesopotamian culture spread to Asia Minor and Armenia in the second half of the 3rd millennium BC.

According to Schrader, the attribute of the torque, which Cernunnos holds raised in his right hand, could provide a hint that the motif from Mohenjo-daro had come through ancient Persia and was influenced by the iconography in this region. Although a figure holding a torque raised in one hand was minted on a Celtic coin from Gallia (cf. Fig. 239), this specific pose is also a common image in the art of the Achaemenid Empire (Schrader 1934, 192). The type of artefact could have fulfilled a cultic function or a ritual aspect at public ceremonies in the Achaemenid period of ancient Persia and such a scene is depicted on a bas-relief of Achaemenid origin. The object is kept in the 'Musée d'Archéologie nationale' in Saint-Germaine-en-Laye in France (Bertrand 1880, 5).



Fig. 308: Celtic silver that shows a warrior with a braid who holds a torque in one hand and a spear in the other. The coin originates from the region of Reims and dates ca. 58-48 BC (Poinssignon numismatique: Celtic Coins. [Online] Available from: https://www.poinssignon-numismatique.com/coins_r5/celtic-coins_c8/remi-region-of-reims_p4872/remi-region-de-reims-58-48-av-j-c-potin-au-querrier-courant_article_79929.html [Accessed 20th May 2018]).

Fig. 309: Bas-relief of Achaemenid origin that depicts a resting figure on some piece of furniture who holds a torque raised in its right hand. The figure could represent a person of high social status, probably a ruler, who is accompanied by servant standing in the back and two guards or warriors that have come before it.

A figure in the Achaemenid iconography, which was represented holding a ring or torque in one hand, is *Ahura Mazdā*, a deity that has been regarded as the highest god in the religious belief of ancient Persia, in particular in the aspect of Zoroastrinism. King Darius I., who ruled from 522 to 486 AD, and the following kings worshipped this deity as the supreme god who would protect the fair ruler (*Encyclopædia Britannica: Ahura Mazdā*. [Online] Available from: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Ahura-Mazda> [Accessed 21st May 2018]).

⁶² A king of the Akkadian Empire who approximately ruled from 2254 to 2218 BC when the realm developed to its maximum strength and who bestowed himself the rank of a deity (Wikipedia: Naram-Sin of Akkad. [Online] Available from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naram-Sin_of_Akkad [Accessed 20th May 2018]).

The god was also a special motif in the Sasanian iconography, where the ring held raised in one hand can still be found as an attribute of Ahura Mazdā, like on a relief from Naqsh-e Rostam in Iran that dates to the 3rd century AD, in which the deity gives the ring of kingship to the Sasanian ruler Ardashir I. (Wikipedia: Ahura Mazda. [Online] Available from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ahura_Mazda#/media/File:Naqsh_i_Rostam._Investiture_d%27_Ardashir_1.jpg [Accessed 21st May 2018]).



Fig. 310 & 311: Reliefs of Ahura Mazdā from Persepolis and Naqsh-e Rostam, in which the god (on the right side) hand over the ring of kingship to the Ardashir I. king of the Sasanian Empire.

The torque is also a characteristic attribute of *Mithra*, *Mitra* (Sanskrit variant spelling) or *Mithras*, a deity of light whose origins can be found in India where this god appeared in one of the Vedas that is dated to 1400 BC. The cult of Mitra spread from the Indian subcontinent to ancient Persia and after Alexander the Great had conquered the Achaemenid Empire, the worship of this eastern god of light travelled westwards during the cultural period of Hellenism and has been connected with the god Helios of ancient Greece and his Roman manifestation *Sol Invictus* (Encyclopædia Britannica: Mithra. [Online] Available from: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Mithra> [Accessed 21st May 2018]).

But there is no depiction of Mithra in the iconography of the Achaemenid Empire that can be clearly identified or assigned to him, although some face designs on coins were interpreted as to show representations of him. A more likely depiction of Mithra decorates the reverse of a coin that supposedly originates from the rule of the Parthian king Artabanus II., who ruled from 128 to 124 BC. The motif shows Artabanus in a kneeling position before a figure sitting on a throne, which was regarded as a sculpture of a Greek deity and a possible illustration of Mithra, who appears in the shape or figure of the god Apollon, based on the probable bow he hands to a third figure (Encyclopædia Iranica: MITHRA ii. ICONOGRAPHY IN IRAN AND CENTRAL ASIA. [Online] Available from: <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/mithra-2-iconography-in-iran-and-central-asia> [Accessed 21st May 2018]).

Mithras represented as a young man similar to the image of Apollo is a characteristic depiction influenced by the ancient Persian culture that existed at the same time as the Parthian Empire. Such images can be found on coins minted in the Kushan Empire that established in the region of Bactria. Mithras is one of the deities that were most often represented on Kushan coins. The earliest of these minted representations originated from the reign of *Sotar Megas* (who ruled from approximately 80 to 100 AD), a title which means 'the Savior' or 'the Great' and appeared on the coinage in place of his real name, Vima Takto. But these images solely represented Mithra's head in profile and were used instead of the ruler's own portrait, probably resulting from his title that can be connected with Mithras (*Encyclopædia Iranica: MITHRA ii. ICONOGRAPHY IN IRAN AND CENTRAL ASIA*. [Online] Available from: <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/mithra-2-iconography-in-iran-and-central-asia> [Accessed 22nd May 2018]).

Under Sotar Megas' successor, Vima Kadphises Mithras' face designs had been replaced by images of Shiva, but were revived during the reign of Kanishka I. (from 127 to ca. 153 AD). During that period, at first the name Helios appears in Greek letters next to the depictions of Mithras, which was transformed into the Bactrian version *Mihr* and other variants like *Miuro* or *Mirro*. The motif of Mithras was portrayed almost alike on the coins dated to the period of the Kushan emperor Huvishka who ruled around 153 to 191 AD. These representations depict the deity dressed in the ancient Persian fashion with a cloak, a tunic and boots equipped with either a sword or a spear and holding a torque or alternatively a wreath decorated with ribbons in one hand. These attributes were probably symbols for the investiture of the king or the royal *khwarenah*, the divine power given to the chosen ruler. (*Encyclopædia Iranica: MITHRA ii. ICONOGRAPHY IN IRAN AND CENTRAL ASIA*. [Online] Available from: <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/mithra-2-iconography-in-iran-and-central-asia> [Accessed 22nd May 2018]).



Different coins with face designs depicting the deity Mithras (from left to right):

Fig. 312: Coin of the Parthian king Artanabus II.; **Fig. 313:** Mithras with halo and torque on the reverse of a coin from the Kushan ruler Huvishka; **Fig. 314:** Reverse of a Bactrian gold dinar from the period of Huvishka portraying Mithras with a crescent and a torque; **Fig. 315:** Mithras with a nimbus of rays holding a crescent on a gold dinar from Kanishka, dated between 128 to 150 AD.

There are also several other depictions of different figures holding a ring in one hand minted on the face designs of several Bactrian gold dinars that originated from the rule of Kanishka I. and are dated to the period between 128 to 150 AD. The ring in the hands of the deities Athsho, the god of metal, and the mounted Druvaspa, the god who preserves the health of animals, is described to represent a diadem (*COIN INDIA: The Coin Galleries: Kanishka I.* [Online] Available from: <http://coinindia.com/galleries-kanishka.html> [Accessed 22nd May 2018]). The ring is also an attribute of a depiction of Shiva, beside the bull and the trident, on a dinar made of gold minted approximately in 195 AD during the reign of Bazodeo Kushan⁶³ (*Okar Research: Robert Göbl & Bactrian/Kushan Coinage (171 BC - 232 AD).* [Online] Available from: <http://balkhandshambhala.blogspot.co.at/2015/05/robert-gobl-bactriankushan-coinage-171.html> [Accessed 22nd May 2018]). Shiva appears to have three faces that alternatively could represent hair, like on several similar figures of him on various coins. The raised diadem or ring can also be interpreted as a torque.



Gold dinars: with depictions of deities holding a ring or diadem (from left to right). **Fig. 316 & 317:** The god Athsho, **Fig. 318:** The god Druvaspa on a horse, **Fig. 319:** Shiva and a bull.

7.3. European bronze figurines in a probable proto-yogic pose

Two small bronze figurines were found in Eastern Europe that probably represent a pre-yoga position and could have been influenced by the depictions from India.

The first small statuette that was casted of bronze has been found in the settlement of Lukaševka in the northeastern part of the Republic of Moldova. The site is assigned to the Poienestî-Lukaševka culture that dates to the period from the 2nd to the 1st century BC. Its main area were the regions in the North and in the middle of the territory between the eastern part of the Carpathian Mountains and the Dniester



Fig. 320: Bronze figurine from Lukaševka.

⁶³ Vasudeva I., ruler of the Kushan Empire from around 191 until 232 AD and the last of the so called 'Great Kushans' (Wikipedia: Vasudeva I. [Online] Available from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vasudeva_I [Accessed 22nd May 2018]).

river that springs in the western part of the Ukraine, crosses Moldova and runs into the Black Sea. The culture developed when a foreign group settled there, which several believed were Bastarnae, who are assigned to the Germanic tribes, although their precise allocation is not clear (*Babeş 1993, 17, 89*).

The figure which measures 5,7 cm in height is described as a probable representation of a man, whose knees are spread and the heels are put together (*Babeş 1993, 89*). The figure is depicted with a probable ring around its neck that likely represents a piece of jewellery, either a necklace or eventually some kind of torque. A v-shaped line underneath, as well as the additional lines let one assume that it belongs to some sort of garment. The right arm forms a right angle and rests in the figure's stomach, a hand was not designed. The left arm is stretched and the hand placed on the left thigh.

The second bronze figurine that originated from the Poienesti-Lukaševka culture was excavated at the Romanian site of Dăneşti. The statuette is smaller than the former one and is only 3,5 cm high and has been made in a similar body pose. The figurine is described as a depiction of a woman (*Babeş 1993, 89*). The small circles on the figure's chest could indeed symbolize breasts and according to the other lines on the body, the figure is likely represented naked. The neck of the probable woman appears to be larger than those of the other figure. Her right arm is outstretched, while the hand either clasps the upper leg or rests on it. The left arm appears to be holding tightly against the chest in a bent position. The woman's legs are bent and her heels could have been placed together once or the feet could have been crossed. *Babeş (1993, 89)* also stated that there are comparable Celtic motifs, but those would not necessarily be relevant.



Fig. 321: Bronze figurine from Dăneşti.

7.4 The protectress of animals and the Hindu deity Lakṣmī

Taylor (1992, 88f.) compared the Gundestrup plate **C 6573**, which depicts a female bust between two elephants, the protectress of animals, with the depiction of the Hindu deity *Lakṣmī*, the goddess of beauty. She is also named *Śrī* (the beautiful) and a deity of wealth and luck. *Lakṣmī* is the wife of the god Vishnu and appears in different forms, either two- or four-armed, in a standing position, as well as in a sitting one. In the latter variant, the goddess sits on a pedestal shaped like a lotus and carries two of these flowers in red colour, allocated to

her as specific attributes. Furthermore, she changed her form in accordance with Vishnu's several transformations. If Lakṣmī is four-armed, the two additional hands form the gestures *abhaya* and *varadamudrā*, which symbolize protection and the granting of wishes. Another motif for Lakṣmī depicts her between two elephants that hold vessels in their trunks and pour water over the sitting goddess, which is associated with fertility and life (Schuhmann 1996, 97-99).

Lakṣmī is also a tutelary deity of the aspects of luck and wealth. Furthermore, she is responsible for the growth of every living being and grants as well as protects different aspects of fertility for men, animals and the crops. According to the myths of the goddess' birth, she was born from the Ocean of Milk, from whom the world had been created by the orders of the god Brahma. Lakṣmī bathes in the river Ganges, from which two elephants of celestial nature pour water over her (Grabner-Haider & Marx 2005, 235f., 279f.).

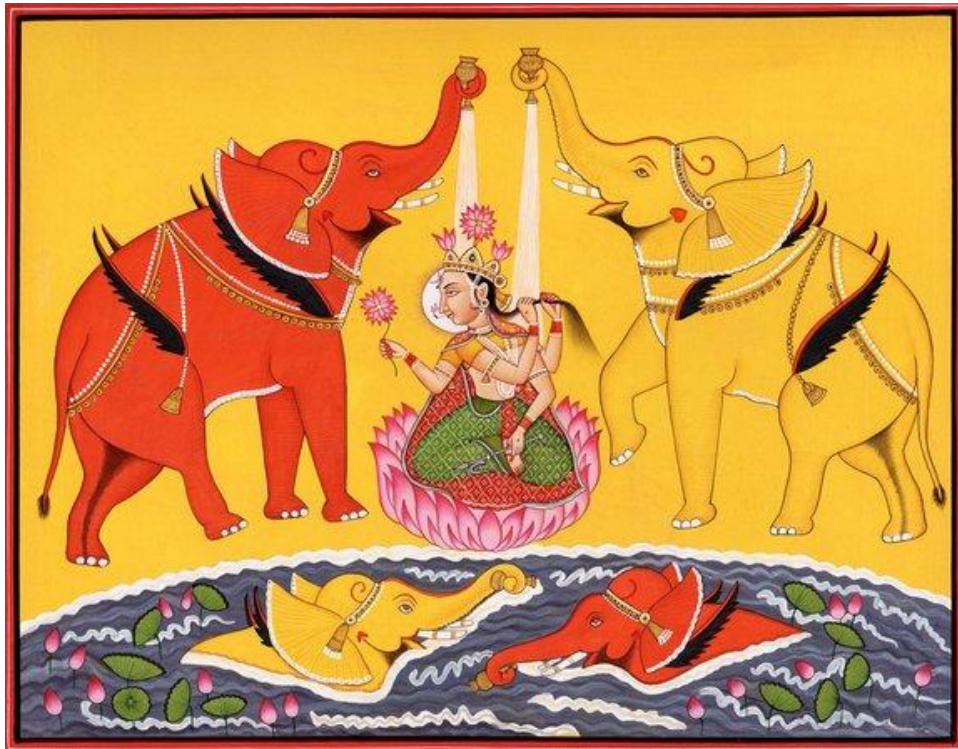


Fig. 322: The sitting Lakṣmī (Gajalakṣmī) is bathed by two elephants. Copy of an illustration in a manuscript around 1780 (Wikipedia: Lakshmi. [Online] Available from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lakshmi#/media/File:Gaja_Lakshmi.jpg [Accessed 12th April 2018])

Friedrich Drexel (1915, 19) has already mentioned the possible connection between the scene on the cauldron and the motif of the female deity *Çrī* or *Sirī*⁶⁴ in the art style influenced by elements from the Persian, as well as the Indian pictorial world that developed under the successors of Ashoka in the Maurya Empire. The depiction of the elephants that accompany

⁶⁴ The adapted spelling variant of the Sankrit name Lakṣmī in the native langue Kannada spoken by the Indian ethnicity Kannadigas.

the deity on both sides reminds one of the arrangement of the figures on the Gundestrup plate. A connection between the images is possible and the Gundestrup depiction could originate from the Indian motif. This approach is supported by the fact that the animals represent Indian elephants. Drexel identified the female bust on the Gundestrup cauldron that is accompanied by elephants as the deity *Ma* from Asia Minor, the mistress of animals who was worshipped in the city of Comana in Cappadocia. The Celts could have known the myth of this goddess and understood the portrayal on the cauldron as representation of *Ma* (Drexel 1915, 19).

The image of the Indian deity *Sirî* Drexel referred to is depicted on the front side of the eastern gateway (south end) of the stupa of Sanchi in India (cf. Chapter 5, 4), which is described as a representation of *Māyā*, the mother of the Buddha. She is depicted sitting on a lotus that grows from a vase, holding a flower of the same type in her right hand, while a pair of elephants (mentioned as *Nāgas*) pours water over her. The scene is considered to be a developed variant of the birth theme in Buddhist art (Marshall & Foucher 1982, plate XLI).



Fig. 323 & 324: The protectress of animals, depicted on plate C 6573 and *Māyā* represented on the front side of the eastern gateway of the stupa of Sanchi (cf. Fig. 326).

The comparison of the Gundestrup scene with the painting of *Lakṣmī* illustrates a number of similarities between the two depictions:

- The central figure or bust is female and flanked by two elephants.
- Flower motifs are placed close to the women, either in the form of lotus flowers or as rosettes.
- The gesture of the female bust could represent a gesture of protection, a typical gesture that *Lakṣmī* forms with one of her hands.
- Compared to the depiction from Sanchi, both female figures are (almost) naked.
- Both women wear a hair band or a headband and jewellery around the neck, either a necklace or a torque.

Friedrich Otto Schrader (1934, 187-189) supported the approach of Drexel and noted several arguments for a possible link between the Indian art and the Gundestrup cauldron. The cult or the worshipping of a female deity that is represented with a pair of elephants, one at each side, is only known from the Indian subcontinent. Schrader interpreted Lakṣmī or Śrī as an analogy of the Greek goddess *Aphrodite Anadyomene*. According to Hesiod (*Theogony*, Verses 175-205), the Titan Cronus cuts off the genitals of his father Uranus with a sickle and threw them into the sea. From the rising foam the goddess Aphrodite was born. Lakṣmī emerging from the ocean of milk and accompanied by a pair of elephants is identified as the character *Gajalakṣmī*, the Lakṣmī with elephants. This figure is the oldest one among all the deities of Hinduism, although the role or character of Lakṣmī was different then, because she was an independent deity, not yet the wife of Vishnu, who was responsible for fertility and luck. The reason that *Gajalakṣmī* was not mentioned in the Rigveda probably resulted from the social status of her worshippers, because supposedly the deity was favoured by the common people and was less popular in the upper classes of the Aryan society (Schrader 1934, 187f.).



Fig. 325 & 326: *Gajalakṣmī* depicted in a medallion scene at the railing pillar of the Bharhut stupa that dates into the 2nd century BC and Maya or *Gajalakṣmī* on the back of the northern gateway of the stupa of Sanchi.

Although *Gajalakṣmī* could be related to the great goddess of the Indus Valley Culture, as well as to the oriental *Magna Mater* or *Cybele*, she probably originated from the Classical period of India that began approximately around 200 BC. Written texts of early Buddhism mentioned the popularity of *Gajalakṣmī*, which was also represented on ordinary objects of everyday use like on a comb made from ivory in the “*Museum für Völkerkunde*” (museum of

ethnology) in Munich. Therefore, it would be possible that the myth of this deity spread to Asia Minor and eventually even further. According to Schrader, the names of the deities Lakṣmī and Ma have the same ancient origin, as is shown in the name of the Indian equivalent of Amor, *Māpatya*, which means '*the son of Mā*' (Schrader, 1934, 188). This deity of sensual love and lust is also called *Kama*, who is the son of Lakṣmī in Hindu mythology (Grabner-Haider & Marx 2005, 284).

Another probable link to the Indian original motif are the two rosettes on both sides of the bust that are described as to represent either a sun wheel or the wheel of time, because on the depiction of the deity Śrī or Lakṣmī from Sanchi, similar symbols can be found illustrated as wreaths. Schrader disagreed with the interpretation of John Marshall and Alfred Foucher (1982, plate 41; Schrader refers to an older interpretation by Foucher from 1913), who identified the figure as Maya. But Schrader considered another theory by Foucher as possible, ie that, in the earliest forms, the accompanying elephants appeared as attributes of the Hāritī, the female deity of plenty or wealth in Buddhism (Schrader 1934, 188).

Maya is represented on every one of the four relief-decorated gates of the stupa of Sanchi. She is depicted in different variations, either standing or sitting between two elephants or without the animals. Marshall and Foucher described these scenes as different phases in the nativity theme of the Buddha (1939, plates 11, 24, 25, 30, 41 & 56). The diverse illustrations with the same preconditions are very similar to each other (cf. Fig. 321 & 323) and vary only in small details. These depictions of Maya are also described or interpreted as representations of the deity Lakṣmī or Gajalakṣmī. In this context, Gajalakṣmī is also characterized as a symbolisation of the birth scene of the Buddha, based on the goddess' fertility aspect and the water the elephants pour over her is linked to the ritual *abhiṣeka* ("consecration") that was performed during the ceremonies of the royal enthronement (Boisselier et al. 1978, 26).

It is beyond doubt that the female bust and the supposed deity on the Gundestrup plate C 6573, the protectress of animals, is not a depiction of Lakṣmī or Gajalakṣmī. But it is likely that this representation of a deity from the Celtic world between two elephants originated from India and the attributed animals could symbolize the majesty of this particular goddess (Schrader 1934, 188f.).

7.5 The master and the mistress of animals

The figure with the buffalo horns from the Mohenjo-daro sigil and the figure of Cernunnos on the Gundestrup cauldron can be assigned to a specific theme, the so called '*master of animals*'.

This motif is represented in various ways, on the two mentioned representations the human master is surrounded by animals, a different form of depiction is a standing figure that grasps an animal with each hand, portrayed almost identically, but mirror-inverted to each other. The deer hunter and the dragon slayer on the plates **C 6567** and **C 6568** can also be linked to this iconographic category, as well as the female bust flanked by elephants (**C 6573**). The human figure can either be a male master or a female mistress and their behaviour can be divided in two groups: a hostile one, in which the figure appears to fight the animals and one with a friendly, protecting attitude towards the beasts. The winged women and the 'dragon king' also represent (**Fig. 32-35**) this motif. The accompanying animals can be real, as well as fantastic creatures. The image of a human figure standing between two animals is an intercultural motif that appeared in several cultures of different historical periods.



Fig. 327-329: Male deity grasping tigers by the throat on a sigil from Harappa (female version cf. Fig. 286), a horned female deity flanked by two lions from Mycenae (cf. Unterberger 2011, 118) on a probable seal and a Minoan master of animals with geese on a gold pendant from Crete (ca. 1850-1550 BC).



Fig. 330-332: A male figure with horns who grasps the tails of two leopards on a vessel from the Jiroft culture (late 3rd millennium BC), a man embracing two human-faced bulls on a lyre excavated in the Mesopotamian city of Ur (around 2550-2450 BC) and a horned figure that holds the paws of two griffons; cheekpiece of a horse bit made of iron from the Iranian province Loristan (approx. 700 BC).

7.6 Phalerae of women accompanied by birds and smaller figures

A phalera that was discovered in the northern part of Pakistan at a site near the town of Rawalpindi shows a figure of a woman, whose hair is braided with two birds next

to her, approximately on one level with her shoulders, which sits on some kind of frame that could be the back of her chair. The image is similar to the depictions of women with braided hair and birds on the phalera from Galiche in Bulgaria and the Great Mother on the Gundestrup cauldron (C 6565) that is also accompanied by smaller figure. Taylor sees in the woman the goddess *Hariti*, who protects the children. Similar depictions of this deity were also found on artefacts attributed to the Sarmatians who lived in the basin of the river Don, where several influences from the cultures located in the north of India found their way to. The Russian historian Mikhail Rostovtseff perceived these cultural links and contacts in the year 1930 (Taylor 1992, 87).



Depictions of a woman with birds and surrounded by smaller figures on silver plates:

Fig. 333: Phalera from Rawalpindi in ancient India (today's Pakistan) that dates in the 2nd century BC.

Fig. 334: Phalera from Galiche (Bulgaria).

Fig. 335: The silver plate C 6565 with a similar image from the outside of the Gundestrup cauldron.

The occurrence of several similar images, which spread over a number of different regions and also a vast amount of time, does not necessarily have to be related to the same interpretation or meaning of a symbol or an image and could have been transformed. An example for such a change is the motif of the deity *Harithi* who changed from her former persona of a child-eating ogress to a benevolent woman who protects them instead. The personification of her that is depicted on the cauldron's plate could have also undergone some transmutations. There is also a parallel between *Harithi* and a character in the Welsh-Celtic mythology named *Rhiannon*. She appears in the *Mabinogion*, a collection of tales which originates from Welsh texts and manuscripts from the Middle Ages, and is also transformed from a predatory being to a guarding figure and who is attended by two birds. The resemblances could either just be purely accidental (or have occurred by sheer chance) or could have later been adopted from the older *Harithi* figure which goes back to the representation on the Gundestrup cauldron and other artefacts made from silver. It is also likely that the character developed independently at some point of time in the Middle Ages (Taylor 1992, 88).

7.7 Phalerae with elephants from India and Europe

Timothy Taylor found several similar illustrations or motifs on silver phalerae from all over Europe (cf. Fig 66). The picture of an elephant with a building on his back, either a specific shaped howdah, a house or a castle, on a phalera made of silver that was found on the island of Sark in 1718 but was lost, has parallels on two (almost) similar artefacts, which were discovered near the Pakistani city of Rawalpindi. The objects have also been decorated with an elephant, but instead of the house the animals carry three people on its back, probably a mahout, a noble and his companion (Taylor 1992, 87).



Fig. 336-338: Phalerae with elephants: two from Rawalpindi (2nd century BC) and one from the island of Sark.

The linkage of northern India to Sarmatia could explain the illustrations of elephants on the cauldron. But this theory is not a completely new one. Japetus Steenstrup, a natural scientist and professor at the University of Copenhagen, dated the making of the cauldron in 1895 to the societies, which were located in the North of India, Tibet or Mongolia during the Middle Ages. Nevertheless, the arguments Steenstrup noted were not convincing, because the similarities in artefacts and images he had used for comparisons were undefined, uncertain, not explained and were mentioned without any reasonable order. Therefore, his approach has not been considered as a possibility afterwards; in hindsight, his attempt was basically correct or at least not completely wrong (Taylor 1992, 87).

A possible explanation for the parallels on artefacts, which have been found far away from each other and which are, although somehow alike, a bit different in execution and design, could be that a web of contacts had existed between artists and craftsmen. The similar motifs and iconographic elements could have originated from these connections and spread over long distances, while they overcame separations of ethnicity or politics. The networks that existed between the silversmiths of Antiquity can be assumed to have reached from North India to the

Balkans, over a distance of 6000 kilometres⁶⁵. Evidence for this approach is provided by archaeological finds, although there exist only a few so far. The diverse images and varying iconographic elements are a result of a copying or an imitation process that could have run over several stages (*Taylor 1992, 87f.*).

A good visual example for this procedure is the depiction of the elephants on the Gundestrup cauldron. Their shoulders are designed in a strange, pointed form and the transition from the shoulders to the neck and the head runs too far up from the animals' bodies. Therefore, it is likely that the artist has not seen a real elephant himself, but only an image of that animal or a replication of an image, which he imitated again. For example, the illustration of an elephant minted on coinage. Furthermore, the elephant's ears are placed in the wrong place and are too small. A theory for this fact is that these ears had originated from ornamental headgears illustrated on figures in India (*Taylor 1992, 87f.*).



Coins with images of elephants:

Fig. 339: A gold coin from Mir Zakah (Afghanistan) is believed to be the only object of its kind with a lifetime-depiction of Alexander the Great (Aramco world: Ptolemy's Alexandrian postscript. [Online] Available from: <http://archive.aramcoworld.com/issue/200606/ptolemy.s.alexandrian.postscript.htm> [Accessed 12th April 2018]).

Fig. 340: Carthagian coins found in Spain which date around 220 to 206 BC. The elephant image is placed on the reverse side of the coin (Coinweek. Ancient Coins - Elephants on Ancient Coinage. [Online] Available from: <https://coinweek.com/ancient-coins/elephants-ancient-coins/> [Accessed 12th April 2018]).

Fig. 341: Coins minted around 49 BC by order of Julius Caesar. The elephant on the obverse stamping on a serpent with horns could symbolize a carnyx, a representation of the Gallic conquest by Caesar's troops (cf. previous quote: <https://coinweek.com/ancient-coins/elephants-ancient-coins/> [Accessed 12th April 2018]).

⁶⁵ 4000 miles in Taylor's article; according to Google maps almost 6000 km.

Despite the already mentioned anatomic irregularities of the Gundestrup elephants there is another one, which will be recognized by the viewer. The tusks look more like those of a boar or maybe a warthog, than those of a real elephant.



Fig. 342 & 343: Sideview of a real Asian elephant versus the image on Gundestrup plate C 6573.

7.8 The wheelmen, Taranis, Vishnu and Ashoka as chakravartin

The bust with half a wheel on plate **C 6572** has been linked to the Celtic god Taranis of whom the wheel has been an attribute, although these interpretations have been made hesitantly (Taylor 1992, 86). In *'De Bello Gallico'*, Caesar used Roman names for the descriptions of the aspects and functions of the Celtic gods. He reported that the Gauls worshipped Jupiter, the master of the sky who can be identified as *Taranis* (Book VI, Chapter 17). Taylor allocates Taranis to a specific, category of deities: “wheel gods” (Taylor 1992, 88), which is pancultural and a common appearing motif in human cultures. The Indian deity Vishnu can also be linked to this group, based on his attributed wheel (Taylor 1992, 86-88). The Indian or Hindu wheel symbol represents righteous rule (Schuhmann 1996, 48).



Fig. 344-346: Gundestrup wheel-men, bronze figurine of Taranis and a sculpture of the meditating Vishnu (ca. 11th/12th cent.) with a club (*gadā*) and the wheel/disc (*chakra*) (Schuhmann 1996, 48f.)

The wheel-half on the Gundestrup cauldron has eight spokes, therefore a whole one would count 16. Wheels with the same or a very similar amount of spokes appear on some depictions, like on a fragmented relief that originates from the Indian town of Amaravati. The central figure in the scene is a large man, whose right arm is raised, stretched and placed upon a wheel on a column. Two smaller figures are placed on both sides of the smaller one and it appears that both of the men are holding something with their hands. These men could be servants or followers of the centrally placed man.

The figure is interpreted as a representation of the Mauryan emperor Ashoka, who ruled from approximately 265 to 238 BC. Ashoka was a patron of Buddhism and supported the spreading of the religion throughout the Indian subcontinent by conquest. The wheel in combination with the figure could symbolize the ruler as a *chakravartin*, the ruler of the world according to the ideas of ancient India, whose title is a derivation from the Sanskrit words *chakra* “wheel” and *vartin*, which means “one who turns”. As a result, the term can be translated as “the ruler who is unhindered in his movements”, while the turning wheels refer to his chariot (*Encyclopædia Britannica: Ashoka and Chakravartin* [Online] Available from: <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Ashoka>; <https://www.britannica.com/topic/chakravartin> [Accessed 23rd May 2018]).

The 16-spoked wheel is also depicted as a cultic symbol that is worshipped by believers. In the depiction of the wheelmen, these two Indian motifs could have been combined, whereby the bust could represent a deity and the figure the blessed supreme ruler or a believer or the bust could stand for the ruler and the figure is his follower or servant.

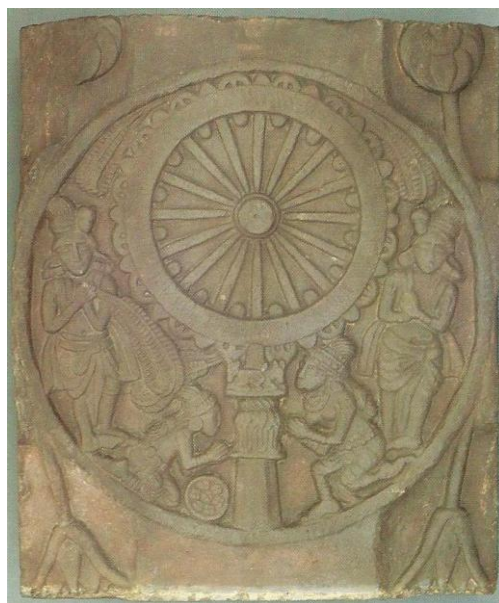


Fig. 347: Relief from Amarvati, ca. 1st century BC/AD, displayed in the Musée Guimet in Paris.

Fig. 348: Believers worshipping the wheel, Medallion (60 x 50 x 14 cm) sculpted as relief on the railing of the Bhārhut stupa from the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh. It dates around 100 BC and is kept in the Indian Museum in Calcutta (Klimburq-Salter 1995, 84).

8. A mythic concept of the world's construction

There exists another theory about what is shown or can be seen on the sigil with the horned master of animals from Mohenjo-daro, as well as on the base plate or silver phalera attached to the bowl of the Gundestrup cauldron. This interpretation would be another parallel between these two artefacts.

Gerald Unterberger (2011) has collected several images, figures and statues from different countries and cultures all over the world, which all show the same or a similar idea or imagination: a bull as a significant part in the construction of the world. This is an archaic belief, which developed into three different, although resembling concepts: A bull who bears the pillar of the world, the structure of the world or earth itself (or the flat earth), either on its head or on its back. According to these perceptions, the structures connect all the different worlds like the world above and the world beyond, heaven and earth or several different spheres of heavens and underworlds (Unterberger 2011, 1-5).

8.1 The horned master of animals on a Mohenjo-daro sigil

The author theorizes that the headpiece of the figure on the sigil could be the world mountain. According to one legend, the wife of Shiva is the daughter of the Himalaya. It is said that the couple lived together on the mountain *Kailāsa*⁶⁶ in the Himalaya, somewhere in Tibet. In the Hindu and Buddhist literature, the mountain is equal to *Meru*⁶⁷, the world mountain. There are demons, which shake the mountain so that it will collapse, therefore *Kailāsa* is meant to be a world mountain and its fall will be the end of the world. But Shiva, as an antagonist to evil, smashes the arms of the demons. Meru can have or can be illustrated in two forms, either with three peaks, similar to a trident, or in the shape of an hourglass. The hat on the head of the figure on the sigil looks similar to that form, therefore Unterberger asks the question if the headgear could symbolise the world mountain. In addition, the three faces of Shiva could reflect the context of the world pillar or the world mountain and its deity who sits in the centre of the universe and is able to see everything and look everywhere (Unterberger 2011, 181f.).

⁶⁶ *Mount Kailash* which is regarded as a holy place in Buddhism, Bon, Hinduism and Jainism (Wikipedia: *Mount Kailash*. [Online] Available from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mount_Kailash [Accessed 14th January 2018]).

⁶⁷ *Mount Meru*, according to the cosmology of Buddhism, Jainism and Hinduism it has five peaks and is imagined as the center of all universes, regardless if they are of metaphysical, physical or spiritual nature (Wikipedia: *Mount Meru*. [Online] Available from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mount_Meru [Accessed 14th January 2018]).



Fig. 349 & 350: Mount Kailash in Nepal and the hour-glass shape of world-mountain Meru.



Fig. 351: Illustration of Mount Meru according to the cosmology of Jainism.

Fig. 352: Thangka (Buddhist painting) of Mount Meru in the conceptualised universe of Buddhism.

Fig. 353: The sigil with the horned master of animals from Mohenjo-daro.

8.2 The symbol on the lying bull's head on the Gundestrup base plate

According to Unterberger this myth could also be represented on the Gundestrup cauldron, to be exact, on the phalera, which serves as the vessel's bottom plate (**C 6563**). The head of the lying bull is ornamented with an element that reminds us of a flower and consists of three parts, a circle or ball on the top, a thin line or pole in the middle and underneath a horizontal crescent-shaped figure. The lying crescent could stand for the earth, while the pole could symbolize the world pillar with a star on it, which would be the Polar star. Unterberger remarks the possibility that the scene could show the bull, who carries the tree of the world and in addition, illustrates the animal's cosmological function as the carrier of the world. This could be indicated through the decorative symbol worked into its head. The figure with the sword could symbolize sacrifice, because by the killing of the bull, the world will end and be renewed (Unterberger 2011, 93f.).



Fig. 354-356: The bull's forehead, the enlarged symbol and a spiral or a whirl on a bull head attachment from the treasure of Craivo.

Furthermore, Unterberger connects the origins of this specific depiction to the representations of Mithras, based on several similarities between these scenes. Beside the obvious sacrifice of the bull, the probable dog, which is depicted above the figure on the phalera, is another parallel to the god who is also accompanied by such an animal. The animal underneath the bull is described as resembling a reptile and is interpreted as a possible adoption of a snake and a scorpion that resulted in a fusion of both creatures. Depictions of these two animals can be found in sacrifice-scenes of the Cult of Mithras (*Unterberger 2011, 94*).



Fig. 357: A painted relief of Mithras from Sterzing in South Tirol (Italy). Next to Mithras and the bull a dog, a snake and a scorpion are depicted.

- Chapter Five -

Intercultural contacts and influences between Europe and India in antiquity



- Chapter Five -

1. Intercultural contacts in antiquity

Symbols are an important aspect and a unique product of human civilizations. Nowadays, in the high developed societies and global connections photos, pictures and symbols spread easily and fast all over the world. Symbols can absolutely have the same meaning for two people, if they are either related, from the same country or if they live in different parts of the world, which lie far apart. A reason for this is that several symbols are connected with logos, brands and companies such as the bitten-into apple from Apple. In addition, a symbol could also have the same or a similar meaning for two different groups of people whose ways of life are different and who do not only live in different countries or places, but also under different climatic conditions. It could also be possible that symbols originated independent from each other, but look very similar, like a sun or fertility symbols as a phallus or a vulva.

Symbols could spread or be distributed over a various amount of time, especially when they are associated with a system of belief or some kind of religion. For example, the cross of Christianity, the crescent of Islam or the Star of David. This is mostly connected with an adaption of that religion or some kind of missionary work. Nevertheless, a symbol can also find its way to another part of the world because of intercultural exchange(s), probably connected with an adaption or an alteration of that implied symbol. There are several reasons for such an intercultural exchange: the spreading of a culture or a religion, war and possible following conquest, trade or reports from travellers or other witnesses, who have seen or discovered that specific symbol.

But how far could symbols have “travelled” in former centuries, especially in antiquity? And if they had wandered from one culture to another over different regions and an uncertain span of time, did their meaning change or did it remain almost the same or at least similar?

The depiction of the horned master of animals on the sigil from the Harappa site of Mohenjodaro and the antlered master of animals on the Gundestrup plate **C 6571** show several similarities. There are also other parallels between the scenes on the cauldron as well as images on Iron aged European artefacts and the pictorial world of ancient India. Intercultural contacts between the Mediterranean world and India had existed and can be proven based on historical examples like the campaigns of Alexander the Great to ancient Persia and India. This enterprise favoured cultural exchanges between the diverse civilisations and with Alexander's army also different sorts of scholars and craftsmen travelled to the foreign East.

2. The special role of the smiths and craftsmen

An assumed condition for the theory of a far-reaching and long-distance cultural exchange as well as transfer, which was spread by communities over several countries, is the fact that the craftsmen who conducted the metal work were part of a wandering group. It is likely that the artisans who made the Gundestrup cauldron belonged to such a migrating social class of which probably several had existed in antiquity. Their itinerant way of life would have come along with adoptions and transformations of motifs and symbols from different cultures, with whom these smiths came into contact. Some characteristics of the societal connections between the crafters and their patrons or customers can be read off the scenes shown on the cauldron, as well as from other depictions on metal work. On the plate with the wheelmeen (C 6572) a probable male figure can be seen who wears a helmet with backwards bent horn-applications and a hip-length garment that spares the arms, decorated with or sewed out of several vertically running stripes. The figure's right hand grabs the wheel as if he aims to turn it, while its other hand is placed beneath and closely to the wheel, as if it would support the object. The 'turner' could fulfil a specific ritualistic role and could have been a member of the same social class as the craftsmen who forged the cauldron, possibly a group which was similar to a caste or a guild (*Taylor 1992, 88*).

It is most likely that the forging and the working of metal were activities which had a specific cultic role in prehistoric times that even persisted until the late centuries of the second millennium. Therefore, it is most likely that preliterate cultures and groups had a necessity to combine and connect processes of high complexity with certain rituals because they had no opportunity to write them down. To ensure that sequences would be handled in the right order, a group or a society needed these procedures to become branded in the common memory. This could have been ensured through ritualized processes or formulas that were spoken as spells. It would be possible that the earliest creations of metal and their makers had a relation to a form of power, probably a fusion of political and religious might. A result could have been that when the earliest metal, the copper, had been discovered, a person who was able to create or craft it formed the leader of a community, and the handler of magical or religious practices was only one person at a given time. In the pre-Roman Iron-Age, religion and metallurgy could have been linked, at least partly. Political power on the other hand was a distinctive factor, the result of secularisation. Support for this argument could be provided by the scenes depicted on the Gundestrup cauldron (*Budd & Taylor 1995, 139f.*).

An essential point in the evolution of metallurgy in Afro-Eurasia was the material change

from bronze to iron, which likely influenced transformations in society, although of unknown extent. A possible theory could explain the link between the transition of metals and the social transformations. It is reasonable to assume that craftsmen or smiths who worked with bronze had special forms of connections or relationships with their customers. Their patrons or masters would have been those people who regulated and controlled the trade with tin, the indispensable ingredient material for creating bronze-alloying. The required technologies for making and casting bronze were changed to a process of forging, which required essential social transformations. Through these changes, the smiths became more independent and could have travelled through several regions where they offered their miracle-working skills. The settlements the craftsmen visited on their journeys could have kept distance to the smiths, so that their ritual work would not be disturbed and the people avoided any 'magical infections' (*Budd & Taylor 1995, 140*).

Compared to traditional folk customs of metal-working that exist in the present Eurasia, an obvious distinction of 'magical' elements from the ordinary process cannot be made, instead the two parts blur into each other. Therefore, it is likely that the production of metal artefacts was closely connected to performances of magical acts. Examples for this theory can be found in several myths and stories, like in the legend of the smith *Wayland* or *Wieland* (*Budd & Taylor 1995, 139*). Smiths, either of human or dwarfish origin, have always had a special role or function in the tales of the *Edda*. Another parallel is *Ilmarinen* in the Finnish epos *Kalevala*, who forges the magical *Sampo*, the mill of plenty.

A useful example for comparison of recent times would be the handwork of the Romani people or Gypsies, a name based on a historic exonym. This itinerant group of people frequently carried out those kinds of tasks or works that the other social groups of the civilizations, which they travelled through, probably considered to be ritually harmful or risky, like playing music at a funeral, predicting the future or the fate and the treating and workmanship of metal. The Romani people were only randomly noted in written sources of history and it could be the same case with the group of craftsmen who are traceable through archaeological sources, but have no mentions in works of antique authors. It would be possible that this social or ethnic group of smiths lived in Thrace, but did not feel as belonging to its inhabitants (*Taylor 1992, 88*).

Considering that such an itinerant group of silversmiths or craftsmen specialised in working metal lived in Thrace and wandered through the surrounding territories, it is likely that these men came to ancient Macedon and Greece as well as to the Celtic lands in the Middle and lower Danube basin. Along with Alexander's army they could have also come to ancient India.

3. Alexander the Great: A cultural mediator

3.1 Alexander the Great and the Celts

In the spring of the year 335 BC Alexander marched to the Danube to continue the conquest of Thrace, which his father Phillip had started some years earlier. The young king was purposeful to bring that venture to a successful end. After Alexander had defeated the tribe of the Triballi, he received gifts of hospitality handed over by delegations of the tribes and people who settled alongside, as well as around the Danube. Among them was a Celtic embassy sent by the Celtic tribes resident in the eastern part of the Adriatic Sea, which was also the group that came from the most western array. Ptolemy, one of Alexander's generals and the later founder of the Ptolemaic dynasty, delivers a description of the first meeting between Alexander and the Celtic ambassadors. He reported that Alexander asked the Celts what they would fear most in life, hoping that they would answer to fear himself most of all among men. But to his surprise the Celts answered that their only fright was that one day the sky could fall down on their heads, an idea that is already reported in the Histories of Herodotus. Alexander made an alliance with the Celtic tribes, which assured that there would not be any Celtic attacks on the Macedon territory during his lifetime, through which the threat, that could have inflicted the plans for Alexander's campaigns and their implementing, had been removed (*Gebhard & Ziegeus 2013, 139*).

In the years following Alexander's death, his remaining generals and former advisors each fought several times about the succession of his line. Seleucus, who had defeated Lysimachus in the battle at Kouroupedion, was killed by Ptolemy Keraunos, the eldest son of Ptolemy, who in turn ruled in Macedon afterwards. The Celts used these turbulences to attack and assembled in great numbers on the Macedonian plateau, where their army separated into three parts. The first part led by Kerethrios started an attack on the Thracians and the Triballer, while the second group commanded by Bolgios triumphed over Ptolemy Keraunos in Macedon, who was beheaded afterwards. Brennos and Akichoros led the last section to the South, where the warriors plundered Delphi in 279 BC (*Gebhard & Ziegeus 2013, 139-141*).

The sack of the key sanctum in Greece is that Celtic episode, which has been documented best by antique sources. The Celts were defeated by a Greek army and afterwards spread to the surrounding territories where in Thrace the Celtic realm of Tylis developed and a part of the Scordisci founded a town named Singidunum, which became modern day Belgrade. One year later, in 278 BC, Nicomedes I. of Bithynia shipped Celtic warriors as mercenaries over the

Dardanelles to support him against his brother Zipoetes II., whose rebellion had led to a civil war. The Celtic army consisted of the tribes (or parts of it) of Tolistobogii, the Tectosages and the Trocmi and half of the Celtic troupes moving southwards were women and children. This conglomerate settled in Asia Minor after the war and was henceforth known as the Galatians. In the Hellenistic period, the popularity of using Celtic warriors as mercenaries beside the regular armies had reached its pinnacle and almost every ruler in the territories that lay east to the Celtic lands had at least one contingent in his service (*Gebhard & Ziegeus 2013, 141.*).

At the beginning of the 2nd century BC, many of these Celtic mercenaries could be found in the Seleucid Empire, the Ptolemaic empire and in the kingdoms of Pergamon, Bithynia and Pontus, but because of sparse reports or clues it is unclear what happened to the majority of Celts after their service in war. It is known that some stayed in the regions where they had come to or fought in, like in Egypt or Asia Minor. The Celts were connected to the Mediterranean world, which was characterized by the Greek culture and later by the Hellenistic one. Through these contacts, an intercultural exchange happened. This did not only affect the Celtic tribes in the immediate neighbourhood, but also spread into the Celtic world in Central Europe and emerged in manifold aspects. Their weapons, a longsword and an oval shield with midrib and an umbo to protect the hand, in combination with their way to fight was adapted not only by their allies but also by their enemies, so that the armament in Eastern Europe orientated after the Celtic one (*Gebhard & Ziegeus 2013, 141f.*).

Celtic arms also influenced Greek art and literature and were adopted in their spectrum of motifs. From the Hellenistic and antique Mediterranean world, the Celtic mercenaries brought different manifestations of foreign cultures back to their homeland: in form of coins, artefacts, icons and statues, as well as spoils of war and also the impressions of countries alien to them. In the Celtic world, new techniques and inventions were adopted and novel art styles developed or created through this cultural influence from the south. In addition, the way cities were organized was adapted, which reshaped the Celtic structure of settlement, mostly characterized by agriculture (*Gebhard & Ziegeus 2013, 142.*).

The far-reaching travels of Celtic mercenaries can be proven best by coins, which the warriors brought back with them. There are several sites where such foreign coins of the Greek and Hellenistic world were found, for example in Nĕmĕice (Moravia) the excavation of a Celtic settlement brought forth several different coins from varying campaigns, where Celtic warriors served as mercenaries. Ancient coins from the second Punic War and the sixth war in Syria (most likely) prove an involvement of Celts in belligerent activities in the late 3rd and early 2nd century BC. But so far, only a few such coins were discovered in West and Central

Europe, compared to the wide spread dissemination of Celtic warriors in different armies or to their raids and plunder. In addition, the coins made of silver and gold with the image of Alexander the Great minted on circulated after his death, either because his successors used the older coins again or made new ones with the same or a very similar motif. Especially in the years following the death of Alexander large amounts of gold coins were used by the different rivals who fought over primacy. After the second half of the 3rd century BC, Lysimachus controlled the coinage and the coins which were in circulation in Thrace and which were often used to trade with the barbarian tribes (*Gebhard & Ziegeus 2013, 142f.*).

In southern Germany only three coins with the counterfeits of Alexander the Great or one of his successors were found at different sites. The first one is a small bronze coin, which was discovered at the *Gelben Bürg* (district Weißenburg-Gunzenhausen) that dates to around 320 BC. The two other coins are gold staters with an Alexander motif minted on them, which had already been excavated as grave goods in the village (Thuringia) in 1830; unfortunately one of these was lost. In the first half of the 3rd century BC, these coins made their way up to the North, at a period of time, when the Celtic world did not have an independent coinage. An explanation for the absence of foreign gold coins in the Celtic world could be that they were reused because of their high content of gold, melted and turned into either jewellery or into coins, whereas an additional part of silver or bronze had been added. After the weight had been slightly modified, the coin was reused. Studies concerning metallurgy of the Celtic coins prove a new use through alloys, melting and re-minting. (*Gebhard & Ziegeus 2013, 143f.*)



Fig. 358: Imitated gold coin of Alexander the Great that has been excavated together with a bronze bracelet in a Celtic burial in the Thuringian village Dobian (Germany).

Fig. 359 & 360: Celtic coins which copied Macedonian coinage motifs of Alexander (bronze coin), Philipp II. and Lysimachos (general of Alexander, Diadoch and Macedonian king).

There are a few more coins with images from the Greek-Hellenistic world that were discovered in South Germany, but they are restrike mints, imitating foreign motifs. Such local copies are proven at the earliest in the second half of the 3rd century BC in different parts of Gallia and are based on the gold coins by Philipp II., which have a profile of Apollo and a chariot on it. Celtic imitations of southern gold coins are also known from the area around the Upper Rhine, Upper Bavaria, Upper Palatinate and Franconia. In Bavaria, Celtic gold coins, designed after the models of Philippian coins, were found in Menning (dist. Pfaffenhofen), Eggling (dist. Regensburg), Weiding (dist. Cham) and Würzburg, but a copy of a gold coin of Lysimachus was also discovered in 1918 in Maihingen (dist. Donau-Ries), although an original is missing. Gold staters of Alexander were also imitated in Bohemia and Moravia. It seems that such copies were very popular among the Celtic rulers and chiefs. The conduction of images on the Celtic coins as well as on the inscriptions is a hint that originals were available for the copyists. Independent Celtic coins were established in the late 2nd century BC and the earliest forms are the so called rainbow cups (*Gebhard & Ziegaus 2013, 144f.*). There are no reports or sources from Antiquity that tell us about Celtic warriors in the armies of Alexander the Great (*Gebhard & Ziegaus 2013, 143*). But considering the fact that Celts doing war service as mercenaries were an everyday occurrence in the armies of Greek-Hellenistic times, it is very likely that Alexander could have used some of them for his campaigns. Proof for this theory could be gained through the archaeological finds of gold coins of Alexander at Celtic sites and by depictions of Celtic warriors at Sāñchī in India.

3.2 Alexander the Great and India

In the early summer of the year 327 BC, Alexander the Great led an army of circa 35.000 men over the Hindu Kush, aiming to the Panjshir Valley and further over the region of Gandhāra. From there the Macedonian king planned to march to the land of the five rivers, as well as to the valley of the river Indus so that he would arrive in ancient India, an enterprise that no mortal man from the Mediterranean world had achieved before him. Only heroes and deities were believed to have travelled that far. According to the Greek myths, the deity Dionysos came to India in an immemorial time and taught the people of India, who lived as nomads during that time, the culture, or what would fit the Greek understanding of culture. Therefore, they regarded their god as a cultural hero who showed the Indians how to practise agriculture and the breeding of cattle, founded cities and shared his knowledge of making wine with them. It also had been told that Dionysos formulated the first laws of India (*Hahn 2000, 9-17*).

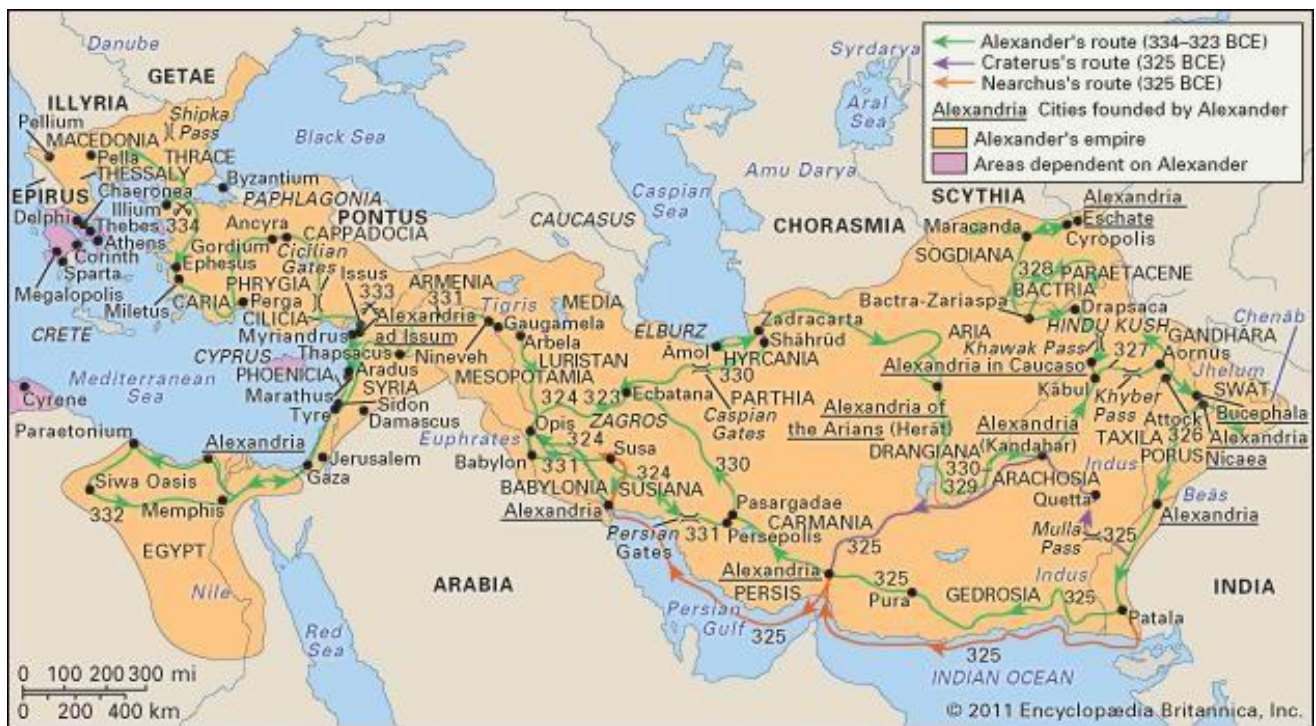


Fig. 361: Map of Alexander's campaign in the eastern parts of the Persian Empire and in ancient India.

What Alexander and his contemporaries believed to be India is not equal to the modern territory of the Indian state. The antique India spanned the Valley of Panjshir, Gandhāra, the land of the five rivers and the lower region of the Indus Valley, which today belongs to the eastern territory of Afghanistan or to the state of Pakistan, except for the region of Baluchistan. One legend reported that the mighty Heracles, who was believed to have travelled to the edges of the known world during his twelve labours, crossed India where he had released Prometheus from the rock Zeus once had bound him to. So, Alexander planned to emulate the deeds of this ancient hero, who was his own idol and even those of Dionysos, by wandering to India, which he planned to cross and conquer. In the Greek conception of the world, India was the last inhabited region in the East behind which the great and infinite ocean spans. To reach this edge of the world was the goal of the young Macedonian king, so that he would be in line with the achievements of heroes and deities and probably even exceed them (*Hahn 2000, 9-18*).

Alexander's troupes included a whole bunch of different units. The army's main core consisted of around 10,000 men infantry, heavy armed warriors that formed the infamous Macedonian phalanx. In addition, there were around 5,000 riders, who were named the companions of Alexander, also mercenaries from Greece, riders from Thrace as well as skilled units of high mobility from different regions of the former Persian Empire, which the king had personally chosen for that enterprise, were part of the army. In addition, an extensive baggage train followed the army, which also included wagons and horses (*Hahn 2000, 9f.*).

Although Celtic mercenaries are not specifically mentioned in the sources, it is likely that they had been part of the army, according to their appreciated fighting skills and common usage as mercenary units in Antiquity. (*cf. chapter 2.1*) Furthermore it would also be plausible that several craftsmen specialised in working metal followed the army to ensure necessary repairs of weapons and armour and probably also to fulfil the exquisite tastes and wishes of the command section. Therefore, the production of artefacts made from precious metals for the king and his generals is imaginable, as well as the decoration of weapons and armours with ornaments of gold, silver and other valuable materials.

In the antique Mediterranean world, India was imagined as a land of wonders and miracles about which all sort of fantastic tales occurred. A lot of fantastic beasts should live there, like ants the size of foxes that would dig in the earth for gold, or humans, who would have the head of a dog, as well as dragons of an enormous size, should have inhabited the outermost region of the ancient world. The origins of these, very imaginative, tales, through which India became a land of fantasy for the Greeks could only be figured out to a specific amount. The oldest reports about India resulted from a journey of Skylax, a captain from the ancient region of Caria⁶⁸, who sailed by the order of king Dareios I., ruler of the Persian Empire from 522 to 486 BC, downwards on the river Indus for exploration purposes. He reported about the humans with dog heads and also mentioned other strange creatures, which were probably were based on native stories. Although a transcript of Skylax' journey has not been preserved, a short reference can be found in the Histories of Herodot (*Book 4, 44*) (*Hahn 2000, 10-12*).

Some of these fantastic stories resulted from a specific development in Greek historiography. Authors like Hekataios of Miletus and Herodot adopted a theme from the Greek legends, where a whole spectrum of strange creatures would have lived on the edges of the known world. Therefore, the ancient writers also inhabited faraway lands with these or similar beasts. But the biggest portion of legends originated from the writings of Ctesias of Cnidus, who had lived as a personal doctor at the court of the Persian Empire for some years. There, he got in touch with the reports about the Indian country, and after he had returned home, Ctesias transformed his memories into several texts, the so called *Indika*. The *Indika*-collection extended the fantastic tales about India and added further inhabitants to the country, like gold-guarding griffins and people who would only have had one large foot (*Hahn 2000, 12f.*).

Hence the Macedonian army had great expectations of what it would discover in the regions of India. Beside his troops, Alexander also brought several scientists, engineers and scholars to India, who made the exploration and the documentation of this almost unknown country

⁶⁸ Located in the western part of Anatolia. *cf.*: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caria> [Accessed 22th March 2018].

their ambition. Maps about the geography of that foreign land did not exist, which caused some difficulties for the army's marching routes. For example, the counting of the (foot)steps was one method that had been used for measuring the distances and also specific prominent details were noted along the routes. During their trips, the Macedonian king and his men followed every hint or legend concerning the places Herakles and Dionysos had come to. Furthermore, they also searched for the fantastic beasts. From the Macedonian point of view, their own culture was superior to those of the Indians (*Hahn 2000, 18-21*).

As a result, they projected their own imaginary world, as well as their own cultural traditions on all the things, impressions and behaviours in India, which were either new or alien to the Greek-Macedonian culture. Therefore, several local ideas, traditions and behaviours had not been understood to the complete extent by the foreigners, because they reinterpreted them according to their own patterns of perception. This changing and adapting by the Macedonians of the exotic Indian flora, fauna, the cultural and also social aspects of the Indian people's lifeworld are probably the most remarkable characteristics of Alexander's campaign and conquests in India (*Hahn 2000, 18*).

An episode for this misunderstanding and change of meaning is the story of Alexander's meeting with a native sage man. According to language barriers, three translators were necessary so that the Macedonian king could have a conversation with the Indian philosopher Dandamis. Those, in turn, refused to give Alexander a detailed introduction and explanation of his philosophical concepts, considering that it would be useless if three different people have to translate his words so that Alexander would be able to understand him, much less to figure out his philosophies. Therefore, the exact role, function and the cultural concepts of these Indian sages were not understood and all of them had been summed up under the term '*naked sages*'. So, for the foreigners, it did not matter if one of these people was a yogi, a sadhu or a member of the Brahmin class. Later the philosopher Onesicritus was sent by Alexander to meet with this Indian sage and noted Dandamis' teachings. The resemblance to philosophies from ancient Greece is certainly no coincidence (*Hahn 2000, 26*).

Although Alexander's campaign gained a lot of new information about India, it was still a military enterprise that had been carried out with high brutality. In Alexander's expectations, every ruler, tribe or city he met in his ongoing advances should bow down to him immediately. Resistance, even hesitation was punished and resulted in heavy violence. Furthermore, several warning examples were set, each one in a very cruel way. For example, the Macedonian king ordered his troops, on several occasions to kill unarmed inhabitants such as men, women and children who fled before the onslaught of his army. In some areas, the

whole population was killed and in a number of villages or settlements all inhabitants became slaves (*Hahn 2000, 30f.*). According to Albert B. Bosworth (1996), Alexander's campaigns to India show several parallels to the conquest of Mexico through the Spaniards, under the command of Hernán Cortés in the years of 1519 to 1521.

3.3 After Alexander: Northern India and its special function as an intercultural hub

Although Alexander's campaign had only lasted two years, the enterprise had enormous cultural and economic impacts on the country. The Hellenistic culture affected the Maurya Empire and further had a major influence on the Gandhāra-culture that existed from the 1st century BC until the 5th century AD. There, the art style of Hellenism became a crucial factor in the shaping of the regional art of Buddhism. Furthermore, this process had an effect on the development of art in Central Asia and on the realms there, ie the Kushan Empire (1st century until 3rd/4th century AD), as well as on the Gupta Empire (320 to 570 AD). The north-western part of India became a hub for cultural influences and exchange, which resulted from its geographical location on the main trade passage from East to West (and vice versa), the Silk Road. North-India's role as a bridge for trade and exchanges between the Eastern and the Western hemisphere remained for several centuries. Together with further trade centres in the South of the peninsular, frequent trade connections established between India, China and the Roman Empire. In conclusion, the conquests of Alexander did not endure long, but beside the political and military consequences, the contact between the different cultures heavily influenced the further development of history (*Hahn 2000, 39f.*).

The campaigns of Alexander the Great brought knowledge and myths from the antique world of Europe to ancient India or, to be precise, the north-western part of the country, which today is mostly the territory of present-day Pakistan. It is doubtful that these developments happened in the short amount of time Alexander spent there during his military expeditions into the country. It is more likely that, in the following period of the Diadochi, the Seleucid Empire was responsible for the spreading of Greek culture in the East.

But what are the possibilities for why the ideas of the East once made their way to the West and to Europe? First of all, these ideas could have been transmitted through the participants of Alexander's campaigns, which included soldiers, officers, generals, his military cadre, scribes, philosophers, all sort of artists and musicians and so on. But could the Indian images, ideas and symbols have made their ways further north than Greece or ancient Macedon? And if they did, how did that happen? One theory is that Celtic mercenaries came with Alexander's army

to the distant corners of the known world. A possible proof of this theory are reliefs on the sepulchral monument of emperor Ashoka the Great, the stupa of Sāñchī, which show figures with attributes and equipment, which resemble Celtic objects.

4. Cultural influences and exchanges between Europe and India in Antiquity

4.1 India and its fascination to the Mediterranean West in Antiquity

The philosophies and religions of India were of great interest to the intellectuals in the western antiquity, ever since Alexander the Great had undertaken campaigns to that country and had conquered some parts of it. In the European literature of the late antiquity and the Middle ages, the idea as well as the image of India was heavily influenced by biographies about Alexander that had been written in Hellenistic times and which reported about philosophers accompanying the army of the young Macedon. Alexander had commanded men like Onesicritus, a historian and Cynic philosopher, to learn wisdoms and ideas from Indian teachers who were called *Gymnosophistai* in the Greek language, which means naked sages, and even Alexander is said to have spoken and to have exchanged letters with them (*Baier 1998, 19f.*). Several suppositions see or identify these wise men as yogic disciples of Jainism (*Drew 1987, 147*).

These texts and reports have formed a specific idea of India and western philosophers of the cynic and stoic schools believed that the land was the birthplace of ancient wisdom(s). In the West, such ideas had been changed, as well as become sophisticated, and if someone wanted to find the pure forms or original variants, India would have been the right place. But this interest did not focus so much on theory and content, but on the teachings in practice, similar to the philosophic concept of Cynicism. The Greek authors underlined the Gymnosophistical way of living, consisting of asceticism, an apparent immunity to lust and pain. In addition, the Gymnosophists would despise death and would make no difference between what the customs as well as the traditions and their teachings or lore would be (*Baier 1998, 20f.*).

In the Greek opinion, the naked sages were true philosophers because they had realized the Greek ideas and ideals of wisdom. The adoption of this way of living became a main aspect of the stoic and cynic school of philosophy. Onesicritus, for example, described one of the Gymnosophists named Mandanis as an advocate of the healing, as in the sense of nature, the

physis. On the contrary, he criticised the Greeks who, in his opinion, had exchanged their natural life for a catalogue of rules and habits designed by human arbitrariness, the so called *nómoi*. In addition to the Indian philosophical way of living, the practice and training of meditation found their way into the philosophic schools of the Hellenistic world, which were in many ways similar to forms of yoga (Baier 1998, 21).

Alexander's army was accompanied by an amount of scientists, scholars and intellectuals from Greece, such as several philosophers. Among them was a man named Pyrrho who lived from approximately 362 to around 275-50 BC. Pyrrho was the founder of *Pyrrhonism*, a school of the philosophic aspect of skepticism. Pyrrho's lore was influenced by Buddhist teachings and concepts or based on them to a specific amount. Through the school of Pyrrhonism, early forms of Buddhist ideas significantly affected the philosophical concepts in the Eastern Mediterranean world (Beckwith 2015).

A new trade route was developed between Egypt and India at the end of the 2nd century BC when the so called monsoon-passage was explored. The direct connection over the sea was safer and avoided custom services, in comparison to the old trade ways. This led to the creation of Greek-roman trading colonies in India and each year more than a hundred ships made their way during the lifetime of Strabo. It is most likely that the increase of trade relationships affected the cultural exchange as well as the knowledge about the foreign subcontinent. But the new gained learning only affected the literature to a small amount, because the imagination and the ideas about India established by the stories concerning Alexander the Great were omnipresent in the culture of the Hellenistic and later in the Roman world (Baier 1998, 23f.).

There are several theories that philosophers like Apollonios and Pythagoras had been influenced by yogic lore because their ideas were similar in some aspects. In addition, a biography about Apollonios from the third century BC exists, written by Philostratos, which reports that he had travelled to India (Baier 1998, 24). There he could have exchanged philosophic ideas with a man named *Iarchas*, who is supposed to have followed the concept of yoga which was created by *Patañjali* (Drew 1987, 93).

Although it is possible that the Indian journey of Apollonios never happened, the yogic philosophy was at least known to some extent in the Mediterranean area of the late antiquity. And, according to Baier, the arguments for Drew's hypothesis are not very convincing, because what is known about the connections and contacts of ancient sages and their teachings today is a combination of legends and anecdotes. Furthermore, these informations are not very precise. There are not enough historic details to construct a western reception of

yoga. On the other hand, an episode of historical accuracy is the participation of the philosopher Plotinus, the father of Neo-Platonism, in the campaign of emperor Gordian III. against the Sasanids, so that he could gain some of the Persian and Indian knowledge. But this enterprise did not reach India and ended when the emperor was murdered in Mesopotamia. Besides Plotinus' interest for the Indian teachings, no definite proof exists that these lores had any influence on his own ideas and philosophies (*Baier 1998, 24f.*). However, the Indologist Richard von Garbe was convinced that the Neo-Platonism was influenced by the philosophic concept of Samkhya and other yogic teachings (*Garbe 1896, 40*).

Although several parallels occur, if the teachings of Neo-Platonism are compared with the Indian yogic practices and other later Christian authors from antiquity, there are too few reports and sources to prove an encounter of Western philosophers and Indian yogic sages. The idea that India is a land full of wisdom and asceticism remained, and in late antiquity, monks and philosophers focused their attention on the mystic subcontinent. It was common in the 2nd and 3rd century AD to see the East, especially India, as a place where wise revelations could be found in philosophic and religious lore, as in their traditions (*Baier 1998, 25f.*).

4.2 The influence of ancient European myths on the legends concerning Buddha's birth

Were there connections between the Indian culture and the cultural world of Europe in Antiquity? Until the second half of the former 20th century, it was supposed that there were no such direct influences. If intercultural contact and exchange could be assumed, then the West must have learnt from the East, because the texts from the Indian world were obviously the older ones. Another presumed option could be that the topics of these stories are parts of a mutual heritage of an Indo-European culture or 'race' (*Derrett 1992, 47*).

The period of time, in which texts originated has been questioned and it does not seem wacky or very unlikely that authors, who were resident in the West could have influenced the works of authors in India, at least in certain cases. Stories and themes from the Judaeo-Christian lore could have made their way to the Buddhist world and have been adapted there. Vice versa, such an exchange is proven by a tale called *Barlaam and Ioasaph*. J. Derrett mentions another Buddhist story that has run through some changes so that it becomes a version fitting for Judaism. The plot is that Moses argues with Samael over the possession of his soul. According to Derrett, the scene is dimly similar to the confrontation between Buddha and Māra⁶⁹. The assertions made by Moses probably have nothing similar in the Jewish tradition

⁶⁹ The personification of death, calamity and desire in Buddhism; similar to Satan.

and seem strange compared to the usual character of Moses (Derrett 1992, 47):

1. Moses' power is greater than those of everyone else who came into this world;
2. On the day of his birth, Moses "*found occasion for speech*" (Derrett 1992, 47);
3. And on that day Moses walked;
4. and he also spoke with his parents;
5. and in addition, the baby refused/renounced to suck milk (Derrett notes that this claim is an exception and is a common narrative in the Jewish history);
6. When Moses was three months old, he has foretold to receive the Law from the midst of the flaming fire.

These features resemble the powers or abilities of the Buddha at his birth, according to the texts, and parallels to all of these points except the fifth one can be found. Derrett states that stories can pass to different cultures over time. This form of "cultural exchange" happens by adopting different motives, themes or narratives that might be changed to fit in the own tradition or mythology. For the Jews, that kind of influence or inspiration was unusual, because they were averse to scriptures of any culture which practised some form of idolatry. Therefore, this case is particularly remarkable (Derrett, 1992, 48).

The texts from the West or of the antique Mediterranean world that had an impact on the Indian culture were the works of Homer. With the campaigns of Alexander the Great, into the East and to India, an Indo-Greek kingdom was established in the north-western part of the subcontinent. It is possible and very likely that a part of the Indian population had come in touch with the Greek culture and, therefore, with Homer's epics. But there is no trace of his texts in the literature of India and any possible translations are now lost, if there ever had been any. Therefore, the influence of Homer was believed to be of minor significance. Although there are text passages from several ancient authors like Philostratus (c. 170-244 AD) and Dio Chrysostom (c. 40-111 AD) (Derrett 1992, 48f.). Plutarch (c. 45-120 AD) wrote for example:

"But when Alexander was pacifying Asia, Homer was what was read, and the children of the Persians, of the Susianians and the Gedrosians learned to chant the tragedies of Sophocles and Euripides." (Derrett, 1992, 49)

And Aelian (174-235 AD) narrated:

"That Indians translated Homer's words into their local speech and chant them, and the kings of Persia also, if one is to believe writers on these subjects." (Derrett, 1992, 49)

Such references were thought to be the result of misunderstandings made by travellers from Greece about Indian epics. Tales as the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyana* have some parallels to the Greek epics, so it could be possible that the explanations made by locals resulted in some misconceptions. But these texts could be more than simple accounts about the significance of Greek literature in India. Considering ample proof for Greek culture in India, as on the river Amudarja (Oxus in Antiquity), where inscriptions of Aśoka in Greek letters were found close to the river course, it is possible that the texts should be understood literally. If India came in contact with the Hellenistic culture for the first time through Alexander, it is not clear when it vanished. Derrett mentions an older suggestion, which states that the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyana* were inspired by cultural influences from the West; although unproven, a seductive argument in his opinion (Derrett, 1992, 49f.).

Josette Lallemant developed a theory that the texts of Virgil were known in India, because there are some peculiar similarities between passages of the Roman author and texts from the Indian epic. So maybe some transcripts of Virgil somehow made their way to the East, possibly through delegations of ambassadors. Another possibility is that these texts were brought to India by merchants or perhaps by travellers. Academics that have specialised in Virgil's texts paid Lallemant's proposals no attention, inter alia because when Virgil refers to *Indi*⁷⁰ he usually means the people of Ethiopia (Derrett, 1992, 50).

John Allan has discussed a *tabula iliaca*, which dates to the latter half of the 2nd century A.D. and created in the north-western part of India. It depicts a scene where soldiers in obvious Roman armour move and check the Trojan horse and next to it a proclaiming woman is portrayed, who is dressed in the fashion of India and most likely represents Cassandra. But Allan is sceptic, because there would be no reason for the translation of a Latin epic into an Indian one, if older sources from Greece were known in India. And, in addition, only the tale of Aeneas mentioned that Laocoon used a spear to test the horse. However, the person who sculpted this specific tabula had somehow learned about the antique epics. Maybe they had read Virgil. However, there are other Greek authors as well who worked on the Trojan War. In addition, Allan states that “secular” artistic scenes are rare in the range of motifs in the Gandhāra period and he does not see a mere secular image on the tabula. In his opinion, the scene could have been appointed to be some kind of warning, to show what could happen to a land, its people and treasures if beweaponed strangers were brought into the country (Derrett, 1992, 50).

Clues for literary concepts from the West in India have also been gathered by Rafique

⁷⁰ In Latin *India* does not only mean India or Indians but is also synonymous for Ethiopians or Arabs.

Jairazbhoy. Although he argues that Homer's epics could have influenced tales from India like the *Mahābhārata*, concrete evidence is absent (Derrett, 1992, 50).

The birth of Gautama, the later Śākyamuni Buddha, resembles stories or tales from the Greek mythology in some parts. Two different groups of these texts exist, the canonical and the extra-canonical. Although the latter type is based on the former one, it mainly differs concerning the flourish and it dates to the 1st century AD. The origin of the canonical category dates to the middle of the 3rd century BC. The Homeric poems were accessible for the first time, either as a collection or separately, in the 6th century BC. Alexander the Great's campaign to India lasted from 327 to 325 BC. According to the actual chronology concerning the life of Gautama Buddha, he died in 368 BC. The death of the Buddha had not happened long ago, although it is probably unlikely that Buddhism at that time had reached the territories in which Alexander and his successors had stayed. The wondrous story of Buddha's life was formed in the century after he had died, but it was not finished then and during the following two centuries, it was further changed and enhanced, as is shown by several iconographies. The Greek culture, or at least parts of it, had survived in India for some time after Alexander. Styles of its art had been adopted and were vivid in the Gandhāra School. Furthermore, coins with several Greek gods are known and also some texts in Greek language (Derrett, 1992, 51f.).

Buddha's birth in the canonical version includes some miraculous characteristics (Derrett 1992, 52):

1. Thoughtful and in possession of his self, the Bodhisattva descends from the heaven of delight into the womb of his mother. Although his virtuous mother does not feel any disruption at that moment, she realises, marvellously, that she is pregnant.
2. The child is probably born at the end of the tenth month of the pregnancy. Seven days after the mother gave birth to the Bodhisattva, she dies and ascends to the heaven of delight.
3. At the moment of birth, she is standing, and before the baby can touch the earth it is taken in the arms of four sons of the gods, later into the hands of men, so the boy is clean and unsullied.
4. When he enters the world, a cold and a warm shower fell from the sky, bathing mother and child.
5. At the moment of his birth, the boy stands solid on his feet and declares “*Chief am I in the world...*” (Derrett, 1992, 52).

6. A glow or glance, infinite and magnificent, emerges when he is born.

There are also other stories concerning the birth of following Bodhisattvas. The only exception is an episode about Vipassi (Vipaśya), which says that the boy was nursed by goddesses and therefore all Bodhisattvas after him were nursed to. The texts concerning the birth are expanded on in the extra-canonical versions and add some new elements to it (Derrett, 1992, 52f.):

- Gautama was born in the garden of Lumbinī. In the forefront of the birth, Māyā saw a flowering tree and grabbed an arm of it. In addition, the tree supported her, she connects with it and bears the child standing under that tree.
- From the right side of the mother's body, the baby enters the world and she does not feel pain.
- At his birth, the boy was laid onto gowns made of Benares muslin.
- Māra sends emissaries to the Newborn with an offer for a universal kingdom, which the Bodhisattva declines (comparable to the rejection of Satan's offer by Jesus).

Some of these facts have comparative examples in other mythologies or systems of belief. In Hinduism, several characters were not born from the womb, but from different parts of the body. Some gods of ancient Greece did not come into the world the natural way either. Athena breaks forth from Zeus' forehead, Hera bears Hephaestus from her thigh and Dionysus comes from Zeus' thigh. Typhon, son of Tartaros, is born from the side of his mother Gaia (Derrett, 1992, 53f.).

There are further similarities in Greek mythology and the Homeric Hymns. Apollo and Hermes (whose birth happened in the tenth month of pregnancy) were also able to speak and walk right after birth. The former has quite a few things in common with the Bodhisattva, not only in his function and appearance, but also in the process of his birth. Apollo's mother, Leto, gives birth on Delos, while hugging a palm tree, kneeling on grass, and the newborn baby is surrounded by brightness. Goddesses wash the boy pure in a holy manner and dress him with fine woven, white bands and girdle of gold. Apollo is not nursed with mother's milk, but given ambrosia and nectar by Themis (Derrett, 1992, 54f.). And Phoebus speaks to the goddesses:

"Mine be the clear lyre and bended bow, and I will utter to men the unerring counsel of Zeus." (Derrett, 1992, 55.)

The tree is mentioned in both birth stories and probably has a deeper meaning. It is likely that the plant represents a symbol in cosmogony⁷¹, and its appearance in the two versions, which are of different cultural backgrounds, could indicate that the tree is somehow important. Furthermore, in Buddhist art, the tree is occasionally depicted as the wishing-tree⁷² and symbolises the cosmic fertility. Gautama, born beneath that tree, is connected to it. The fact that the boy will not be born again after his birth, because he has broken through the circle of rebirth, will make the tree a source of “non-becoming” for other people and hence a reason for new creation (*Derrett, 1992, 55f.*).

The alleged tree from Apollo's birth could be visited on the isle of Delos over centuries. The plant was exotic and with such an immense span of life that the connection with Apollo born under that tree could remind one of an eternal element in the nature of the god and in his prophecies. It is likely that stories about that sacred tree's existence could have been told in India, where they were adapted or changed. But it is also possible that a traveller from the Indian lands could have seen that specific tree himself. In addition, Derrett refers to an assertion by John Irwin that the pillar cult (axis mundi) developed from a resembling tree cult that existed before Buddha and Aśoka (*Derrett 1992, 56*).

The tree, the bath, the ability to speak and walk and the wrapping of the child by godly beings are common to the birth of Apollo and Gautama. It could be possible that the origin myth of the latter was influenced by aspects of the former. Furthermore, both extraordinary beings show several similarities to each other, according to their purpose or function: both are in some way enlightened. Gautama, because he will become the Buddha one day and Apollo in his godly nature. In addition, both have the ability to see or foretell the future in some way, for example as an oracle.

4.3 The Gandhāra art style

Gandhāra was an ancient region that spanned over the eastern territory of present day Afghanistan, as well as over the north-western regions of Pakistan. It was the centre of the Kushan Empire, whose most eastern expanses included the upper valley of the confluence of the stream Ganges and its tributary river Jumna and also the city of Mathurā. Resulting from this location, the area has been influenced by different cultures. The cultural impacts from India prevailed in the east of Gandhāra, whereas in the west, the cultures of ancient Persia and

⁷¹ The term Cosmogony means any theory or concept that tries to explain either the cosmos or the universe.

⁷² The tree *Kalpavriksha* is a divine plant in the mythology of Hinduism that fulfils wishes.

the Greek Mediterranean world have affected the region over several centuries. Furthermore, inflows from the territories to the north of Gandhāra also reached this area (*Boisselier et al. 1978, 59*). The manifold cultural influences and transfers were also essentially connected to several invasions by various ethnic and cultural groups like Greeks, Indo-Greeks, Achaemenids, Indo-Parthians and the Saka (*Klimburg-Salter 1995, 121*).

It is still the matter of academic debate if the earliest sculpture that represented the Buddha in physical form originated from Gandhāra or from the Indian city Mathurā. Nevertheless, a more realistic art style developed in the former region, whose design features show obvious influences from Greek art, which mainly resulted from the contacts with the Mediterranean culture through Alexander's campaigns and were afterwards invigorated by trade connections. These foreign elements are represented on the Buddha figures in the plastic design of the robes and the sculpted arrangement of the folds that parallels those of Roman togas. The curly hair with formed strains also bears similarities to those of Greek statues and elements from the representations of Apollon, ie the hair style and the halo, which were adopted for the figures of Bodhisattvas. The precise dating for the various sculptures are not always clear and can also be difficult to determinate (*Hartmann 2015, 40-44*).



Different sculptures in the Gandhāra art style:

Fig. 362: Statue from grey-coloured slate of a Meditating Buddha from north-western Pakistan with a height of 93 cm and a width of 56 cm. It dates in the 2nd/3rd century AD (*Schulenburg 2015, 94*).

Fig. 363: Bodhisattva made from slate, 120 cm high and 42 cm wide that dates in the 2nd century BC (*Klimburg-Salter 1995, 164*).

Fig. 364: Buddha and his disciples. The sculptures made from clay were dated in the 3rd century AD and have been excavated at the Afghanian site of Haḍḍa. The bearded man next to the headless statue of the Buddha has been interpreted as to represent Heracles in the role of *Vajrasāṇi*, who protects as well as guides the Buddha and is one of the eight great Bodhisattvas (*Boisselier et al. 1978, 180*).

5. The Great Stupa of Sāñchī

The Great Stupa at the site or the village of Sāñchī was erected by the order of emperor Ashoka in the 3rd century BC. The monument measures 17 metres in height and 37 metres in breadth. It is assumed that the construction houses ashes of the Buddha. The building was damaged sometime in the 2nd century BC, but reparations have been made and additional structures were put up afterwards. The complex was finished at some point during the 1st century BC (*Encyclopædia Britannica: The Great Stupa*. [Online] Available from: <https://www.britannica.com/place/Great-Stupa-Buddhist-monument-Sanchi-India> [Accessed 24th May 2018]).

Four gates had been built around this stupa, each oriented to one cardinal direction. The different sections of every gate have been highly decorated with many relief figures, as well as other ornaments. In one of these scenes, several men are illustrated, among other people, who wear rings around their necks and who carry long music instruments, which are held upwards. Although the style and the clothing of the figures look different compared to those of other portrayed people, the resemblance to the surrounding Indian figures and motifs around is obvious. Nevertheless, these two details are definitely reminiscent of the Celts.



Fig. 365: *The stupa of Sāñchī with the northern gateway in the front.*

5.1 The northern gateway

The northern gateway of the Great Stupa of Sāñchī consists of two pillars, one to the left and one to the right, and three horizontal bars above each other that are connected with the pillars. This so called *Torana*⁷³ is the only one of the four gateways which still has most of its original decorations today, in the form of sculpted figures placed and added on the gateway-structure. On the highest crossbar, which formed the top of the gate, seven sculptures have been placed. The two pillars at the bottom are decorated with chiselling reliefs on all four sides, and capitals formed as the front half of several, probably four, elephants. Next to each elephant, there is a figure added that leans on a tree, a so called *śālabhañjikā*⁷⁴. The three crossbars have sculpted ornaments on the front as well as on the back. The illustrations depict scenes from the life of Buddha Gautama. The ends on both sides of the crossbars are decorated with whirls or spirals and each time a (winged?) lion sits on it (*Marshall 1982, Plates 21 & 25*).



Fig. 366: The back side of the northern gateway.

⁷³ A detached gate crowned with an arch which has a ceremonial or ritualistic function in Buddhism, Hinduism and Jainism and is a common construction in India and the Southeast of Asia (*Wikipedia: Torana*. [Online] Available from: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Torana> [Accessed 18th February 2018]).

⁷⁴ A sculpted female figure who shows the conventionalized characteristics of women. She is always placed next to a tree of whom she seizes a branch (*Wikipedia: Salabhanjika*. [Online] Available from: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salabhanjika> [Accessed 18th February 2018]).

One scene that can be found on the inner face/side of the pillar standing in the western direction has illustrations that are rather unusual for India. A depiction portrays a crowd of people celebrating in front of a stupa. According to Marshall's explanation, the celebration of the Mallas of Kūśinagara can be identified, that shall honour their sharing of relics that come from the Buddha himself and which had been placed inside of the monument. This stupa is illustrated with two terraces, three rows of fences and a torana adorned with festoons. Around and above the stupa, four *kinnaras*⁷⁵ fly, carrying garlands, and in front of it is a group illustrating several human figures in different positions, praising the occasion. According to Marshall, all of them appear to be male. Either they are celebrating, carrying objects to offer or playing music. The group of musicians is quite diverse: one plays a harp, another a kettledrum, two people carry a tambourine, either a cylindrical or an ovoid one, one person plays a double flute and two men carry some sort of flourish or trumpet, which is held and played upwards and whose upper end is shaped like the head of a serpent (*Marshall 1982, Plate 36*).



Fig. 367: The scene on the northern gateway with the worshipping foreigners who bring offerings and make music.

The last pair of instruments seems quite familiar and is reminiscent of the carnyx that is played by musicians who are part of the warrior's parade on the Gundestrup cauldron. The pair of thin flutes is similar to an *aulos*, a double flute from ancient Greece, but there are also modern parallels to double flutes from India.

Marshall stated that the musicians as well as the other worshippers are depictions of foreign people, originating from the North. He based this interpretation on the carving of the figures' garments and further details. Their hair is curled and some figures have it bound with bands.

⁷⁵ Mythic creatures who have the upper body of a human and the lower body of a bird (*Wikipedia: Kinnara*. [Online] Available from: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kinnara> [Accessed 18th February 2018]).

Several people wear a headpiece, either shaped like a flat or a peaked cap. The clothes of the group resemble tunics with long sleeves and the figures wear thin belts or girdles (*Marshall 1982, Plate 36*).



Fig. 368 & 369: Detail of the *Sāñchī* musicians and the *carnyx* players on Gundestrup-plate C 6574.

Furthermore, some men are equipped with capes which are worn like a Greek *chlamys*, and the whole group wears sandals and leggings, at least those figures whose legs are visible. For Marshall it is obvious that the members of the ruling clan of the Mallas wished the depictions of people of northern origin, which are clearly recognizable based on their clothes. He theorizes that the garments could be a motif chosen to symbolise that these people would have a certain vain nature. The territories in the North-West of India had only accepted Buddhism as their new religion shortly before the gates were sculpted, and now these new fellow believers were depicted celebrating the burial ceremony of their new master as members of this religious belief in India (*Marshall & Foucher 1982, Plate 36*).

6. The Lion Capitals of *Sāñchī* and *Sārnāth*

There are two monuments that have been sculpted under the rule of Ashoka which stand out from all the sculptures crafted during this period. They are the so called *Lion Capitals*, one pillar each from the sites of *Sāñchī* and *Sārnāth*. The leaf-like capitals are shaped like a bell and have an abacus in the form of a circle on the top, crowned with four lions that are placed

back to back. Although both monuments are similar in their design and their ornamentation, there are differences in their outworking. While the Sārnāth-capital ends with a group of four addorsed lions, the animals on the capital of Sāñchī uphold a sculpture of four *dharmacakra*⁷⁶. Therefore, Marshall concludes that the designed concepts were made by one person who created the capital of Sārnāth, while the one of Sāñchī had been made by another artist whose technical skills did not reach an equal level (*Marshall & Foucher 1982, 88f.*).



Fig. 370 & 371: Copy of the Lion capital from Sarnath and the Lion capital of Sanchi.

According to John Marshall, the artisan who designed the ornamentations of the capitals was not of Indian origin, but of a foreign one. Marshall argues that the two monuments had been built in the 3rd century BC, a time in which the forms of art that were native in India had been on another level of development, which would not have produced such high quality work and designs. It is likely that sculptures and, in particular, ornamental sculptures were widespread in ancient India, but those were made of wood or other materials, which did not outlast the millennia. Furthermore, Marshall bases his theory on comparisons of sculptures at Sāñchī that had been made a century later (probably during the 2nd), as well as to other Indian

⁷⁶ A religious symbol in Buddhism that represents the Wheel of the Dharma or the Wheel of the Law (*Wikipedia: Dharmachakra*. [Online] Available from: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dharmachakra> [Accessed 17th February 2018]).

art objects from different regions, although he does not give a more detailed or specific explanation for that. Anyway, regarding the level of quality of those sculptures from a younger period, it did not reach an equal degree of detail and workmanship. In Marshall's opinion, the pillars at Sāñchī and Sārnāth belong to the highest development of art which existed in the world in that period of time in which they had been built. As a better explanation of his arguments, he states another comparison, noting that the Greek art of the archaic age could neither design nor craft an object like the Pergamon Altar. In addition, the pillar monuments do not integrate into the Indian spectrum of art and neither has there been any historical artistic period in which these sculptures could have emerged. The capitals came from a foreign art tradition (*Marshall & Foucher 1982, 89*).

In Marshall's opinion, the artist's skills resulted from an apprenticeship in an artistic tradition of generation-spanning ambitions and experiences that were familiar with the designs as well as the pictorial world of Greece and Asia Minor. Furthermore, the sculptor has been influenced by the art traditions of ancient Iran. Therefore, he traces the sculptor's origin back to Bactria, where those two groups amalgamated. Once a satrapy of the Achaemenid Empire, this region was then conquered by Alexander the Great and his troupes in the second half of the 4th century BC. This conquest was followed by the establishment of a Greek colony in Bactria next to the ancient Mauryan Empire, which brought influences of Hellenistic culture, combined with adoptions from the Persian world to India. Marshall states that the capitals in the form of a bell as well as the final superficies-polishing that create a glossy effect can be linked to the Achæmenid artistic tradition. Furthermore, a great impact from Persia is recognisable in the edicts of Aśoka, which had been engraved into a number of pillars all over his dominion (*Marshall & Foucher 1982, 90*).

Even if the sculptor did not originate from Bactria, he must have learned the designs and motifs of Hellenistic art and must have had some experience with the arts of Persian tradition as well. But, regarding the high amount of monuments and sculptures from the period of Aśoka's reign, Marshall notes that several Bactrian artists at this time had obviously worked in India. Those artisans hired sculptors from India that were less experienced and less skilled in the crafting of sculptures from clay or in the carving of stone. Therefore, the objects produced by the assisting Indian craftsmen did not reach an equal level, neither in quality nor in detail. But Marshall states that even by considering these arguments, it is very unlikely, in his opinion, that the Lion capital of Sāñchī was made by a trainee from India who had almost little expert knowledge for the chiselling of stone. So, most probably the sculptor was also Bactrian, but not as skilled as his colleague (*Marshall & Foucher 1982, 90*).

- Chapter Six -

The Triumph of Dionysos on Persian Silver plates

An example of intercultural exchange and the adaption as well as the transformation of images and symbols



- Chapter Six -

1. Persian silver plates with the motif of the triumph of Dionysos

An example of how a specific motif or image has been adopted and undergone a metamorphosis afterwards so that it fit into a different cultural context, is shown by Mehdi Moussavi Kouhpar and Timothy Taylor (2008) on the basis of four Persian metal artefacts.

These ancient objects are four different plates made of silver, which are either of Parthian or Sasanian origin and show very similar illustrations. It should be mentioned that the term '*Sasanian silverwork*' is a very general one that bears several problems, which need further explanations as well as investigations. The large number of objects that are displayed in museums all over the world and that are identified to originate from the Sasanian Empire do not have a provenance in an archaeological understanding. Also, specific details about the stratigraphic context of the objects that could provide some information about a particular date of crafting or the moment when the artefacts could have been deposited are often missing. Nevertheless, the Sasanian art style had an influence on the neighbours and contemporaries of the Sasanids, and probably even longer, where such artefacts of precious metal had also been demanded or requested. That Sasanian silver objects were traded over broad distances and trading networks might be proven through finds of such objects in the western part of the Ural region, together with other silver products inspired by them (Kouhpar & Taylor 2008, 127).

Each of the four silver plates depicts a similar scene that originates from a motif of Hellenistic art, the so called "*Triumph of Dionysos*". The adoption of this particular motif into the artistic range of the Parthians and later into the Sasanian one, where it had been changed and adapted, can be recognised in the iconography on the plates. An accurate dating of the artefacts is not possible and the region of origin and also the place(s) where they had been produced can only be roughly located. Nevertheless, the plates are connected on the basis of the iconography, and a chronology can be made according to its transformation and its change (Kouhpar & Taylor 2008, 127).

The oldest of the silver artefacts originates from the Parthian Empire and is kept today at the *British Museum* in London. The youngest plate is a work of Iranian provincial art, representing some motifs that can be linked to the iconography of early Islam. The object was probably found in the Iranian province Māzandarān along the southern coast of the Caspian Sea. The two remaining plates are interpreted to be a Sasanian work and can be dated somewhere between the other two objects, which show how the image transformed in a

mutual evolutionary process. Today, one belongs to the collection of the *State Historical Museum* in Moscow, while the other one is stored in the *Freer Gallery of Art* in Washington, D. C. According to Kouhpar and Taylor it is (almost) impossible to connect the plates, or one of them, to a particular workshop. And neither a connection between the different craftsmen neither likely nor could have known their colleague's work (Kouhpar & Taylor 2008, 127).

Precious metal of great value like silver had a very small chance of survival because it was melted very often and then reused. This statement is based on several calculations of which the results show that the preserved archaeological silver finds are equivalent to a percentage of 0.01 % of the assumed total amount of silver objects that once had existed (Taylor 1999). Therefore, it can be estimated that against one silver-find there stand ten thousand objects that are absent due to their reuse. The four items are merely random examples of a much larger evolution, in which this iconography had changed. Anyway, a relationship between the images on the plates can be recognised as well as an iconographic metamorphose, which suggest that in every geographical area or period of time, the manufacturing of such pieces was based on stereotypes (Kouhpar & Taylor 2008, 127).

The identification that the motif on the plates is a representation of the triumph of Dionysos refers to the description of Ormonde M. Dalton, who identified this theme on the oldest of the objects which belongs to the collection of the *British Museum* (Dalton 1964).

1.1 Plate 1: Parthian or Sasanian manufacturing

The silver artefact of either Parthian or Sasanian origin measures 22,5 cm in diameter and weighs 906,2 g. Today, the object which dates in the period from 200 to approximately 300 AD is stored in the *British Museum* in London and has the inventory number 124086 (*The British Museum: Collection online*⁷⁷).

In the centre of the plate, a figure is depicted in a resting position on some form of lounge. Its legs are covered with a



⁷⁷ Complete reference: *The British Museum: Collection online: plate*. [Online] Available from: http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=367369&partId=1 [Accessed 14th April 2018].

piece of cloth and are bent, almost at a right angle, and the right lower leg is crossed above the left one, although only the right foot can be seen. The upper part of the body is naked and leaning backwards, while the figure leans onto its left arm or elbow. The sculpted chest indicates that the person is of male sex. The right arm is raised and bowed and the man holds a bowl in his hand. The engraved outline of the head is visible, but a face is missing. The feet of the men are shown from the side, while the upper body is presented in a front view. The man rests on sort of a platform, which is outlined with two engraved lines that form a rectangle. Underneath this plate, a wheel can be seen that is moved by a smaller naked figure with wings shown in profile, it is probably either a boy or a man. Therefore, the man is transported on some kind of vehicle that is likely a cart with one axis.

There are two similar winged figures depicted on the plate, one at the edge of the cart who holds a jug in its left hand, while the other one is raised and grabs a string that runs into a long stick held by another winged figure that is flying. This stick resembles a fishing pole, and the way the figure holds it resembles the position of a fisherman trying to pull a fish out of the water. The upper part of the figure is depicted in a front view, whereas the legs are designed in a side view. It seems that the genitalia of the figure illustrated are male. Therefore, the two other similar figures are also boys.

On the left side of the man a much smaller figure is placed, who is obviously female according to its breasts, its long hair and its dress that covers its feet. The woman sits on the edge of the cart and her lower legs hang over. Her body is oriented to the right side, in opposition to those of the man, although her head looks to the left side. It appears that the larger man rests his elbow either on her back or on her neck.

There are three other figures, whose bodies are (almost) the same size as those of the man on the cart. Two of them are placed close to the plate's left edge and walk in front of the vehicle. Their bodies are also oriented in that direction. According to their style of hair and the facial features they are men too, although their breast muscles are slightly accentuated or highlighted. Both men wear garments that cover the shoulders and end in long widths that are opened on both length sides.

The first man is a bit taller than his companion. His head is turned back to the resting man and surrounded by a golden circle or a disc that is lighter than the background of the plate. The right arm is raised, but bent towards the man, while his hand forms a fist that rests on the shoulder or is very close to it, except for the man's right forefinger, which is also placed on the shoulder. This gesture could indicate that the man is pointing to himself, while he faces the seated man, probably because the man on the cart called forth one of the two men and the first

one doubts that he is supposed to be this specific person. The man's left arm is bent, while his hand is closed and placed on his chest in an upward position.

The second man looks towards the left side of the plate, with both of his arms tucked up to the upper body. The man's right arm links arms with the taller male figure in the front. Furthermore, it appears that both figures are holding something with their left hands. This could be a piece of cloth in the form of a cloak or a cape, as it can be seen at the right side of the first man underneath his arm. According to the fashion of ancient Greece, it is likely that both men are wearing a long *chiton* that is fixed on both shoulders, but the garment has more similarity to the female version, which has been held together with a girdle running around the waist that can also be found on the two men. The lower part of the garment flutters behind the man. His feet are bare, just like those of the first man. Another possibility would be that the men are supposed to pull the cart, although ropes are not depicted.

The third male figure is nude and stands behind the cart on its right leg, while the left makes an almost horizontal line. It appears to be placed against a tree on the plate's right edge, whose branches reach and bow above the head of the man and also cover the head of the central figure. But it could also be possible that the tree stands in the back, while the leg is just raised to represent movement. In addition, five orbs hang on the branches, which appear to be fruits, probably berries or grapes. Although the figure is shown from behind, it is likely that it portrays a man because of its hairstyle on the one hand and according to the items in his hands on the other. These are the skin or the pelt of a carnivore that covers the lower half of the man's left arm, in detail the head, the two front paws, which likely originate from a lion, and a club in his right that lies on the man's right-hand shoulder. Alternatively, the club could be the limb of a tree, but it is more likely to be a club because its semicircular end is engraved, which would not be necessary if the limb ran over into the tree.

The ground level of the scene is marked with a horizontal line, on which the figures stand or walk, and the cart-wheel is moved by the small winged figure that kneels on the same line. In combination with the edges of the plate, the line forms a semicircle, in which a carnivore is illustrated between two bushes or shrubs with three blossoms each. The animal stands on his left hind paw, while the right one is placed on the body of a vessel into which its right front paw reaches as well as its snout. It is obvious that the animal drinks from the jar. The blossoms of the plants also resemble small vessels and are reminiscent of poppy seed capsules, but could also be something different.

According to Dalton, the man on the chariot is supposed to be Dionysos who is accompanied by Ariadne⁷⁸. The two men in front of the vehicle are drawing it and their clothes are seen as tunics. On the basis of the club and the lion skin⁷⁹, the naked figure behind the cart is identified as Herakles. The winged boys are described as genii⁸⁰, and the one standing on the chariot is seen as to pour a liquid out of the vessel in his hands. Furthermore, the plants are noted to be of conventional style, and the animal is characterized as a panther (*Dalton 1964, 49-51*). This specific animal is connected with the deity Dionysos, who is often depicted wearing the animal's skin and one of his attributes.

1.2 Plate 2: Sasanian origin

The second plate is supposed to be of Sasanian origin and is kept in the *State Historical Museum* in Moscow.

The similarity to the first illustration is obvious, but there are several differences in the details. The central figure still sits on a chariot with only the lower body covered, while the upper part is naked and in an upright position. According to the figure's highlighted breast muscles, it could be of male sex, although their round forms have a resemblance with female breasts, nipples



Fig. 373, Plate 2: Sasanian plate.

are absent. The left hand holds a strip of cloth, another one or probably the same strip hangs over the figure's left upper arm. The right arm remains in the same position, including the bowl that is filled with small orbs, either berries or grapes. The face is depicted and illustrated

⁷⁸ The daughter of the Minoan king who helps Theseus to defeat the Minotaur. Afterwards she went with him back to Attica but has been left behind on the isle of Naxos where Dionysos found her (*Grabner-Haider & Marx 2005, 110f.*).

⁷⁹ The first labour of Herakles was to kill the Nemean lion, an invincible beast which he fought with a club and strangled it to death with his arms. Henceforth Herakles wears the animal's skin which protects him (*Wikipedia: Nemean lion*. [Online] Available from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nemean_lion [Accessed 9th March 2018]).

⁸⁰ In the Roman mythological lore a genius was believed to be an embodiment of the divine nature that exists in individual form in every human, in places or things (*Wikipedia: Genius (mythology)*. [Online] Available from: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genius_\(mythology\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genius_(mythology)) [Accessed 9th March 2018]).

with a long nose. Furthermore, the man wears a number of jewellery: two bracelets, a necklace and also some kind of diadem.

Above the man a bird sits in the tree's branches which are also longer, while the trunk of the tree has become narrower. The branches also have leaves that are almost identical to those of grapes and the visible fruits are highly likely grapes.

The woman sitting next to the man is much taller or larger than the one on the first plate, but still a little bit smaller than him. She is almost completely naked, except for a cloth that lies over her lower legs, and her bare breasts are depicted with nipples. The woman is ornamented with a similar set of jewellery like that of the man. Her body is also presented in an upright position, while her legs are only slightly bent. Almost from the knees downwards, they are hanging over the edge of the platform. While the fingers of the woman's right hand are placed on the lower horizontal edge of the chariot, her left hand holds on to a vertical line, which marks the edge of the vehicle. It seems that the woman wants to climb down from the cart. In accordance with the person next to her, a line is engraved around her belly, which could either represent abs or a thin waist.

The man behind her is also naked and presented in a similar position, in which the left leg is also placed on the tree, but almost at a right angle, the right one, however, does not reach the ground. He wears a small conic hat or a cap and carries the same items as the naked man on the first plate, but in a different style. The handle of the club is thicker than its shaft that has a crescent shaped detail almost in the middle of the weapon, while the club's head is shaped like a cone. The man's left arm is also covered or wrapped in the skin of a lion and only differs in the depiction because the arm hangs straight down and therefore so does the skin. Additional details are a small tail on the back that grows close to the upper end of the man's bottom and six humps on his back that could either represent some animal (in combination with the tail aspect) or, instead, more ordinary, a muscular back.

All in all, there are six genii or boys, but only two of them have wings, although one wingless figure is illustrated flying near the upper left edge of the plate. The two others form a pair on both sides of the wheel. This item is depicted as a circle with a small orb in its middle, from which eight tear-shaped drops spread, and, therefore, it resembles a rosette. Furthermore, the wheel neither touches the platform above, nor the ground underneath and the winged figures in a squatting position raise the object with their hands. The two additional ones are placed to each side of the carnivore, between the animal and the plant. Each of them carries an instrument, the left one a form of lute and an object in the shape of an hourglass, which is probably a sort of drum. The pitcher in the left hand of the boy on the chariot is in a horizontal

position, close to the head of a tall figure on whom he probably pours the pitcher's content. The two men in front of the cart have been changed and either both of them or only one has become a woman, because it appears that the breasts of the right person are stronger accented than of the left one, although this could be due to the perspective. Otherwise, they remain in a similar position. The pair is clad in long dresses, with sleeves which cover the left leg, while the right one is bare, and has resemblance to a chiton with sleeves. Both also hold seemingly thin scarves in their hands that 'flutter' around the head either from behind or from above. In addition, the arms of the figures are decorated with bracelets and they are wearing different kinds of caps.

1.3 Plate 3, Sasanian origin

The third plate is also assigned to the Sasanian culture and displayed in the *Freer Gallery of Art* in Washington D.C.

The composition of figures and ornaments has changed less from plate 2 to 3, than compared to the change from the 1st to the 2nd, although some details have varied. The central figure has clearly visible female breasts and her face also bears the softer facial features of a woman. A minor curiosity are her broad shoulders and upper arms.



Fig. 374, Plate 3: Sasanian plate.

The woman at her side has become smaller and was also moved upwards a bit. Furthermore, her hair became longer and is now in accordance with that of the woman next to her.

The changes on the illustration of the nude man are very small. His club has been slightly modified, the shaft is now completely straight and the shape of his head is akin to a pear. The left leg does no longer lean on the tree trunk, but is hooked up instead.

The pair of women or alternatively the male-female couple is almost equal, the head of the second one is closer to the first figure, which could also be male.

There are minor differences in the small figures. The flying one is again depicted with wings

and at the spout of the pitcher, a drop of liquid has been added.

The floral elements have also changed slightly. The plants next to the carnivore are gone and additional leaves and fruits grow on the branches.

1.4 Plate 4, Post-Sasanian origin

The fourth plate, which belongs to the *British Museum*, was discovered in the Iranian Māzandarān province and dates in the 7th century AD (*Wikimedia Commons*⁸¹). The scene on this plate has undergone a major change, but elements of the original motif can still be identified. It shows a banquet and all figures are depicted in a different style of clothing. They wear either long wide dresses, garments ornamented with several drapes, or tunics in a similar style in combination with fluffy pants, like the



Fig. 375, Plate 4: Post Sasanian plate.

so-called harem pants that are also called Turkish trousers. The central figure is a bearded man in a similar resting position as Dionysos, who holds a small cup in his left hand, while the other one holds an object similar to a fan. This item is supposed to be a bundle of barsom⁸² (*Kouhpar & Taylor 2008, 133*).

Next to him, although on the opposite side, sits a woman, depicted in almost the same body size. She looks into a small disc raised in her left hand that is likely a mirror.

The couple is surrounded by three smaller men of whom two play instruments, a lute and a horn or a form of flute. The third one has his arms crossed, while his hands are placed on the chest. There is an object shown on his head in the form of a horizontal trapezoid in front of the mouth that runs over into a smaller uprising tube, which makes a sharp angle and becomes

⁸¹ *Wikimedia Commons: File: Sassanid Music Plate 7thcentury.jpg*. [Online] Available from: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sassanid_Music_Plate_7thcentury.jpg [Accessed 10th March.2018].

⁸² An instrument of priests in Zoroastrianism that either consists of wires or rods made from metal and was used for specific rituals and ceremonies (*Wikipedia: Barsom*. [Online] Available from: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barsom> [Accessed 10th March 2018]).

a broader conic tube. Its purpose is unclear; this item could just be of decorative nature or is probably also a music instrument.

The grapevine remained in the picture and became thicker and longer and it bears more grapes. In addition, the end of its trunk is a lion's head. An animal skin can be found near the lower edge of the plate next to a vessel that hangs from a tripod. Furthermore, there is a basket depicted, which is filled with orbs and has two jugs on it, which are either fixed or are mere symbols. A vertical feather can be seen near the left edge and a horizontal ear is illustrated above the tripod and the animal's skin.

1.5 Plate 5, Sasanian-Persian design

There is another plate designed in accordance with the Sasanian-Persian art style, which can be linked to this sequence of plates, although it is not mentioned in the article by Kouhpar and Taylor. This object was also crafted from silver, though some areas have been gilded additionally. The silver plate was found either in Iran or Iraq and dates to a period from the 7th to the 8th century AD. It is part of the collection of the *Israel Museum* in Jerusalem. (*The Israel Museum: Plate*



Fig. 376, Plate 5: Sasanian-Persian plate.

depicting a drinking party in the Sassanian-Persian Style. [Online] Available from: <http://www.imj.org.il/en/collections/199397> [Accessed 10th March 2018]). The plate is described as follows:

“The main figure, larger than the others, is a monarch seated on a throne. His posture - one leg crossed over the other - is typical of portrayals of oriental kings. The monarch wears the crown of a Sassanian king, and he is holding a cup of wine, another symbol of power.”

(The Israel Museum: Plate depicting a drinking party in the Sassanian-Persian Style. [Online] Available from: <http://www.imj.org.il/en/collections/199397> [Accessed 10th March 2018])

A closer look at the details reveals the similarity in the motif and the iconographic elements that are in accordance with the original scene. The platform of the cart or chariot changed into a throne, as can be seen on the last plate. The position of the king resembles that of the central figure on the first three plates, and the ruler is surrounded by four men: two servants of whom the left one holds a pitcher, and two musicians playing the lute and some sort of wind instrument. A fifth man with wings holding a strip of cloth in his hands is depicted flying close to the upper left edge. There are grapevine ornaments in the scene, and on the lower edge of the plate, two carnivores are drinking from a large vessel.

2. The impact of the Greek culture on the Parthian Empire

The Greek world with all its achievements had a major impact on the Parthian Empire regarding its political principals and its cultural life and art style (*Ghirshman 1954, 266-268*). For a while, the whole Parthian territory had been coloured with concepts and ideas which originated from the Greek culture, especially the court of the king. No less than ten Parthian rulers, and probably even more, characterized themselves to be Philhellenes, and even coins minted in the Parthian Empire were decorated with writings in the Greek language. Therefore, it is likely that the Parthian craftsmen who made the plates aimed to copy or adapt a motif concerning its artistic style and eventually also its meaning (*Ettinghausen 1972, 6f.*).

The argument that the plates could just be the result of ambitious artisans, who aimed to imitate the admired products of their Greek colleagues, is indeed a reasonable one. But the transformation of the scene and the additional details suggest that it is more likely that the motif was borrowed and adapted. It would be possible that the artist adopted Dionysos' triumph with the intention to change the scene into a depiction of a deity with a similar characteristic from his own mythological background. A parallel from Iranian mythology would be *Anāhitā*, a goddess of fertility with the ability to command the waters, who was widespread in ancient Persia (*Kouhpar & Taylor 2008, 128f.*).

She also consecrates the wombs of the women and provides the purification of the mother's milk as well as of the male semen (*Hinnells 1973, 32*). This is almost equal to the abilities of Dionysos, who is also a fertility deity, who can make milk as well as honey and ensures the growth of the grapes as well as the grapevines (*Lurker 1987, 97*). In the *Avesta*⁸³, the goddess

⁸³ The principal collection of sacred texts in the Zoroastrian religion which were written in the ancient language Avestan (*Wikipedia: Avesta*. [Online] Available from: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Avesta> [Accessed 10th March 2018]).

is described as to have a lot of strength in her arms, which could explain the broad shoulders and upper arms. She wears a crown on her head that consists of eight parts and is clad in the pelts of beavers (*Carnoy 1945*). Although the central figures on plate 2 and 3 are supposed to be Anāhitā, especially the illustration on the third looks bears a close resemblance to her (*Kouhpar & Taylor 2008, 129*).

Kouhpar and Taylor suggest that the plate should be divided to represent the dualistic aspect of Zoroastrianism. The figures on the left side in front of the cart symbolize the good, while the right side and the figures to the back stand for the bad, ie evil. Based on this attempt, they further suggest that the supposed genuii could depict the good and the bad powers or spirits, which either drag or shove the wheel, through which the equilibrium of the world is created (*Kouhpar & Taylor 2008, 129-131*).

The right half shows the aspects of Anāhitā, fertility represented by the bowl filled with grapes in her hand, and also the couple, which is probably celebrating its union, that is blessed through the liquid from the pitcher of her little helper (*Kouhpar & Taylor 2008, 130*).

The naked warrior could stand for the ancient Persian hero *Keresaspa*, who is mentioned in the Avesta and the slayer of many monsters, symbolized through the skin of the lion. The nude woman looking at him could represent the monster *Khana-Sa-Eiti* which tricked and seduced Keresaspa so that he would sleep with her (*Kouhpar & Taylor 2008, 130⁸⁴*).

Finally, the group of the small musicians and the animal could be related to an event or phenomenon in nature, for example the eclipse of either sun or moon or an earthquake, whereby the people played drums out in the streets until the spectacle was over. The second possibility is that the men want to gain the beast's attention by playing their instruments, diverting it from drinking from the jar that possibly contained wine. This should prevent the intoxication of the animal, which could have been imagined to be the origin of all unnatural phenomena (*Kouhpar & Taylor 2008, 131*). Maybe the scene depicts an eastern myth in which a cosmic monster in the form of a feline carnivore carries the world on its head or back, and its movement causes earthquakes. In both scenes, the horizontal line rests on the animal's head. This could symbolize the world or the disc of the world.

With the Dionysos-scene from plate 1 as a reference, the artist of plate 2 could have aimed to create a combination between the Greek art style and the Persian one that should also provide a coherent link to the original motif. Therefore, the range of details, which were added to the scene, had been selected with care so that they would not disturb the foreign scene. This could

⁸⁴ The description of Khana-Sa-Eiti refers to two Persian/Iranian sources, the *Tārīkh-i asaṭīr-yi Irān* by Z. Āmūzgar (Tehran 1974) and the *Yashthā* by E. Pūr Dāvūd (Tehran 1999).

have led to the development of a new main theme, which inspired following craftsmen to change the motif again so that it became an amalgamation of ancient Persian cultural and mythological elements (*Kouhpari & Taylor 2008, 129*). But, considering the fact that the second plate does not directly follow the first one, based on Taylor's calculation, it remains unclear where in this process of transformation the object is placed. Therefore, although the scene on plate 2 is likely to be the first depiction of Anāhitā in this sequence, we do not know the foregoing metamorphoses, which changed the Mediterranean Dionysos into this female Persian deity.

- Chapter Seven -

How the Harappa sigils could have influenced the representation of Cernunnos on the Gundestrup cauldron



- Chapter Seven -

1. The journey of a motif from India to Europe

The former chapters have shown various cross-legged poses that are depicted on a number of artefacts or sculptures from various regions. The illustrated predecessors of yoga positions from the Indus Valley had spread westwards, where these Indian models influenced the figure of Cernunnos and his portrayal on the Gundestrup cauldron several millennia later. Based on the artefacts as well as the intercultural contacts and exchanges, three theories can explain the journey of the motif and its influences on the Celtic- and Thracian art.

It is almost impossible that the specific depiction on the described Mohenjo-daro sigil has been the direct model or template for Cernunnos on the Gundestrup cauldron, because it has to be interpreted as to be only one preserved representation among a larger amount of illustrations which are very similar to each other. The motif that is mentioned in the following theories has to be understood as an iconographic type or an image-category of a figure with animal attributes represented as some kind of horns sitting in a pre-yogic position and accompanied by animals that are arranged in a specific order. In this arrangement, the beast of which the decorative headgear has been adapted from is placed on the right side of the figure while the upper creature to the figure's left side is not orientated towards the human but does instead turn its back on the central figure.

1.1 Theory 1: An independent development and a later adoption

The Neolithic figurines from the Eastern areas of the Mediterranean Sea demonstrate that the cross-legged position can look back on a long history of representation on different objects of art and artefacts made by humans. This sitting pose is not exactly a very difficult one to achieve and quite a comfortable way of sitting on the ground. It is very likely that every human culture at some point discovered how to perform this specific body posture. The cross-legged pose could have been an everyday practice which was not connected with a deeper meaning, but solely with a functional one. The lap formed by the crossed feet is a functional base for performing different sorts of manual work, the extent of the lap's usability of course depends on the kind of work.

The cross-legged pose also has another usable function. If someone wants to achieve a state of calmness, this particular figure will suit perfectly, because the hands can be placed on the

areas of the upper legs, on the knees or simply in the lap. In a very simple example, an individual or group of individuals could achieve tranquillity by sitting together with crossed legs around a fire and watching the flames dancing in front of the black scenery of the night or listening to the stories of the fellow members of a specific social group. Therefore, it is likely that at some point of human evolution the cross-legged seat became connected with forms of cultic activity that then developed into more complex variations over time.

It is very likely that the sculptures from the Aegean Neolithic period are connected with some sort of ritual or ceremonial actions and could probably represent a phase of these activities. Although a simple representation of an ordinary pose is an option, which cannot be completely excluded from the interpretations of prehistorical sculptures (like the mentioned examples), an intended deeper meaning is the more likely variant. Some of the figurines are described as a female snake deity, but even in a more general interpretation, they can be regarded as some kind of idols.

The representation of figures in the cross-legged pose on artefacts of different cultural origin proves that this seated position is a pancultural one and also supports the attempt to put these sculptures in a ritual or cultic context. This categorisation is based on three criteria: the depiction, the usage or the purpose of the artefact and the context of its finding. The ritual or cultic purpose of the cross-legged pose can either be assigned to one or several of these categories. On the artefacts from the Eurasian steppes, this specific position is represented on figures that hold a drinking bowl or another drinking vessel or are shown in a scene which shows a person at the point of death. The probable drinking ritual is also depicted on some Indo-Scythian coins from the kings Azes I and Azes II.

The artefacts that were discovered in burials, or are assumed to originate from burials illustrate cross-legged figures in various contexts. Such figures appear on ordinary objects for everyday beauty treatment, like the precious mirror from Sokolova Mogila kurgan or on pieces of jewellery which might not have been used every day but must not have a specific cultic purpose either, like the necklace from one of the Kobyakova kurnas or the Siberian belt plaque. The pedestal from Zheytsu is described to have served as an incense burner that was once used in ritual or cultic activities, while the bone-urn shaped as a cross-legged sitting man from Koi-Krylgan-kala served as a vessel of cultic nature that preserved the ashes of a dead. Those of the Mongolian stone sculptures that are designed as men in cross-legged poses are found at offering places or ritual sites.

An ordinary representation of cross-legged poses that was likely not intended to depict a cultic activity is the sculpture of the Egyptian scribe.

The cross-legged examples from the Balkans can also be regarded as to represent a cultic position. The central figure on a lead plate from Romula probably represents a female deity, while the artefact itself was probably a votive offering once.

The cross-legged figures from the Celtic world can either be found on representations of the antlered deity Cernunnos or on warrior statues that could have represented great heroes or legendary ancestors that can be connected to the Celtic mythical world and can therefore also be regarded as to have fulfilled a specific cultic purpose or role. Another certain connection between the cross-legged pose and religious or cultic activities are the Mesopotamian statue of Kurlil from Uruk and the probably cross-legged figure of the deity Isis from a depiction of her Roman cult.

The figures that are depicted on the sigils from the Harappa Civilisation are definitely early forms of yoga or the precursors of later yogic positions. A mere ordinary meaning or function of these figures is unlikely and they can be considered to result from some kind of a ritualistic or meditative practice.

When the campaigns of Alexander the Great reached ancient India, some participants of this enterprise could have come in contact with these Indian yogic images that originated from the Harappa Civilisation. It is highly likely that the motif of the master of animals had survived in a similar or in almost the same form as the depiction on the sigils from Mohenjo-daro and could have remained a prominent image in the iconography of ancient India. Thracian silversmiths could have been among the baggage train of Alexander's army and could have adopted this exotic figure of a probable deity via different sorts of images and sculptures they saw in India. It is also very likely that the figure was among the treasures and objects Alexander and his troops acquired in different ways, either as plunder, gifts or tributes. But warriors from Thrace could have also brought this specific image from India back to their homeland.

Back in Thrace, the Indian master of animals could have amalgamated with a local deity of nature, which could have been connected with a deer or a stag which eventually resulted from the cultural contacts with the Black Sea regions and the influences of its art that in turn could have been influenced by the pictorial world of the steppes. The godly personification of nature could have been based on or linked to older shamanistic aspects that included wearing different body parts of animals, like feathers, antlers and skin and eventually cross-dressing. Another possibility would be that the attributes of the buffalo deity were exchanged with a local animal that was widespread in the Thracian region and considered to be important: the stag.

Alternatively, the stag deity could have developed in the border lands between the Celtic tribes of the middle and lower Danube basin and the lands of the Thracians, where the Celts could have adopted the image from the Thracians and combined it with their own divine aspect of nature which then became an antlered deity. But the whole transfer process could also have resulted from the involvement of Celtic mercenaries in Alexander's Indian campaign. In any case, the origin of the antlered deity Cernunnos is supposed to be located in south-eastern Europe on the Balkans, from where the character spread in the Celtic world.

It is likely that the cross-legged pose had a specific importance as a cultic figure in several cultures of Europe and through the foreign influences the figure became a yoga pose. The position of the Celtic master of animals could have been intended as a 'yogic' position that turned into a more ordinary cross-legged one because it was common to the Celtic world or because the particular details of the positions of the feet were considered to be that important. The small bronze figurines from Lukaševka and Dănești that can be interpreted as some sort of idols might also represent a prototype of a yoga position and were possibly influenced by the foreign pre-yogic motifs from ancient India.

In addition, there are also other characters and probable deities depicted on the Gundestrup cauldron whose representations could have originated from ancient India. These are the female bust placed between two elephants (*C 6573*) and the bearded male bust and the figure with a horned helmet that hold a wheel (*C 6572*). The motifs could have undergone a similar process of travel, adaption and development. The foreign elements could have been combined with local deities or godly characters and the attributes, which have been unknown in the specific context became an attribute of special symbolism that was new in the Mediterranean cultures and the Celtic world. The wheel as a symbol of lore or rule probably could have been linked to a main deity in the Celtic pantheon. The elephants could have been attributed to a goddess of nature and beasts, a protectress of animals, because of their sheer size that represented majesty so that these beasts would highlight the figure's aspect respective role as female deity over the animal world.

According to the modern scientific and technical investigations, the place of origin of the Gundestrup cauldron can be located in the area of northern Gallia and western Germania. A group of wandering silversmiths of Thracian origin, or of a cultural background closely linked to the iconography and art of Thrace, could have come to that region, either on their own or together with Thracian auxiliary troops that were intended for the Roman army. These foreign craftsmen could have brought the Indian motif – or a motif that had developed from this image – to the West and depicted the known deity Cernunnos in a body posture that was

originally intended for this deity. Furthermore, cooperation between artisans from Gallia and Thrace is likely to have produced the cauldron in a workshop lead by a Thracian master.

1.2 Theory 2: An early spreading of an Indian motif

The motif or the image of the master of animals in a pre-yogic pose from Mohenjo-daro could have travelled westwards many centuries or even millennia before Alexander the Great saw the light of day. The trade connections between the Indus Valley Civilisation and the high cultures of ancient Mesopotamia definitely also caused intercultural exchanges between these divergent societies. As a result, the buffalo-horned figure that is accompanied by different animals could have been adopted from the Indus Valley and adapted in Mesopotamia. It is likely that typical Indian animals were exchanged for ones that have existed in the Mesopotamian wilderness, for example the water buffalo could have been replaced by a local bull and the tiger could have turned into a lion.

The fact that bull horns were connected with a high social rank or royalty and also linked to a cultic aspect or character in the Mesopotamian priesthood could have favoured the spreading and the prominence of the foreign motif from India. The master of animals in the pre-yoga position could have become a part of Mesopotamian iconography that spread further northwards to Armenia. The forerunning yogic figure either could have remained over an amount of time and turned in a simpler cross-legged position, or could have preserved its original, more complicated arrangement of the legs and the feet. From this point forward, two possibilities emerge:

In the first variant, the motif of the master of animals could have been '*inherited*' to the following cultures or civilisations that were located in the interfluvium. Over time, additional elements could have influenced the original depiction from Mohenjo-daro and were probably added to the image, like a ring or torques that is held in a raised hand. From Mesopotamia the image could have spread to Asia Minor, the Black Sea coastal areas and the Mediterranean world where possibly different or further attributes had an impact on this specific image. From there, the image reached Thrace where the depiction of an antlered deity was born.

The yogic pose could have become a part of the Thraco-Celtic pictorial world in the middle and lower Danube basin from where it spread to Middle and Western Europe and took different shapes that could have been linked to the more common cross-legged position or remained a yogic figure.

The second option suggests a spreading of the pre-yoga pose from Mohenjo-daro to

Mesopotamia where it turned into the simpler cross-legged position that spread northwards and to Europe. In the aftermath of Alexander's campaign, the original motif could have been revitalised and the yoga-like figure that had changed in a cross-legged sitting figure could have taken its 'original' shape and became a pre-yogic figure once again like the representation on the Gundestrup cauldron.

1.3 Theory 3: A Mesopotamian origin

According to Friedrich Schrader (1934, 193), the figure on the sigil from Mohenjo-daro, which probably represents a deity, does not necessarily need to be of an autochthonous Indian origin and could have developed instead of an archetype from Mesopotamia to which eventually different animals had been attributed.

This theory suggests another path of the spreading of the motif of the master of animals. The trade contacts and the intercultural exchanges between the Mesopotamian cities and the Harappa Civilisation could have likely favoured the adoption of the horned figure which might have been the representation of a deity or some mythical character. It is likely, that the pre-yoga position was added to the motif in the Indus Valley and could have either developed from a mere cross-legged pose of the original depiction or another position of the archetype-figure which could have been standing or represented sitting on some piece of furniture.

If Mesopotamia is considered to be the source of the image's archetype, then it could also have been transmitted to the Mediterranean world and to Europe from there. Therefore, the similarities between the horned figure on the Mohenjo-daro sigil and Cernunnos on the Gundestrup cauldron could be explained by their common origin. The similar yoga position of the antlered figure could be again the result of the contacts between the Mediterranean antique world and ancient India that were 'established' by Alexander's campaign and its aftermath when a great interest about the Indian lore emerged in the stoic and cynic philosophical schools of the Eastern Mediterranean cultures.

Regardless which theory of the three possible developments are considered to be the likeliest or most reasonable one, there certainly is a connection between the depictions of the horned figure on the Mohenjo-daro sigil and those of Cernunnos on the Gundestrup cauldron. The similarities respectively parallels between the two images are too detailed and specific as to regard them as just a sheer coincidence. Instead, both images can be assigned to a common category or type: ***the master of animals***. Therefore, these two images are both part of an

evolutionary process in which the image from the Harappa Civilisation represents an early type whereas the image on the cauldron is a later manifestation. Although details and attributes of the figure have transformed, the main features of the figure remained: a human figure with animal attributes that is surrounded by animals.

The position of the figures links them to a specific subcategory within the representations of the master of animals, the figures in a pre-yogic position or a proto-yoga figure. The body postures were most likely intended to depict positions of the predecessor of the philosophic lore, which is known as yoga in present times. This yogic prototype was probably similar to the concept of *Hatha Yoga* in which magical powers and special abilities are believed to be generated through practising yoga. It is possible that a deity of nature was considered to be able to turn into an animal, one whose appearance in the wild caused astonishment in the human viewer, like a water buffalo, a wild bull or a stag.

It would also be possible that an eastern yoga position has been adopted in the pictorial word of the Mediterranean cultures in the European antiquity, although it is rather unlikely that the exact meaning of the figure has been transferred to from India to the West. But it would be possible that the basics of the philosophic concept that is represented on the sigil from Mohenjo-daro and the other sigils from the Harappa Civilisation were also transmitted: a being that achieves special powers by remaining still or immobile in a specific body posture that differs from the ordinary sitting and standing poses by stretching particular parts of the body, balancing or placing the limbs in twisted poses.

The antlered figure which likely portrays the Celtic deity Cernunnos is the result of a process of evolution caused by intercultural exchanges and depicts a pancultural motif in a position which most probably originated in ancient India. Although this stag deity can be linked to the Celtic culture in Middle and Western Europe, its origins lay in the European Southeast and it emerged from combined influences which span thousands of miles and several centuries of human history.

Conclusion: The origins of the Gundestrup cauldron

The Gundestrup cauldron is the outcome of several different origins which have amalgamated in a silver artefact that some considered unique. The question of the vessel's origin cannot be easily answered; instead diverse origins have to be considered. On the one hand, the origins of the used material as well as the applied techniques that were used in the cauldron's manufacturing process can be determined. On the other hand, the origins of the cauldron's iconography and influences on the depictions of its plates can be clarified (Nielsen 2005, 53). This remark can be reduced to a concise question: "*The origins of what?*" (Nielsen 2005, 53). The iconography represented on the different plates of the Gundestrup cauldron show figures and elements that can be linked to the culture of the Celts, a term that refers to the groups that are assigned to a common ethnic group in ancient Europe that are labelled as Celts. Although there were some variations between different areas that were inhabited by these Celts, the various tribes had many things in common like a material culture, art and pictorial world and also weaponry. Based on the details as well as the equipment of the represented busts and figures, the cauldron's place of origin has either be argued for the western part of the Celtic world which is equal to Gallia, or the eastern areas that belonged to this region, the middle and lower Danube basin on the Balkans. Several finds have been made there that parallel some of the details on the Gundestrup cauldron.

In the latter region, the Celtic culture came in contact with another cultural group of people, the Thracians to whom many finely crafted as well as ornamented silver artefacts and finds can be assigned. There are several parallels between the figures and decorative elements on the Gundestrup cauldron and silver objects that originated from the culture of Thrace. According to the analyses of the cauldron's design and depicted images, the settlement zone of Celtic groups in the middle and lower Danube basin in south-eastern Europe would be the likeliest place of the vessel's origin, because of the geographical proximity to Thrace and the resulting cultural contacts between the Celts and the Thracians.

But the technical analyses and investigations of the artefact suggest a place of production in the West of the Celtic world, according to the used silver material that came from silver sources in the German Taunus mountain range and the northern area of present day France. From both areas silver has been taken that was used for coins, either for the Roman quinars or the Curiosolites of Celtic origin. The weight of the cauldron is a multiple sum of a *siglos*, a coin type of Persian origin that was also used in Thrace. This ancient Persian coin or coinage had been adopted in the period of time from approximately 513 to 480 BC when the Thracian

south had been occupied by the Persian Empire. Therefore, it is likely that silver coins provided the raw material for the cauldron.

A possible explanation for how the silver from Western Europe ended up on the Balkans could be that the precious metal came to the Balkans in the form of coinage, either as loot or through different kinds of payment. But the more likely option is to assume that the cauldron has been crafted in Western Europe, particularly in a region that included the North of France and the western parts of modern-day Germany. Craftsmen who were specialised in metalwork and silversmiths of Thracian origin or cultural background could have travelled to the West of the Celtic world and crafted the cauldron there, probably in cooperation with local artisans. It is also possible that these Thracian craftsmen were part of a social group that practised an itinerant way of life.

Based on the results of the investigations of beeswax, that has been used to stabilize the plates from the inside when the figures on the outside were decorated with different tools, and its AMS ^{14}C dating the Gundestrup cauldron has been forged at some point of time in the period between the turn of the eras respectively the birth of Christ and 300 AD.

The antlered figure that is depicted on one of the cauldron's inner plates (*C 6571*) can be identified as Cernunnos, based on the image and the engraved name on the *Pillar of the Boatmen* from Paris. The origins of this deity probably lie in Thrace and its neighbouring regions in south-eastern Europe. Cernunnos is often depicted in a cross-legged pose, a sitting position that can be found on many artefacts and sculptures from different regions and time periods. Among the earliest forms are Neolithic figurines that were found on some of the Aegean islands. Figures with crossed legs are also shown on artefacts from the Eurasian steppes where they often appear with a drinking vessel that can be linked to some sort of ritual. Most of the objects were burial goods, one sculpture of a cross-legged man served as a burial urn. Other representations of this position can be found on stone sculptures that were connected with ritual or cultic places.

Cross-legged poses are also a common appearance on sculptures from Europe where this category is often depicted on monuments and statues from the Western Celtic world, although it is not an exclusive motif in Celtic art and also appears on a plate that originated from the Roman period in Romania. In Gallia, the cross-legged pose can be either found on depictions of deities that are identified as representations of Cernunnos or on stone statues of probable warriors that emerged in the southern Gallic regions. Nevertheless, the position of Cernunnos on the cauldron has been repeatedly described as to be cross-legged, the depiction is not such one, which becomes clear by comparison with the other cross-legged figures. Instead, the

antlered character performs a standing pose that resembles a position that would be considered nowadays as a yoga figure. Based on its design, the depiction of the Gundestrup-Cernunnos can be interpreted as representing an androgynous character, because it differs from the other central figures of the Gundestrup plates that bear clear male or female sexual characteristics.

An object of comparison to the Gundestrup plate with Cernunnos is a fragmented silver plate from the hoard of Săliște which depicts one and a half female figures who share a detail with the antlered figure: the zigzag bound shoe laces which are a rare design element that appears only on one other fragment from the Bulgarian site of Durentsi. But according to the combination of female secondary sexual characteristics like breasts and a sword, which is considered a representation of a male attribute, the figures can also be interpreted as androgynous characters. It is likely that the silver plate belonged to a cauldron, based on the two remaining rivets and an additional hole for such one, a method that has been used for other vessels and cauldrons made from bronze. The artefact can be assigned to a specific object group to which also the Gundestrup cauldron belongs: silver cauldrons made of separate parts that were assembled in the production process and which are decorated with figured relief scenes worked in a repoussé and chasing technique. The excavated and discovered silver finds are only a very small percentage of the artefacts that have been produced and were in circulation in ancient times. Therefore, the cauldron might be unique in the composition of the scenes as well as the detailed design of its reliefs, but the vessel itself is not a unique object and has to be regarded as one piece among many similar artefacts.

Depictions of figures that are shown in yoga positions are represented on sigils from the Harappa Civilisation that dates in the second half of the 3rd millennium BC. These body postures are regarded to be the predecessors or the prototypes of the positions that will develop over time into the philosophical concept of yoga. A figure in a proto-yogic position on a sigil from the city of Mohenjo-daro show several similarities to the depiction of Cernunnos on the Gundestrup plate, such as an animal attribute in the form of horns, accompanying animals that are arranged in the exact same way and alike elements of fashion. There are also additional parallels between busts and figures on the Gundestrup cauldron and motifs from ancient India. The female bust on plate **C 6573** can be compared to the Indian deity Lakṣmī or Gajalakṣmī, an ancient fertility goddess who can be linked to the oriental cult of the Magna Mater or the deity Cybele and is also likely to be an analogy of the Greek deity Aphrodite or Aphrodite Anadyomene. All in all, both figures can be assigned to a pancultural motif: the master/mistress of animals.

Further parallels can be found on the Gundestrup plate with a male bust and probably a male figure that holds half of a wheel with eight spokes. Depictions of full wheels with 16 spokes are known from various Indian depictions, either shown as the wheel of the lore (*dharma*) or as an attribute for the *chakravartin*, the turner of the wheel equal to the ruler of the world based on an ancient Indian idea. Another link to India is provided by the female bust on plate **C 6565** that is accompanied by three smaller human figures and three birds. The figure of a woman with similar attributes is depicted on a silver phalera has been found in the Pakistani city Rawalpindi. Another comparable image (but without the small figures) is represented on a phalera from the Bulgarian village of Galiche. An Indian elephant which carries a howdah on its backs decorates not only phalerae from Rawalpindi, but has been also illustrated on a phalera from the Sark hoard. These animals are likewise minted on coins of different origin.

The similarities in these depictions can be explained by analogies or common archetypes from whom the characters and probable deities had developed. Nevertheless, some of them most probably result from intercultural contacts and exchanges between the Mediterranean world and ancient India. Such connections existed and were established in the aftermath of Alexander the Great's campaign to India in the years from 327 to 325 BC. Although this enterprise did not last and the conquered Indian territories were lost soon afterwards by the successors of Alexander, the Greek-Hellenistic culture influenced the North-West of ancient India. Evidences for this impact can be found in myths about the birth of the Buddha that adopted tales from the Greek mythology and the Lion Capitals of Sāñchī and Sārñāth that date in the 3rd century BC and were likely crafted by masters from Bactria that have been influenced by the art of the Greek and the Achaemenid culture. In the 1st century AD an art style developed in the region of Gandhara that has been heavily influenced by the Greek and Hellenistic art world and was used for statues and sculptures of the Buddha.

But also the Mediterranean cultures were influenced by the Indian lore. A great interest about India arose among the philosophical schools of cynicism and stoicism in Greece that regarded India as the source of their philosophic concept where the ideas would be practised like they originally were intended to be. The 'naked sages', as these Indian philosophers were described by Alexander and his men, practised a philosophic lore that shows several parallels to yoga. But according to communication problems, it has to be doubted that the western philosophers fully understood the ideas of their eastern colleagues.

It is likely that Alexander's troops also included Celtic warriors that served as mercenaries, a common appearance in the armies of the antique Mediterranean world. Gold coins with face designs of Alexander and his successors, either originals or local imitations, were discovered

at different sites in southern Germany that are assigned to the Celtic culture. Depictions of figures with Celtic carnyxes and Greek fashion elements were sculpted on the northern gate of the stupa of Sanchi as a representation of foreigners that have been converted to the new Buddhist faith. Therefore, Celts must have been known in India.

It is highly likely that the figure of Cernunnos in a yoga-like position on the Gundestrup cauldron was influenced by a motif of a horned figure in a pre-yogic position from the Harappa Civilisation. The depiction of the sigil from Mohenjo-daro is one of them. Different hypothesis could explain the evolution of the image and its journey from India to Europe, the different members and followers of Alexander's army could have come in touch with the image on several monuments and sculptures in India. Furthermore, it is likely that the motif was represented on various art objects and artefacts that Alexander's troops brought with them back to the West. The motif from Mohenjo-daro could have also spread through trade connections between the Indus Valley and Mesopotamia several centuries earlier, from where the representation travelled northwards and could have transformed in a simple cross-legged seat that was changed when the contacts to India were reawaken by Alexander's campaign or the proto-yoga figures could have kept their specific pose.

The sculpting of the legs of the bronze figurines from Lukaševka and Dănești, that can be interpreted as some sort of idols, also reminds of a yoga posture as well as on the depictions from the Harappa sigils and might also be a result of the cultural exchange between India and the Mediterranean cultures.

The Hellenistic motif '*The triumph of Dionysos*' demonstrates the adoption and transformation of a motif on different silver plates of Parthian or Sasanian origin, that do not represent an immediate consecutive development but phases in a process of change. In this development the deity Dionysos transformed in the Iranian fertility goddess Anāhitā who has similar abilities. Later the triumph turned into a banquet scene which could either depict members of the higher social classes or a king.

It is highly likely that the similarities in the depictions on the sigil from Mohenjo-daro and the Gundestrup scene with Cernunnos are not a mere coincidence, but the result of processes of intercultural exchange and influence that reached over large geographical areas and also different periods of time or epochs. The evolution of the former motif to the latter one could have developed similarly to the depictions in the example of '*The triumph of Dionysos*'. The horned figure on the Mohenjo-daro sigil represents an early form, while the antlered character of the deity Cernunnos shows a later phase in the process.

Therefore, the impacts on the iconography of the Gundestrup cauldron are far more diverse and far reaching that most of the investigations in the artefact's history of research had considered it to be. In conclusion, the cultural origins or influences and the iconographic connections of the Gundestrup cauldron to ancient India which had already been assumed by Japetus Steenstrup in 1895 and later by scholars like Friedrich Schrader (1934, 185-193), Heinz Mode (1959, 68) and Timothy Taylor (1992, 84-89) has been proven to be highly likely theories. Or, as Taylor stated it:

“In retrospect, one can see that those who dismissed his (Steenstrup's) conclusions threw the baby out with the bathwater.” (Taylor 1992, 87)

Abstract

The present master thesis discusses the different motifs and elements which influenced the iconography of the Gundestrup cauldron.

The first chapter includes the latest state of art which consists of two sections. The first one describes the two main explanation models that have located the artefact's place of origin based on its iconography, whereas the second is about the technical investigations of the material which have been used for the making of the cauldron.

The second chapter describes the stag god Cernunnos and his various representations. The assumed origins of the figure are followed by finds of comparison on which a characteristic feature of Cernunnos appears: the cross-legged pose. The chosen objects originate from a geographical area that spans from the steppes of Eurasia to Gallia.

The third chapter brings in an example of comparison to the cauldron, a silver fragment from the hoard of Săliște. A description of the objects and of the purchase of the hoard is included besides a detailed analysis as well as different interpretations of this artefact.

A list of sigils that are assigned to the ancient Indian Harappa Civilisation on which precursors of yoga figures are depicted can be found in the fourth chapter. In addition, parallels between ancient Indian and European image motifs are shown.

The existence of cultural contacts between India and the Mediterranean world, through which an intercultural exchange developed, are shown in the fifth chapter.

The sixth chapter demonstrates a development and transformation of an image, based on the motif '*The triumph of Dionysos*'.

The seventh chapter contains possible theories that explain how the depictions from the Harappa Civilisation could have influenced the illustration of Cernunnos on the Gundestrup cauldron.

Abstract

Die vorliegende Masterthesis widmet sich verschiedenen Motiven und Elementen, welche die Ikonographie des Gundestrupkessels beeinflusst haben.

Das erste Kapitel enthält den aktuellen Stand der Forschung, der sich aus zwei Bereichen zusammensetzt. Der erste beschreibt die beiden wesentlichen Erklärungsmodelle, die anhand der Ikonographie den wahrscheinlichen Ursprungsort dieses Artefakts lokalisiert haben. Der zweite hingegen beinhaltet die technischen Untersuchungen des Materials, das bei der Fertigung des Kessels zum Einsatz kam.

Im zweiten Kapitel werden der Hirschgott Cernunnos und dessen unterschiedliche Darstellungen beschrieben. Auf vermutete Ursprünge dieser Figur folgen Vergleichsfunde zu einem charakteristischen Merkmal in der Darstellung von Cernunnos, dem Sitz mit überkreuzten Beinen. Die ausgewählten Objekte stammen dabei aus einem geografischen Raum, der von den Steppengebieten Eurasiens bis nach Gallien reicht.

Im dritten Kapitel wird ein Vergleichsstück zum Kessel, ein Silberfragment aus dem Hortfund von Săliște, angeführt. Neben einer Beschreibung der Objekte und der Erwerbung des Hortes sind eine ausführliche Untersuchung sowie unterschiedliche Interpretationen dieses Artefaktes enthalten.

Im vierten Kapitel ist eine Auflistung von Siegeln der altindischen Harappa-Kultur zu finden, auf denen Vorläufer von Yoga-Figuren dargestellt sind. Desweiteren werden Parallelen zwischen antiken indischen und europäischen Bildmotiven aufgezeigt.

Kulturelle Kontakte, die in der Antike zwischen Indien und dem Mittelmeerraum bestanden, wodurch ein kultureller Austausch zustande kam, der Einfluss auf verschiedene Bereiche genommen hat, werden im fünften Kapitel aufgezeigt.

Im sechsten Kapitel ist anhand des Motives *'Der Triumph des Dionysos'* eine Entwicklung sowie Umwandlung eines bestimmten Bildtypus beschrieben.

Das siebente Kapitel enthält mögliche Erklärungen, wie die Darstellungen der Harappa-Kultur die Cernunnos-Darstellung auf dem Gundestrupkessel beeinflusst haben könnten.

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