CHAPTER V

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SCYTHIAN / ŚAKA ELEMENTS IN EARLY ART OF THE BORDERLANDS OF INDIA AND THE NORTH-WESTERN PART OF INDIA

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SCYTHIAN/ŚAKA ELEMENTS IN THE EARLY ART OF THE BORDERLANDS OF INDIA AND THE NORTH-WESTERN PART OF INDIA

The subject-matter of this chapter will be discussed under two sections as follows :

A. Scythian/Śaka elements in the early art of the borderlands of India.

B. Scythian/Śaka elements in the early art of the North-Western part of India.

A. IN THE BORDERLANDS

So far as the borderlands are concerned our attention would be focused on the area from the south of the southern section of eastern Scythia.¹

^bThe Śaka/Scythian elements in early art of India as witnessed in, A. East of the northwestern part of the subcontinent, and B. Other areas in India, which had experienced Śaka-Pahlava rule, have been dealt with in the next chapter as in the first

Between the river Oxus in the borderlands and North-Western India there were Bactria (in northern Afghanistan), Aria (West Afghanistan including Herat), Drangiana or Śakastāna¹ (South-West Afghanistan including the Seistan region), Arachosia (south-eastern Afghanistan including the Kandahar area) and Paropanisadae (the area to the east of the Hindu Kush in North-East Afghanistan).

Thus the regions which were incorporated in Afghanistan in the late pre-Christian and early Christian centuries, were Bactria, Paropanisadai, Arachosia, Gedrosia and Drangiana. Bactria² (in Northern Afghanistan) was bounded on the north and also on the east by Sogdiana (situated in Uzbekistan), on the west by Margiana (part of modern Turkmenistan), and on the south or south-west by a part of Aria (modern Herat region in Afghanistan). Below it was Drangiana³ (or Śakastāna, modern Seistan). According to Ptolemy, India Intra Gangem⁴ (Indian subcontinent minus the area to the north and

place they experienced lesser penetration of Śaka/Scythian elements and secondly they belonged to later periods, i.e. after the Śaka-Pahlava rule.

¹Śakastāna, has been discussed in chapters II, III, IV above.

² Geog. Cla. Pt., p.142.

³ *Ibid.*, p.147.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p.147.

north-east of the Ganges) lay on the east of Paropanisadai¹ (modern Kabul-Begram region to the south-east of the Hindu Kush was within its limit), Arachosia² (the south-eastern Afghanistan around Ghazni and Kandahar) and Gedrosia³ (in a part of Baluchistan). The territory of Afghanistan outside the Hindu Kush was generally called Ariana.

Of these areas, the most important site yielding Śaka/Scythian artifacts is Tillya-tepe in northern Afghanistan, dated in c. first century B.C. to first century A.D. Tillya-tepe's connections with North-West India is shown by the evidence of interalia a gold medallion (Plate 129 A) displaying on one side a lion with a Kharoshtī inscription.⁴ The inscription reads *siho vigato bhayo* meaning the 'lion who is devoid of fear'. This attribute indicates the lion as a theriomorphic representation of Śākyasimha (Gautama Buddha). On the other side of the medallion (Plate 129 B) appears a naked and bearded man turning a wheel. He is identified with Heracles-Krishna.⁵ The evidence of the medallion⁶ thus establishes an Indian connection with the Tillya-tepe site of the first century A.D. This Indian connection is of key significance as it indicated the

⁴ Bac. Gol., Pl.131.

¹ Agr. So.Imp.Par.Hist.,p.2

² Geog. Cla. Pt., p.147.

³ Ibid., p.148.

⁵ Ibid., Pl.131.

⁶B.N. Mukherjee, 'A Note on a Gold Coin or Medal found at Tillyatepe (Afghanistan)', *Mudrā*, Calcutta, 1989, pp. 37-39.

percolation of Śaka/Scythian elements in early Indian art. The repetition of styles, motifs of the Śaka/Scythian repertoire at Tillya-tepe have been revealed as a result of excavations. Discoveries of the Afghan-Soviet Archaeological Expedition in 1978-79 in the town of Shibargan in northern Afghanistan, show various artifacts in the ancient burials dated in the first century B.C. to first century A.D. They all have Śaka/Scythian influence.

Excavations at Tillya-tepe have yielded more gold ornamental plaques and ornaments than utility objects, weapons and horse trappings. It is noteworthy that these had a fair distribution in the Scythian burials of the western section. Of key significance at Tillya-tepe are the Parthian coins with local overstrikes found along with a coin of Tiberius.¹ The Parthian coins have substantially shown that the Parthians had much trade in the Indian borderlands specially with the semi nomadic cattle-raising pastoralists on the Parthian empire's borders.² The Śaka/Scythians had to collaborate with the Parthians, as strikingly contrasted a few decades later by the great nomadic Kushāņas, who were able to control the important branch of the Silk Roads that led along the Indus Valley to the port of Barygaza (modern Broach) from

¹G. A. Pugachenkova, 'The Antiquities of Transoxiana in the light of

Investigations in Uzbekistan (1985-1990)', Anc. Civ. Scy. Sib., Vol. 2, p. 35.

² Koshelenko and Pilipko, Parthia', Hist. Civ. Cen. As., Vol. II, pp.36-137.

where ships could sail to Egypt, thus affording to bypass Parthia and Parthians.¹ The formation of these routes was to a considerable extent associated with the natural resources of certain regions. Therefore, the case of bypassing or avoiding the Parthians was not applicable to the Śaka /Scythians, and this is important in the cultural sphere.

The animal style, as apparent from the Tillya-tepe objects, was an essential part of the art of the Eurasian nomads. We have come across it during the course of our study of objects belonging to the Eastern and Western sections of the Scythian/Śaka art in the previous chapter (IV). It appeared again at Tillya-tepe, in the ornamentation of utility objects, ornaments, weapons, horse trappings and other burial goods, as well as in tattoos. Animals were depicted singly or in complex compositions in this animal style. Details were accentuated by means of coloured inlays, curvilinear ornamentations, additional zoomorphic elements, and exaggerations of the animal bodies. Gold phiales (Plate 130) from burial 4,Tillya-tepe,² have a close parallel in the gold phiale from Gonio.³ These gold phiales are in the form of cast dishes fluted with

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¹ David Christian, A History of Russia, Central Asia and Mongolia: Inner Eurasia from Prehistory to the Mongol Empire, Blackwell Publishers, Oxford, 1998, Vol. I, p. 121.

² Bac. Gol., Pl. 139.

³ O.D. Lordkipanidze, T.K. Mikeladze, Le trésor de Gonio, Tbilisi,

grooves furring out from the central circlet. The massive gold phial from Gonio is similar to silver bowls widespread in Georgia in the first century A.D. A gold pyxis from burial 3, Tillya-tepe, has similar parallels in the later Saka complexes. The gold pyxis¹ consists of three segments, having a bottom, a cylindrical body and a lid with a handle. The whole cast body is embellished along the waist with a horizontal band of laurels, each of which is bounded at the base by a curved thong. The separately cast bottom has been soldered on to the body. The lid is embellished with the same ornamental design as the body of the vessel. The protruding handle is topped by a finial or pommel whose shape is reminiscent of a pomegranate. It carries an embossed ornamental design along the rim. The round loop, one of which is soldered on to the lid and the other on to the body, are linked by a braided gold chain. The abundant use of loops soldered on to various artifacts is a characteristic feature of Tillya-tepe art. From Burial 3 has also been found a gold bowl, cast of a thin sheet and subsequently embossed. The bottom of the bowl is strongly concave.² The techniques of soldering, casting of thin sheets of metal and embossing were in use from the early Scythian period. Another interesting

^{1980,} pp. 35,59.

¹ M.Treister, 'New Discoveries of Sarmatian Complexes of the 1st Century A.D.', Anc.

Civ. Scy. Sib., Vol. 4, p. 41.

² Bac. Gol., pp. 238-239, Fig.22.

utility object, found from burial 3, is a cast flat-bottomed pot (Plate 131) with a lid and an upright lip. Soldered on to its shoulders are two loops, one on either side and they are made of twisted wire with coiled ends. Passed through both loops are two chains, which are attached to the soldered-on ring-shaped handle of the pot's flat lid.¹ Attached to the rim of another cast gold bowl found from burial 4, Tillya-tepe, is a gold scale model of a tree (Plate 190).² This type of scale model of a tree along with a gold figurine of an ibex had been incorporated into a ceremonial headdress akin to a diadem or crown as attested to by the celebrated gold diadem from the Khokhlach barrow (Novocherkassk Treasure) of early second century A.D. Thus the skillfully crafted diadem from the Khokhlach tumulus has parallels among Tillya-tepe ornaments. The Khokhlach style has also been revealed in the contemporary Kobyakovo diadem and analogous adornments were found from barrow 46 near the village of Ust'- Labinskaya of early second century A.D.³ It is interesting that the techniques used at Khokhlach were also apparent in ornaments found at Nogaichik and Taxila. Brooch-plates in the shape of rams have been encountered both at Nogaichik-Sokolova Mogila and Tillya-tepe.⁴

¹ *Ibid.*,Pl. 141.

² *Ibid.*,Pl. 121.

³ I. P. Zasetskaya, *Zolotye ukrasheniya gunnskoi epokhi*, Leningrad, 1975, p. 17, Fig. 3.

⁴ M.Y. Treister, 'Concerning the Jewellery Items from the Burial Mound at Nogaichik', Anc. Civ.Scy. Sib., Vol. 4, p. 154.

Thus, an overall compositional analogy, is seen not only by an identical choice of subject-matter such as tree and ibexes, but also by such purely technical elements as the tiny pillars or rings in which the legs of the animals terminate. The Scythian repertoire includes similar gold scale models of trees with similar branches of wire and leaf-like disks dangling from them.

The rim of a pear shaped silver utensil from Tillya-tepe carries a fillet in relief of high grade silver. This is again ornamented with a chain-like design of impressed half-moons or crescents. Chains with dangling crescents have been frequently used in Śaka/Scythian objects from the early period.¹

A particular mirror (Plate 132)² from burial 3 has a massive ivory handle ornamented with a plain scratched design. The obverse is smooth whereas the reverse is edged with a raised rim embellished with barely marked bosses and with a cone-shaped prunt in the middle. This mirror is similar to a round mirror having an identical ivory handle from Taxila (Plate 133).³

Whatever the source of the tradition of securing gold ornaments onto clothing, the Eurasian nomads carried that preference to extraordinary lengths,

¹ Bac. Gol., p.34.

² Bac. Gol., Pl.144.

³ Taxila, Vol. 3, Pl.182, b=no. 211.

as is well documented by the rich burial at Tillya-tepe. Hundreds of ornamental plagues have been found in the Tillya-tepe burials, whose exact positioning enables us to reconstruct the ornamental dècor of such parts of clothing as cuffs, sleeves and hems. The reconstruction of the entire apparel would be like the typical Scythian close-fitting tunic, as depicted on numerous Scythian utility objects.¹ Also the garb of a king on a pendant from Tillya-tepe is typically Scythian. Even the annular, curltipped horns of the dragons with their backward contorted quarters as depicted on this pendant, are peculiar to the Scytho-Siberian animal style. Similarly executed dragons have been found from Gonur stone amulets. The site of Gonur has been recently excavated and is dated near about the first century A.D.² Also, the motif of the horned and winged horse on this pendant is very much similar to the winged and horned horse motif found on a cap from Issyk barrow in Kazakhstan.³ Burial 1 at Tillya-tepe has remains of a gold threaded apparel, showing the gold threads with a multitude of pearls on them and some intricate designs edged with gold plaques. These gold plaques (Plate 134) have an identical repoussé ornamentation of the 'man with a dolphin'.⁴ The representation of the dolphin is fairly realistic except in its body scales. Perhaps the goldsmith had a hazy

¹The typical Scythian costume is discussed in Chapter IV above.

² V. Sarianidi, 'New Discoveries at Ancient Gonur', Anc. Civ. Scy. Sib., Vol.2, Fig. 16.

³ K. A. Akishev, Kurgan Issyk, Moscow, 1978.

⁴ Bac. Gol., Pl. 86.

notion of the creature or, he had tried to create a stylistic counterpart. A similar dolphin (Plate 135) has been found from the burial mound at Nogaichik.¹

The treatment of the dolphin's scales was also applicable to the griffin plaque and griffin's-head handle from Ufa, dated in the fourth century B.C. (Plate 136).² The image of dolphin could be of local Bactrian provenance, the latter having an association with Graeco-Roman art, in which dolphin representation holds a leading place. Similar dolphins are stylistically represented on handles from Taxila. Also from Tillya-tepe are sewn-on six-petal rosette plaques. They are arranged in a checkerboard pattern in two rows recalling the well-known Scytho-Siberian form. This checkerboard pattern could be an individual collation in the eastern section of the Scythian art.³ Within the Scythian tradition of clothing plaques, the earlier plaques, dating to the seventh, sixth and fifth centuries B.C. tend, to be made of more solid metal and are larger than those of the fourth century B.C. By the end of the first century B.C. many of the plaques were small in size and extremely thin. Perhaps the demand for such plaques led to mass production by means of stamping metal sheets. Ornamental bands at Tillya-tepe recall the ornamental

¹ Cf. M.Y.Treister's article cited in Footnote No.26 above, p.138, Figs.10-11.

² Gol. De. Eur., Pl. 70.

³The checker-board pattern is discussed in Chapter IV above.

bands found from Scythian burials of South Russia of fifth, fourth centuries B.C. Thus, the ornamental band at Tillya-tepe attests to the continuation of techniques in ornamental works, such as minute granulation, inset work with turquoise, and repoussé rosettes, from a very early period.¹ A necklace of gold beads (Plate 137) from burial 6, is made of slightly elongated beads secured by a pair of cone-shaped clasps. The surface of each bead is articulated into 109 eight facets, with the ribs marked by minute granulation.² Tillya-tepe gold rings are embellished with a simple ornamental design of circles and almond shapes (eyes). These gold rings are similar in technique and embellishments to the Oxus ring, the flat hoop of which expands into a circular bezel, with a lion embossed. Its legs extend round the hoop on either side. The bronze ornament from the fourth tumulus of Seven Brothers barrow was similarly executed. Pendants in the shape of circles (Plate 138) have been found in the cemetery at Tillya-tepe,³ and in Scythian barrows dating from the second century B.C. to first century A.D. in the Kuban region. Also, heart-shaped leaf pendants have been found in Tillya-tepe barrows.⁴ The treatment of the ivy motif on the Kul-Oba Athena pendant had again revisited Tillya-tepe.

¹ Bac. Gol., p.20.

² Bac. Gol., Pls. 66, 67.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 234, Fig. 24.

⁴ Ibid., p. 235, Fig. 36.

Tillya-tepe has also yielded brooch-plaques in the shape of ram horns. Analogies of rectangular brooch-plaques with four-petal rosettes (Plate 139) have been found in burial 1 at Tillya-tepe.¹ Bracelets with widening ends have been found on the left arm of the buried man. Similar bracelets on the left arm of the buried man have been found from Porogi, dated in the first century B.C. - first century A.D.² Bracelets with antelope terminals are cast with open-ended terminals. These bracelets (Plate 141) from Tillya-tepe³ have petal like ears and coiled horns, which are encrusted with convex and highly polished turquoise beads.

An interesting imagery of the Scythian repertoire was figures of goddesses with furies or with other wild animals. The plaques with images of females seated on a panther and a lion-griffin were found from Bolshaya Bliznitsa. Represented on large gold pendants from burial 2 at Tillya-tepe was the type 'Mistress of Animals' (Plate 141).⁴ She wears a high calathus, a long skirt under a belted jacket, and holds in either outstretched hand a twisted animal of syncretic form. The same imagery was found on the earrings from

¹ Ibid.,Pl. 27.

² Cf. M. Y. Treister's article cited in Footnote No.21 above, p.39.

³ Bac. Gol., Pl. 105.

⁴ Ibid., Pls.44-47.

Tolstava Mogila, each in the form of a female standing against two lions.¹ From burial 4 at Tillya-tepe, comes a superb belt with nine plaques representing a figure seated on a large feline. The figure (Plate 142) is probably that of a male, in quasi-nomadic attire.² Thus, from the sixth century B.C. down to first century A.D., plaques depicting men/women or animals were an integral part of Śaka/Scythian imagery. Like the robed woman on a panther, and another on a griffin,³ both from Bolshaya Bliznitsa, similar couples on mythical lions have been found from burial 6 at Tillya-tepe. Clasp disks (Plate 143) found at Tillyatepe⁴ have massive convex forms, made in the cast technique. These are similar to ones found at Taxila. Clasp disks have three massive rings soldered on to the back for purposes of fastening. Soldered on to one is a hook, and on to the other, a loop that terminates in inward-turned scrolls. These inward-turned scrolls were widely used in Saka art forms in India including architectural decors. These inward-turned scrolls so beautifully displayed on cauldrons of Raskopana Mogila (Plate 144), Ukraine,⁵ revisit as motifs guite popular in the āyāgapatas found from Mathurā, dated in the first century A.D. onwards. Hairpins found at Tillya-tepe show the usage of thin gold sheet shaped like

³ Art. Scy., p.181.

¹ Art.. Scy., p.97.

² Bac. Gol., Pl. 97.

⁴ Bac. Gol., p.226.Fig.2.

⁵ Gol. De. Eur., Pl. 168.

quadrefoils (Plate 145),¹ in such a manner, that two of the lobes are horizontally aligned, and the other two are bent downwards. It also has crescent-shaped plaquettes. These crescent-shaped plaquettes are also found in the famous hair ornament (Plate 146) from Ufa,² of fourth century B.C. Cut from gold sheets are flowerlet plaques in the form of rosettes, and these were quite popular in Tillya-tepe burials. The rosettes comprise of four heart shaped lobes, each of which, in turn, is impressed with a straight and deep line down the middle and a curved line along the rim. Another interesting find was a five lobed brooch partitioned by small lozenges, with rim curved inwards. Each of the five heart shaped lobes is embellished with a pair of pear-shaped turquoise inlays. Several techniques of incrustation of metal objects were in use in Saka/Scythian art. One of them is the insertion of precious or semi-precious stones or glass fragments. Another is the insertion of enamels, both combined to form the cloisonné technique. Six-petalled rosettes, found from Tillya-tepe burials were cut from gold sheets. On the reverse of each rosette is a loop for attachment. Five and six-petalled rosettes (Plates 147,191,192) were also found from Taxila.³ Similar rosettes were also found in the Pavlovsky Barrow⁴ of the fourth century B.C. and on the disc pendant (Plates 148,149,27) from Kul-

¹ Bac. Gol., Pl. 18.

² Gol.De. Eur., Pl.14.

³ Taxila, Vol. III, Pl.179, nos. 83,84,93.

⁴ Art. Scy., p.99.

Oba.¹ The Tillya-tepe rosettes are also similar to the rosettes bordering the lower edge of the boat-shaped pendants of Kul-Oba (Plates 148,149,27).² Hollow and boat-shaped earring clips (Plate 150) with two soldered halves are yet another fascinating group from Tillya-tepe³ ornaments. The terminals of the clips are embellished with an identical ornamental design. There is the distinguished motif of a chain row of equilateral triangles, and further down, a chain of lozenges. This boat-shaped form was frequently used in the Scythian jewellery, especially in the Kul-Oba ear ornament, Novoselitsy gold earrings,⁴ and those from Krasnoye Znamya, Novozavedennoe, Kabardino-Balkariya⁵ and Volkovtsy (Plates 17,18).⁶

Another Scythian motif of the ram horn continued in the Śaka/Scythian period. Brooch-plates in the shape of ram horns (Plates 151,152) have been encountered at Tillya-tepe, burials 5 and 3,⁷ and they are similar to those found from Tulkhar, Sokolova Mogila and Nogaichik.⁸ Plaques of different shapes, geometrical and otherwise seem to have carried the Scythian legacy at

Caucasus; Recent Archaeological Finds', Anc. Civ. Scy Sib., Vol.1, p.60, Fig.1. ⁶ Scy. Art., Pls. 115, 116.

¹ *Ibid* ., Figs.4-7.

² Scy. Art., Pls. 130, 133,134.

³ Bac. Gol., Pl.32.

⁴ Scy. Art, Pls. 247,248.

⁵S.V. Makhortykh, 'Scythians and Sarmatians of the Northern

⁷ Bac. Gol., p.255. Fig.12; p.239, Figs.30-31.

⁸ Cf. M. Y. Treister's article cited in Footnote No.26 above, pp. 154, 155.

Tillya-tepe, and from Tillya-tepe elsewhere. Thus, the Śaka/Scythian repertoire branched out into various categories without losing its focus. Seen from a surveying distance, they seem to be the living images, which had carried their tradition, with an interest and an inwardness across the vast expanse of space and time.

The 'bow with bosses' plaques (Plate 153)¹ from Tillya-tepe have their parallels at Taxila (Plates 154,155).² Encrusted trefoil plaques (Plate 156) from Tillya-tepe³ are very much similar in shape to copper, bronze and lead trefoils (Plate 157) from Taxila.⁴ Pear-shaped plaques (Plate 158) from Tillya-tepe⁵ have further variations at Taxila (Plate 159).⁶ Trident-shaped plaques with circlets have been found both at Taxila and Tillya-tepe. At Tillya-tepe both tridentshaped plaques and eye-pupil plaques are found (Plate 193).⁷ Plaques with elongated insets and flowerlet plaques (Plate 194)⁸ were important motifs in Tillya-tepe art. These were encrusted with turquoise. Encrusted trefoil patterns of motifs, pear-shaped motifs, trident-shaped motifs have been extensively

¹ Bac. Gol., p. 227, Fig.10.

² Taxila, Pl.179,b=no.23; Pl.179,=no. 88; Pl.136,o=nos. 144, 145.

³ Bac. Gol., p.108, Pl. 51.

⁴ Taxila, Pl.179, no. 63.

⁵ Bac. Gol., p.234, Fig.27.

⁶ Taxila, Pl.180, no. 151-160.

⁷ Bac. Gol., Pl. 23,24.

⁸ Bac. Gol., Pl. 25, 26.

used in the jewellery found from Scythian barrows.¹ Especially noteworthy are the large horned and small horned plaquettes (Plates 151,152)² from burial 3, Tillya-tepe. These plaquettes were cast in the shape of curved horns with two raised vertical stripes on the front. The rims have been perforated twice in both the types. Similar ones (Plates 160,161) have been found from Taxila.³ The Taxila plaquettes were made of copper, bronze and lead.

Horse accoutrements from Tillya-tepe have definite Śaka/Scythian affinities. Noteworthy are the temple pendants, which formed a striking part of the ornamentation of these horse accoutrements. The temple pendant from Tillya-tepe have two identical protomas or foreparts of a horse turned in opposite directions, with almond or 'eye' shaped turquoise insets (Plate 195).⁴ Similar protomas of two horses were also found in the Luristan bronzes.⁵ Burial 4 at Tillya-tepe has yielded a bridle embellished with gold phalerae and arched plaques with repoussé designs executed in the Scytho-Siberian style.⁶

¹ Scythian jewellery of the western section have been discussed in Chapter IV above.

² Bac. Gol., p. 239, Figs. 30, 31.

³ Taxila, Pl.179, nos.37-41; Pl.181, nos. 168-176.

⁴ Bac. Gol., Pl.40.

⁵ R.Ghirshman, 'Notes Iraniennes IV : Le Trésor De Sakkaez. Les Origines De L'art Méde Et Les Bronzes Du Luristan', Artibus Asiae, Vol. X, 1950, pp. 181-206.

⁶Scytho-Siberian art style has been discussed in Chapter IV above.

Weapons belonging to the Tillya-tepe burials stylistically support their Śaka/Scythian heritage. Depictions of stags, however, become rare. The images and motifs of animal combat, fantastic monsters, floral patterns resembling nandipadas (Plate 196)¹ and hunting scenes are prevalent, as these may be linked symbolically to the world of the dead. They may be also linked to Herodotus's accounts of signs of valour. The iconography of the griffin on the scabbard covering from burial 4 of Tillya-tepe is similar and almost identical to the Porogi griffin . Porogi is in the Yanpol District of the Vinnitsa region.² The male and female burials of Porogi are dated in the last century B.C. to first century A.D. Again, the Tillya-tepe scabbard (Plates 162,163)³ covering are stylistically similar to the gold toilet phial from Khokhlach.⁴ The clasps of the sword-belt of Porogi (Plate 164)⁵ are technologically and typologically similar to the openwork clasps from some of the burials of Tillya-tepe . Certain parallels with the Tillya-tepe gold can be observed in the scenes as well, like the plaques from burial 2 portraying the hero as holding two dragons by the paws. Articles of a sword-belt set from the Kosika burial, north of Astrakhan, have analogies

¹ Bac. Gol., Pl. 158.

²Cf. M. Y. Treister's article cited in Footnote No.21 above, p.37.

³ Bac. Gol., p.222, Pl. 164.

⁴ I. I. Tolstoi, N.P.Kondakov, 'Russkie Drevnosti v Panyatnikakh Iskusstva', *Collected Publications*, Moscow, 1990, Vol. 3, p.140.

⁵Cf. M. Y. Treister's article cited in Footnote No.21 above, p.75, Fig.2.

in both burial 4 of Tillya-tepe and Porogi.¹ Kosika findings can be dated in the middle of the first century A.D. The style can be related to that of the Siberian-Altai nomadic world, on the wooden scabbards found at Borotab, Ulandryk, Barbugazy barrows of the fourth and the third century B.C.² The treatment of the monsters on the Tillya-tepe scabbard is also apparent on the Kobyakovo torque. The beards and manes of the wolf-headed dragons of the Kobyakovo torque are executed in the same manner by interwoven braids and notches, as the monsters on the Tillya-tepe scabbard (Plate 165).³ A number of stylistic details of the Kobyakovo torque are reminiscent of the gold decorations of the necropolis in Tillya-tepe at the threshold of the Christian era. Rich with diverse turquoise inlays, the seven main shapes used in the Kobyakovo torque were almond shape, rectangle, parallelogram, comma, etc., and were found practically in the same combinations on the earrings, clasps and sword scabbards from Northern Afghanistan (Plates 162,163,165).⁴ The mythical creatures with human bodies and animal heads of the Kobyakovo torque wear armour which are similar to that depicted on coins of Azes, and on a relief found from Khalchayan in Uzbekistan.⁵ The figurines of musicians from Tillya-

¹ *Ibid.*,p.51.

²V.I.Sarainidi, Khram and Necropol' Tillya-tepe, Moscow 1989, p.98.

³ Bac. Gol., Pl. 160.

⁴ Ibid., Pls. 160 – 166.

⁵M. Treister, 'Sarmatian Treasure of South Russia', Archaeology, Jan/ Feb 1997, p.49.

tepe¹ all sitting with legs crossed are similar to the sitting male character depicted on the Kobyakovo torque. The figure of a warrior from Koy-Krygankala² attests to the same pose. Perhaps, as an iconographical canon, the seated pose of persons with their legs crossed became ingrained in the Central Asian regions at the threshold of the Christian era. Hinged bracelets similar to the open work gold bracelet, near the left wrist of the skeleton at Kobyakovo, and decorated in the animal style, also originate from Kazakhstan and Northern Pakistan.³ As to the shape of the cup held by the central figure of the torque Kobyakovo, it is similar to that of vessels from Sarmatian barrows of the first century A.D. These cups were made of gold and silver and have realistically executed zoomorphic handles. The sword of the hero is similar to those found in Gandhära reliefs.⁴ The costumes of the zooanthropomorphic creatures are similar to that of the Kushāņa armour consisting of a plated cuirass with a tight-fitting upper part and a widening short skirt. The elongated version of the Kushāna armour appears on coins of the Indo-Saka rulers of Gandhāra at the threshold of the Christian era⁵ and is shown in detail on the

¹V.I. Sarianidi, op.cit., p.66,Fig.23.

²Yu.A.Rapoport. 'Khorezmiiskie Ossuarii', *Iz Istorii Religii Drevnego Khorezma*, Moscow, 1971, Fig. 23f.

³ Cf. M. Y. Treister's article cited in Footnote No.21 above, p.43.

⁴G. A. Pugachenkova, *Iskusstvo Gandkhary*, Moscow, 1982, p. 123, Fig. 129; p. 130, Fig. 136; p. 145, Fig. 153.

⁵ M. V. Gorelik, 'Sakski dospekh', Tsentral Aziya: Novye pamyatniki pis'mennosti I iskusstva, Moscow, 1987, p.368, Figs. 2, 6.

bone plaque with a battle scene from the Orlat necropolis in Uzbekistan¹ dated, probably, to the same time. Thus, the objects from Tillya-tepe suggest many shared features of the Śaka/Scythian repertoire in their animal style. The characteristic of this site was the use of coloured inlays for accentuating ornamentation. Precious stones were also used specially in curvilinear ornamentation. The animal style of Tillya-tepe often used additional zoomorphic elements and exaggeration of parts of the animal's body. The maintenance of such a vast repertoire obviously implied that the nomads had an intimate economic relationship with the agriculturists of the oases and river plains, and both of them had a definite part in the formation of the nomadic art.

B. IN THE NORTH-WESTERN PART OF INDIA

The early art of the north-western part of India displays Saka/Scythian elements to a significant extent. The north-western part of the subcontinent, now mainly in Pakistan, and a part of Afghanistan, formed the so-called 'base'

¹G. A. Pugachenkova, Drevnosti Miankalya, Tashkent, 1989, p. 149, Fig. 71.

of India's contacts with early Central Asia. In this region, Taxila was a major stronghold of Śaka occupation.¹

The north-western part of the Indian subcontinent mainly embraced the territories of Gandhāra, Uddivāna (Swat), Kāśmīra, Sindhu-Sauvīra (mentioned in the Junāgadh inscription of Rudra-dāman I dated in the year 150 A.D., were situated on the west and east of the lower Indus) and also the areas in between them. Geographically, Gandhāra denoted an area which lay on both sides of Indus and contained two great cities viz. Pushkalāvatī (Charsadda in the Peshwar District) and Takshaśīlā (Taxila in the Rawalpindi District). To the north of Gandhāra lay Uddiyāna or the Udyāna, identifiable with modern Swat (in Northern Pakistan). To the east of Uddiyana lay the country of Chi-pin. The name denoted a large territory in the north-western section of the Indian subcontinent including Kāśmīra. From the Ch'ien Han-shu² (composed in 54 A.D.), it is evident that Chi-pin was an ideal region for commerce with a variety of merchandise. An important trading centre in the north-western section of the Indian subcontinent was Taxila. The Taxilans might have participated in transit trade, buying only what they actually used and not having there any important distributing center. Thus, it appears that Bactria, Kabul-Begram

¹ Taxila, as a Śaka site has been discussed in Chapter III above.

² C.H.S, Ch 96 A, 10 B.

region (Paropanisadai), North-western India including Taxila and Chipin, and the lower Indus area etc. formed a commercial zone. The Indo-Greek's were in possession of this zone or parts of it from the middle of the 3rd century B.C. to late 1st century B.C. The economic importance of the territory, once ruled by the Indo-Greeks, continued in the ages of the Scytho-Parthians. The same trend continued under the Kushāņas. Nomadic art manifests itself on Kushāņa art, however, nomadic elements in Kushāņa art are not dealt with in this study.

Prior to the coming of the Śaka-Pahlavas, Taxila had a rich tradition of art due to the amalgamation of indigenous and foreign art traditions. This was revealed by the excavated stratas at Taxila. The archaeological records show the cultural changes, and also indicate an influx of Śaka/Scythian art forms, as apparent from the findings in the early Śaka and Śaka-Parthian strata at Taxila. Taxila did not have burials. Therefore the utility objects, ornaments, weapons and horse trappings were found from the Śaka-Parthian strata. Taxilan potteries from Scytho-Parthian levels have typical Śaka/Scythian and Scytho-Siberian motifs of simple parallel bands, chequered triangles, chevrons, loops, quatrefoil crosses, trees and birds, zigzags and wavy lines.¹ Ovoid-

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¹ Taxila, Pls. 130, 131.

shaped store-jars¹ were also common. Bell-shaped² carinated vessels in bronze and copper have also shown Scythian affinities. Jugs with two handles like the amphoraes were fairly present in the Scytho-Parthian levels. Beakers with deep flared mouths became popular under the Śakas and Parthians. These beakers had the svastika motifs. Usage of deep flared mouths was commonly practised by the Saka/Scythians in their inventory of utility objects. Vessels of copper and bronze with projecting nail heads³ were also common in Taxila. Such nail heads were similarly seen in metal utility vessels of the Scythian barrows in the western section. The Saka-Parthian strata at Taxila also yielded clay vessels with nail head imitations of metal originals. Interestingly, inkpots in the form of small vases with wide mouths, and usually with two lug-ears,⁴ have been found. These are reminiscent of the Gaimanova Mogila vessels' lug ears (Plate 8).⁵ Śaka and Parthian influences, yet again, manifest themselves in shapes and decorative motifs on stoppers which were surmounted by grotesque heads of animals, parts of animals, and even by recumbent forms. Some variations were there at Taxila regarding utility objects. There was some sort of mass usage of utility vessels of the Saka/Scythian style. Earlier, from Tillya-tepe and

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¹ Ibid., Pl. 121, no. 3.

² Ibid., Pl. 123, no. 6.

³ Ibid., Pl.174, nos. 255-258.

⁴ Ibid., Pl. 125, no. 142.

⁵ Scy. Art., Pl. 166.

other burials of the western section, or for that matter, from the Issyk barrow (where the burials were of chieftains, or of royal personages) there were specific forms of utility vessels. But at Taxila, the Saka/Scythian motifs spread to a wider range of objects of daily use, whatever be their dimensions. Vessels with animal headed handles were also found from the Saka/Parthian strata at Taxila. These vessels are similar to those found from the kurgan of Khokhlach (Plate 166)¹ and Tillya-tepe, both dated in the first century A.D. Such zoomorphic handles are typical of Scytho-Siberian productions from an earlier period and continued in the Saka/Scythian productions in India in the first century A.D. The Taxila vessels² with animal headed handles have several Scythian vessels (Plates 167,168) belonging to the western analogies in section.³ The meaning, form and function of the vessels and the animal motifs and the disposition of the zoomorphic ornaments, must have deep roots in antiquity. They took the utilitarian role of attachments on vessels. Such continuity of form and ornamentation can be explained only by their cultural significance. Similar vessels with zoomorphic handles (Plate 16) have been found from the Amirtyuba burial of Azerbaijan dated in the first century B.C. to

¹ Gol. De. Eur., Pl. 132.

² Taxila, Pl.123, no.80.

³ Scy. Art, Pls, 102,103,104.

first century A.D.¹ Other vessels common to Scythian burials like rhytons and amphorae, have also been found from Sirkap, Taxila. They have typical Śaka/Scythian motifs executed in bands. The incised, embossed and appliqué ware from Sirkap, also shows the Scythian influence. A squat flask of unique shape from Bhir Mound, Taxila shows the decoration of incised chevrons and cross-patterns. Lamps found in the Saka-Parthian strata were made of schist and other soft stones. The commonest shape was a leaf or heart-shaped vessel, sometimes provided with a handle projecting from the back, sometimes with pierced lugs for suspension. In the bowl-shaped lamp of green steatite from the Mahal site in Sirkap,² (dated in the middle or later part of the first century A.D.), the Saka/Scythian nomadic art form seems to have left its mark. The lamp has a spout and three lugs pierced, perhaps, for suspension. Between the lugs are acanthus leaves, and on the spout, an elephant's head is carved in low relief. Elephants are noticed in the Saka art of India. Other lamps found from Taxila similarly attest to the Saka/Scythian influence, as displayed in parts of vessels and attachments. Another utility object common to Scythian burials was the tripod stand. From Sirkap, Taxila has been found an iron tripod stand

¹I. Aliev And G.Goshgarli, 'Archaeological Investigations In Azerbaijan (1986-1990)', Anc. Civ. Scy. Sib., Vol. 1, p. 267, Fig. 3.

² Taxila, Vol. III, Pl. 146, no.114.

for cauldrons. It consisted of a ring supported on three legs.¹ Iron hinges of double-leaf pattern have also been found from Taxila. Bronze and copper hinges of double-leaf pattern dated in the first century A.D., have also been found. Allied to the leaf motif, but with a variation, was the leaf-and-knob motif. From Sirkap were found copper spoons, dated in the first century A.D., with leaf-and-knob motif attached to the handles.² Spatulas with heart-shaped blades and some with *nandipada* handles have also been found from Sirkap.³ Shallow bowls of silver, reminiscent of the Scythian silver bowls, have been found from Taxila.⁴ Two circular concave lids of silver (Plates 170,171) have been found from Sirkap. In the middle of the concave upper sides are looped handles in the form of fishes soldered to the lids.⁵ Both the technique and the motif remind one of the nomadic toreutics.

Votive or ritual tanks assignable to the third and second centuries B.C. were found from Taxila in the Bhir and Sirkap sites. These were in the form of round bowls with a number of miniature saucer-shaped lamps around their rims. The later ones found from Sirkap had square forms, and perched midway

¹ Ibid., Pl. 162 e.

² Ibid., Vol. II, p. 594.

³ Ibid., Vol. III, Pl. 177.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 612.

⁵ Ibid., Vol. III, Pl. 189, nos.20, a,b.

between the lamps were birds with outspread wings .¹ The later votive tanks are assignable to the first centuries A.D. The inclusion of the birds could be due to the Śaka/Scythian influence, as bowls with rams or birds perched on the rims were common in Scythian and Scytho-Siberian utility objects.

The base of a bowl from the Dharmarājikā stūpa is stamped with a medallion of a lion and elephant in relief. A similar medallion is in the Sānchi stūpa III railings. Stone trays (Plate 172) found from Taxila are reminiscent of the Śaka/Scythian repertoire, especially in the treatment of leogryphys, winged stags, hippocamps and fish-tailed monsters.² The geometric and floral designs ,and the use of quatrefoil rosette motifs on the stone trays are all very much affiliated to the nomadic tradition. The designs on the stone trays are similar to the floral, geometric, abstract and animal designs on stone discs and ringstones (Plate 173).³ The hippocamps of Taxila remind us of the hippocamps of the Oxus Treasure, and also the gold plaque from Kul-Oba.⁴ The leogryphs of Taxila are similar to those from the Seven Brothers barrow (Plate 174).⁵ A hippocampus with a horseman is shown on a steatite toilet disk from

¹ Ibid., Pl. 136, no. 156=u=no. 155

² *Ibid.*, Pls. 144, 145, no. 81.

³ Ear. Orn. Anc. Ind., p. 135, Fig. VI.6; p.139, Fig. VI.14; p. 139, Fig. VI.16.

⁴ Scy. Art., Pl.207.

Garavkala in Tajikistan dated in the first century A.D.¹ Similar ones are found on stone tablets from Taxila, and on reliefs from Gandhāra, as well as on Han mirrors from China. Stone reliquaries from Taxila are similar to those discovered from Airtam, Ushturmulla, and Kara-tepe,² the latter on the bank of Amu Darya in present southern Uzbekistan. Terracotta male heads with conical caps (Plate 175)³ from Taxila, strengthen our view of Taxila as a Śaka-Parthian site. The seals and sealings in Sirkap, along with the coins, firmly establish the Śaka/Scythian, Śaka-Parthian antecedents of Taxila. There were numerous Śaka coin types from Taxila, the commonest of Maues' types was his "Elephant head and Caduceus' coins. Coins of both Azes I and Azes II were prolific at Sirkap.

Other than utility objects, the Śaka/Scythian elements of art in Taxila were also manifested in horse accoutrements, weapons and jewellery. Jewellery moulds from Ter and dated in the Sātavāhana period are similar to some Taxila moulds. Rosettes with beaded margins found at Prabhas Patan were actually covered with gold foil (this usage of gold foil was very much prevalent on rosette

¹ Cf. M. Y. Treister's article cited in Footnote No.21 above, p.63.

²B.Yu.Stavisky, 'A Buddhist cult centre on the right bank of the Oxus, Excavations at Kara-tepe in Termez in 1983-1992', Anc. Civ. Scy.Sib., Vol. 3, p.292.

³ Taxila, Vol. III, Pl. 134, nos. 51.

plaques of the Scythian period). Horse trappings made of iron, copper, bronze and lead have been found from Taxila. The iron bits found at Taxila date from the first century A.D. The S-shaped cheek bars¹ definitely show the nomadic influence. The cheek bars made of bone and ivory with incised parallel lines and chevron motif, recall Scythic types. Copper, bronze and lead buckles and clasps are found from the Saka-Parthian period. Ornamental clasps with dotand-comma cloisons² and bronze ornamental buckles in the form of modified nandipadas with three pear-shaped cloisons (Plate 176) in middle for inlaywork,³ revisit Taxila. In fact, both in Taxilan horse-trappings and jewellery, there is a special feeling of revisiting the Scythian and Scytho-Siberian art. Some of the Taxilan bronze buckles and other horse trappings are similar to the trappings (Plate 82) found from the Suglug-Khem burial.⁴ Again, horse trappings from Aldy-bel, Arzhan and even from Tagar are similar to those from Suglug-khem. This is an indication of the eastern origin of Scythian art, and since horses were important, therefore their trappings were to be given priority. Iron horse-bits (Plate 177) from Taxila⁵ reveal remarkable similarity with horses

¹ Ibid., Vol. II, p. 551.

² Taxila, Vol. III, Pl. 172, m=no.30.

³ *Ibid.*,Pl. 172, n=no.31.

⁴V. Semenov, 'New Evidence Of The Scythian Type Culture Of Tuva ', Anc. Civ. Scy. Sib., Vol.2, p.332, Fig. 18.

⁵ Taxila, Vol. III, Pl. 165, nos. 96–98.

bits (Plate 178) found from Filippovka kurgan 6.¹ Horse-bit terminals of bone from Taxila are reminiscent of those from the Zhurovka Barrow (Plate 179).² Buckle-plates are comparable to those from the Otonkon hoard (Plate 180).³ Horse-bits having stylized heads of animals⁴ have Taxilan counter-parts. The propeller-type check pieces on the bone plates from the Orlatsky barrow in the Samarkand region, of first century A.D. have also been found at Ai-Khanum and in the layer of the first century A.D. in Sirkap.⁵ Iron and bronze arrowheads and other weapons from Taxila reveal Śaka/Scythian influence. Bone weapon handles found from Scythian sites have similar counter-parts at Taxila.

Leaf-shaped spear tips⁶ are abundant in the Śaka-Parthian strata, at Taxila. Similar leaf-shaped spear tips (Plate 181) were found from the Filippovka kurgan.⁷ A kneeling warrior on the pyxis from Kosika⁸ has distinctive arrowheads with three points belonging to the fork type. The earliest

¹ Gol. De. Eur., Pls. 118, 119.

² Art. Scy., Fig. 145.

³N.L.Tchlenova, 'Objects Of The Scythian "Animal Style "From The Taiga Zone Of Siberia', Anc. Civ. Scy. Sib., Vol. 3, p. 322, Fig. 2.

⁴ Scy. Art., Pl. 275.

⁵O.Guillaume, 'Contribution à l'etude d'un artisant bactrien pré-hellenistique', in : Actes de colloque franco-soviétique 'L'archaeologie de la Bactriane ancienne', Dushanbe, 1982, Figs.7, 8 .cf. also Taxila, Vol. III, Pl. 165, no. 100, a, b.

⁶ Taxila, Vol. III, Pl. 164, no. 68.

⁷ Gol. De. Eur,, Pl. 120.

⁸ Cf. M. Y. Treister's article cited in Footnote No.21 above, p.6.

finds of this kind of arrowheads in the adjacent areas are the arrowheads from the complexes of the first century A.D. in Taxila.¹

Ornaments like torques, pendants, earrings and necklaces from Saka-Parthian strata in Taxila, show Śaka/Scythian elements but compared to Tillya-tepe there was less use of gold. Necklaces (Plates 182,183) from Bhir mound² were made of beads similar to beads from Tillya-tepe. Necklaces from Taxila (Plates 199,200,201) reveal the beautiful interplay of beads, plaques and pendants.³ The plaques in the Taxilan necklaces had spaces for encrustations. Similar intermingling of beads, plaques and pendants had been found in a necklace from Karagodeuashkh barrow (Plate 184). In the latter example,⁴ dated in the late fourth century B.C., the plaques are filigreed. It is worth noting that the different shapes of the plaques persisted in Śaka/Scythian art of later period as found from Taxila, Tillya-tepe and other areas. Even shell ornaments show motifs of heart patterns, chevrons, and conventionalised birdhead patterns. Fragments of shell bangles show incised chevron patterns⁵ and 'dot and comma' motifs.⁶ Beads of Tillya-tepe types continue to be found

¹ Taxila, Vol. II, p.560, Vol. III, Pl. 169, 200–202.

² Ibid., Vol.III, Pl.136, f=no.145, o=nos. 144, 145.

³ Ibid., Vol.III, Pl.193, nos. 56, 57, 58.

⁴ Scy. Art., Pl. 254.

⁵ Taxila, Vol. II, Pl. 201, no. 13.

⁶ Ibid., Vol.III, Pl.201, no. 18.

mainly in the Saka-Parthian strata at Taxila. Animal beads were mostly found from Saka-Parthian level in Sirkap. The animals represented are lions, birds, frogs, tortoises, elephants, rams, monkey and bull. The lion, of which five specimens were found from Sirkap, was symbolical of the Buddha, the 'lion of the Śākyas' and likely, therefore, to be popular in a stronghold of Buddhism such as Taxila.¹ Finger-rings with flat almond shaped bezels recall Scythic types with Hellenistic influence. It is evident from the designs themselves that the jewellery found at Taxila, the manner in which the gems are applied, and the style of incrustation which arose at Taxila in the first century A.D. were the direct outcome of the Saka-Parthian occupation .We have already seen that in the Scythian jewellery, incrustation was very much popular. Hairpins from Taxila have bird-on-tree motifs. This bird-on-tree motif has definite Scythian connections. Gold ear-pendants of 'disk-and pendant' types have been found from Saka-Parthian strata in Sirkap, dated in the first century A.D. An interesting gold ear pendant from Taxila² has motifs of rosettes and leaves which were inlaid with turquoise paste. The ornament consists of two pieces joined by a hook. The lower piece consists of an amphora in the centre, and on either side of it is an infant Eros riding on a winged sea-lion. Four plaited chains hang from the latter and end in a pearl and leaf terminal. The motif of

¹ *Ibid.*, Vol.II, p. 748.

² *Ibid.*, Vol.III, Pl. 190 c.

Eros on the winged sea-lion is reminiscent of the motif of 'Cupids astride dolphins' as found from Tillya-tepe. Another gold earring from Taxila¹ consists of a six-petalled blossom with a circular centre of applied wire enclosed by granules of regular size. The inner petals (cut from sheet gold) are plain and the outer petals (of stamped sheet gold) are filled with granules of different sizes. Twisted wires are attached to the back and appear as loops from the front, adorned with granulated rosettes. Beneath the blossom is a turquoise vase mounted with granulated sheet gold. Stylised dolphins of sheet gold link the vase and rosette. When viewed aerially, the image occupying the space, i.e., the linking portion, seems like a nandipada. Several Scythian-Siberian-Śakan techniques are manifest in this earring, namely the 1) use of applied wire, 2) use of granulated gold mounts, 3) images worked in the round and subsequently chased (as the dolphins), and 4) use of sheet gold trefoils with applied wire and granulated borders. Also from Sirkap were found gold bracelets with square clasps encrusted with gems. A Taxilan bracelet has much similarity with the Kul-Oba bracelet. Lion-head shaped terminals of gold bracelets (Plate 186) from Taxila² are similar to a pair of identical cast gold bracelets from burial 6, Tillya-tepe.³

¹ Gol. Tre. Jew. Ind., p.17, Pl. 3.

² Taxila, Vol. III, Pl. 195, i=nos.133-136.

³ Bac. Gol., p.52.

Bracelets with hinged joints as found from Taxila were also represented on friezes on the Kosika cup, and on the high relief with horsemen from Khalchayan. Several gold bracelets from Sirkap dating from the first century A.D., having rectangular clasps are similar to the golden bracelets from Olbia (Plate 187).¹ The rectangular clasps, as well as the scheme of decoration put them close to the Olbian ones, although the bracelets from Taxila have hoops made of a single piece. The piece originating from Taxila includes both flat lamellar hoops² and open-worked hoops, decorated with S-shaped figures.³ These bracelets from Taxila are close to the Olbian pieces (given their geometric designs, use of gems and their use of cabochon inlays, in this case, amber, rock crystal, and glass paste). Given their construction, a pair of bracelets from the first century A.D. Sarmatian burial of Sokolova Mogila in the South Bug basin stand close to the pieces from Taxila. A medallion from Taxila depicting Eros and Psyche⁴ is very much similar to a medallion decorating a silver cup from the Nogaichik female burial mound,⁵ dated in the first century A.D. In the Taxila medallion, the figure of Eros is on the left and he is embracing Psyche with his left arm, and the faces of the figures are depicted strictly en face. The quality of the workmanship and its oversimplification reflects what is

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¹ M.Yu.Treister, 'Two Golden Bracelets From Olbia In The Walters Art Gallery', Anc. Civ. Scy. Sib., Vol. 8, p.25, Fig. 9.

² Taxila, Vol. III, Pl. 196, a, b.

³ Ibid., Pl. 196 c,d,e.

⁴ Ibid., Pl. 207, 11.

⁵ Cf. M. Y. Treister's article cited in Footnote No.26 above p.131.

undoubtedly an imitation of a Hellenistic prototype produced by a not particularly competent craftsman. It is, however, worth noting, that the motif of Eros and Psyche was quite widespread, above all in terracottas starting with the Hellenistic era. In a gold repoussé plaque dated in the first-second century A.D. and from the Taxila-Punjab area (formerly in the collection of Col. D. H. Gordon) shows Hāriti and Paňchika (Kubera) seated, surrounded by the typical beaded border. The dress of the god reveals nomadic influence.¹ The gold protome of a dolphin from the fibula² found from Nogaichik is reminiscent of the dolphin handles from Taxila.³ A Taxilan gold brooch in the form of a repoussé figure of winged Aphrodite (Plate 188)⁴ is similar to the Aphrodite figurine, from Tillya-tepe.

Excavations at Shaikhan Dheri, about 22 miles north of Peshawar, have yielded Scytho-Parthian artifacts in phase I (stratgraphically). It is important to note here, that there was no indication at all to distinguish the Scythian period from that of the Parthians. However, the range of the objects are fascinating and they continue to confirm and elaborate the Śaka/Scythian elements. The head of a lady, richly decorated and having the triangular headdress with

¹ Gol. Tre. Jew. Ind., p.16, Pl.1.

² Cf. M. Y. Treister's article cited in Footnote No.26 above, p. 131.

³ Taxila, Vol. III, Pl. 189, nos. 20, a, b.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Vol.III, Pl.191,s=no.96.

rosettes at the corners, has been found from Shaikhan Dheri. The lady wears roundels at the ears and has a decorated forehead band,¹ similar to the one from Khokhlach. The emblemata figurines on bowls from Shaikhan Dheri create a distinctive style, as these figurines are embossed on the inside of the bowls by a mould. The technique appears to be peculiar .Out of six such bowls, five came from the late Parthian levels, along with coins of Maues, Azes I, Azilises, and Gondophares.² The major element in Indo-Parthian numismatic iconography is the central figure in Saka/Scythian costume, holding an object over the head of the elephant rider and probably it was the branch of a tree. This motif was also seen in the Hellenistic art.³ Another feature of the Indo-Parthian numismatic iconography and also of the Indo-Scythian repertoire, was the equestrian representations of kings holding various symbols of power, among which is a short stick ending in a hook and looking like an ancus, as seen on the coins of Azilises, Azes, Gondophares, and Soter Megas.⁴ Some coins from Shaikhan Dheri are similar to the motifs on the gem engraving found from Kundzhulitepe in Kashkadarya, southern Sogdiana. The triumph scene on an engraved gem from Kundzhulitepe, excavated in 1988, shows

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¹ A.H.Dani, 'Shaikhan Dheri Excavation , 1963 – 64 , In search of

the second city of Pushkalavati', Ancient Pakistan, 1965/66, Vol. II, p. 57.

² *Ibid*., p. 65.

³ M. Mitchiner, Indo-Greek and Indo-Scythian Coinage, London, 1975, Vol. 1, p. 88.

⁴ A. K. Srivastava, *Catalogue of Śaka – Pahlava Coins of North India*, Lucknow, 1972, Pl. IV, 1 – 5, 7, 9, 11; Pl. V, 4; Pl. V, 6 – 8; Pl. VII, 1 – 4.

familiarity with Śaka-Parthian numismatic iconography. Kundzhulitepe gem¹ is dated in about the first century B.C. to the early part of the second century A.D. i.e., prior to Shaikhan Dheri . Thus, the coin iconography was in transit from Kashkadarya to the North-West India. Male heads with the typical Scythian pointed caps have been found from Shaikhan Dheri. One of the trenches yielded a female head with an elaborate headdress with a tricorn over the head and rosettes at the ears.² A horse's head from Shaikhan Dheri shows the typical Scythian horse's head collar, chin strap, and face strap with circular eyes.³ Shaikhan Dheri has also yielded gold leaf shaped pendants⁴ with soldered loops for suspension. Such pendants have been prolific at Tillya-tepe. Artifacts, therefore, from various regions of North-West India, show the gradual assimilation of Śaka/Scythian and Parthian, as well as Hellenistic elements into their traditions. This process was intensified from about the middle of the first century B.C. onwards. A similar assimilation had occurred earlier in South Russia, between the Cimmerians, the Scythians and the Pontic Greek settlers.

¹ K. Abdullaev, S. Raimkulov, 'A Triumph Scene On An Engraved

Gem From Kundzhulitepe, Kashkadarya', Anc. Civ. Scy. Sib., Vol. 2, p.

² A.H. Dani, 'Shaikhan Dheri Excavation 1963/64', Ancient Pakistan, 1965/66, Vol II, p.70.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

⁴ Ibid., Pl. XLIX.

The Śaka/Scythian elements are also discernible in Gandhāran art. A Gandhāra panel shows men wearing the Scythian costume. Similarly, one of the reliefs from Buner (Plate 189)¹ shows a series of musicians in Scythian costume. The scale-armoured figure² besides Paňcika-Kubera from Takal, shows Scythian affiliation. Scale armoured figures have been frequently depicted on friezes of utility objects, and on weapons in Scythian art. The neck ornament of Paňcika-Kubera³ reflects nomadic affiliations. The Scythian costume is also seen on reliefs of Sahri-Bahlol, Rokhri, Jamalgarhi, Ranighat, Swat, Khair Khanch and at Hadda and Begram. It is noteworthy, that as found from Timargarha and Gandhāra Grave cultures dated sixth century B.C. onwards, the main anthropological element of the population could be linked to those from the Caspian region. It is important to note that the image of a hippocampus with a horseman as shown on a steatite toilet disk from Garavkala in Tajikistan of first century A.D.⁴ has Indian parallels. The image has also been found on Gandhāran reliefs, on stone tablets from Taxila, and also on Han mirrors. The characteristic sculptures of Gandhāra during the first three or four centuries A.D. were produced in vast quantities for the Buddhists and their monasteries. The figures of Bodhisattvas are noted for their

¹ Dyn. Art. Kus., Pl. 58.

² Ibid.,Pl. 62 a.

³ Ibid.,Pl. 62.

⁴ Drevnosti Tajikistana (Antiquities of Tajikistan), No. 364. pp.138 - 9.

adornments as they were decked in the finery of local magnates.¹ The figures have massive earrings, armlets and torques, often incorporating bird or animal forms. On their diadems and armlets can sometimes be seen the highhaunched animals of the 'animal style 'of the Scythians and Sarmatians.² The techniques of carving stone or moulding terracottas, do not favour the reproduction of lighter, more delicate creations such as have been found in numerous Śaka/Scythian artifacts from the north-west. Therefore, the sculptured jewelleries no longer represent the real jewelleries (in use) but have become conventionalized.

The Śaka/Scythian elements in later Indian art as found in regions east of the north-western part of the subcontinent which had undergone Śaka rule, will be discussed in the next chapter. But there were some sites like Māt near Mathurā which flourished parallely with Taxila and other north-western sites during the first century A.D. Māt, incidentally, has yielded figures with pointed caps. These pointed caps have been repeatedly identified with Śaka/Scythian pointed caps. But the Māt cap is very much similar to the depiction of the coiffure of the Buddha as found from the Kolkhozabad region, again dated in

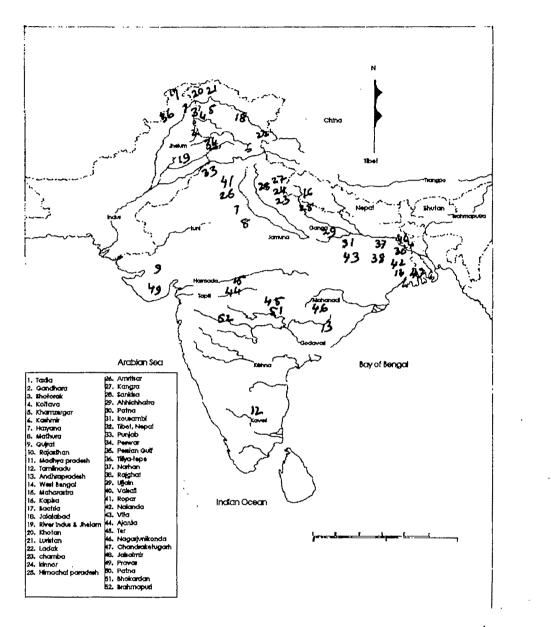
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¹ Gol. Tre. Jew. Ind., p. 13.

² M.I.Rostovtsev, Animal Style in South Russia and China, Princeton, 1929, Pl. XVIII, 5.

the first century A.D.¹ The large, intricately carved stone plaques, called ' $\bar{a}y\bar{a}gapatas$ ' have been understood as Jain votive tablets of homage, which were produced in Mathurā during the first century B.C. and first century A.D. It is interesting that in the symbolic relief carving of the $\bar{a}y\bar{a}gapatas$, we see Saka/Scythian elements and Saka/Parthian motifs. These motifs have composite anthropomorphic and theriomorphic features. It seems that Parthian art forms with its Iranian background had well mingled with the Saka/Scythian nomadic animal art. The Saka/Scythian elements in later Indian art, from first century A.D. onwards have been discussed in the next chapter.

¹B. A. Litvinsky, 'Ancient Tajikistan', Anc. Civ. Scy. Sib., Vol.1, p.301, Fig.5.



MAPIE: DISTRIBUTION OF SITES/LOCALITIES IN INDIA AS MENTIONED IN THE TEXT.

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