

© *Liubomyr Dobrovolskyi*

THE IDEA OF TWINNING IN PAIR COMPOSITIONS IN THE EASTERN EUROPEAN SCYTHIAN ANIMAL STYLE

The article is devoted to the semantics of the Scythian animal style images from the Eastern European zone. It covers the characteristic motifs and specific techniques for modelling paired compositions with the semantics of twinning in the images of the Eastern European Scythian animal style. The study is based on 74 images that frame or decorate archaeological finds from the Eastern European zone. The novelty of the study lies in the analysis of Scythian animal images in the aspect of characteristic motifs of ithyphallic images and their stylization in the form of animals in paired compositions, which we interpret as homoerotic scenes. The article expands information about the areal, chronological and social distribution of the custom of twinning in the Scythian environment. Zoomorphic images, containing ambivalent motifs and creating ithyphallic images, used in paired compositions of torment, pursuit or transformation, as well as in an antithetical position (sometimes creating syncretic images), as a result of semantic duality and metaphorical shift are interpreted here as ithyphallic images in homoerotic scenes. The numerous zoomorphic images in paired compositions confirm the widespread prevalence of twinning as a social phenomenon among the Scythians, embodied in the scenes of the ritual of consanguinity on golden plaques from the royal mounds of Solokha and Kul-Oba. The researchers' assumptions that the specific social-class structure of Scythian society is the reason for the spread of twinning among the Scythians, mainly in the fighting squad environment of the royal Scythians, are confirmed by the areal and chronological distribution of monuments, and by the high percentage of gold items. The results of the study will be used in a comparative analysis of the depiction of the idea of twinning in all zones of the Scythian-Siberian animal style.

Keywords: *ambivalent motives, ithyphallic image, phallic symbolism, Scythian animal style, twinning, zoomorphic image*

Author info: **Dobrovolskyi, Liubomyr S.** — Student, L. N. Gumilyov National University (Astana, Republic of Kazakhstan). E-mail: lubomirdobrovolskiy@gmail.com ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1392-5355>

For citation: Dobrovolskyi, L. S. 2024. The Idea of Twinning in Pair Compositions in the Eastern European Scythian Animal Style. *Herald of Anthropology (Vestnik Antropologii)* 1: 138–161.

References

- Alekseev, A. Yu. 2012. *Zoloto skifskikh tsarei iz sobraniia Ermitazha* [The Gold of the Scythian Kings from the Hermitage Collection]. Saint Petersburg: Izdatel'stvo Gosudarstvennogo Ermitazha. 272 p.
- Artamonov, M. I. 1947. Obshchestvennyi stroi skifov [Social System of the Scythians]. *Vestnik LGU* 9: 70–87.

- Brasinszkij, I. B. 1985. *Szkita kincsek nyomaban* [In Search of Scythian Treasures]. Budapest: Helikon. 118 p.
- Dobrovolskii, L. S. 2023. Apotropaicheskie obrazy vostochnoevropeiskogo skifskogo zverinogo stilia [Apotropaic Images of the Eastern European Scythian Animal Style]. *Vestnik antropologii* 2: 86–104. <https://doi.org/10.33876/2311-0546/2023-2/86-104>
- Iatsenko, I. V. 1959. *Skifiia VII–V vekov do nashei ery* [Scythia 7th–5th centuries BC]. Trudy Gosudarstvennogo Istoricheskogo muzeia. Moscow. 120 s.
- Kantorovich, A. R. 2015. *Skifskii zverinyi stil' Vostochnoi Evropy: klassifikatsiia, tipologiia, khronologiia, evoliutsiia* [Scythian Animal Style of Eastern Europe: Classification, Typology, Chronology, Evolution]. Doctoral dissertation, Lomonosov Moscow State University. 1724 p. (Arkhiv IA RAN. F. R-2. T. 1–3).
- Kantorovich, A. R. 2020. Stseny presledovaniia, terzaniia i pogloshcheniia v vostochnoevropiskom skifskom zverinom stile (problema interpretatsii i statisticheskie pokazateli) [Scenes of pursuit, Torment and Absorption in the Eastern European Scythian Animal Style (Problem of the Interpretation and Statistical Indicators)]. In *DIALOG 2017–2018. Dikhotomiia iskusstva v arkhologii: lokus, obrazy, genesis: Materialy ob"edinennogo seminaru Instituta arkhologii RAN i Instituta istorii material'noi kul'tury RAN* (Sankt-Peterburg, 6–7 dekabria 2017 g.; Moskva, 6–7 dekabria 2018 g.). Sbornik nauchnykh statei [DIALOG 2017–2018. Dichotomy of Art in Archaeology: Locus, Images, Genesis: Proceedings of the Joint Seminar of the Institute of Archaeology of the Russian Academy of Sciences and the Institute of History of Material Culture of the Russian Academy of Sciences (St. Petersburg, December 6–7, 2017; Moscow, December 6–7, 2018). Collection of scientific articles]. E. S. Levanova, N. Yu. Smirnov, eds. Moscow: IA RAN. P. 192–231.
- Khazanov, A. M. 1972. Obychai pobratimstva u skifov [The Custom of Twinning among the Scythians] *Sovetskaia arkhologiia* 3: 68–75.
- Korolkova, E. F. 2015. Sledy nevidannykh zveri (k probleme traktovki fantasticheskikh obrazov) [Traces of Unprecedented Animals (To the Problem of Interpretation of Fantastic Images)]. In *Arkhelogicheskiy sbornik. 40 vypusk: materialy i issledovaniia po arkhologii Evrazii. Pamiati L. K. Galaninoy posviashchaetsia* [Archaeological Collection. Issue 40: Proceedings and Studies on the Archaeology of Eurasia. In Memory of L. K. Galanina. Dedicated to the Memory of L. K. Galanina]. Gosudarstvennyi Ermitazh. Saint Petersburg: Izdatel'stvo Gosudarstvennogo Ermitazha. P. 157–188.
- Meliukova, A. I. 1950. Voisko i voennoe iskusstvo skifov [The Army and Military Art of the Scythians]. *Kratkie soobshcheniia Instituta istorii material'noi kul'tury* 34: 30–41.
- Terenozhkin, A. I. 1966. Ob obshchestvennom stroe skifov [About the Social System of the Scythians]. *Sovetskaia arkhologiia* 2: 33–49.