

THREE OBJECTS OF ART FROM AN IRON AGE SETTLEMENT SITE IN SOUTH SWEDEN

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Introduction

During the last few decades investigations with the aid of metal detectors have contributed to a new situation for research into the Iron Age in South Scandinavia. Traditionally, the mapping of Iron Age settlements has been a major obstacle as they are difficult to trace. Surveys have usually given just some sherds of ceramics and perhaps some burnt stones, objects difficult to date and evaluate. However, surveying with the aid of metal detectors has changed the picture fundamentally. In the last two decades a new type of settlements has appeared, primarily in Denmark but, as we shall see, also in South Sweden. The objects which are found with metal detectors are ornaments, coins, mountings, tools and remnants of metalworking. As several settlement sites show abundant finds and often objects of prestige character, together with indications of trade and crafts, a new term – central place – is often used. By central place is meant a settlement that in some respects has assembled functions of central importance to a region of varying size (Grønnegård 1997; Paulsson 1999).

It might be appropriate here to make some comments on the use of metal detectors in archaeological research. First, their use is strictly regulated in Swedish law. It is absolutely forbidden to use them on ancient monuments or settlements without permission from the National Heritage Board. The investigation must be carried out with great responsibility. This means that the location of every single object must be measured and mapped and the objects registered according to current museum standards. It is

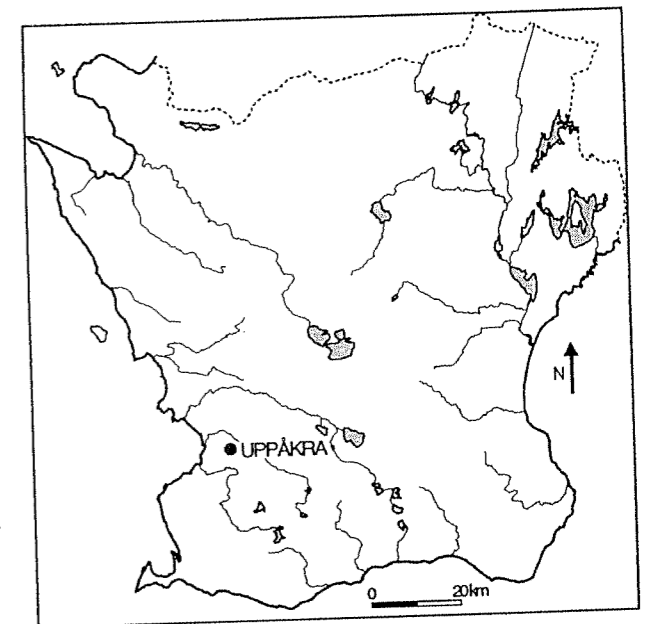


Fig. 1

worth noticing that metal detecting usually only affects the plough layer, within 10 to 20 cm of the surface. Thus, no undamaged underlying structures in an occupation layer are disturbed. The accurate measurement of the position of every single object found by metal detector may be of great value in the event of later excavation (Paulsson 1999).

Uppåkra, a village some five kilometres south of the university town of Lund, has for some decades been known as an unusually big settlement from the Iron Age. A limited



Fig. 2

excavation was carried out there in the 1930s, indicating an agrarian settlement from the Roman Iron Age. During the following decades it was found that the extent of the settlement was about 1500 x 600 metres. However, very little was known about the functions of this extensive settlement, nor was its chronological time-span known. In 1996 the Institute of Archaeology, Lund University, started new investigations at the site. The investigations, excavations, geophysical measurements, drilling and searching with metal detectors, has been carried out at the place during the last four years (Larsson 1998). The geophysical measurements together with the auger probes have confirmed the extent of the occupation layer and made it possible to evaluate variations in its thickness (Larsson 1998 and in press). The excavations have so far been limited, but some interesting results and spectacular finds have been made, for example, large quantities of debris from a comb workshop from early Iron Age or a big, gilded relief-brooch from the Migration Period. The most spectacular part of the investigations, however, has been the detector search. The results are overwhelming: by now over 7,000 finds have been registered. The finds show that Uppåkra played a central part in society from the time around the Birth of Christ till the end of the 10th century. The finds indicate a variety of functions such as trade, long-distance contacts, crafts of various kinds as well as religious activities. Objects of prestige character make it probable that persons from the highest social levels were present or lived at the place (Hårdh 1998; various articles in Fynden 1999; Hårdh in press). Of course it is impossible to give a survey of the impressive record. Instead I will present three objects, through which it is possible to tell three stories, which together will give a glimpse of a very special South Swedish settlement from the Iron Age.

A pendant with snake decoration

As the objects found by metal detector in a certain sense are without context, the only way to interpret them is to work with parallels from well-known contexts. Sometimes, however, the objects found are unique, with no clear parallels. Then we have to analyse details of the object and work with combinations of elements. In 1996 a pendant was found, which at first glance seemed to be unparalleled. It is 49 mm wide and 46 mm high and has remnants of a loop with parallel grooves. The pendant is made of silver with gilded decoration. The front side shows two snakes cast in low relief. The bodies of the snakes are rather broad and their heads, seen from above, have long noses and elliptical eyes. Along the middle of the bodies there is a stamped decoration of concentric bows in two rows along two parallel, grooved lines. The snakes are gilded (Hårdh 1999a). On the back there are some graffiti, engraved lines which delineate snake figures, a head of the same type as on the front and a snake head seen from the side (Bergqvist 1999, fig. 2).

In order to find parallels to the pendant we may look at some well-known sacrificial finds from central Scania, i.e. the Sösdala and Fulltofta finds. Both finds consist of horse equipment of extraordinary quality, including gilded and decorated mountings (Forssander 1937:183 ff.; Fabech 1991). They have also been intentionally destroyed. They were both deposited on the top of eskers in the interior of the province. According to Fabech, the mountings show connections to Central and Eastern Europe. She believes that the finds reflect religious activities in connection with funeral ceremonies (Fabech 19:130 ff.; Fabech 1993:204 ff.). They probably indicate the presence of an upper class with international connections and the ability to combine foreign and indigenous rituals (Fabech 1993:224).

The objects are decorated with stamps in geometrical shapes. The decoration is usually referred to as the Sösdala style. This style is characterized by stamped, geometric ornamentation, often applied to silver thin plate. It has been defined on technical grounds rather than stylistic ones (Karlsson 1983:163). Roth, as well as Forssander, emphasize the parallels between the South Scandinavian objects and some East European finds (Forssander 1937:33ff.; Roth 1979:55). According to Arrhenius, the style was developed through the encounter of Roman and Germanic traditions at the Roman border. It is based on Late Roman patterns and occurs in a vast area from the Baltic coast and the Elbe region down to the Danube area, but with a particularly strong concentration in South Sweden. It clearly shows the contacts between Scandinavia

and Central and Eastern Europe in the 5th century (Arrhenius 1987; Arrhenius 1994:190 ff.). Among the mountings in the deposits from Sösdala and Fulltofta there are a couple of pendants which show the same mixture of gold and silver as our pendant and also a stamped ornamentation of the same type. Moreover, these pendants, which are of so-called pelte shape, have ends with snake heads or other types of animal heads. The finds referred to belong to the beginning of the 5th century, and there are other examples of metalwork in the same style, for instance brooches, dated to the same period (Forssander 1937:183 f.; Karlsson 1983, figs. 8–9; Hårdh 1999a).

It is possible to find parallels to the animal decoration of the pendant also in wood carving from the same time. In bog finds, also interpreted as sacrifice finds, mainly from the Danish area, there are wooden objects, spear shafts and a sword scabbard with carved ornaments which in type and outline closely resemble the snakes on our pendant (Hårdh 1999a with references). Thus there seems to be a connection between this kind of pendants, sacrifices and weapons. Also the wood carvings belong to the 5th century and thus strengthen the chronological reference.

The next question is, what is our pendant? Is it an ornament for an important person or is some other interpretation more appropriate? The best parallels for our pendant are, as mentioned above, some pelte- or lunula-shaped pendants from a series of sacrificial finds consisting of horse equipment. Hagberg has studied the group and points out several East and Central European parallels, but the actual shape comes from the Mediterranean. Here we can find pictures showing horses decorated with lunula-shaped pendants (Hagberg 1957, figs. 2, 4 and 5). Arrhenius discusses a pendant from Vennebo, Västergötland and states that it belongs to the first half of the 5th century. She refers to it and similar items as "Pferdestirnanhänger", i.e. horse-forehead pendants (Arrhenius 1987). Although the Uppåkra pendant deviates slightly in shape from this group, I think it is quite possible to interpret it in the same way because of its decoration.

The Uppåkra pendant, just like most of the objects from the place, was found by metal detector and without any connection to constructions or occupation layers, but it is not totally without context. In the same area some thirty spear-, lance- and arrowheads of iron were found, some of them violently damaged. Deliberate destruction of weapons and other objects is a recurrent feature in the sacrificial finds and thus it might be possible to see a connection between the pendant and the weapons. The pendant is

clearly a prestige object. The snake representations have been cautiously interpreted as an expression of the protecting and victorious god Odin, who also is connected to warriors (Bergqvist 1999:116, Hårdh 1999 with references). The graffiti on the back strengthens the interpretation of the pendant as an amulet. They are, according to Bergqvist, probably an expression of a wish to strengthen and renew the power of the amulet. Repeating an invocation is a fundamental act in religious practice (Bergqvist 1999:116).

So, the Uppåkra pendant can be put into an early 5th-century context. We can state that it has connections to other objects, which were part of prestige horse equipment. These objects have been found several times in sacrificial finds, often with weapons. The pendant can be connected to exquisite horse equipment but may also have functioned as an amulet. It is possible that it was deposited as a part of some religious activities.

Beak-shape brooches

In contrast to the pendant, the beak-shaped brooches really are a kind of everyday item. We encounter them on almost every settlement site and cemetery used in the late 6th and early 7th centuries in South Scandinavia. However, in this respect too the site of Uppåkra is extraordinary. Here roughly 180 brooches of the type have been found. This is far more than any other place has contributed. Some of the really rich sites on the island of Bornholm have yielded 30 or so. I am quite convinced that brooches of this type were made at Uppåkra, as moulds for them have been found (Hårdh 1999b; Hårdh 2000 in press). Now, the important thing here is that they are abundant, although regionally restricted. They are a South Scandinavian phenomenon, their distribution restricted to Denmark and southernmost Sweden (Ørsnes 1966:120 ff.). Therefore it is appropriate to analyse their details to be able to discuss the conditions of the local craft. The brooches have been analysed according to size, shape, decoration and technical elements. I have tried to understand something about the factors that are decisive for the shaping of the various elements. It is probable that technical elements, such as needle attachment and needle keeper, belong to the technical tradition into which the craftsman was trained. Moreover, these elements belong to the back of the brooch and thus are not visible when the brooch is worn. As the brooches are cast, the shape and size depend on the models that the craftsman possessed. Their shape, in turn, may have varied according to chronologically or regionally determined fashions. Perhaps the craftsman had several models, so the customer was able to choose. Then the size

of the brooch might depend on how much bronze there was available or how much the customer was willing to pay. The cast brooch was sometimes decorated with stamped ornaments or gilded. It is likely that the customer could decide these matters on his/her own. So, the final shape of the brooch is due to a series of decisions by various persons and in varying circumstances (Hårdh 1999b).

However homogenous their shape, the South Scandinavian beak-shaped brooches, of which a few hundred are known, show a great deal of variations and very close parallels are not as common as one might at first believe. Let us first look at some technical details. The brooch is cast in bronze, but the needle is usually made of iron. There are three different ways to attach the needle: (1) with two tubes or tunnels through which a bar of iron runs, the needle is attached to the bar with a spiral construction, (2) with two perforated pegs or (3) with one perforated peg to which the iron needle with spiral is attached. The construction of the needle attachment gives the clearest regional variation. In the east, South Sweden and the island of Bornholm, the tunnel construction is dominant, which seems to have been developed locally out of small equal-armed brooches, perhaps equipped with loose spiral plates. The tunnel construction is maintained, by tradition, even on the youngest brooches, although the construction with peg(s) must have been easier to produce. Attaching the needle with one, sometimes two, pegs is predominant in the rest of Denmark, the western part of the distribution area of the type. This may indicate that the beak-shaped brooch was a foreign type in the west and was adapted to the current craft tradition here. The single peg dominates in the west and the tunnel construction in the east, irrespective of the general shape of the brooch. A double attachment peg is most prominent on the Danish islands, mainly on Zealand. The first type is dominant in the eastern parts of the area of distribution, the second in the centre and the third one in the west (Hårdh 1999b).

Thus, within the general South Scandinavian tradition we can distinguish three regions which are defined through technical qualities. Typical of cast brooches is that they may be copied far away from their original production area. Moulds can be made from old brooches or prototypes can be transmitted over vast areas. The result is that brooches found far away from each other, and even made according to different technical traditions may be very similar in size and shape. When we come to the stamped decoration the individual workshop or craftsman is visible again. We may assume that the craftsman had a certain set of stamps at hand and so we can again see locally limited distributions

of traits, which also probably shows the extent of a certain workshop's products.

The production of this period was obviously decentralized. There are moulds found at smaller agrarian sites as well. The large number of the brooches indicates that production was carried out rather extensively. Around a third of the brooches found at the Uppåkra site are fragments. It has been stated that at least some of them were deliberately fragmented probably to be remelted. Recycling of metals was a common practice and a large share of the objects found may be regarded as scrap metal. It has even been suggested that a central place like Uppåkra might have had some kind of monopoly over the supply of important raw material (Hårdh 1999b:159 f. with references).

A gilded animal head

A small item, 34 x 22 x 12 mm, of silver with a gilded upper surface, pictures an animal head. It has a pointed nose, oval, vaulted eyes and upright, rounded ears. The mouth is wide open. The neck is ribbed and it is demarcated by ribbons with a decoration of a row of small beads, probably imitating filigree. The execution is decidedly plastic. The back is plain and slightly concave. A portion of its middle part is broken and missing. The object belongs to an exclusive family of similar art products, most of them from prestige contexts.

First of all we have four pairs of harness bows from Denmark with gilded bronze decorations showing animals and animal heads, from Mammen in Jutland, Møllemosegård and Søllested on Funen and from Elstrup, Als (Müller-Wille 1975, figs. 1–6; Graham-Campbell & Kidd 1980, figs. 28, 89; Graham-Campbell 1980:143; Näsman 1991, figs. 1–2). These harness bows are all very similar although there are variations in details. Typical is that at both ends there are plastic animal heads, cast of bronze and gilded, lion-like and with protruding round ears. The heads are plastic with features in strong relief. The eyes are big, round or oval. The heads from Søllested and especially Møllemosegård show clear similarities to our head, both having oval eyes and proportionally bigger ears than Mammen. Typical of all of them, however, are the beaded ribbons around the animals' necks. There has been a lengthy debate on the style and dating of the harness bows. Some scholars have referred them to the Jelling style and some to the Mammen style (see below). Concerning chronology, the first half, the middle or the second half of the 10th century have been suggested (Näsman 1991:234). Horn Fuglesang refers the Søllested as well as the



Fig. 3
Foto B. Almgren

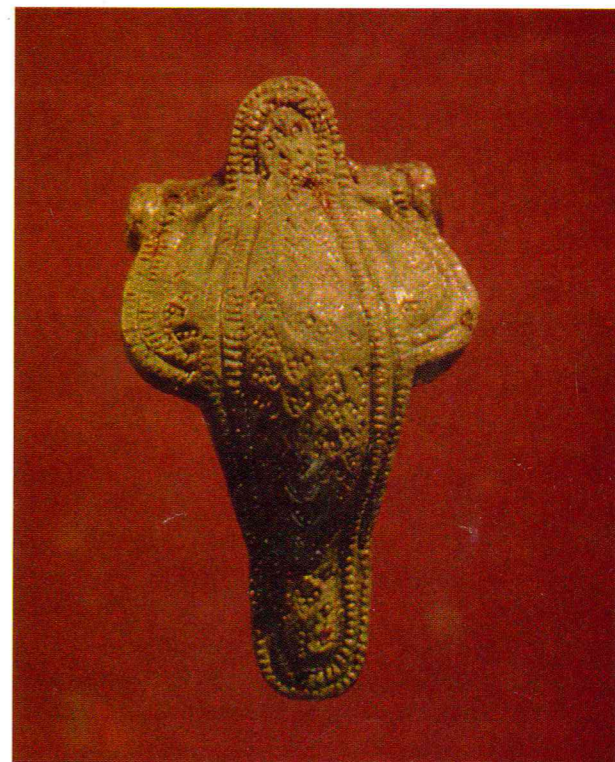


Fig. 4 a
Foto B. Almgren



Fig. 4 b



Fig. 4 c



Fig. 5

Møllemosegård bow to the Mammen style, and dates the style to the second half of the 10th century (Horn Fuglesang 1991:92, 103). Näsman points out that the harness bows from Mammen and Elstrup are stylistically earlier than Søllested and Møllemosegård (Näsman 1991:234).

A series of smaller heads of the same type have been mountings for caskets, the best-known of which are the famous caskets from Bamberg and Kamień. The two caskets have been treated in an extensive article by Muhl, who refers both of them to the Mammen style (Muhl 1990:272, 321; see also Horn Fuglesang 1991:90 and Wilson 1995:127). The two caskets are well known for their exquisite decoration with animals depicted in carved relief on bone plates and bronze mountings with plastic animal heads, birds and mammals. The mammals' heads from the Bamberg casket have closed mouths and rounded eyes. The heads of the Kamień casket have wide-open mouths and oval eyes. The ears of the animals from both caskets are rounded and upright. Muhl sees the Bamberg casket and the Kamień casket as expressions of developed Mammen style. As there also are some elements from the Ringerike style in the decoration of the Kamień casket, according to Muhl, the latter is possibly somewhat younger than the Bamberg one. Muhl refers the Bamberg casket to the second half of the 10th century and dates the Kamień casket from the late 10th century to the beginning of the 11th (Muhl 1990:293, 321, 335).

From the tomb in the church of Jelling, two magnificent pieces are known, two mountings from a belt, one with two animal heads and one with one head (Krogh 1983, figs. 22, 23, 24; Vierck 1984, fig. 198:3). The mountings are gilded silver and constitute, as a matter of fact, the best parallels to our head. Similar features are the high relief, the oval eyes, the beaded and grooved ridges as well as the rifling on the necks. Also the use might have been the same. The back of the Uppåkra head is damaged and the neck is broken, so an unambiguous interpretation of its function is not possible. The size speaks in favour of a casket mounting, but a belt mounting is likewise possible.

The harness bows from Søllested are put forward by Graham-Campbell as an example of a superb work in the Jelling style (Graham-Campbell 1980:143). Horn Fuglesang puts them in the Mammen style (Horn Fuglesang 1991) and Wilson maintains that the Søllested bows evidently show an overlap between the Jelling and the Mammen styles (Wilson 1995:121). According to Näsman, the heads of the harness bows from Mammen show several elements, which are typical of the Jelling style, whereas

he refers the bows from Møllemosegård and Søllested to the Mammen style (Näsman 1991:234 ff.). Jansson discusses the chronology of the middle and late Viking Age on the basis of recent discoveries, above all dendrochronological datings of some of the central monuments. The eponymous objects or monuments in Jelling or Mammen style seem to belong to a rather restricted period, a third of a century or so. He asks whether it really is appropriate to divide objects into various styles such as the Jelling or Mammen style (Jansson 1991:271 ff.). He concludes by stating that the kings in Jelling had a much larger repertoire of patterns than indicated by traditional style division. The period also seems to have been a period of transition, when the elements of Scandinavian animal art were being developed in various directions (Jansson 1991:276).

The Mammen depot is a scrap metal depot. It contained, besides the harness bows, a series of decorated mountings together with fragments of metal bowls and a patrix. The contents of the hoard mirrors the wealth at a Danish manor in the middle of the 10th century and gives an impression of the highest social level in 10th-century Denmark, probably in close connection to the royal court at Jelling (Näsman 1991:252 f.).

The mounts from Jelling are referred to by Gabriel as royal precious metal products in the style of the court workshop (Gabriel 1988:227). Vierck discusses them in connection with the Mammen style. He shows the well-known coronation picture of King Cnut the Great from New Minster, where the mantle of the king is fastened with mounted straps, and suggests that the Jelling mounts may be interpreted as some kind of regalia (Vierck 1984:415 f.). Vierck here makes a distinction between objects in the Jelling style and the Mammen style. He maintains that, as only a few objects of the Mammen style are known and these are mainly of exquisite character, they might represent an exclusive court art in contrast to the more widespread Jelling-style objects, which then might represent objects belonging to broader groups of the population (Vierck 1984:416).

The objects presented here are all considered to be South Scandinavian products. The first one, the pendant, is an example of early Germanic animal art, in its first stages of development, in close contact with traditions on the European continent, particularly of Late Roman origin. It might be connected to manifestations of religious art. Because of its quality, uniqueness and the material it must also be connected to the uppermost strata in society of that

time, i.e. the 5th century. The second one, the brooch, is regarded as an indigenous South Scandinavian object the shape of which may be traced back to earlier, local brooch types. In contrast to the other two, it was also produced in large quantities and meant for a much broader part of society. It indicates a kind of mass production at the site in the 7th century. The third object, the head, should probably be seen in connection with workshops at the royal court at Jelling, and thus also connected with the consolidation of power in the 10th century, in what was going to become the Danish kingdom.

The three objects dealt with here are, as mentioned at the start, only a minor part of what has been found at Uppåkra. Through these three objects I have tried to point out some facets of the Uppåkra settlement. The place seems to have had an outstanding role in the Iron Age society in South Sweden during a period of about one thousand years. The so-called central places are thought to have gathered various functions regarding politics, religion, administration and economy. The three objects presented here may represent religious beliefs and activities, craft and trade and political leadership. The assembled impression of the seven thousand objects from the site indicates a multifunctional site, which we can follow over a very long time. The functions may have varied during this period and the emphasis of them may also have varied. However, it is clear that the site had a central position in various respects for the surrounding region, that it was some kind of a centre, starting around the Birth of Christ and succeeded by Lund at the end of the 10th century.

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DESIGNS ON ANCIENT LATGALLIAN MEN'S ARM-BANDS 9TH–12TH CENTURIES

Baiba Vaska

RIGA (LATVIA)

Some notes on design studies in Latvia

Research on geometric design in Latvia began in the 1920s and 30s when the basic ideas characterising ethnographic design became established. Several well-known ethnographers (A. Dzērvītis, J. Sudmalis and others) were engaged in serious work in this field, but it is Ernests Brastiņš, also the founder of a religious movement based on Latvian folklore, the *dievturi*, is usually most closely identified with such research. By profession an artist, he is quite a controversial figure, who made important contributions both to Latvian archaeology (by his hillfort surveys) and to the study of design [*Brastiņš E. 1923; Brastiņš E. 1925*]. Already in 1925 Brastiņš pointed out that specifically Latvian design motifs are not to be found. Usually such motifs relate to a wider cultural area, and the characteristic features are to be sought in their selection and composition [*Brastiņš E. 1925, 14*]. As leader of the *dievturi*, he was unacceptable to the Communist government. Along with a large number of Latvian intellectuals, he was murdered in 1940 and his works were forbidden.

During the Soviet period, both archaeology and ethnography, along with study of the associated design, were viewed to some extent as part of a passive opposition movement. Research on design was in reality forbidden. This brought about a very sensitive and exaggerated attitude to design, and attempts to discover in it a deep sacred meaning and cosmic messages of national significance. This was particularly characteristic when the National Awakening began in the late 1980s. One example

is the film "The Lielvārde Belt" directed by Ansis Epnars. The need today is to step back from this approach and get back to scientific study of design.

The names of design motifs have become established in Latvia thanks to the Brastiņš' activities. He tried to discover the symbolic meaning of designs by using folklore material and relevant works by contemporary European researchers. This approach survived and continued among Latvians in exile. At the present day in Latvia the archaeologist Guntis Zemītis is continuing work on the symbolic content of design. Although the religious experiments by Brastiņš have somewhat discredited his research, the names of the design motifs that he introduced have become firmly established terms used in Latvian archaeological literature too. All are familiar with the **cross** and **swastika**. Also used in Latvia are the names **sun sign** (*saulīte*) designating concentric circles (called an "eye" in Lithuania); the **Jumis sign** (*Jumja zīme*)—a diagonal cross with upper ends bent outwards; and the **God sign** (*Dieva zīme*)—a triangle without a base topped by a circle.

Aspects of design studies

Design is somewhat ambiguous: it can be purely decorative, as is characteristic of professional art, and it can also appear in the form of symbols and signs, particularly among primitive and peasant cultures, at the same time without loss of its decorative function. Thus, research can be aimed in different directions: analysis of design structure, as well as attempts to derive a typology and establish the time and place where it

was used. For archaeological material, elementary statistical analysis has an important role. Statistics can establish which modes of composition or motifs are the determinant ones and which are only incidental. Research can seek the history of origin of particular motifs and their former meaning in the cultures where they occur. It must be said that from the archaeological material it is hard to determine the meaning of each design motif—this can be established only from an oral tradition or written sources. Such information is unavailable for archaeological material from Latvia.

Design is often complicated in character. A single system can bring together geometric, floral and zoomorphic design, as well as human masks and figures. Often, particularly on metal artefacts, graphic representations are combined with raised design. This complicates the formulation and use of all-encompassing terms, so the following discussion gives a brief account of the terms **element** > **motif** > **block** > **figure** > **system**.

An **element** can be defined following two different approaches. The first is purely graphical, an element being a simple geometric figure: a dot, a circle or a straight or curved line. The second approach is technological, where one stamp impression is considered an element. The latter approach is used in analysing designs on Neolithic pottery.

The present study makes use of the former approach.

A **motif**—is a more complicated creation. It can usually be divided into several elements, but occurs repeatedly, usually over large areas or long time periods, possibly with a semantic idea (for example the swastika).

A **block** is a combination of motifs and elements, not as constant as a motif, but possibly repeated on a single artefact.

A **figure** is a combination of various motifs and elements, even larger and more flexible than a block and usually not repeated on an artefact.

A **system** is the combination of all of these components in a definite composition, characteristic of a whole artefact group.

Components of a design larger than an element, but not clearly definable, are described.

The author agrees with Lithuanian design researcher A. Bliujiene that a design cannot be considered in isolation from the artefacts that it adorns [Bliujiene A. 1999, p. 261]. Since insufficient space does not permit discussion of all Latgallian arm-bands, men's arm-bands have been chosen, because it is these in particular that are most richly ornamented during this period. It should be mentioned that the ornamentation of men's arm-bands differs from that of women's arm-bands. Only at the very end of the

period of study does the ornamentation overlap (on arm-bands with animal-head ends).

The possibility of dating design

In principle this is an archaeological question, but cannot be ignored if the development of design is to be understood. In the first place, design never exists on its own, but is always linked to the surface that has been ornamented, and so it is always associated with a particular object. In each particular case the date for this artefact automatically becomes the date of the design. However, certain forms of design, although directly linked to the artefacts on which they occur, are nevertheless found over much wider areas and for a much longer period of time than the particular artefacts. And although there are certain motifs connected with a specific group of artefacts—pottery, textiles or metal jewellery, it is usually the case that the same motifs occur during one particular time period on several groups of artefacts. It is often the details of a motif or combinations thereof that prove more useful for dating purposes.

Now let us turn exclusively to the designs found on arm-bands.

The place of arm-bands in ancient Latgallian culture of the 9th–12th centuries

The main forms of arm-bands worn during this period are:

- 1) warriors' arm-bands;
- 2) solid arm-bands of segmental section;
- 3) animal-head-ended arm-bands.

Around the 7th century the neck-ring, considered one of the most important status indicators, disappears from male graves. Fibulae are dominant in the 8th century: the owl fibula and the crossbow fibula with poppy-head ends. In the early 8th century both men and women wore club-ended arm-bands with a hatched rhombic plait design. But already at this time a process was beginning whereby men's arm-bands came to be of radically different form from women's arm-bands, although very sparsely ornamented (hollow and solid profiled arm-bands). This means that the arm-band was coming to be a gender-specific artefact in graves (Fig. 1).

From the 9th century men began to wear warriors' arm-bands, which featured not only as ethnic and gender indicators, but also as rank insignia. For example at Nukši cemetery, for which archaeologist Elvīra Šnore has produced a social classification, it is found in burials of the first and second category, but only in two cases in third category burials [Illhope E., Zeūda T. 1957, p. 41]. It is also found in child (boys') graves, showing that status in



Fig. 1. Ancient Latgallian dress.
Reconstruction by A. Zariņa

the social hierarchy was inherited. Arnis Radiņš [1999, p. 132] does not, however, support this view at least with regard to Nukši cemetery, where arm-bands have been found in 70% of male graves.

In the 9th century only warriors' arm-bands were worn, supplemented in the 10th and 11th centuries by solid arm-bands of semi-circular section, which in the 11th century were replaced by animal-head-ended arm-bands.

In the 10th and early 11th century it common to find a warrior's arm-band together in one grave with a solid arm-band with ends of segmental section, and in the 11th century the warrior's arm-band commonly occurs together with the animal-head-ended arm-band. In certain cases the solid arm-band with segmental section is also found together with the animal-head-ended arm-band. Although the arm-bands commonly occur together, the warrior's arm-band was also worn alone during the whole of this period. There is even one burial (Ābeļu Priednieki cemetery) with all three arm-band forms.

Thus we may consider that the arm-band had come to be one of the components of a complex of signs showing the individual's place in society.

In the 11th century we already see a decline in the value of the arm-band as a social indicator. Animal-head-ended arm-bands are found also with women, and women continued to wear them even when they had fallen out of use among men. Animal-head-ended arm-bands are one of the last forms of arm-band to be worn by males. All the other men's arm-band forms from this time are rare and exhibit evident influences from neighbouring groups, or even represent imports.

During the 9th–12th centuries when men's arm-bands had the highest social status, they were also most richly decorated. Unfortunately, comparison of designs on Latgallian women's and men's arm-bands is complicated by the fact that in the 8th and early 9th century, when women wore richly ornamented cuff-shaped arm-bands, the profiled arm-bands of the men were practically unadorned,

while during the time when warriors' arm-bands were in use, women's arm-bands were represented by the spiral arm-band, which, although very distinctive, did not have much space for decoration. Thus, although we may conclude that during the 9th–11th centuries designs on women's and men's arm-bands were significantly different, we have no definite chronological proof.

It should be mentioned that similar designs also occur on penannular brooches from this time.

Designs on warriors' arm-bands

Warriors' arm-bands have been subject to the most exhaustive archaeological study. Typology, chronology and distribution have all been investigated [Daiga J. 1974, p. 174–197]. This has greatly aided the study of designs on this form of arm-band. It has turned out that, although a particular type of design often corresponds to a particular

arm-band type, this is not always the case. This study treats 164 of the 260 arm-bands published by Daiga. Not subject to study are child arm-bands, damaged pieces and pieces on which the design is unclear.

Design composition

The ornamentation of warriors' arm-bands is divided into three compositional sections:

- 1) ornamentation of the ends of the arm-band;
- 2) ornamentation of the central part of the bow of the arm-band;
- 3) ornamentation of bands along the edges.

Since the ornament along the edges has been analysed in some detail by Daiga and is one of the components used for arm-band typology, it is not discussed separately here. The main part of the ornament, and the most ancient one, is that of the ends of the arm-bands. This is based on one

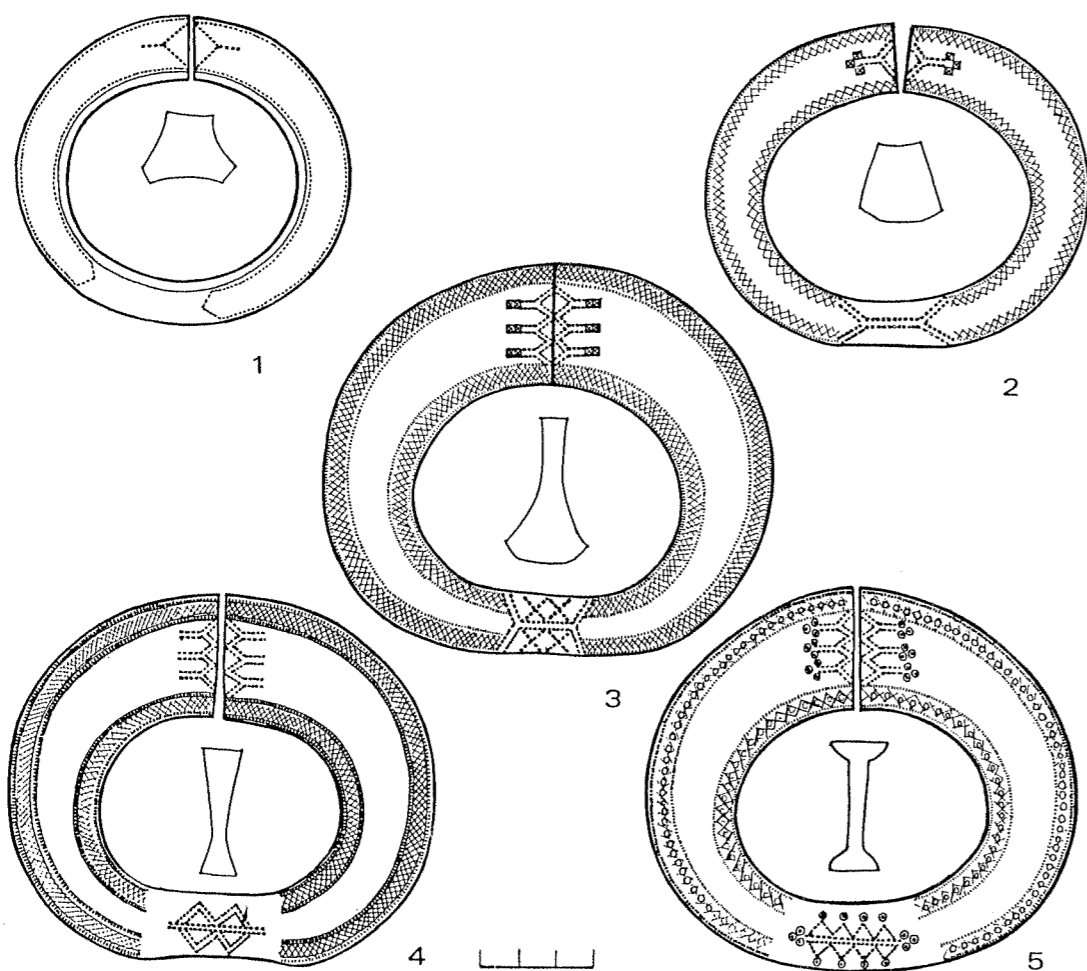
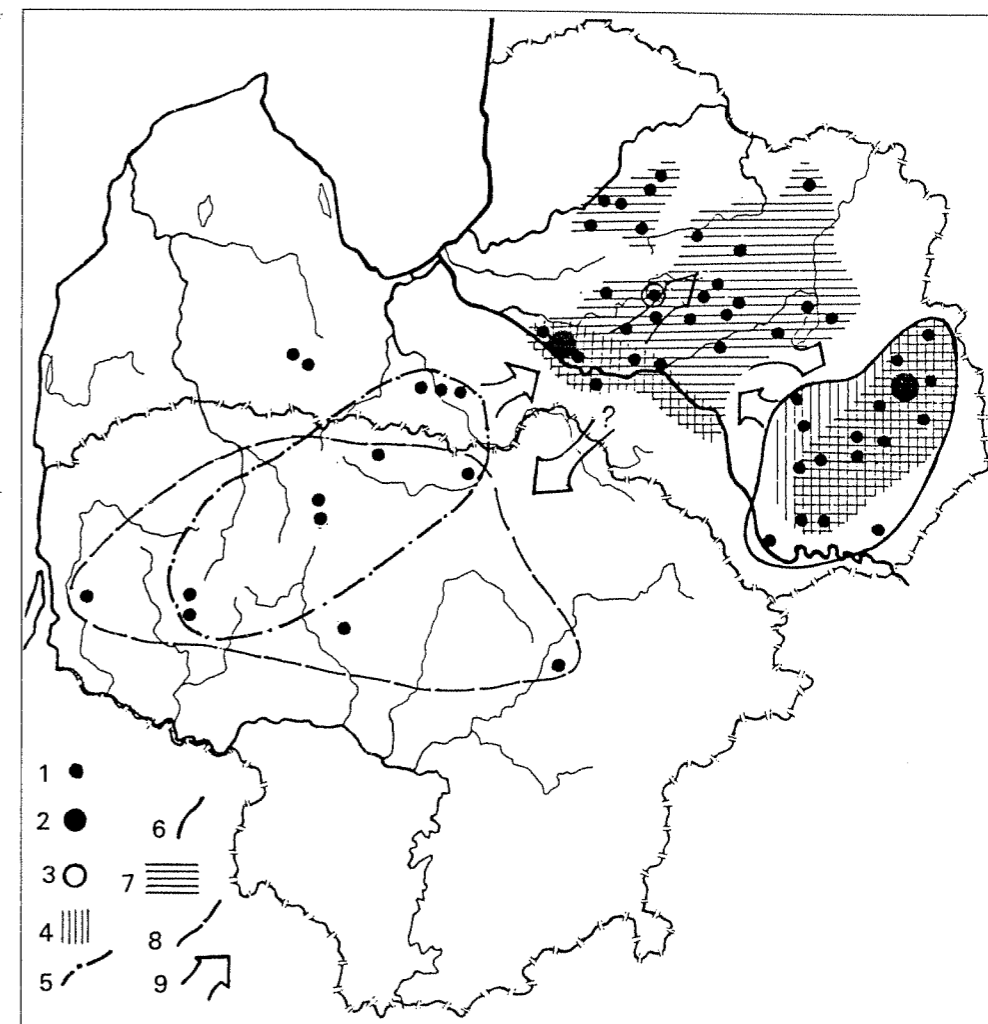


Fig. 2. Design types on warriors' arm-bands. 1 – early form of warrior's arm-band; 2 – type I warrior's arm-band with design type A1; 3 – type II warrior's arm-band with design type A2; 4 – type III warrior's arm-band with design type B; 5 – warrior's arm-band with design type C.

Fig. 3. Distribution map of warriors' arm-bands. 1 – find-spots of separate finds; 2 – production centres; 3 – possible production centre in the 11th century; 4 – arm-bands with design type A in the 9th and early 10th centuries; 5 – probable area of distribution of arm-bands in the 7th–9th centuries; 6 – arm-bands with design type B in the 10th century; 7 – arm-bands with design type C in the 11th century; 8 – the area of distribution of warriors' arm-bands in Lithuania (after Lietuvos TSR archeologijos atlasas IV, 1978, Fig. 57); 9 – main directions of the spread of arm-bands in the 9th century.



particular motif, consisting of a caret topped by a tower-like extension. Since this motif has no generally accepted name and is complicated to describe, it is henceforth described as the **warrior's arm-band motif**. Arranged in a row, these motifs are to be found on the very earliest and the very latest arm-bands. Over the course of time the number of such motifs changes (from one up to five, although the largest proportion of arm-bands have three), as do the details of the motif itself. The same cannot be said of the ornamentation of the central part of the arm-band, which is entirely lacking on the earliest arm-bands and which obtains its final, unvarying character only at the very end of the process in design type C on type IV arm-bands.

Only a few early arm-bands have been found (Fig. 2:1), and in fact these come from outside of the Latgallian area, from Semigallia [Atgāzis M. 1990, p. 37, Fig. 8:3] and Samogitia in Lithuania [Vaškevičiute 1988, p. 73, Fig. 8:4; Vaitkunskiene 1990, p. 39, Fig. 4; Vaitkunskiene 1990a].

Design types

Arm-band types, as well as particular design types, are connected with particular territories within the Latgallian area, and also differ chronologically.

Design type A1. Arm-bands of type I (Fig. 2:2)

Early 9th century. 17 arm-bands.

Connected with the area along the River Daugava (Fig. 3) around Aizkraukle hillfort (Lejasbitēni cemetery).

End design: 1 warrior's arm-band motif surmounted by a block of three faceted squares.

Central part of the bow of the arm-band: brackets delimiting the edge design, connected by a horizontal line.

Design type A2. Arm-bands of type II (Fig. 2:3)

Second half of the 9th century. 26 arm-bands.

A wider area of distribution, compared with the previous arm-band type—mainly the Vidzeme region, as well as Latgale (Fig. 3).

End design: 3 motifs surmounted by a single faceted square.

Central part of the bow of the arm-band: crosses or triangles arranged on both sides of the horizontal line. No two arm-bands have exactly the same arrangement of this design.

Design type B. Arm-bands of type III (Fig. 2:4) 10th century. 58 arm-bands.

Characteristic of Latgale (Fig. 3). Manufacturing centre at Ludza (Odu kalns, Kivti, Nukši). It was here that design type A2 developed into type B.

End design: three warrior's arm-band motifs, but without the faceted square characteristic of the previous period.

Design type B1. (31 arm-bands). On the central part of the bow of the arm-band, on both sides of the horizontal double line, there are two double-outlined triangles. The number of triangles also varies somewhat: three arm-bands with one triangle and three with three triangles.

Design type B2. (14 arm-bands). The line between the triangles has disappeared, and there is a quite unusual

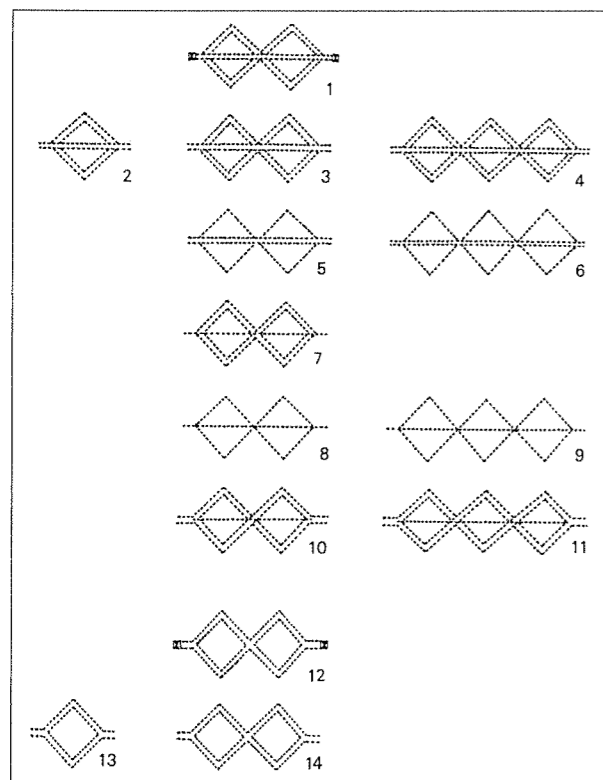


Fig. 4. Variants of design type B in the central part of the bow. 1-4 - design type B1; 5-11 - variants with a single line; 12-14 - design type B2.

combination, difficult to describe, consisting of two rhombuses and horizontal lines. This variant also developed within the frame of type A (Fig. 4:12-14). A slightly similar design is to be found on Estonian arm-bands [Mägi-Lõugas M. 1995, p. 321, Fig. 23] and Lithuanian neck-rings [Kulikauskiene R., Rimantiene R. 1958, Fig. 294].

Also, 13 arm-bands have variants with a single line in the whole of the figure, or else just in the triangles or between them (Fig.).

Design type C. Arm-bands of type IV (Fig. 2:5) 11th century. 44 arm-bands.

Although arm-bands with this design type have also been found in Ludza, and it seems that they developed here, design type C is connected mainly with the Vidzeme region (Fig. 3).

End design: three warrior's arm-band motifs surmounted by a block consisting of three circles with a dot in the centre (so-called suns).

In the design of the central part of the arm-band on both sides of the double line there are 4-8 triangles drawn with a single line, so-called God signs. At the ends of the line there is a triangular block consisting of three circles.

The ornamental band along the edges of the arm-band consists of fine rhombuses with a dot at the centre.

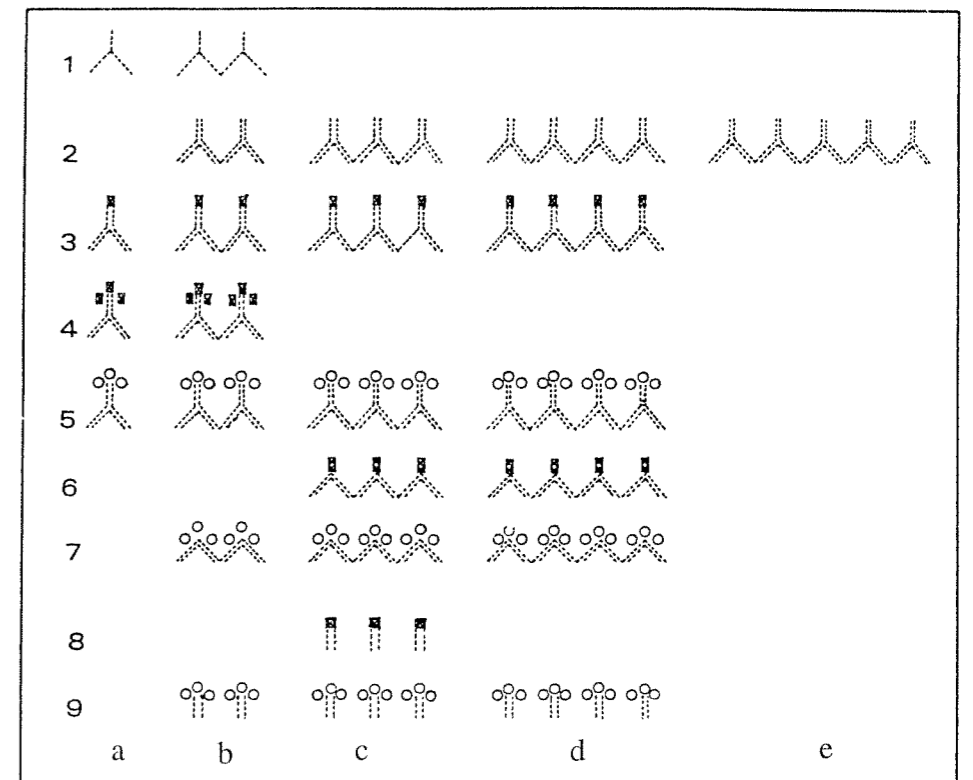
Processes in design

In the warrior's arm-band motif the double line, not always found on early arm-bands, has already stabilised in type A1, and this remains up to the end of use of the arm-bands. The situation with the termination of the upper end of the motif is more complicated. On the early arm-bands this is different in almost every case (usually a circle or block of three circles), but later it consistently ends with one square, although at the beginning of type A1 a block of three faceted squares occurs. In type B the terminal part disappears entirely, returning in type C as a block of three circles, already seen on the earlier arm-bands (Fig. 5). Much more interesting is the design on the central part of the arm-band, which attained its final form only in the 11th century on arm-bands of design type C (Fig. 6). A similarly arranged ornament, on both sides of a horizontal axis in the form of a double line, can be found on Curonian arm-bands with animal-head ends [Bliujiene A. 1999, Fig. 7.2: b,c,d], although it seems that a Curonian influence cannot be seen here.

Designs on solid 10th-11th century arm-bands of segmental section (Fig. 7)

Arm-bands with a segmental (hemispherical) section

Fig 5. Motifs on the ends of warriors' arm-bands. 1-5 warrior's arm-band motifs; 6-9 - other motifs.



can be divided into two types: one with horseshoe-shaped ends in relief, and the usual form, which differs from Curonian arm-bands only in being more massive. Both of these types were in use contemporaneously during the whole period of existence of arm-bands, and they have the same sort of ornamentation. Dating of these arm-bands is possible thanks to the warriors' arm bands with which they co-occur.

Although Elvīra Šnore wrote already in 1936 that arm-bands with a loop design are earlier than those with a design of fine rhombuses and dated them to the 10th and 11th centuries, no further studies followed [Šnore E. 1936, p. 62-71].

These arm-bands are also found among the Curonians, where they date from the 9th and 10th centuries [Bliujiene A. 1999, p. 169, Fig. 7.2: b, c, d], but the Latgallian examples are more massive. Estonian arm-bands with a similar ornaments, but much thinner, are dated to the same time as the Latgallian pieces [Mägi-Lõugas M. 1995, p. 319, Figs. 5-9]. Arm-bands with a wave design arranged in groups are characteristic of Viking Age Scandinavia [Nerman B. 1958, S.]. These raised vertical waves occur in combination with rows of fine pearls along the edges. Such an arm-band has also been found at Grobiņa, dated to the 9th century [Nerman B. 1958, Plate 17, Fig. 87] and in Riga, where the dating is unclear [Rīgas vēstures

un kuģniecības muzejs 1973, Fig. 43]. The Latgallian and Curonian arm-bands have thickened ends, which is exactly the opposite of the Scandinavian examples, and the wave motif has changed into engraved loops, but on certain arm-bands we still see the motif of rows of pearls, which serves to connect them to Scandinavian arm-bands. On Latgallian arm-bands these loops are markedly elongate, but on a Curonian arm-band from Palanga the length corresponds to the undulations on the Scandinavian arm-bands.

Design composition

Only the ends of the arm-bands are decorated. A division into vertical zones, or an all-over design, or else a combination of both of these arrangements is dominant.

The designs can be divided into three types: A, B and C, the third being the latest type, dating from the 11th century.

Type A (Fig. 7:1)

10th and early 11th century. 20 arm-bands.

The design of this type is characterised by a loop motif, found also among the Curonians and Estonians. It forms part of an unusual cell design and terminates in a God sign, a zigzag or warrior's arm-band motif. The loops are engraved with a solid line and are rounded at the ends, while the cell motif has sharp corners and is expressed as

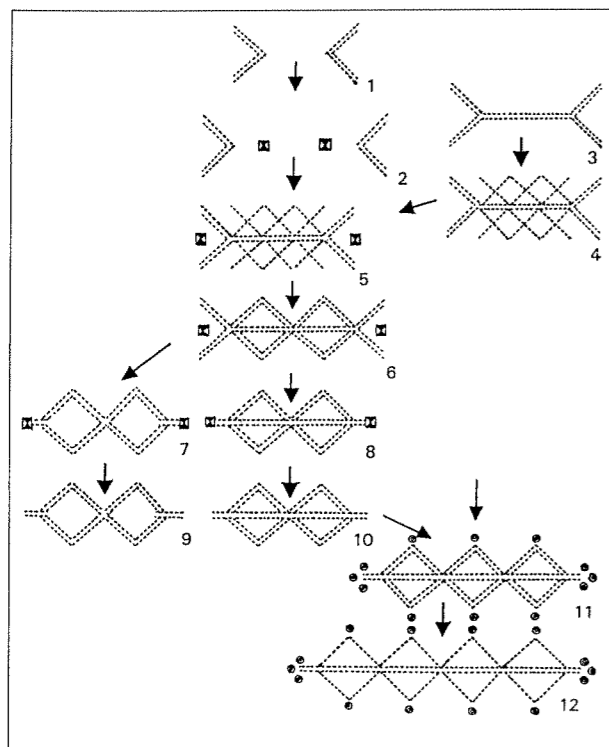


Fig. 6. Development of designs on the central part of the bow of warriors' arm-bands

a string of cast pearls or else is marked by an interrupted line. Usually there are two or three blocks of loops, but occasionally there is just one block. Judging from the warriors' arm-bands found together with arm-bands of segmental section, arm-bands with three blocks of loops are slightly earlier than arm-bands with two blocks.

The decorated area of arm-bands with design type A in two cases terminates in a degenerate warrior's arm-band motif, in five cases in a God sign resembling a zigzag, in one case in an extended God sign and in three cases in a zigzag (Fig. 7).

Type B (Fig. 7:2)

10th and early 11th century. 11 arm-bands.

This type is distinguished by its two-part design. Such a composition, where the decorated area is divided into two equal parts, is characteristic of Estonia and is found on various arm-band types there, including arm-bands reminiscent of Latgallian examples. In addition to a loop motif or simplified versions thereof, the knot with corners motif is also usually found on Estonian arm-bands, and Scandinavian plaiting design also occurs [Mägi-Lõugas M. 1995, Fig. 8:1].

Several variants can be distinguished among the arm-bands with this design type. The first consists of the

Scandinavian all-over plaiting motif and loop motif, while the second consists of all-over plaiting and fine rhombuses. Two arm-bands only with a plait motif have also been found, and on one arm-band there is a knot characteristic of the Estonians.

All arm-bands with design type B have been found together with type III warriors' arm-bands. Elvira Šnore has dated such an arm-band from Kiviti cemetery to the 10th century [Šnore E. 1987, p. 24].

In two cases the decorated area of arm-bands with this type of design terminates in a rhombic block of five circles, and in one case in a zigzag, which can be considered a row of God signs (Fig. 7).

Type C (Fig. 7:3)

11th century. 16 arm-bands.

This type is characterised by an all-over rhombus design. Three have been found together with type III warriors' arm-bands, one with a type III/IV warrior's arm-band, four with type IV warriors' arm-bands and one with an animal-head-ended arm-band. Three separately occurring arm-bands are dated to the 11th century, i.e. they are relatively later than arm-bands with design types A and B. Although the rhombuses with central dots are also found in the edge ornamentation of type IV warriors' arm-bands with design type C, a similar design of fine rhombuses in a diagonal net arrangement is also to be found on Curonian arm-bands from an earlier date [Bliujiene A. 1999, Fig. 94:3,9]. On arm-bands with this design type in three cases the decorated area terminates in a warrior's arm-band motif, and in five cases in a God sign. There are no two identical motifs (Fig. 7).

Designs on men's animal-head-ended arm-bands (Fig. 8)

11th and 12th centuries. 32 arm-bands.

Animal-head-ended arm-bands also belong to the range of artefacts linking the Latgallians and Curonians. Among the Curonians these arm-bands occur earlier than among the Latgallians, but these are somewhat different. It may be suggested that the Latgallians adopted not the arm-band as such, but rather the idea of the animal-head end.

Since during this period Latgallian animal-head-ended arm-bands were only developing, they were quite varied and obtained their final form as women's ornaments quite late. The study of designs on these arm-bands is hindered by the fact that a generally accepted typology has not yet been established. These arm-bands are divided into groups on the basis of the cross-section of the bow and the form of the animal head. The numbers given to the groups do not correspond to those published previously [Vaska B.

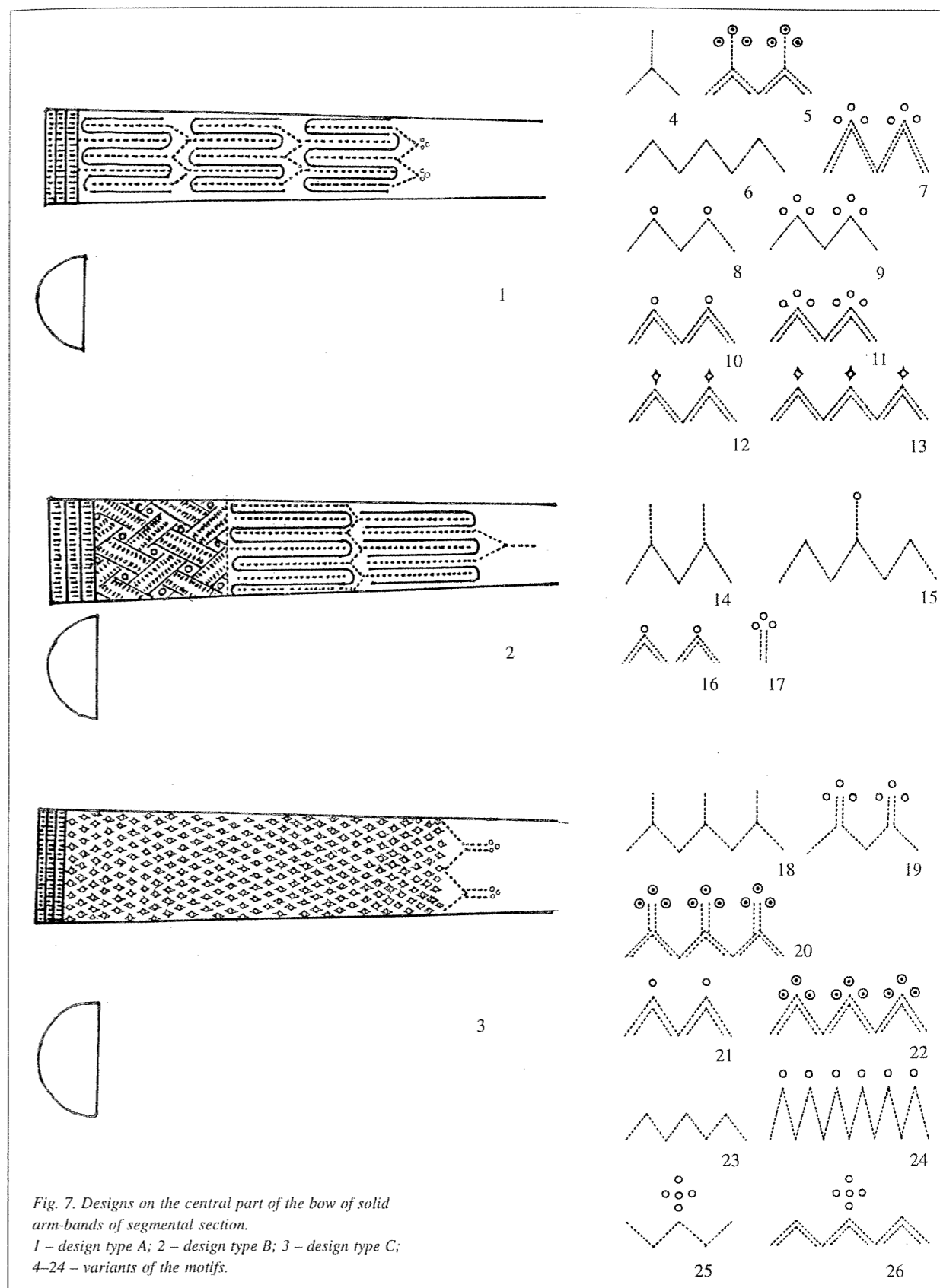


Fig. 7. Designs on the central part of the bow of solid arm-bands of segmental section. 1 - design type A; 2 - design type B; 3 - design type C; 4-24 - variants of the motifs.

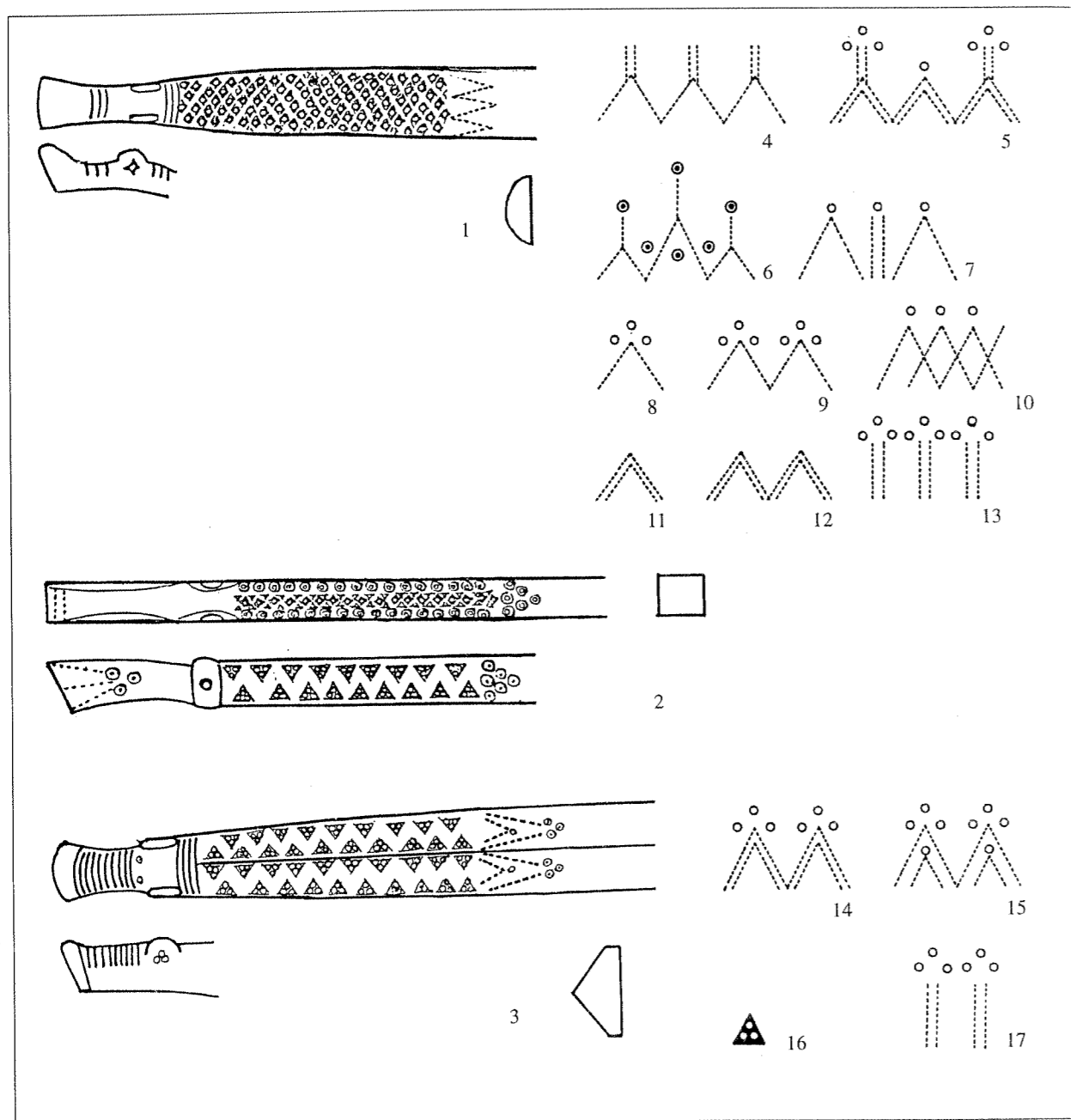


Fig. 8. Designs on animal-head-ended arm-bands. 1 – designs on arm-bands of the 1st group; 2 – designs on arm-bands of the 2nd group; 3 – designs on arm-bands of the 3rd group; 4–15 variants of the motifs; 16 – the three-droplet triangle.

1997, p. 36–41]. Men's arm-bands of the 1st group correspond to Group I animal-head-ended arm-bands, the 2nd group corresponds to group V, while the 3rd group corresponds to group II.

Only arm-bands from definite male graves have been utilised. Arm-bands found as stray-finds have not been used.

1st Group (Fig. 8:1)

Circa 1100. 24 arm-bands.

These arm-bands have an unusual form of the muzzle of the animal-head, which terminates in a broadened, horseshoe-shaped tip. The bow of the arm-band is segmental in section. In terms of the composition and motifs, the design is similar to that of arm-bands of

segmental section. 24 arm-bands from male graves have been used. It is possible that these developed from arm-bands of segmental section and design type C [Radišs A. 1999, p. 99]. The all-over rhombus design terminates in a warrior's arm-band motif or God sign.

2nd Group (Fig. 8:2)

11th century. 3 arm-bands.

Arm-bands with a rectangular cross-section. Only three such arm-bands have been found in Latvia, but they are significant in having both rows of three-droplet triangles and sun signs and the bands of rhombuses and triangles that characterise the edge ornamentation of warriors' arm-bands.

3rd Group (Fig. 8:3)

11th and 12th centuries. 5 arm-bands.

Arm-bands with a triangular cross-section and rows of three-droplet triangles along the edges of the facets, which leave the middle of the bow of the arm-band undecorated. There are only five definite male arm-bands.

Comparison of the form of the animal head shows a resemblance to the arm-bands of the 1st group, so it might be thought that men wore these arm-bands at the beginning of the time of their use. On slightly later arm-bands these triangles already form an uninterrupted row. Both the composition and the design represent a significant innovation in Latgallian design and serve to link it with the Baltic Finnish area.

The arm-bands of each group have their own characteristic design. But whereas the design of the 1st

group of arm-bands resembles that of arm-bands of segmental section and has the same motifs as are found on warriors' arm-bands, the arm-bands of the 2nd group show a new motif, and in the 3rd group the composition has also changed.

General character of the design

Main motifs

The warrior's arm-band motif is found in the 6th century in the ornamentation of the Baltic tribes on silver neck-rings with thickened ends. One such example has been found in Lithuania [Kulikauskiene R., Rimantiene R. 1958, Fig. 294], a second in Latvia in Podži hoard [Urtāns V. 1977, Fig. 60]. After this time it is found on arm-bands, as well as on other artefacts both in Latvia and in Lithuania and Estonia. It occurs on warriors' arm-bands starting with the 7th century. From the 9th century the variant with a double line, typical of the Latgallians, developed, and this remained in use until the 11th century. In the 9th century faceted terminal squares were added, disappearing in the 10th century, only to reappear in the 11th century in the form of a block of three circles. In Latgallian culture it was no longer widespread after the end of the 11th century, and disappeared in the 12th century. The earliest example known to the author occurs on a bronze axe from the Bronze Age of Hungary (Fig. 9:2) [Kovacs T. 1977, p. 37 Fig. 16]. This motif does not occur among the design motifs discussed in the works of M. Gimbutas. The warrior's arm-band motif may be phallic in character, but equally it could be a very schematised human representation (Fig. 9:1).

The God sign. Individual examples of this motif are found in the Baltic region already in the Roman Iron Age

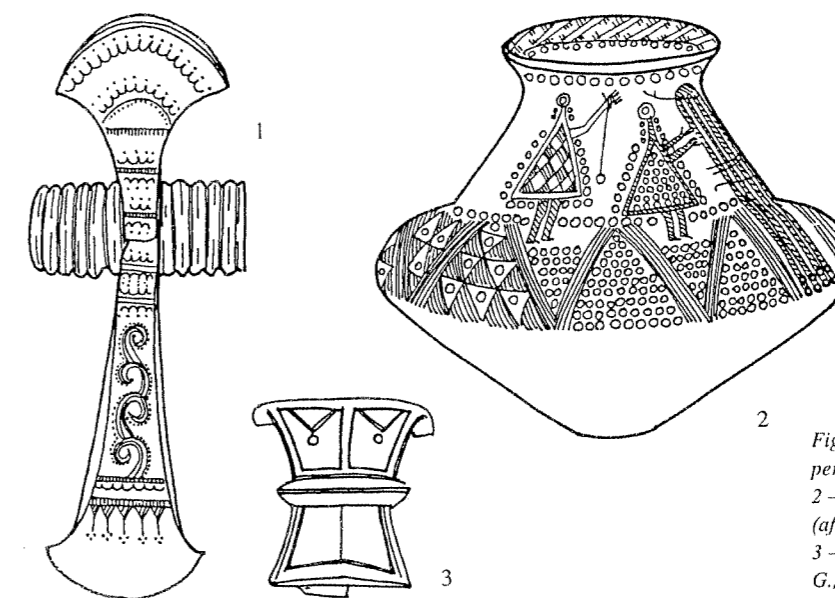


Fig. 9. 1 – vase from the Halstatt period (after Filip J. 1969, p. 1339); 2 – Bronze Age axe from Hungary (after Kovacs T. 1977, p. 37 Fig. 16); 3 – Roman period fibula (after Zemītis G., Rozenberga V. 1991, p. 31 Fig. 8).

[Okulicz J. 1973, Fig. 176:b,f]. In Latvia the God sign is known from only one fibula of the Roman Iron Age (Fig. 9:3) [Zemītis G. 1991, Fig. 9:1]. At this time the motif was found in the Western Germanic lands and in the cultures around the Baltic Sea [Reineke A., Rauch K. 1989, Fig. 6:1a]. In the Middle Iron Age it appears once again in isolated cases on silver neck-rings with thickened ends. For example, in Lithuania it has been found on a 6th century neck-ring [Vaitkunskiene L. 1981, p. 42, Fig. 17]. In Latvia this motif was in use starting with the 10th century, when it became one of the most popular motifs. It is still found on ring brooches of the 14th century. Outside of Latvia the earliest such motif known to the author is on the same Hungarian Bronze Age bronze axe having the previous ornament (Fig. 9:2). The motif is very widespread in Baltic Finnish design. It is also quite variable, and so can be used for dating only together with the artefact on which it occurs. This motif is possibly connected with celestial-vault or celestial-mountain symbolism. In Gothic church architecture it appears as the "vimperg". It also occurs as a stamp.

The **plait** motif, occurring both on arm-bands of segmental section and on penannular brooches, is of Scandinavian origin.

Although the **herring-bone** motif is universal, it is rarely found on warriors' arm-bands (only on 7 arm-bands of various types). The herring-bone pattern is usually included among fertility symbols.

The **three-droplet triangle** (a triangle with dots inside it) arrived in Latvia in fully-developed form as a stamp from the Germanic area [Salin B. 1904]. It was widely used in the cultures around the Baltic Sea. It does not occur as a linear engraving (Fig. 9:4).

The **sun sign** was a very widespread motif in Baltic cultures already from the Roman Iron Age. It was known already in the Neolithic and so is not suitable for dating purposes.

The **loop** motif evidently arrived on the eastern shore of the Baltic from Scandinavian arm-bands in the 9th century, and became popular from the 10th century. From the raised Scandinavian motif it changed into an engraved design, and became somewhat degraded to a simple block of parallel lines. Particularly characteristic of Estonia, the motif is also found on individual arm-bands in Latvia.

Diagonal crosses are found on certain warriors' arm-bands. This motif is quite widespread among Baltic cultures. For example, it was one of the main motifs in the ornamentation of the cuff-shaped arm-bands worn by women in the 8th century, but it is not clear whether on warriors' arm-bands it was a separate motif with a semantic meaning.

Composition

In all cases the ends of the arm-bands are decorated, and the closer to the end of the arm-band, the heavier the ornamentation. The most common arrangement is linear, although all-over design is also found, usually consisting of a rhombic (diagonal) net. Symmetry was important. Also observed is a contrast between quite densely ornamented bands and empty areas of the surface. Vertical ornamental zones or bands are also used on arm-bands. Such are to be found mainly on arm-bands of segmental section and can possibly be regarded as a Curonian influence, particularly with regard to the raised, striated bands. Horizontal bands of ornamentation also occur, particularly on animal-head-ended arm-bands.

The dominant number of motifs on arm-bands is three. Usually, tripling of motifs or elements is observed, and the reverse process also occurs.

However, the concept behind the composition of the warrior's arm-band design differs from that of other arm-bands. In addition to the ornamentation of the ends of the arm-band, ornamentation is also found in the middle of the bow of the arm-band as a closed, separate composition. In contrast to the comparatively constant decoration of the ends, the central part of the arm-band displays an uninterrupted process of development of the design, ending only in the final period of use of the arm-bands. This composition, arranged around the horizontal axis of symmetry, was improved and augmented, and its role in the system of ornamentation of the arm-band increased (Fig. 6).

The all-over design arrangement in the form of plaiting of hatched rhombuses in Latgallian culture is characteristic of arm-bands with conical club-shaped ends of the 7th and 8th centuries and later modifications thereof, which are, however, female arm-bands. However, the characteristic details of the plait design found on arm-bands of segmental section are too distinctive to permit the idea of an uninterrupted tradition and the local origin of the motif. Even if we assume that this Scandinavian rhombic plait design with fine diagonal hatching and impressed dots has been obtained through the intermediate influence of the Curonians or Livs (Livonians), direct Scandinavian influence cannot be excluded either, because the Daugava route "from the Varangians to the Greeks" was in existence from the 10th century. It should be said that in general its influence on Latgallian culture was little felt. It is hard to explain the origin of the bow ornamentation of the solid arm-bands of segmental section covered in fine rhombuses and those of the 1st group of animal-head-ended arm-bands. Previously such stamped squares are found in the bands of decoration along the edges of the warriors' arm-bands.

A very interesting feature is the combination of two modes of arrangement in the ornamentation of the 3rd group of animal-head-ended arm-bands. Stamped rows of triangles arranged along the edges of the bow of the arm-band take up about two thirds of the bow of the earlier arm-bands, with the remaining third in the centre of the bow left undecorated. However, on slightly later arm-bands these rows of triangles are to be found along the whole length of the bow, and on 13th and 14th century shield-shaped arm-bands they are found only in the central part of the bow. This mode is also to be found among the Slovenians of Novgorod [Sedova M. 1981, p. 103 Fig. 39]. In general, starting with the 10th century, a tendency can be observed for ornamentation to become universal in the circum-Baltic countries. The use of common motifs and techniques increases. Although some researchers disagree, a growing number of motifs are developed through the creative re-working of a Scandinavian tradition.

The school and individual craftsman, characteristics occurring en masse and unique features, the system and departures from it

It is generally accepted that professional crafts were already in existence during the period under study. Unfortunately, nothing is known of craft structure and organisation. It is interesting that there are no unique artefacts at this time. There was strict standardisation, although each arm-band is in reality the work of a particular craftsman. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to establish criteria for distinguishing several pieces made by a single person. Only in one case does Jolanta Daiga write in her notes that one and the same instrument—a stamp of a rhombus with a dot in the middle—has been used on both of the arm-bands in a grave at Ābeļu Priednieki cemetery (a warrior's arm-band and a group II animal-head-ended arm-band of square section). The most interesting are the warriors' arm-bands, since they display a course of development, and the changes are clearly unidirectional: they become thinner and broader, even though the manufacturing centres change. Changes in the ornamentation are not so smooth: each manufacturing centre included characteristic details in the warrior's arm-band motif, but the design of the central part of the bow of the arm-band shows development which is in general unidirectional, although with some departures from this: the tendency is from more flexible to more strictly defined composition. Of course, exceptions occur, but as a rule these are not on the finest ones but usually on less confidently crafted pieces.

Most interesting, of course, is the mechanism of formation of variants on the central part of the bow of the

warrior's arm-band. Although, as mentioned above, development is in principle unidirectional, departures from this are always occurring. Very interesting is the fact that at a certain moment such a departure provides an entirely unexpected basis for the beginning of a new direction, which happens at the transition from design type B to C (Fig. 6).

When discussing designs on Latgallian men's arm-bands, we may conclude that during the period of study significant changes occur. New motifs appear, while the old ones are forgotten. New modes of composition appear. When the difference between the forms of arm-bands worn by men and women disappears, the differences in ornamentation also disappear. Motifs common to a large circum-Baltic cultural area come into use, common features with Curonian, Estonian and Liv design make their appearance. Re-worked Scandinavian design motifs and techniques become popular.

Looking at designs on Latgallian male arm-bands generally, we may conclude that the most important line in the composition of the design is the concentration of the design at the ends of the arm-band, which distinguishes them from 8th century women's arm-bands, where the ornamentation is distributed equally over the whole of the bow of the arm-band, and from the Scandinavian and Baltic Finnish tradition of grouping the ornamentation in the central part of the arm-band.

We are forced to reassert once again the truth—trivial as it may be—that Latvian design and that of the Baltic tribes is geometric and two-dimensional, because new studies and additional material for study shows that this direction was persistently carried through. The face of the warrior's arm-band becomes broader and the contrast between the graphic, geometric ornamentation and the undecorated surface increases. Raised wave ornamentation changes into engraved loops and, at the end of the period on 11th century arm-bands of segmental section it is replaced with an all-over design consisting of fine rhombuses. The animal heads become flattened and reduced, turning into geometric forms that are recognisable only with difficulty. In the end, at the time when the Romanesque style flourished in Europe, the development was into applied art corresponding to the style of the Halstatt Culture. All of this takes place very consistently and, although it is tempting to link this pragmatically to inferior craftsmanship, it unavoidably leads me to consider entirely irrational features based on ethnicity and on deep cultural roots.

Although the assumption that exceptionally rich geometric design was characteristic of the Baltic tribes has proven to be a myth, it must be admitted that, although

heavy and lapidary, the jewellery style developed among the Latgalian tribes during the Viking Age was monolithic and unusually fascinating.

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THE ORIGIN AND THE MAIN ORNAMENTATION FEATURES OF THE CURONIAN ANIMAL STYLE

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The origin of the animal style in Europe. In search of the origin of the animal style in Europe, researchers point out complexity and multiple aspects of the problem; they also indicate several factors responsible for the formation of this style (Salin B, 1904; Åberg N, 1923, 1926; Schetelig H, 1906; Holmqvist W, 1939, 1950). Of these no longer doubted parentage lines of the German animal style is realistic art of the Roman Empire and its provinces. The first encounter of the Germanic tribes which spilled all over Europe was with the culture of the Roman Empire and its provinces, or repercussions of this culture (Schetelig H, 1906, p. 32). However, the Antique naturalistic art was only one of a number of diverse cultural forces (Salin, 1904), which fermented Germanic art. Over the Migration period, the Germanic tribes, which found themselves in Central and Western Europe, and even to a larger degree those who settled in England, fell under the influence of Celtic art, rather symbolical in nature but also abounding in zoomorphic elements (Cunliffe B, 1997). The Goths and Gepids, in the second c., the initiators of the big migration process in Europe, by the year 235 had already reached the coast of the Black Sea to find there realistic Sarmato-Scythian art under strong influence by classical Greek culture at that time (Brown K.R, 1996, p.226-234). In the second half of the fourth c., the nomadic tribes of Hunes and Avars also joined the wave of migration to add something to emerging animal style. European animal style was a cultural product of all these tribes (Brown K.R, 1996, p. 225-226; Wilson E, 1994, p. 67-75). Due to all these influences and obvious efforts by

the Germanic tribes to create and elaborate animal motifs, Europe of the second half of the fifth c. saw the rise of the animal style I. In the sixth c., the art of European tribes had developed into style II, later, it was transformed into style III. The latter completed the Merovingian or Vendel period (Salin B, 1906, Schetelig H, 1906, 1946). In Germanic art, animal was a symbolical representation of Germanic gods combined and multiplied to enlarge their magic and healing power. The Early Christian art incorporated the animal motifs created by the Germanic peoples, in Western Europe, since the sixth or seventh c., Christianity impacted the Germanic animal style (Wilson E, 1994, p. 67-75). This accounts for presence of Biblical iconography and philosophy in some of figurative subjects featured on personal ornaments, bracteates and household items of the sixth–seventh c. Some of the most popular of such subjects are Daniel in the lions' den, Entry into Jerusalem and Michael the Archangel fighting the dragon (Ramonienė, 1997, p. 58, 93, 205).

Animal style in the north-Germanic lands. Animal style originated in Germanic lands in the north of Europe. About the mid-fourth – early fifth c., the Germanic peoples created and rapidly elaborated zoomorphic motifs and the style as a vehicle for their sensibility. The art, which originated as an amalgam of diverse influences, was soon transformed significantly and molded into characteristic Germanic style. The mainland Germanic artists were responsible for this process too.

The formation of the Germanic animal style took place under the influence of Sösdala and Sjörop styles, typical

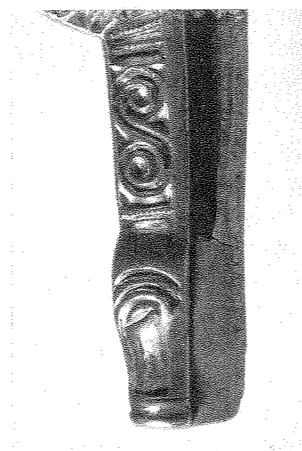
in the mid-fourth and the mid-fifth c. of a small area of southern Scandinavia (Skåne province, Scandinavia) and Nydam style (after peat – bog finds from Nydam in Jutland Peninsula, Schleswig – Holstein region). These styles evolved from a merger of the art of the Late Roman Empire and its provinces with north-Germanic artistic traditions. The animal motifs of the Sösdala, Sjörop and Nydman styles were the key elements in the formation of the Style I (Salin B, 1904, p 182). These styles are characterized by designs of chased geometric ornaments, e.g. “S” and “C” shaped motifs which form a pattern bearing resemblance of a spiral, a “star” motif and a variety of semicircles and triangles, and other, as well as animal motifs like four-leg animals, bird heads. Both types of designs were featured on brooches, belt buckle-plates and belt-mounts, horse trappings-mounts and other artifacts (Salin B, 1904, p. 310, 383-393; Forssander J. E, 1937, p 183-272; Fabech C, 1991, p. 121 –136; 1996, p. 135-142; Bitner-Wróblewska A, 1992. Vol.2, plate X). Even though these styles evolved in small areas, but the migrating tribes, trade contacts, exchanges of gifts, marriages alliances disseminated them rapidly across Central and Western Europe, in some instances their influence reached the coast of the Black Sea.

From Lithuanian archeological findings dated by the early sixth c., a silver-gilt crossbow fibula with a zoomorphic foot coming from Plinkaigalis (Kėdainiai district) cemetery, grave No106, is attributed to Sjörop style (Fig. 1-1a; Kazakevičius V, 1983, p. 189-196). Two other crossbow fibulas with zoomorphic foot found in Vidgiriai (Šilutė district) graves No 2 and 30 are dated to the late fifth or early sixth c. (Fig. 2) The crossbow fibula from the grave No 2 is decorated in spirals that were familiar to the Sösdala style (Fig. 2:1). However, it is difficult to establish the style of the brooch coming from the grave No 30.

In Western Europe (Lower Austria) around the middle of the fourth and fifth c. saw diverse cultural forces result in the Untersiebenbrunn style. In Germany, in the first half of the fifth c., emerged the Wiesbaden style. Brooches of the Wiesbaden style were found not only in Central and Western Europe, but on Öland and in Norway, likewise (Åberg N, 1923, Fig. 236; Werner J, 1981, p. 233). Southern England gave rise to the Jutish A ornamentation style indebted to the Sösdala and Sjörop styles. Both geometric and animal motifs in the Wiesbaden, Untersiebenbrunn and Jutish A styles are very close or even intermingled with the north-Germanic animal art around the mid-fourth and the mid-fifth c. This might account for the fact of personal ornaments and all household metalwork found in Europe and Scandinavia from the mid-



Fig. 1 - a. Crossbow fibula with a zoomorphic foot from Plinkaigalis (Kėdainiai district) cemetery, grave No 106 (photo by Kazimieras Vainoras)



fourth and the first half of the fifth c., being unique artifacts. This especially applies to those found in Lithuania and dating from the second half of the fifth and sixth c. Archeologists almost never come across analogous artifacts. At least it is true of all the ornaments. Brooches or fibulas, which are found in Lithuania from the second half of the fifth and the sixth c. display only the key elements borrowed from one or another of these styles (Fig. 1-3).

Likewise other European tribes, the Germanic peoples wore universal to all Europe type of brooch inherited from the Roman period, which represented a crossbow so called

cruciform brooches (Almgren O, 1897; Salin B, 1904, fig 67-69; Åberg N, 1956, p. 115-130, Fig. 114-138). In the late fourth and early fifth c., Germanic artists started “zoomorphizing” these brooches (Fig. 4). To elaborate this crossbow type even more, they transformed the foot of the brooch into an animal head, which was given eyes, “eyebrows”, nostrils, and a “forehead” (Fig. 3: 1-3, 8, 10; 4). Two or four warts or bony extrusions also adorned animal heads. Sometimes animal head on the foot was almost turned into a tiny independent sculpture piece (Fig. 5: 1). Of Lithuanian archeological examples dated to the second half of the fifth and sixth c., such crossbow fibulas with sculpturally articulated animal heads come from Pagrybis (Šilalė district) and Lazdininkai (Kretinga

district, excavations of 1998) grave No 39 (Fig. 3:11; 5:2). As early as the second half of the fifth and the early sixth c. such brooches acquired more decorative elements characteristic of the Style I. Having originated in the north of Europe, the animal art was further elaborated on the Continent (Salin B, 1904, p. 355; Erä-Esko A, 1956, p. 25-26; Gaimster M, 1998, p. 208). “Zoomorphic” brooches from the Baltic lands of this period represent a long-foot crossbow type with a cast catch (Fig. 5: 2,6). Therefore, no matter that the Baltic and Germanic jewellers of the fifth and sixth c. picked out distinct fibula type to explore the possibilities of animal art, Germanic parentage of the Baltic artists’ “zoomorphic” imagery is beyond dispute. On the other hand, it is obvious, that the Baltic jewellers

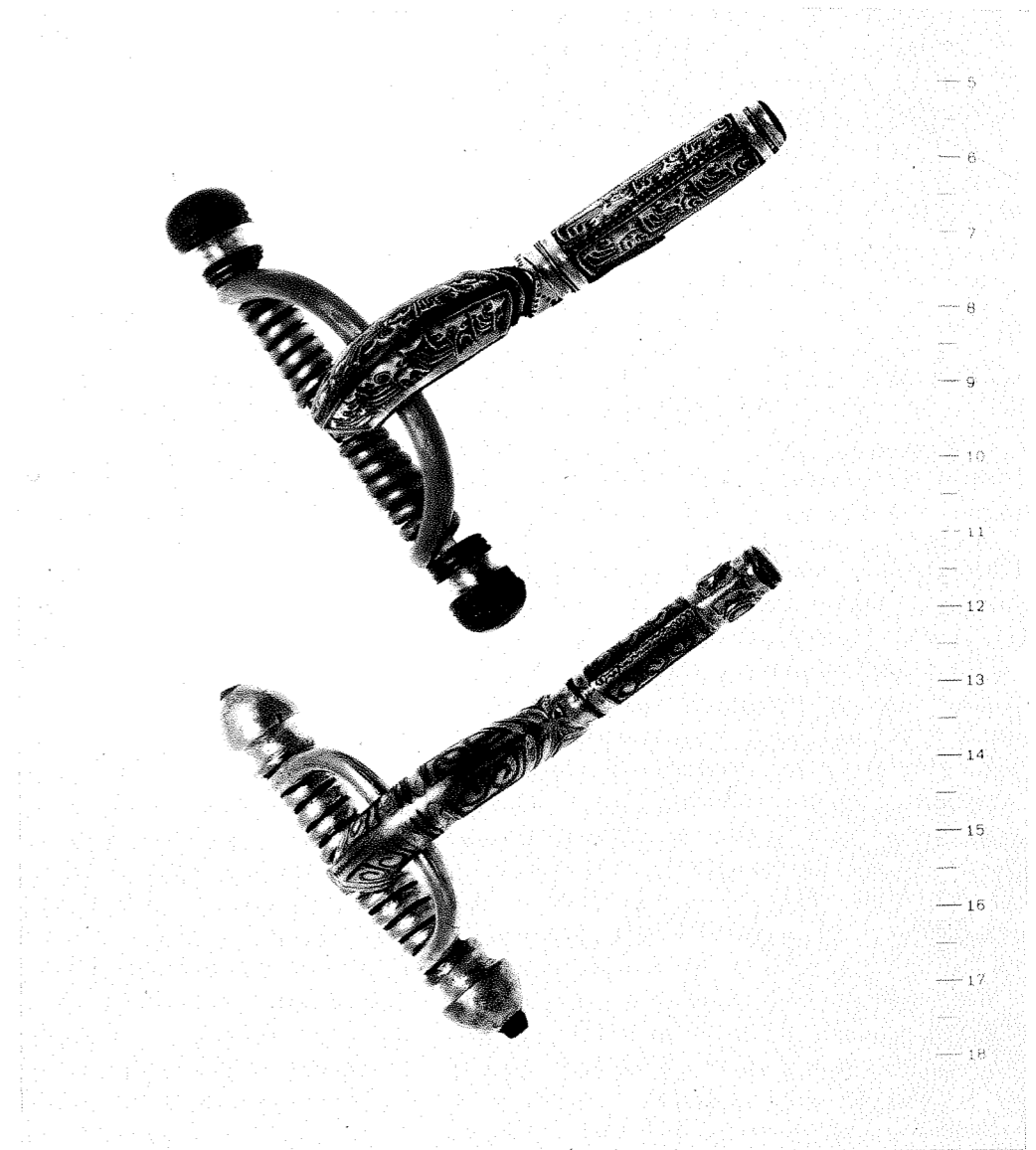


Fig. 2. Crossbow fibulas with a zoomorphic foot from Vidgiriai (Šilutė district) cemetery, grave No 2 and No 30 (photo by Antanas Lukšėnas)

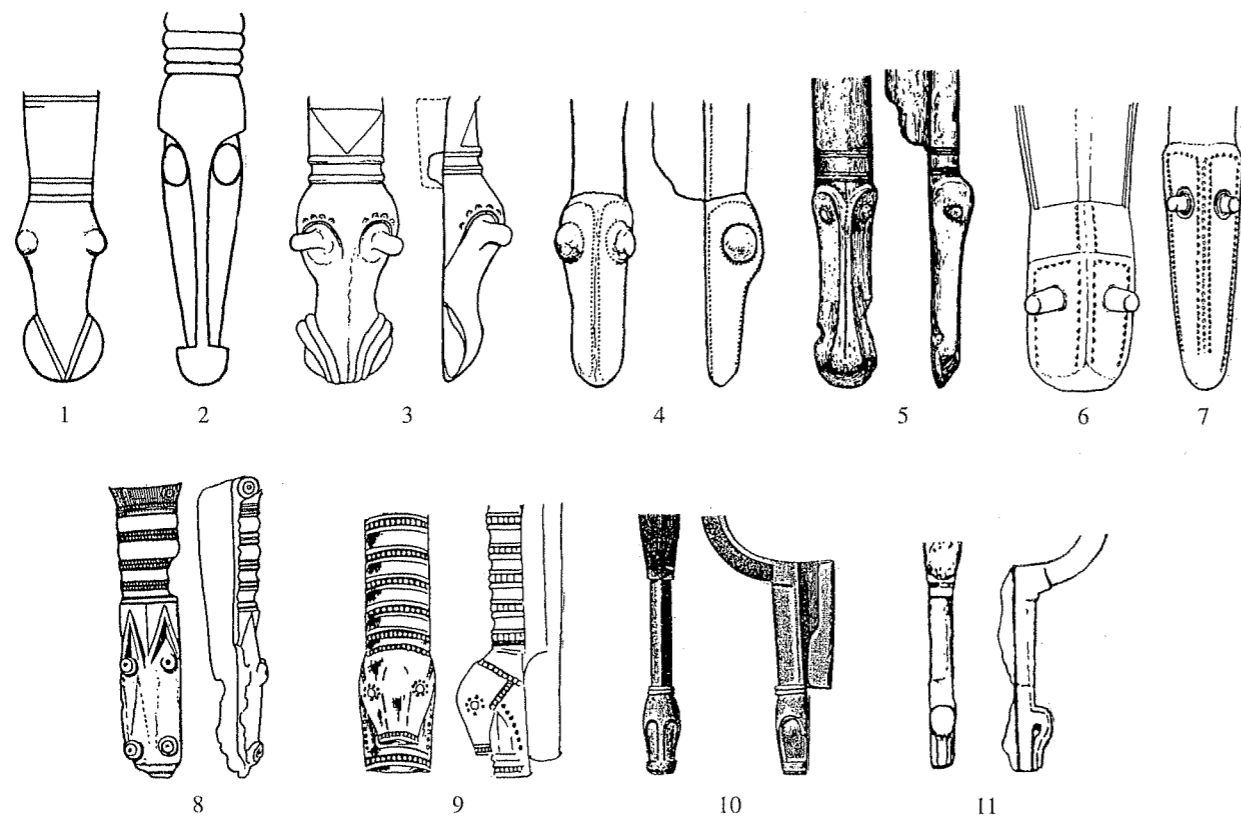


Fig. 3. Germanic (the 5th – 6th c.) and Baltic (the second half of the 5th c. – 9th c.)
 1 – East Shefford Berks, England; 2 – Hönstrop, Öland, Sweden; 3 – Hange, Norway; 4 – Lazdininkai (Kretinga district), grave No 36 (exc. in 1976); 5 – Lazdininkai (Kretinga district), grave No 22 (exc. in 1976); 6 – Genčai I (Kretinga district), grave No 226; 7 – Genčai I (Kretinga district), grave No 227; 8 – Øie, Norway; 9 – Plinkaigalis (Kėdainiai district), grave No 107; 10 – Öland, Sweden; stray find; 11 – Lazdininkai (Kretinga district), grave No 39 (exc. in 1998)
 (1 – according to Åberg N, 1926, fig. 52; 2, 10 – according to Åberg N, 1923, fig. 234 – 235; 3, 8 – according to Scheteling H, 1906, fig. 48; 29; 4 – 7, 11 – drawings by Virgilijus Truklickas; 9 – drawing by Audronė Ruzienė, LNM AR K)

did not copy their models blindly, but transformed the animal style that dominated the European art of the period according to their own understanding (Fig. 1-6).

Baltic artifacts of animal style from the fifth-sixth c.

One of the most interesting and disputable aspects of the Baltic ornamentation system, is the origin of animal style motifs in the Baltic lands. Lithuanian archeologists, who focus on the sources of this style and its manifestation at different periods, fall into two camps. Some of them hold that Baltic animal style evolved in the areas populated by the Balts and drew from indigenous cultural sources (Vaitkunskienė L, 1987, p. 44-53; Nakaitė L, 1991, p. 94-105). However, others believe that this style originated due to the influence of Scandinavian and mid-European (the middle Danube) art (Tautavičius A. 1981, p. 23-31, 1996, p. 273; Šimėnas V, 1992, p. 32). Both those, who deny Scandinavian parentage, and those who take into consideration migration of peoples in Western and Central

Europe as well as along the coast of the Black Sea, point out that animal art emerged on the eastern coast of the Baltic through Scandinavian inspiration.

In order to arrive to the sources of animal art, tracing of cultural stimuli, which generated this style in the Baltic lands, is vital. Of equal importance with imported influences were local ornamentation traditions, which yielded a unique idiom of animal art in the Baltic lands. Baltic animal style jewellery, which comes from periods of the second half of the fifth-sixth c., from the seventh-eighth c. and also from the ninth – twelfth c. differs largely from Germanic specimen of animal style. It should be noted that these artifacts represent three distinct periods, each of them characterized by different inspirations and influences, which drove the process of creation, local production or importation of such metalwork.

Baltic artists' first exposure to quite realistically depicted animal or "zoomorphic" motifs in ornamentation

took place not earlier than the second half of the fifth or early sixth c. At the same time they discovered some previously absent from the Baltic artists' repertoire geometric motifs, such like a "S" - shape motif or "C" shaped spiral, a broken line resembling a meander, a three-part swastika (triquet) and some unexplored by the Baltic jewellers metalwork techniques. These were the possibilities offered by relief and reverse relief versus flat surface, nieloing and gilding as a method universally used across Europe (Tautavičius A, 1981, p. 23-25, 31, Fig. 8-17; Kazakevičius V, 1981, Fig. 4-6; Šimėnas V, 1987, p. 64-67). This wave of animal art and new to Baltic metalwork geometric ornament reached them as repercussions of the Great Migration period, the art and ornamentation of which was in most instances impacted by the elements in the Sösdala, Sjörop, Nydam or Untersiebenbrunn styles (Bliujiene A, in press). Therefore, we should be looking for the origins of the Baltic animal style outside Baltic domain: in Scandinavia, on the coast of the Black Sea and around the middle Danube, all the areas inhabited by Germanic and north-Germanic peoples and their artifacts of the mid-fourth and fifth centuries and styles I-II. As it was mentioned before, the north-Germanic peoples gave the most powerful impetus to the rise of animal art in Europe.

Archeological findings from the Baltic lands dating to this period include drinking horns' bindings, belt-mounts and belt-buckle plates, scabbard-mounts. In the second half of the fifth and early sixth c., a type of crossbow zoomorphized brooch or fibula appeared and started establishing itself across Lithuania. Such brooches were decorated in ornamental patterns of the Roman period, which were alien to Baltic ornamentation system and had no geometric counterparts (Puzinas J., 1935, tabl. XLIII-XLIV). The number of animal style artifacts from Lithuania of the second half of the fifth and sixth c. is small and is lost to abounding metalwork decorated in geometric patterns.

Most outstanding of the Baltic jewellery from this period are crossbow zoomorphic brooches. In the east-Baltic lands, two regions were the animal-style brooch was spread are distinguished, namely, the northern territory of the Balts (Lithuania, Latvia) and southern – Prussia. (Kynakob B.И, 1990, c. 212, puc. 6; Kazakevičius V, 1993, p. 109). Similar brooches were found on Öland and Bornholm and in East Prussia (Fig. 3:2, 9; Åberg N, 1953, p. 93-95, Fig. 107-108). A part of such brooches could be products from the southern Baltic lands or Lithuania, fashioned after Germanic models (Fig. 3:9, 11; 5:2, 6). A part of such brooches have their foot terminating in reptile heads, but their plane foot and the bow with no designs

make them different from their Norman prototypes. Baltic crossbow zoomorphic fibulas dated to the second half of the fifth or the sixth c. characteristically have a foot as if cut off at a right angle at its terminal (Fig. 3:11; 6). Sometimes the foot and the bow of such fibulas is ornamented in even and cord-like strokes, such brooches are called "Raupenfibeln" (Fig. 3:9).

However, in the second half of the fifth and sixth c. animal style did not evolve as an independent systematic phenomenon. These are just first attempts by the Baltic jewellers to copy animal designs that dominated in Scandinavia and Europe. All artifacts found from the period (crossbow brooches and wide - mouth horn bindings) are unique items with a different scheme of decoration and repeatedly manifest the absence of systematic style in the sixth and even early seventh c. In general, "zoomorphic" motifs are not typical for the Baltic ornamentation system in the fifth-sixth c.

Baltic animal style of the seventh-eighth c. The second encounter with the animal style which now made a deeper impact on Baltic jewellers was in the second half of the seventh-eight c. (Fig. 3; 4-5, 7). At that time animal motifs reached them from Scandinavia. However, the Baltic peoples, Curonians including, inherited only the idea of "zoomorphic" style with some ornamentation elements (sprouts) and the possibilities provided by high-relief versus surface and a well perfected casting technique. Curonian crossbow brooches of the period display a variety of types, which share some of their features with their Norman models. However, from the sixth c. onwards, the development of the Baltic and Germanic animal styles takes irreversibly different routes: the Baltic jewellers geometrize animals, while Germanic artists fully embrace animal motifs.

It was not easy to integrate elements of the animal style into the Baltic geometric ornamentation program and into each piece of jewellery, but local craftsmen had coped with this task well. The Baltic jewellers picked out a reptile, a snake, as the main image for their animal patterns, obviously, due to the importance assigned to this animal in the ancient Baltic world outlook. In the Baltic mythological universe, reptiles were related with the Tree of Life, as they lived at the roots of that tree (Dundulienė P., 1979, p. 69). The image of a he- or she-snake as an abstract geometric symbol is present in Lithuanian archeological material from the Roman Iron Age (Michelbertas M., 1986, p. 147, 150, Fig. 59: 1-4, 61: 61; Stankus J., 1995, Fig. 4: 5). In the tenth-eleventh c., penannular brooches and bracelets with zoomorphized terminals were common with the Balts. Researchers differ in their opinion what these terminals of the ornaments

represent: some consider they are heads of a horse (Kulikauskienė R., 1983, p. 33; Vaitkuskiene L., 1986, p. 37-50), others assert it is a snake (Varnas A., 1984, p. 109; Vaska B., 1994, P. 116-119) treated in an abstract manner. Having in mind the origins of the Baltic animal art, it seems correct to consider that the image of still more geometrized snake continues into later periods.

The image of a crawling animal was established in animal art of Scandinavia and the whole of northern Europe since the Roman Iron Age. Realistic reptile heads

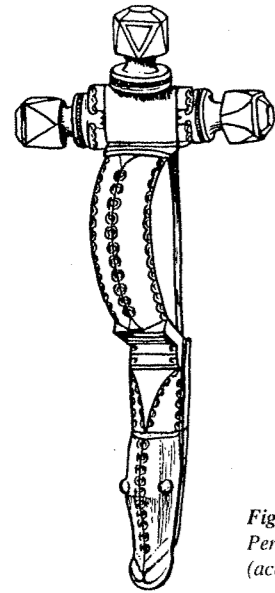
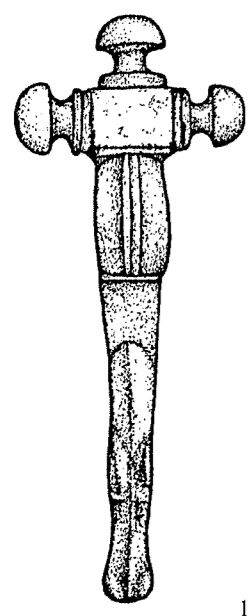


Fig. 4. Cruciform fibula from Andry, Jutland Peninsula, Denmark (according to Scheteling H, 1906, fig. 32)



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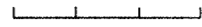
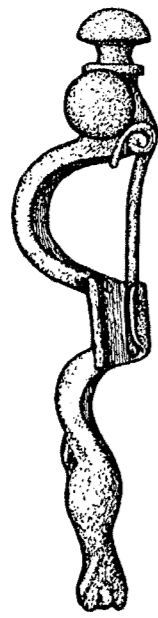
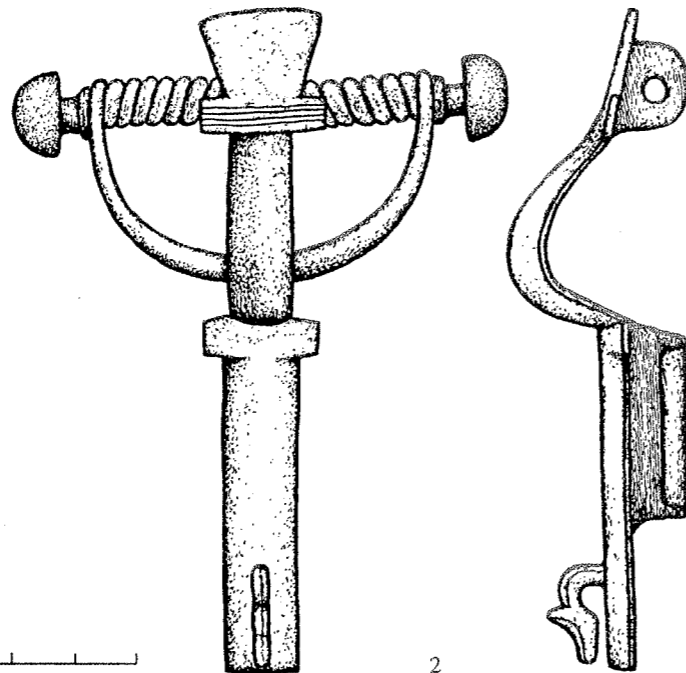


Fig. 5. Cruciform fibula from Rosp Steigen, Norway and crossbow fibula from Pagrybis (Šilalė district), stray find, VDKM 709: 26 (1 - according to Scheteling H, 1906, fig. 47; 2 - according to Vaitkuskiene L, 1995, pav. 168)



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decorate Italian spiral bracelets from the Roman period. Such bracelets were found in Roman provinces. Realistic animal motifs are related with realistic traditions of Hellenistic art and the art of the Roman Empire (Giove T., 1996, p. 189, plate XX). More abstract reptiles are characteristic of Germanic ornamentation found on spiral bracelets, bracteates and other pieces from the Roman and Vendel periods (Andersson K., 1995, p. 28-29; 1996, p. 189, plate XXI; Gaimster M., 1998). In establishing the Germanic animal style, the animal art of Rome and its empire was just one of cultural influences (Salin B., 1904). It seems that Germanic, including Norman artists, chose a four-leg animal or bird for developing their animal motifs of the Style I-III. Besides a four-leg animal a bird, a snake is the third component of the Germanic animal imagery. The head of a bird or a snake is encountered on Frankish and Scandinavian sword-chapes (Gaimster, 1998, p. 78-79). The image of a reptile with expressive "almond-shape" eyes is a part of decoration scheme of Scandinavian bracelets from the eleventh c. (Thålin Bergman L., 1994, P. 71). This leads to conclusion that a coiled reptile, which bears resemblance a spiral, should be attributed to universal human symbols together with a swastika or equilateral cross. The way it is interpreted, in a naturalistic or abstract and geometrized manner, is the matter of individual sensibility of each tribe. It is beyond dispute

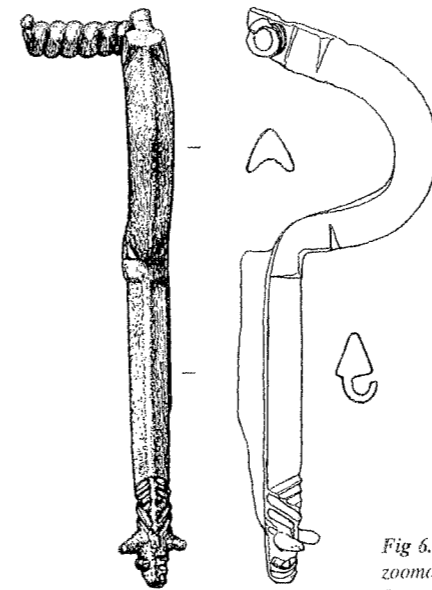


Fig. 6. Crossbow fibula zoomorphic fibula, stray find from western part of Lithuania (KrM). (drawings by Virgilijus Truklickas)

however, that these symbols were integrated into the world outlook system of each tribe.

Over the Viking period, when the relationship of the Curonians with Scandinavia, and especially so, with Gotland, became closer, the early styles of this period gave impetus to the Baltic animal style to develop. These early ones were the Broa/Oseberg (800-850), Borre (the second half of the ninth - late tenth c.) and Jellinge (mid-tenth - early eleventh c.) styles.

Curonian animal style. In the eighth-twelfth c., the Curonian artists developed a distinct local animal style, though largely based on geometric motifs. This style was much indebted to European animal art tradition and started evolving in the late seventh c. The most beautiful metalwork in animal style comes from the eighth - ninth c. However, the tenth - thirteenth c. were marked not only by the further abstraction of ornamentation patterns, but also by consequent decline of the style. The repertoire of the Curonian artists' imagery included heads and sometimes tails of reptiles. Likewise other Baltic artists, Curonians assimilated animal and geometric motifs. It has to be noted too, that only a part of Curonian jewelry finds dated to the eighth-thirteenth c. are decorated in geometrized animal designs. Moreover, male and female ornaments of the period display some stylistic variations. There is much more abstraction in animal motifs featured by female pieces.

The most common Curonian male ornament of the eighth - ninth c. is crossbow animal brooch (Fig. 8-11).

Since the eighth to late ninth c. Curonians, Latgallians and Samogitians wore crossbow fibulas with poppy-seed terminals, these also were decorated in animal motifs. Stylistically most complex are designs of fibulas which have four rather naturalistic reptile heads (type I; Fig. 8 - 10). Most of such fibulas were found in the burial sites in Curonian Mėguva land. Fibulas of types II-IV demonstrate a more simple decoration scheme (Bliujienė A, 1999, p. 100-106, pav. 31-36). The reptiles that terminate the foot

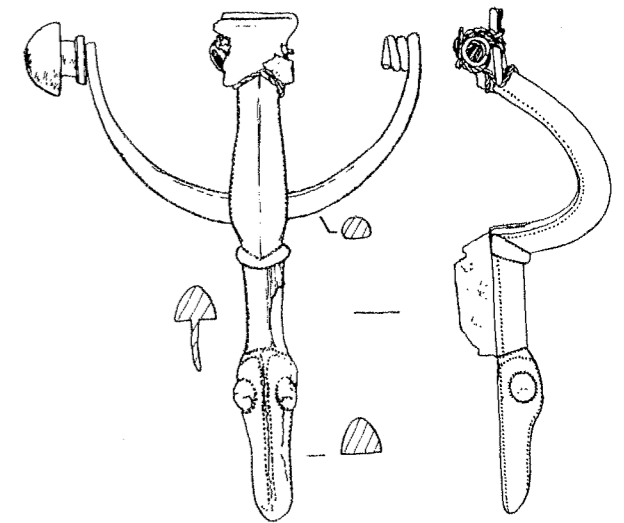


Fig. 7. Crossbow zoomorphic fibula from Lazdininkai (Kretinga district) cemetery, grave No 36 (exc. 1976) (drawings by Virgilijus Truklickas)

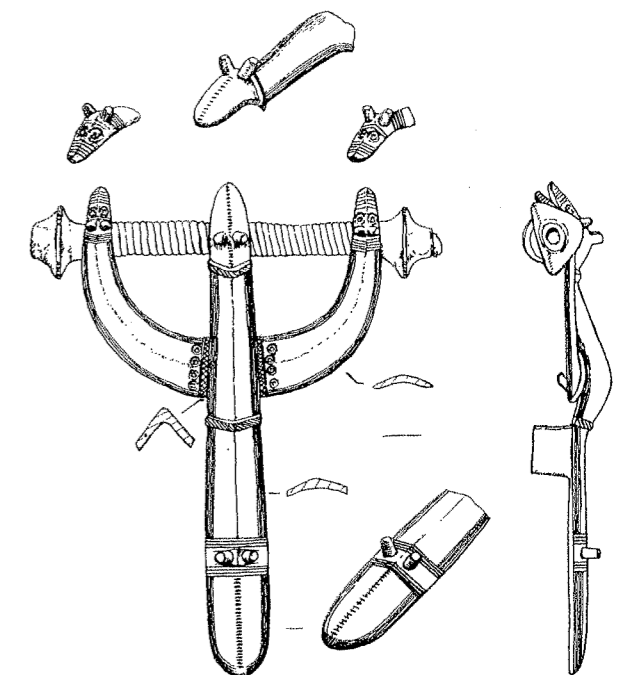


Fig. 8. Crossbow zoomorphic fibula from Kašučiai (Kretinga district) cemetery, grave No 14. (drawings by Virgilijus Truklickas)

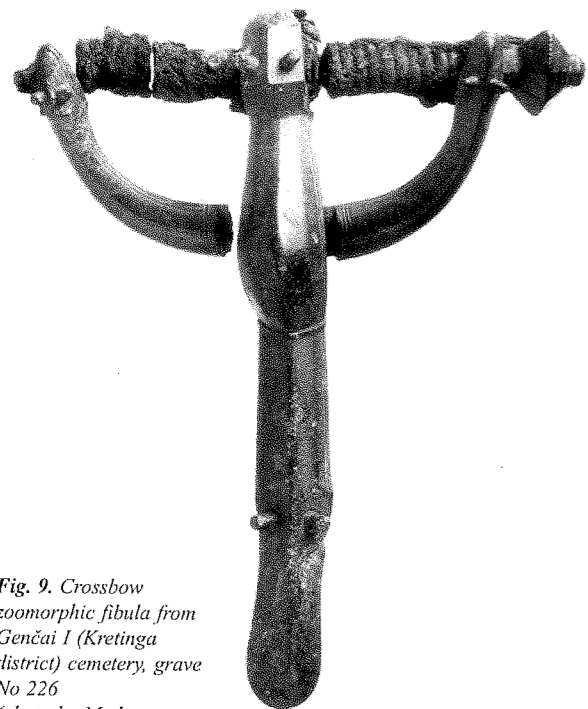


Fig. 9. Crossbow zoomorphic fibula from Genčiai I (Kretinga district) cemetery, grave No 226 (photo by Modestas Ežerskas)



Fig. 10. Detail of the crossbow zoomorphic fibula from Genčiai I (Kretinga district) cemetery, grave No 226 (photo by Modestas Ežerskas)

Fig. 11. Crossbow zoomorphic fibulas from Lazdininkai (Kretinga district) cemetery. 1 - grave No 27; 2 - grave No 192 (both exc. 1976) (The drawings of Virgilijus Truklickas)

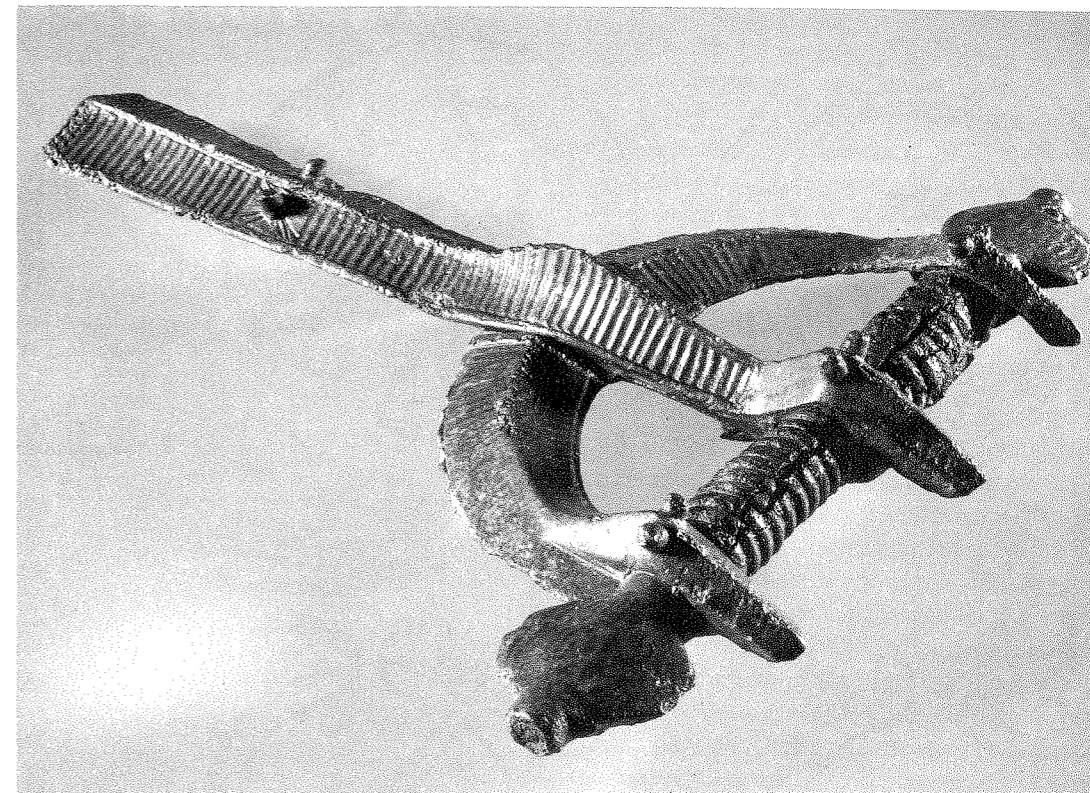
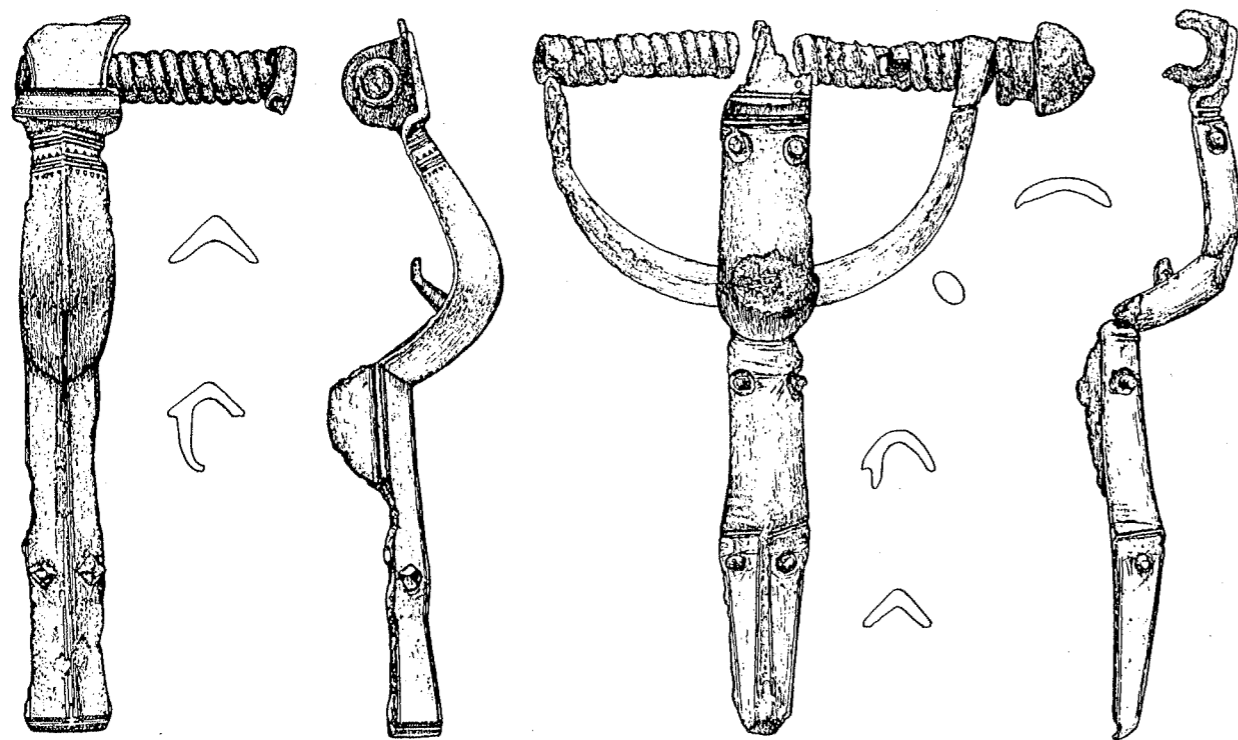


Fig. 12. Crossbow fibulas with poppyseed - shaped terminals from Genčiai I (Kretinga district) cemetery, stray find grave No 185 (photo by Antanas Lukšėnas)

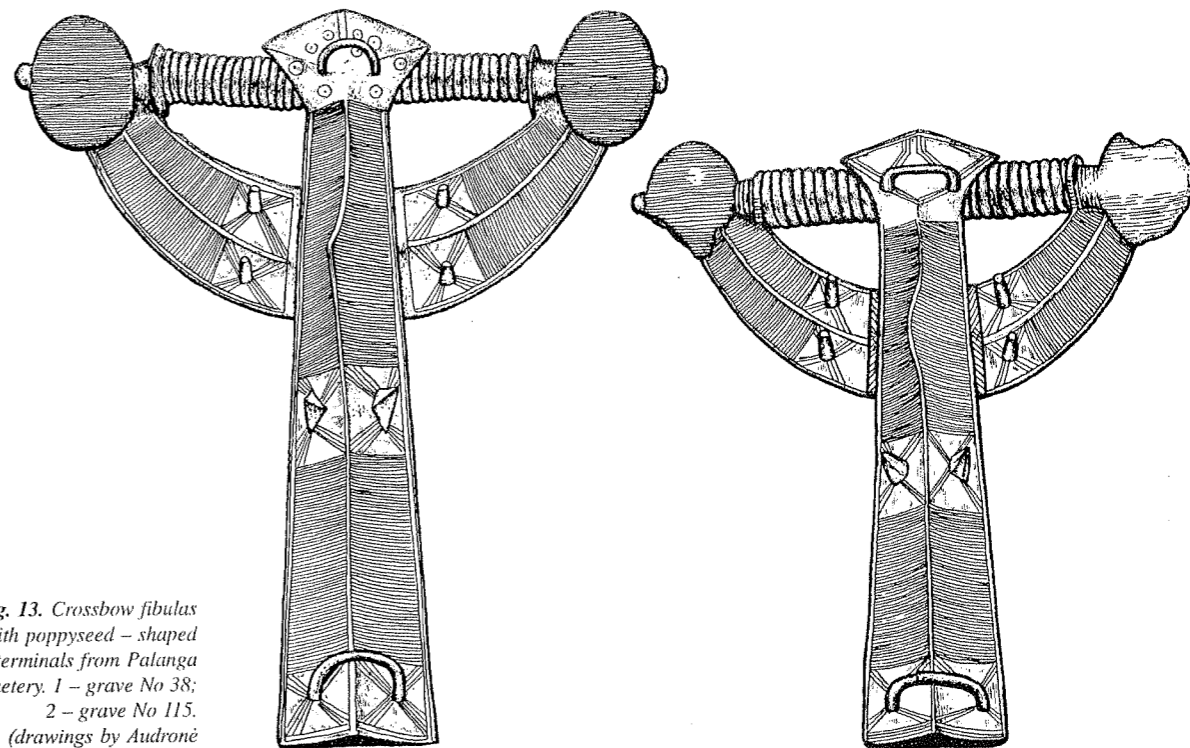


Fig. 13. Crossbow fibulas with poppyseed - shaped terminals from Palanga cemetery. 1 - grave No 38; 2 - grave No 115. (drawings by Audronė Ruzienė, LNM AR K)

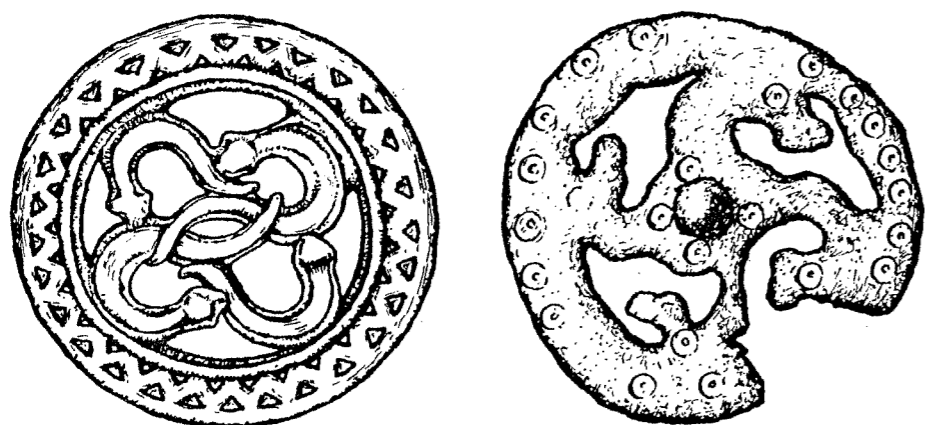


Fig. 14. Round flat fibulas.
1 - Anduliai (Kretinga district),
stray find; 2 - Laiviai (Kretinga
district), grave No 10. (1 -
according to Gaerte W, 1929,
Abb. 254: c; 2 - drawing by
Audronė Ruzienė LNM AR K)



Fig. 15. Penannular fibulas with zoomorphic terminals from Griežė (Mažeikiai district) cemetery. 1 - the grave pit No II, LNM AR 185: 295; 2 - the grave pit No II, LNM AR 185: 276; 3 - the grave pit No V, LNM AR 185: 593; 4 - the grave pit No IX, LNM AR 185: 1027 (drawings by Irena Dumšaitė)

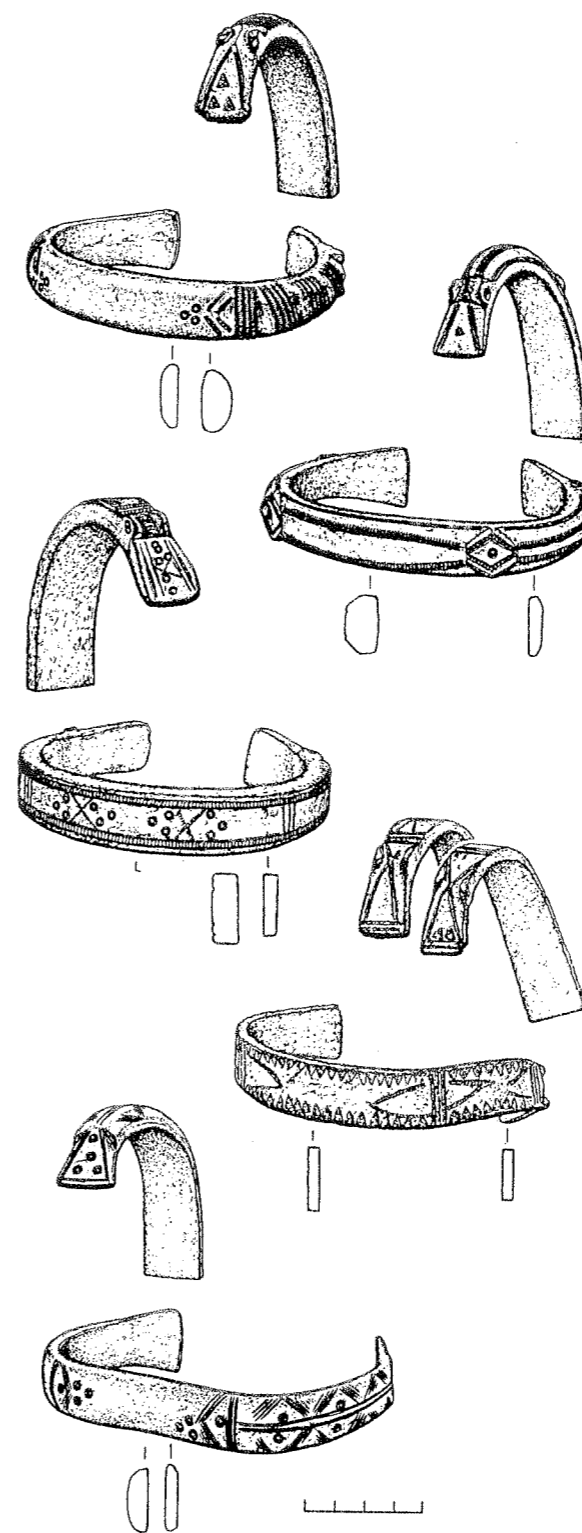


Fig. 16. Bracelets with zoomorphic terminals from Lazdininkai (Kretinga district). 1 - grave No 48 D (exc. in 1998); 2 - 4 - grave No 107; 5 - grave No 179 (2 - 5 were exc. in 1976) (drawings by Virgilijus Truklickas)

or the leg of the fibulas are abstract and often, only two or, sometimes, four warts adorn their heads (Fig. 12). Crossbow - poppy seed fibulas were popular with Curonian men in the eight-eleventh c. These differ from crossbow animal type in their construction and decoration. The distinct construction type of crossbow fibulas (the way of joining chord, spring, knobs and axle together) partially determined Baltic craftsmen's tendency to abstract and geometrize their animal imagery. Crossbow poppy-seed type is the most interesting of brooches decorated in animal motifs in the period of the second half of the seventh - the ninth/tenth (Type I; Bliujienė A., 1999, p. 107-108). Such pieces feature three reptile heads with tapered nose. Yet another completely geometrized head decorates the foot of this type of a brooch (Fig. 12). Crossbow poppy-seed brooches of type II feature just one a little bit more naturalistic head, which terminates the bow of a brooch. Another characteristic feature of this type of fibulas is eight big "warts" distributed on the chord and the foot. These are former images of reptiles rendered abstract (Fig. 13). One distinctive feature of the crossbow poppy seed type is their horizontally incised surface.

In the late eighth - ninth c. Curonian men and women started wearing all types of flat brooches. Round-shaped flat brooches sometimes feature a swastika, the terminals of which are often decorated by reptile heads, these are stylized, but also display some naturalistic features. The jewellers provided these heads with an articulate forehead, nose and ears. The head itself was either sculpturally modeled as separate from the body or at least identified by an ornamental pattern. The eyes of the reptiles were of almond shape, as of these from Gotland. Again, the reptile heads often have small warts. Sometimes the eyes were accentuated by a geometric pattern, most frequently "eyes" pattern was used. "S" - shaped flat brooches were also decorated in animal motifs. In the tenth - eleventh c., penannular fibulas with zoomorphised terminals became common in the area inhabited by Curonians and other Baltic tribes. One type of these penannular fibulas feature tiny and graceful sculptural pieces on their terminals, which look like natural reptile heads. The other type of these fibulas terminate in stylized shapes, which sometimes are transformed into tulip or lily buds, and, in some instances, reduced to geometrical shapes (Fig. 15). In the tenth-thirteenth c. Curonian men, sometimes women too, used to wear animal style bracelets. Geometric patterns or stylized zoomorphic motifs adorned the bracelets of this type (Fig. 16). Bracelets of a spiral type were most loved by Curonian women. The terminals of these bracelets often bore resemblance to stylized reptile heads (Fig. 17). The reptiles of spiral bracelets, in contrast to

Fig. 17. Spiral bracelets. 1 – Laiviai (Kretinga district), grave No 224; 2 – Palanga, grave No 96 (drawings by Audronė Ruzienė, LNM AR K) ©

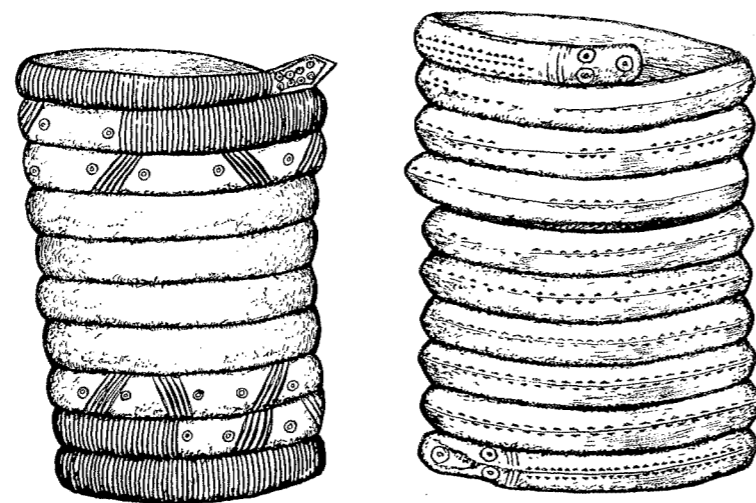
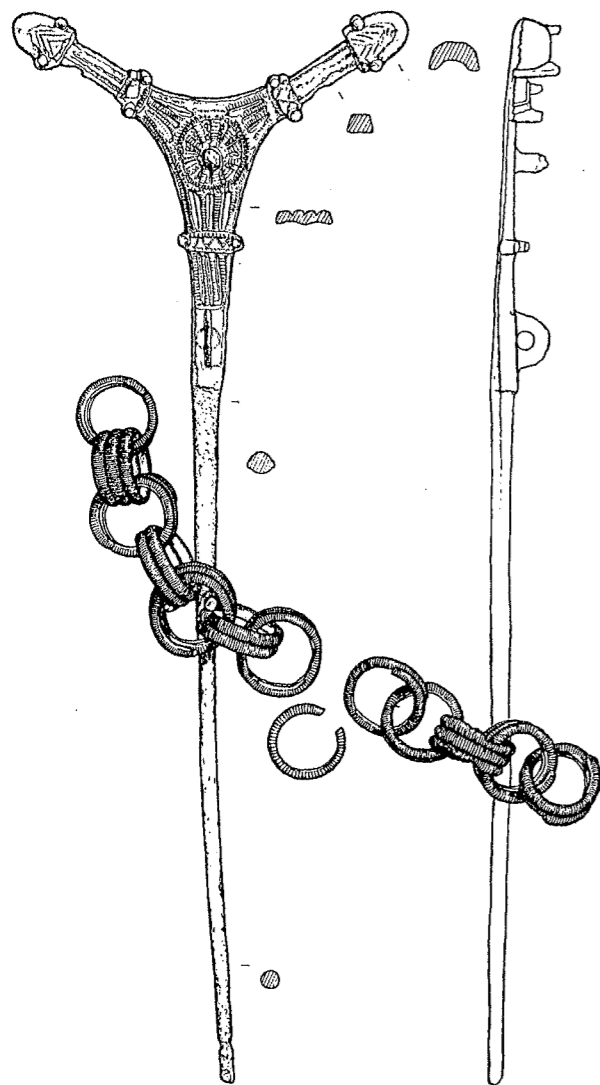


Fig. 18. Pin with a triangular relief head from Lazdininkai (Kretinga district) cemetery, grave No 5 (exc. in 1976) (drawing by Virgilijus Truklickas)



those on fibulas and “zoomorhized” bracelets, have no warts on their heads. The heads on spiral bracelets were decorated in geometric patterns, such like “eyes”, circles, and notches. Usually one bracelet featured two reptiles, which most probably, represent dynamic dualistic force. A zig-zag line was the most common geometric pattern to decorate such bracelets. This zig-zag line, which combined into a plait of diamonds, or, alternatively, X plait served to imitate characteristic patterns of reptile skin. The bracelets, likewise finger rings, were decorated by the “method of spiral”, e.g. a complete decorative pattern was distributed across the lengths and width of two turns of the bracelet.

The burial sites of Curonian women in the lands of Mėguva yielded massive pins from the eighth-ninth c., this being the only location where such type of metalwork was found. The heads of pins feature ornamental patterns in reversed relief, while elongated knobs of the heads resemble of a schematic reptile head (Type V; Kuncienė O., 1978, p. 80). On these pins, reptile heads were often given small warts (Fig. 18). Spiral finger rings was a popular hand ornament with the Curonians of the period. Most often the terminals of such rings are tapered, sometimes one terminal is tapering and bent upwards while the other terminal is wound into a spiral. This way a ring takes a shape of a coiled reptile. The spiral shape lends movement to a design and imitates a crawling animal. One finger ring features one reptile (Bliujienė A., 1999, fig. 85). Spacer plates of Curonian women also bear resemblance to crawling or coiling animals. Such spacer plates feature one or two, sometimes even three reptiles.

Translated by Irena Jomantienė

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Abbreviations

- LA – Lietuvos archeologija, Vilnius.
MAD, serija A, – Lietuvos TSR mokslų akademijos darbai, serija, A
RRS – Roman Reflections in the Scandinavia. Roma, 1996.
- KrM – Kretinga Museum
LNM AR K – National Museum of Lithuania, Department of archaeology, catalog
VDKM – Vytautas the Great War Museum

exc. – excavations

WHERE ARE YOU COME
FROM? AN ENAMELLED
TRIANGULAR BROOCH
FROM GRUNAJKI,
MAZURIAN
LAKELAND, POLAND

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Abstract

Investigations of the stylistic influences remain one of the most interesting subject in studying the past. They offer insight into the sources of artefacts origin and routes of transmission of the pattern, but first of all into the relationships among people. It could be especially fascinating when it concerns specimens found in a region relatively distant from the source of stylistic inspiration and production.

An enamelled triangular brooch from Grunajki, Mazurian Lakeland may be a good example of this phenomenon. It belongs in the significant category of enamelled jewellery produced in the workshops in the middle Dneper River basin as well as upper Oka River basin. The question of origin of Grunajki fibula is quite difficult to answer, because this ornament features its own unique

design. It needs very careful stylistic analysis based on the particular elements of the specimen. Apart from the question of the producer it is also a question of the owner of this brooch – brooch being so extravagant in the BaIt environment.

Mazurian Lakeland belonged to the huge territory of central and eastern Europe where the local workshops producing the enamelled ornaments were flourishing starting from the decline of 2nd and 3rd c. AD up to the 5th c. There were a number of different categories of artefacts decorated with enamel, as brooches, pendants, breast-plates, bracelets, necklaces, elements of belt sets. Their distribution may be a confirmation of the direct contacts among workshops as well as the specialisation of workshops. Such find as Grunajki fibula has opened a new field of research in the phenomenon of eastern enamel.

GILDED ITEMS IN THE MIDDLE IRON AGE IN LITHUANIA

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Gilded items are among the most beautiful and luxurious ones in the archaeological materials of Lithuania. Unfortunately, they haven't attracted too much attention of explorers. The gilded items are important sources in finding out cultural relations, revealing technical and artistic skills of jewellers, contributing to cognition of evolution of social relations.

Gilding is a complicated procedure requiring a lot of know-how and skills. Heating of gold and silver produces a gold amalgam used to slip the gilded surface. Later on the ware is heated by charcoal, what results in evaporation of mercury. A thin golden film is formed on the ware and tightly coheres to the surface of the ware. Since gold shows the best cohesion with silver, merely all gilded items used to be made of silver. Wares are sometimes called gilded when ornamented with a thin golden plate fixed with rivets or otherwise. Such ware could be also made from other metals. Of course, selection of different metals was also determined by colours of metals. White (metal) silver and yellow gold looked extremely beautiful and contrasting, therefore gilding was not designated to cover the entire surface of the ware. These methods used to give the ware refinement and play on colours.

In literature such items are usually reviewed in combination with silver items or in the entire context of ornaments or their groups. In Baltic territories gilded items are scarce. Today the final number of such items is not yet determined. Not long ago just a few items of this kind were known. However, recent explorations of new monuments gave grounds for significant increase of the number of such

items. Findings of golden items or items from gold and silver bimetal amalgam – electron are even more scarce in Lithuania, e.g., fragments of a golden neck-ring were found in the Sudata IV Barrow Cemetery (E. Šatavičius, 1998, p. 47), a belt-buckle made from a gold and silver amalgam was found in the Užpelkiai (Kretinga district) cemetery.

A question of origin of gilded items in Lithuania is not clear. A brooch found in the Noruišiai (Kelmė district) Barrow could be mentioned as one of the most archaic brooches. It is a round plate-type brooch. The middle part of the brooch is decorated with an ornamented golden plate, which is mechanically fixed. It is presumed to be not of Lithuanian origin and, most likely, could have come to Lithuania from the Elbe Germanic territories (M. Michelbert, 1986, p. 219). From the point of view of other explorers, it came from the Pannonia province of the Roman Empire (LAB, 1961, p. 225 – 226). It is dated to 4th century (L. Vaitkunskienė, 1981, p. 47).

The Middle Iron Age might be called the age of gilded items in Lithuania, and in particular as regards the early Middle Iron Age (5th-6th cent.). This period coincides with migration of nations in Middle Europe. By this time quite a number of gilded items appeared in Western Lithuania. They are also found in middle and eastern Lithuania.

In West Lithuania – at the seacoast and the Lower Nemunas - there are several places where gilded items have been found. One of them is in Užpelkiai (Plungė district), where in the ravine of a marsh a ringed brooch, dated 6th cent. was found. This brooch had a golden plate decorated with cellular ornament, placed instead of ringlets (L.

Vaitkunskienė, 1981, p. 50). One more place where gilded items are found is in Lazdininkai (Kretinga district). There a late brass brooch was found, inlaid with gold and ornamented in a knitted, plant-type pattern, in particular characteristic to Scandinavian items (S. Patkauskas, 1978, p. 147; L. Vaitkunskienė, 1981, p. 54). The third brooch was found in Vilkyčiai. It was a ringed brooch of group III decorated with a small gilded tin-plate, dated to approx. 8th cent. (A. Tautavičius, 1996, p. 196).

A collection of gilded items found during excavations in the Vidgiriai (Šilutė district) cemetery was of particular significance. In this cemetery there were three zoomorphic brooches found in graves No 2, 30 and 32 in addition to a shoulder strap with a gilded case and rectangle mounting found in grave No 23. It should be noticed that the brooch found in grave No 2 is not only gilded but nielloed as well. The foot of the brooch has an impression of the stylised head of an animal. An ornament of a falling wave is made in nielloed method. The surface of the brooch is not gilded completely. Gilded are only lines on the brooch and bow. Due to this the brooch has even more play on colours. The other two brooches are thin gold-plated. The foot and bow of the second brooch – found in grave No 30 – are decorated with relief animal ornament. The ornament shows as if the head of a bird with two beaks and three-nailed paws of a beast of prey. The third brooch is different in ornamental stylistics. The foot terminal of the brooch is decorated with the head of a bear-teethed animal. The foot is also decorated with ornaments symbolising the teeth of a beast of prey. The bow is decorated in spiral ornaments. The spring of the brooch is covered, the bow of the spring is wide and ornamented with spirals as well. This brooch has close analogues in the Geistautai (Latvia) cemetery and Scandinavian lands.

In Middle Lithuania meanwhile there is one known gilded brooch from grave No 106 in the Plinkaigalys (Kėdainiai district) cemetery. The body of the brooch is completed gold-plated. The sides of the brooch are decorated with a deep relief ornament – two horizontal letters “S” and a spiral on the wrong shape of letter “S”. The spirals are separated by groups of cross notches. The foot of the brooch ends in the expressive stylised head of an animal (V. Kazakevičius, 1993, p. 107). The explorer dates the grave to approx. 500 A.D. and discovers southern and Prussian traditions (see the same, p. 109).

In East Lithuania the grave of the Taurapilis (Utena district) “Duke” is the most prominent. Among other grave good in Barrow No 5, there was found a sword with ornate scabbards decorated in silver-gilded mountings. In addition, the grave finding included three silver gilded brooches, gilded beltplates and an amulet. It is presumed

that two bigger brooches belonged to the sword belt. The edges of the sword scabbards were decorated with a silver plate which was covered with a massive gilded plate with a deep relief ornament made of a line broken in a right angle on the outside. Below the opening, the outside of the scabbards was decorated in two gilded linear plates of a double cross. On the same level there were two silver gilt buckles. A round gilded plate decorated in a deep relief bent-line ornament was fixed on the outside of the scabbards. The chape was reinforced with a U-shape silver mounting. A gilded plate decorated in a falling wave ornament was joining the top terminals of the chape. The mounting terminal was also decorated with a gilded tin-platelet in axis ornaments (A. Tautavičius, 1981, p. 22 – 24). Underneath the sword blade there was a pendant amulet decorated in a relief ornament. Triptych swastika o triquests are depicted on the sides of the amulet. The buckles are in massive mountings of a fish shape. They are decorated in a symmetric ornament from deep “D”-shape figures, while the small buckle and the tongue have thin notches. The upper side of the buckles and mountings are gilded. The scabbards, buckles of the sword and the amulet have many ornamental and stylistic features in common. This could indicate that all these items were made by one and the same hand crafter. Similar items are also found in the lands of the Danube basin. The third silver-gilded buckle found is quite massive, decorated with a deep ornament of small triangles. The shape and ornament of the buckle are characteristic to the Balkans, Crimea (A. Tautavičius, 1981, p. 25). The grave goods in grave No 5 are dated by A. Tautavičius to the end of 5th cent. – beginning of the 6th cent.

Two more gilded items have been recently found in the cultural territory of barrows in East Lithuania. One of them is a buckle with a mounting found in the Ziboliškiai III (Švenčionys district) barrow cemetery (V. Kliaugautė, 2000, p. 183). The mounting is decorated with a deep relief ornament: the edges – in a line broken in a right angle, the middle – in two linear letters “S” separated with a notch. It looks like the buckle is decorated in the nielloed method as was the buckle in the Vidgiriai, grave No 2. The bow of the buckle is oval, decorated in small circles with a dot in the middle. The tongue of the buckle has flaring, bent terminals. The author noticed a number details similar to items in Taurapilis, Plinkaigalys and Vidgiriai, and dated the buckle to the middle and 2nd semester of 5th cent.

The second item was found in barrow No 30 in the Sudata I (Švenčionys district) barrow cemetery. It is a mounting similar to the foot of a finger-shaped brooch (V. Semėnas, 2000, p. 198). The front of the mounting is decorated in spiral composition. The author dates the item

to 6th – 7th century. Taking into consideration that fragments of a golden neck-ring were found in the adjacent Sudata IV barrow cemetery, one should guess that somewhere near this place there was an important tribal centre of the Middle Iron Age.

Review and collation of all silver gilded items it becomes clear that all of them are unique. They do not duplicate each other: they are similar just in shape, stylistics and ornaments, while compositions are often different. These items are a perfect example of creativity of jewellers, their skills to manage the material and shape. What is not quite clear it is whether these items have been made by foreign handcrafters on site, or brought from other places.

Literature

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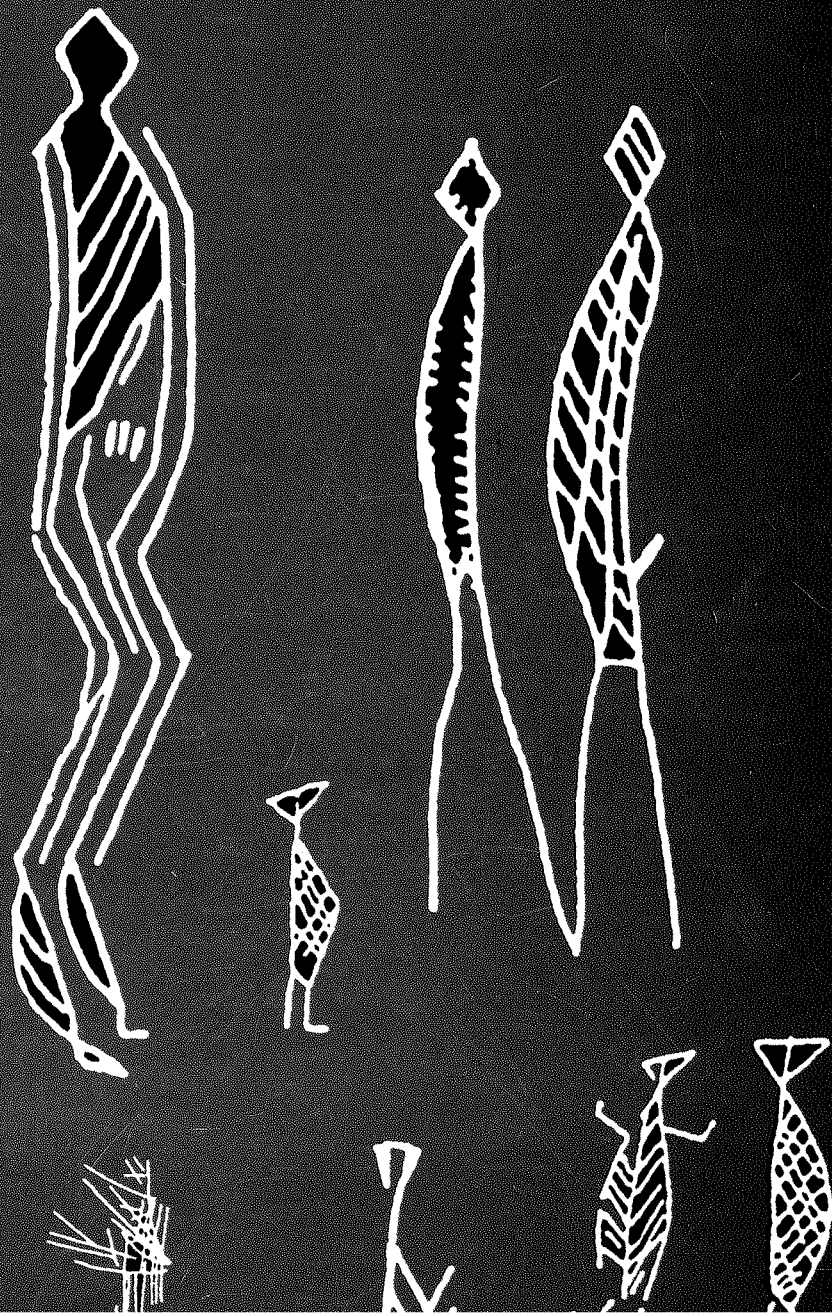
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