

and head are loose and can be added to the body by means of a short shaft, but we do not know why they are removable. At first glance the head seems well proportioned and well modeled. But if, however, we compare it with bronzes of the Kurgan period at Minussinsk, we find that here the legs are more detached. This stiffening in the shape of the legs has already been noticed in the Jenissei valley. The head also lacks the finest traditions in modeling, the animating perforations of the eyes are gone, only those of the nostrils remain. A loop placed on the socket is as usual for ribbons. It is however significant that in getting away from nature the tail has also become a loop. These details all point towards the second period of those mentioned in Chapter V, that is about 500 A.D.

We have already spoken of the use of the head of a bird of prey at Ul'ski Aul. The Scythian type is a flat plaque with the animal in profile and repeated three times along the rim. This, more than any other, has served as an ornamental motive. No examples in the round have been found in the Steppe region. Pole-tops from the Chinese frontier, however, are quite different (Pl. VI nos. 3 & 4), in that they are as naturalistic and as much in the round as at Minussinsk. Plate VI no. 3 is of an eagle as is shown by the arched and notched beak. The ear instead of the eye is perforated.

The other example (Pl. VI no. 4), is in two parts. Above a tube topped with a half ball, we find an eagle's head. Its short and round beak as well as its heavy neck justifies such a zoological designation. It has been impossible to determine why the upper section is removable nor what was the purpose of the hollow thus formed. Perhaps it was filled with small balls to serve as a rattle. All the plasticity and artistic formation of pieces from Minussinsk are lacking here. None of the characteristic perforations remain. The artist has worked independently, using his own ideas. This thrusting aside of the usual artistic formulas seems to me only possible at a relatively late date, that of about the middle of the T'ang period. The hedgehog pole-top (Pl. VII no. 1), from the point of view of style and date, seems close to that of the bird's head. Once more the piercing has been replaced by lines limited to only the essential elements.

The same remarks are applicable to the mating pigs (P. VII no. 2). The hog's jaws are slightly open, the sow is entirely one with the socket. A certain living quality remains, although there is but little movement in the drawing. Any connection with those elements of stylization that were indispensable at Minussinsk as well as to the Scythians is completely lacking, and therefore points towards a date of about 500 A.D.

The hedgehog is one of the family of sacred animals of Siberian schamanism (10). The pig, on the other hand, belongs to the Chinese frontier, as since earliest times it has been a domestic animal of China. The more or less nomadic barbarians were only interested in the wild species, the game-animal.