

near to nature, and at times even ancient motives reappeared. It is impossible to attribute varied yet contemporaneous styles to specific peoples; they appear, so to speak, in contradiction to each other; but this merely helps to prove the diversity of the artistic tendencies in our region.

c) The horse and the ass.

Draught and saddle animals are found in Scythian and Sarmatian art in combat with an enemy, and with some ornament used as decoration or as part of the animal. But only at Minussinsk, where we find both the wild and the domestic species, do they play an important part alone.

Plate X no. 1 is probably of a wild ass, particularly valued as a game-animal by the northern barbarians (27). This fairly large applique has a parallel in the Jenissei valley (28), which is surpassed from an artistic point of view by the object from the Chinese frontier. The ringed eye-holes, nostrils and mouth, bring it into close relationship with Minussinsk. A fresh and natural reproduction such as this may be placed about the year 500 A.D. A Han date would appear improbable, as the Siberian model was only created after the beginning of the millennium. Horses, usually small, but often very well drawn (Pl. X no. 2), were made a little later, probably at the beginning of the T'ang dynasty. This type, saddled or unsaddled, is often found at Minussinsk (29). The animal of Plate X no. 3 seems to be of no definite species, and is therefore a later piece (about 1000). It is alone here, but on Plate X no. 4 we find it doubled with some undeterminable vegetable growth where the two bodies meet. This plant decoration seems to be only a group of the same comma-shaped ornamentation which serves also to embellish the hooves, nostrils, ears and manes.

Plate X nos. 5 & 6 are characterised by the deterioration in technical skill and creative faculty found at the beginning of the II millennium. Between the chest and lower jaw of the galoping horse (Pl. X no. 5) there is a bird's head, a well known motive of early times, used to fill empty spaces. The modeling is without movement, the casting very careless. The latest of all the types is that of Plate X no. 6, specimens of which are frequently found. Any resemblance to nature has completely disappeared along with the modeling. Two animals have again been connected, but as always in this type, the smaller one is above the larger, and may perhaps be supposed to represent the colt. The distinctive tuft on each animal contrasts with the otherwise bad proportions and monotonous details. This group of horses of a primitive style yet of a late period has a curious parallel in the west, where, however, the same artistic deterioration took place in a much shorter lapse of time. A horse, or another animal with its young, is often found in the Caucasus on square openwork belt buckles (30). There again the composition is one of piling up, but the latter pieces must be placed at the beginning of our era. Probably our specimens from the Chinese