

well as the cheeks and paws of the tigers, are rendered by ringed perforations, a reminder of Minussinsk.

Openwork and geometric motives form part of the last phase of artistic production. In the two examples from the Loo collection, the stylised transformation already prevents any clear understanding of the ornamentation (Plate XX nos. 10 & 11). Both have some means of fastening them at the back. On Plate XX no. 10 there is a horizontally placed tiger at the end of the hook. At the beginning of the bar is a small shield flanked by circles and beaded ribbons, and bearing roughly drawn animal-heads, perhaps those of horses. This design is found, identical as far as technique and artistic conception is concerned, on Christian seals that, thanks to Pelliot, can be dated between the XII and XIII centuries (93). The same date may therefore be given to Plate XX nos. 10 & 11. The other designs on the buckle section of the first piece are only distinguishable in a horizontal position. On each side, with their backs toward the centre, are two horses, one above the other. The hook Plate XX no. 11 bears two rudimentary animals surrounding a Maltese cross. The openwork buckle is decorated in two rows, each with three wild asses, heads turned back.

c) Hooks of uncertain use.

The small bronzes placed under this heading were probably never attached to the belt. They may have been awls or bodkins used to undo knots and serve many other useful purposes. In any case Tallgren groups similar objects from the centre of the valley of the Volga with belt fasteners (94). Since small Scythian objects have only been summarily published, we cannot know if this type was familiar to the first metal artisans of the western Steppes. They were part of the Ananino civilization (Pl. XX no. 12), at the latest of 200 B.C. (95), the region near the centre of the Volga that borrowed nearly all of its forms from the Scythians. The fragment (Pl. XX no. 13) is certainly a copy of the Ananino piece reproduced here and also has a fantastic animal at the tip of the hook. It differs from its prototype by a line-drawn rather than a plastic rendering. It may have been created about 1000. A form that seems more likely to have been put to the use suggested above appears on Plate XX no. 14 because of the curve of the bar, and the end in the shape of a fantastic animal-head that has a perforation under the jaws by which it may have been affixed. There seems to be no difference in period, to my mind, between this and the former example.

NOTES OF CHAPTER VI

- (1) Borovka, 1), pl. 24-28.
- (2) Rostovtzeff, 1), p. 99.
- (3) Chavannes, 1), p. 85.
- (4) Chavannes, 1), p. 220.