The Range of the “Cosmic” Deer

A Web Presentation for Future Discussions

Pazyryk Tattoo, ca. 400 BCE

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To Black Sea

Apparent range of the culture of the “Cosmic” horse
The following somewhat random collection of images of the “cosmic” deer/horse is primarily intended to supply fodder for discussion.

A few very tentative observations:

1) The talismanic nature of the deer is relatively obvious from the tattoos and the weapons that carry the deer

2) The use as standard finials suggest that the “cosmic” deer is perhaps a totemic or clan emblem for the Scyths (?)

3) In the Western Scythic area, felines or gryphons attack the deer, = political symbolism?

4) The Parthians seem to use the deer as a sign of stature?

5) Shapur kills the “Parthian” deer as a symbol of conquest?
The Deer in Question, Northeast Asia and Altai

In the trans-Altai, the “deer” is almost certainly the “Reindeer” A male caribou, *Rangifer tarandus*. However, the reindeer is the only species of deer in which the female has horns—perhaps to help her compete for scarce food supplies. In other words, the gender of most representations cannot be determined.
The Deer in Question, Northeast Asia and Altai

Order: Artiodactyla (even-toed ungulates)
Family: Cervidae (deer)
Genus: Rangifer (reindeer, caribou)
The Deer in Question, West Asia

In Persian regions the deer is probably the Persian deer, Dama dama mesopotamica, which is subspecies of the Fallow deer Dama dama dama, known in Europe
(Thanks to Heleanor Feltham)

Male            Female

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The Deer in Question, South Asia


Axis deer, chital - *CERVUS AXIS*

While its range is currently India and Sri Lanka the Axis Deer of Chital of South Asia may have been a component in Pakistan and Afghanistan.
The “Cosmic” Deer in the East
Amur River culture
Ca. 6000-2000 BCE

In this, and the following contexts, the “cosmic” deer, seems to be a “stand alone” totem or other symbol of great potency for the persons engaged in producing it.
The “Cosmic” Deer in the Altai

Pazyryk Site
Ca. 400 BCE

1. Altai Mountain Province showing position of Pazyryk (drawn by Translator).
The “Cosmic” Deer in the Altai

Pazyryk Site
Ca. 400 BCE

The Ice :“lens” that preserved the ephemera in the tombs.
From a Scientific American article of the early 70s
The “Cosmic” Deer in the Altai

Pazyryk Site, Kurgan 1
Ca. 400 BCE
Horse as deer painting: based on felt artifacts in the tomb.
The “Cosmic” Deer in the Altai
Pazyryk Site, Kurgan 1
Ca. 400 BCE
Leogriff Attacking an Ibex from the saddle
The “Cosmic” Deer in the Altai
Pazyryk Site, Kurgan 2
Ca. 400 BCE
Staff Finial 1
The “Cosmic” Deer in the Altai
Pazyryk Site, Kurgan 2
Ca. 400 BCE
Staff Finial 2
Gold leaf over leather
The “Cosmic” Deer in the Altai

Pazyryk Site, Kurgan 2
Ca. 400 BCE
Staff Finial 3
Gryphen with deer head
Emerging from mouth
Wood,

Note that the
Antlers become bird heads
The “Cosmic” Deer in the Altai
Pazyryk Site, Kurgan 2
Ca. 400 BCE
Staff Finial 4
Gryphen with deer head
Emerging from mouth
Wood.

Is the Gryphon
disgorging or devouring
the “Cosmic” deer?
The “Cosmic” Deer in the Altai
Pazyryk Site, Kurgan 2
Ca. 400 BCE
Tattoos on arms

These would seem to be talismanic empowerment of the physical being?
The “Cosmic” Deer in the Altai

Pazyryk Site, Kurgan 2
Ca. 400 BCE
Tattoo on right arm
The “Cosmic” Deer in the Altai

Pazyryk Site, Kurgan 5 Ca. 400 BCE wall hanging (identifying the location of three following details)
The “Cosmic” Deer in the Altai

Pazyryk Site, Kurgan 5 Ca. 400 BCE wall hanging: Detail 1: reconstruction painting of the horse rider approaching a goddess holding the tree of life [? JCH]

A scythic rider reporting to the goddess of life upon his death?
The “Cosmic” Deer in the Altai
Pazyryk Site, Kurgan 5 Ca. 400 BCE wall hanging: Detail 2, photo of horse rider
The “Cosmic” Deer in the Altai

Pazyryk Site, Kurgan 5 Ca. 400 BCE wall hanging: Detail 4, photo and reconstruction of complex composite creature, having human face antlers, wings, leonid body, and exotic tail.
The “Cosmic” Deer Western Scyths

**Fragment of Facing from a Goryt**  Gold; repousse. 40.5x22.2 cm  Scythian culture. 7th century BC  Kelermess Barrow No. 4 (Excavations of D.G. Shultz), Kuban, Krasnodar Region (formerly Giaghinsky District of Kuban Region)  Russia  Source of Entry:  Ἕλληνική Αρχαιολογική Εταιρεία, Αθήνα. 1905

From the Hermitage Museum site

http://tinyurl.com/f54ko
The “Cosmic” Deer Western Scyths

Terminal Bronze; cast. H. 11 cm 7th - 6th century BC Mongolia
Source of Entry: from the collection of Paskevich. The figure of the deer is executed in a realistic manner. The stylistic peculiarities testify to the object's provenance from Middle Asia

From the Hermitage Museum site

http://tinyurl.com/gtj9r
The “Cosmic” Deer Western Scyths
Black Sea & Sea of Azov region, Shield Plaque, Kostromskaya tomb ca. 600 BCE
I assume (without much reason) a totemic icon. (see http://tinyurl.com/f54ko)
The “Cosmic” Deer Western Scyths
Black Sea & Sea of Azov region, Ulski tomb, finial 5th 6th cent BCE
The “Cosmic” Deer Western Scyths

Facing for a Horse's Frontlet
- Gold; stamped, chased. L. 24.5 cm
- Scythian culture. 5th century BC
- Barrow No. 401, Dnieper Area, Cherkassk Region (formerly Kiev Province), the Village of Zhurovka, Russia (now Ukraine)
- Source of Entry: Imperial Archaeological Commission, St Petersburg. 1904

Hermitage Museum
http://tinyurl.com/o82bn

Does this “Deerify” the horse?
At this point in history the deer (and other ungulates) begin to lose to the lions and the gryphons.
The "Cosmic" Deer Western Scyths
Black Sea & Sea of Azov region, Bratoliubivs’ky tomb, Banner Cap 5th cent BCE (side 2)
The “Cosmic” Deer Western Scyths
Black Sea & Sea of Azov region, Bratoliubivs’ky tomb, Banner Cap 5th cent BCE (top)
The “Cosmic” Deer Western Scyths
Black Sea & Sea of Azov region, Kul Oba tomb, polymorphic composite deer 4th cent BCE (top)

Yet, here and in other examples he retains his cosmogenic nature?
The “Cosmic” Deer Western Scyths
Black Sea & Sea of Azov region, Chertomlyk tomb, Amphora 4th cent BCE (overview)

Position of Scenes a & b
The “Cosmic” Deer Western Scyths
Black Sea & Sea of Azov region, Chertomlyk tomb, Amphora 4th cent BCE (Scene a)

In this the horse and the deer seem become conflated?
The “Cosmic” Deer Western Scyths
Black Sea & Sea of Azov region, Chertomlyk tomb, Amphora 4th cent BCE (Scene b)
The “Cosmic” Deer Western Scyths
Black Sea & Sea of Azov region, Tomb 30 at Velyka, Sword & Scabbard 4th cent BCE
The “Cosmic” Deer Western Scyths
Black Sea & Sea of Azov region, Tovsta Mohyla Tom, gorget, 4th cent BCE
The “Cosmic” Deer Western Scyth
Black Sea & Sea of Azov region, Tovsta Mohyla Tomb, gorget, 4th cent BCE

Horses replace the deer in the attack by the Leogryphs
The “Cosmic” Deer Western Scyths
Black Sea & Sea of Azov region, Unknown Tomb, gortyos, 4th cent BCE Overview
For color see Hermitage  http://tinyurl.com/fuekl
The “Cosmic” Deer Western Scyths
Black Sea & Sea of Azov region, Unknown Tomb, gortyos, 3th cent BC, det 1

The deer/horse are totally subjugated by the lions / leopards
The “Cosmic” Deer Western Scythans
Black Sea & Sea of Azov region, Unknown Tomb, gortyos, 3th cent BC, det 2

The Gryphon’s now fight against the lions / leopards
The Deer in Parthia
Parthian King Gotarzea I, r.95-90 BCE (Ag, drachm)

It appears to me that he has 8 tiny deer on his crown
The Deer in Sassanian Iran
Shapur I killing deer ca. 4th cent.
The Deer in Sassanian Iran
A drinking cup with a deer in a lotus ca. 6th cent
The Deer in Sassanian Iran
A wine ewer ca. 6-7th C
The End—Should we now do the “Cosmic” panther?

Plaque in the Shape of a Panther  Gold; soldered, chased, cloisonne enamelling. L. 32.6 cm  Scythian culture. 7th century BC  Kelemess Barrow No. 1(Excavations of D. G. Shchults), Kuban, Krasnodar Region (formerly Giaghinsky District of Kuban Region)  Russia  Source of Entry:  a) Imperial Archaeological Commission, St Petersburg. 1905

From the Hermitage museum  http://tinyurl.com/od2sy
The “Real” End