

## A study on the Scythian Earrings

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### Abstract

Scythian Earrings in the Black Sea region had completely degenerated, stifled by motifs and shapes of Greek origin, retaining its representational realism and its full emotional vitality.

The purpose of this study is to review and research the symbolic meaning and classifying the types of the Scythian Earrings style through the tombs bequests.

The Scythian Earrings were divided into the styles according to the shape, Earring with Ends Shaped like animal's Heads, Boat-Shaped Earrings, Bird-Shaped Pendants earrings, Earrings with a Disc and a Pendant, Earrings Shaped like the Figures, Earring with the drop Pendant, Spiral Earrings.

Earrings based on the boat shape enjoyed a long popularity among the Scythians. As that form became elaborated and combined with the disk-pendent, it reflected native rather than Asian or Hellenic tastes.

Although Scythian earrings were produced based on the shapes of Greece earrings, they recreated these as Scythian unique style. In particular, the animal motive and the decoration have various changes. The exquisite earrings attest to the elegant taste and splendid wealth of the upper classes.

**Key Words** : Ends Shaped like animal's Heads, Boat-shaped Earrings, Bird-shaped pendants, Earrings with a Disc and a Pendant, Spiral Earrings

### I. Introduction

The Scythians were the great nomadic people in the ancient South Eastern Europe and Asia. They were also known for using quality jewelry products of all kinds. Their role is well remembered in the complete history of the Jewelry products.

The Scythian people were known to be wearing exotic jewelry products on their neck, ankles, arm, and ears and so on. These were nomadic people who knew a lot about cattle rearing.

The Scythians were not artist at all but they were known to be very good in wearing gigantic jewelry products. This was also seen in most of

their burial sites. The excavations done in most of their royal burial sites revealed that the Scythian was great jewelry lovers.

As they journey with their cattle, they interacted with some of the cities in the Middle East that had elaborated jewelry tradition. The Scythians had a veritable passion for adornment, delighting in decorating themselves no less than their horses and belongings. Their love of jewelry expressed at every turn. The most magnificent pieces naturally come from the royal tombs, where the skeletons were invariably bedecked with golden diadems, head-dresses, necklaces, belts, bracelets, ear and finger-rings, torques, pendants, amulets, beads, buttons, buckles and paste locket but even the less important burials provide an abundance of jewelry and precious materials.<sup>1)</sup> Such cultures influenced the Scythian nomads a lot.

The hammering and stamping method were the basic method used in the production of the Scythian jewelry. Various images were hammered out of gold and other metal to create definite shapes which were often embedded with colored stone or glass.

In all, the main purpose of the Scythian jewelry into the history of the jewelry evolution is for the sake of total learning about all that concerns jewelry. The Scythians were mainly nomads but they wore a lot of the jewelry products as they moved about from place to place.<sup>2)</sup>

The purpose of this study is to research the symbolic meaning and classifying the types of the Scythian Earrings style through the antique records and tombs bequests.

The Methodology of this study is classifying the types of the art style of the earring from the burial mounds of Scythian chiefs.

## II. Scythian ornaments culture

Scythian contacts with craftsmen in Greek colonies along the northern shores of the Black Sea resulted in the famous Scythian gold adornments that feature among the most glamorous artifacts of world museums.

The changes in material life took place in the Sarmatian period also changed the face of Scythian culture, although old traditions were preserved in some individual forms. The role of Greek civilization further increased owing to the nearness of Scythian settlements to the Greek towns of the north Black Sea and there were close contacts between the inhabitants of these towns and the Scythian.<sup>3)</sup>

The Scythians and their elaborately ornamented gold objects also reveal a tale of interaction with the Greek world, which purchased grain, fur, and amber from the ferocious warriors. Profits from this trade brought the Scythians the wealth to indulge their taste for elaborate objects ranging from exquisite jewelry for themselves to elaborate ornamentation for their horses.<sup>4)</sup>

In exchange for produce, Greeks provided the Scythians with luxury objects jewelry, weapons, vessels—many decorated with representations of Scythian.<sup>5)</sup> "Greco-Scythian" works depicting Scythians within a much more Hellenic style date from a later period, when Scythians had already adopted elements of Greek culture.

Scythians had a taste for elaborate personal jewelry, weapon-ornaments and horse-trappings. They executed Central-Asian animal motifs with Greek realism: winged gryphons attacking horses, battling stags, deer, and eagles, combined with everyday motifs like milking ewes, personal jewelry of the 5th and 4th centuries bc were often made by Greek artisans and combined

the richness of Greek composition and technique with Scythian motifs.

The animal-style had a strong influence in western Asia during the 7th century BC. Such ornaments as necklaces, bracelets, pectorals, diadems, and earrings making up the Ziwiye treasure (discovered in Iran near the border between Kurdistan and Azerbaijan) provide evidence of this Asiatic phase of Scythian gold-working art. The ornaments are characterized by highly expressive animal forms.<sup>6)</sup>

In the third Chertomlyk chamber lay two bodies, each adorned with a gold torque, gold bracelets and rings, and a belt decorated with gold plaques. A woman's body lay on it, still wreathed in gold bracelets, finger-rings and earrings.<sup>7)</sup>

Kul-Oba was the first Scythian royal barrow to be excavated in modern times. Uncovered in 1830, the stone tomb yielded a wealth of precious artefacts which drew considerable public interest to Scythian world.

In the Bosphorus area, a culture formed that reflected the interaction of two worlds – the Hellenic and the barbarian. The works in the Hermitage collection are good illustrations of its distinctive features: the gold torque (4th century B.C., Kul-Oba), for example, is a symbol of authority in barbarian societies that was produced in a Greek workshop. Among the masterpieces of the collection is an earring of miniature workmanship (4th century B.C., Kul-Oba) decorated with the finest granulation, filigree and two figures of the goddess Nike. The Hermitage has seven similar earrings, examples of what is known as the "luxurious style"<sup>8)</sup>

Earrings were popular in the ancient Black Sea that of Scythian aristocrats were kind of a golden ring, decorated with grain and filigree, kalachika or spiral high shackle.

The excavations of royal burial have provided the most complete record of the jewelry of the Scythians and personal jewelry of the 5th and 4th centuries bc were often made by Greek artisans and combined the richness of Greek composition and technique with Scythian motifs.<sup>9)</sup>

Richest grave of the Sarmatian times in the Crimea was discovered under direction of the Soviet archaeologist Askold Schepinsky in May 1974. The barrow was named after the locality Nogaychik, which situated nearby the place of excavations.

In the sarcophagus was buried a woman in age of 35-40, 1 m 70 cm in height. Her head was covered by gold appliques—perhaps it was a head-dress. A pair of earrings laid nearby.<sup>10)</sup>

The Arzhan II barrow, which has a diameter of 80 meters, was investigated during the years 1998 – 2002. An extremely important result of the 2001 excavations was the discovery in the burial mound of an undisturbed grave dating from the 6th-5th centuries B.C. in which a man and woman were buried. The richness of the burial costume and articles accompanying the deceased tells us that they belonged to the very top level of the nomad nobility. For example, the clothing and headgear of the buried couple were embroidered with golden emblems and complemented by other decorations including grivnas, earrings, pendants and buckles.<sup>11)</sup>

Necklaces, bracelets, earrings, rings, pendants and other sorts of jewellery from the necropolises of the ancient city colonies on the Northern Black Sea coast allow us not only to judge the skill of the Greek craftsmen, but also to trace the development of the shapes of jewellery and techniques. Remarkable works of ancient applied art come from the rich royal burials in the Kul-Oba mound, the large mound

necropolis of Pantikapaion, the capital of the Bosporan kingdom, and the graves of members of the priesthood – the Large and Small Bliznitsa (Twin) mounds and the Artiukhovo mound on the Taman peninsula. Sixth-century B.C. earrings found in the necropolis of the ancient town of Olbia are the most ancient in this section.

In Ukraine the new and virgin Scythian burial place, covered with 8 meters of soil, of a young Scythian queen with her clothes on that appeared to be the richest one ever discovered in the tsars' mounds of the steppe Scythia. The golden aureole of head-garments embroidered with the plates, garments and shoes, over-temple pendants and bracelets makes one dizzy. The massive golden hryvna in the form of hoop and 478 gram in weight on her neck was decorated with the mould lions' figurines chasing a deer. The young mother was not alone but with her two-year-son, the prince. The baby was lying in an alabaster sarcophagus together with silver and golden household things. His dried body was decorated with a big golden bracelet, a girdle with the golden buttons, golden hryvna on his neck, earrings and a finger-ring.<sup>12)</sup>

There are earrings are said to be from the ancient city of Olbia on the northern coast of the Black Sea. Long a colonial trading post of the ancient Greeks, the city was inhabited by a mix of Greeks and Scythians and, from the third century B.C., Sarmatians as well. These earrings were made in the mid-first century A.D., a time when local inhabitants received gold and silver from the Romans in exchange for local goods such as salt and grain. The earrings display an array of accomplished goldsmithing techniques: three teardrop-shaped sardonyx stones in serrated, or dogtooth, settings are placed above

a crossbar adorned with twisted filigree and granulation. The five chains of twisted gold wire hanging from the crossbar would have originally terminated in small glass beads. The Sarmatians, like the Scythians, buried their dead with jewelry and other possessions, and earrings were likely part of a wealthy woman's burial attire. A grave recently excavated from the area suggests that a full complement of burial jewelry would have also included several necklaces, a pair of bracelets, gold brooches, and a string of beads for the the head.<sup>13)</sup>

Richest grave of the Sarmatian times in the Crimea was discovered under direction of the Soviet archaeologist Askold Schepinsky in May 1974. The barrow was named after the locality Nogaychik, which situated nearby the place of excavations. In the sarcophagus was buried a woman in age of 35–40, 1m 70cm in height. Her head was covered by gold appliques—perhaps it was a head-dress. A pair of earrings laid nearby.<sup>14)</sup>

Many objects combine traditional Greek themes and styles with distinctive indigenous influences. For instance, the Scythians liked images of animals and everyday life, and they loved gold and jewelry.<sup>15)</sup>

The Scythians' interest in earrings and pendants as forms of personal adornment was hardly unusual. Earrings were a highly elaborated form of female ornament in Egypt and in the Near East: for this reason, it is all the more remarkable that such objects are generally absent from early Scythian burials. While that absence may reflect only the extent to which Scythian burials have been plundered, it may also indicate that among the Scythians, earrings were not a preferred type of jewelry. Indeed, such a lack of interest is supported by the fact that the earliest earring types appearing

in Scythian burials were boat-shaped or circular in form: both types were in common use in the Mediterranean and Near Eastern worlds from a very early period and appear to have been borrowed by the Scythians from their non-nomadic neighbors.<sup>16)</sup>

All the earrings listed below are gold; many involve an elaborate use of filigree, granulation, and enamel. In their elegant refinement of metalwork techniques, one senses a distant affiliation with the less modest inlaid gold ornaments found at Tillya-Tepe, at the far eastern frontiers of Hellenism.<sup>17)</sup>

Gold was widely used by the ruling elite of the various Scythian tribes.<sup>18)</sup>

The animal images probably had religious or magic significance: representations of strong, frightening, or speedy animals on the weapons or armor of a mounted warrior would spread over the vast expanse of the Eurasian steppe, they testify to the wide intertribal exchanges between Scythians and the other peoples of these lands.<sup>19)</sup>

### III. Scythian Earrings Style

Earrings found in Scythian burials fall into a limited number of types and appear to reflect the gradual assimilation of foreign traditions of personal adornment.

The Earrings were divided into the styles according to the shape, Earrings with Ends Shaped like animal's Heads, Boat-Shaped Earrings, Bird-Shaped Pendants Earrings, Earrings with a Disc and a Pendant, Earrings Shaped like the Figures, Earrings with the drop Pendant, Spiral Earrings.

#### 1. Earrings with Ends Shaped like animal's Heads



<Fig 1> Earring with Ends Shaped like Lion's Heads 300–280 BC Chersonesus  
–<http://www.hermitagemuseum.org>

<Fig 1><sup>20)</sup> was a pair of Earring with ends shaped like lion's heads. 300–280 BC, Chersonesus. Each with detailed lion head terminals, their collars with filigree twisted wire ornament including spirals framed by single bands on either side, ending in darts outlined with filigree, the hoops formed of three plain wires twisted together and tapering into a single wire at the point, the lion's mouth open to receive the point. They are simple in shape, but the quality of the workmanship seen in the relief lion's heads in the centre of the disc and the granular pattern of large triangles around its edges places them among the finest examples of the jeweller's art.<sup>21)</sup>

The hoops on this splendid pair of earrings are formed from coiled wires which taper to a point at one end. The other end terminates in an ornamental collar from which the head of a lion emerges. The heads are formed from sheet gold worked in repoussé. The mouths are open to form a hole for attaching the pin.<sup>22)</sup>

While the absence of this earring type may be a matter of chance, it may also reflect a regional Scythian taste that preferred a greater

indication of substance than is offered by the peculiar fashion of mounting large heads on thin necks attached to hoops with radically tapered forms.<sup>23)</sup>

## 2. Boat-Shaped Earrings

<Fig 2><sup>24)</sup> was a pair of Boat-Shaped Gold Earrings was forged, stamped, soldered, filigreed. Scythian culture. 4th century BC. Pastak Barrow No. 2, Gold; forged, stamped, soldered, filigreed.



<Fig 2> Boat-Shaped Earrings 4C BC Pastak Barrow No. 2

-*The Scythian Gold from the Hermitage*, p.101.



<Fig 3> Boat-Shaped Earrings Second quarter of the 4th century BC Bosporan Kingdom, Panticapaeum

-<http://www.hermitagemuseum.org>



<Fig 4> Boat-Shaped Earrings 5C BC Volkovtsy barrow No. 4

-*Scythian Art*, plate 115,116



<Fig 5> Boat-Shaped Earrings 425-400 BC Nymphaeum barrow No. 17

-<http://www.hermitagemuseum.org>

How such earrings were worn is not immediately obvious. The difficulty is that if the hook was threaded through the earlobe starting from the outside, then the sharp point of the hook, and the animal head with protruding tongue at the prow of the boat, would be pointing at, or jabbing, the neck. One possibility, then, is that the hook was threaded through the earlobe starting from the inside. Another possibility, given the 6.3 cm height of the earrings, is that they were not threaded through the earlobe at all, but rather were looped over

the ear.<sup>25)</sup>

<Fig 3> was decorated with Filigreed Palmettes, Gold; filigreed with granulation, Second quarter of the 4th century BC, Bosporan Kingdom, Panticapaeum.

The Boat-shaped earring of high carat sheet gold formed around an inner core, decorated with filigreed bands around the body.

<Fig 4> was Boat-shaped earrings with filigree ornament and triangles of granulated surface and rosette terminals. 5th century BC, Gold. Volkovtsy barrow 4, Poltava Province.

Each earring is ornamented with a border of braid pattern, presumably made by the juxtaposition of two twisted wires, and rows of tiny granules and triangular masses of granules. Although these two earrings are said to be a pair, they are in fact different: the terminals of one are left plain, except for the rosette-cups; the terminals of the other are bordered with a collar of herring-bone pattern. The handling of the granulation on this second earring is cruder than that on the first.<sup>26)</sup>

<Fig 5> Boat-Shaped Earrings Gold; stamped, decorated with granulation. 425-400 BC, Nymphaeum Necropolis, Barrow No. 17, Crimea.

Eight earrings of this type were found in the burial; each earring has a plain boat-shaped body. Both terminals are marked by a collar of filigree and the terminal receiving the ear-wire is ornamented with a pyramid of granules. The pleasingly smooth surfaces of the boat elements, contrasted with the piled granulation, seems to reflect a Scythian sensibility more than contemporary tastes represented in Greek gold from outside the Pontic region.<sup>27)</sup>

The rest 1 was the boat-shaped earrings terminate with the heads of the griffins. The 'boats' are decorated with bands of wire and group of granules arranged in triangles. The

point where the 'tail' is attached is in the form of a rosette. Both are hollow and made up from several pieces: the 'boats' in two parts, the join disguised by means of the gold wire on top and bottom. The griffin heads too were made in two parts, and such features as the ears, tongues and the knobs on the foreheads would have been added. Nymphaeum barrow.<sup>28)</sup>

Boat-shaped earrings are very common in Scythian graves is one of the earthliest and most enduring of types from at least the second millennium B.C. It had a particular vogue in the fourth century.<sup>29)</sup>

These earrings represent the basic boat-shaped formulation that, ornamented with granulation is often associated with ancient Near Eastern traditions. The form has also been found in materials recovered from Ziwiye and Karmir Blur. The earring type could have been adopted by the Scythians either by way of Near Eastern or Greek Island traditions. By the Hellenistic period the simple boat shape had lost popularity; where it appears it is overwhelmed by an accretion of delicate detail. A more 'native' treatment of similar motifs on a boat shape is represented by a pair of earrings from Seven Brothers 7; there the braided ornament is replaced by chased patterns.<sup>30)</sup>

Whether of Greek or Scythian manufacture, the boat earrings found in Scythian burials generally display stylistic variations which distinguish them from those worn by the Greek people. Examples of boat earrings from the Assyrian, Greek, and Scythian cultures are adorned with triangular patterns fashioned in granulation. The use of similar motifs and the extensive trade which occurred across Eurasia make the cultural attribution of many artifacts quite difficult, regardless of the area where they were excavated. Among the artifacts recovered from

Scythian sites are several which appear to have been manufactured by Greek craftsmen utilizing styles which would appeal to Scythian tastes.<sup>31)</sup>

### 3. Bird-Shaped Pendants Earrings

<Fig 6> was Bird-shaped pendants Earrings. 4th BC, Gold, From Kurhan 8, burial z, near village of Volchans'ke.



<Fig 6> Bird-Shaped Pendants Earrings 4C BC  
Kurhan 8, burial  
-<http://www.brama.com>



<Fig 7> Bird-Shaped Pendants Earrings 4C BC  
Novoselitsy barrow  
-*Scythian Art*, plate 247.248



<Fig 8> Bird-Shaped Pendants earrings 6-4C  
BC Olbia, Ukraine,  
-<http://www.heritage-images.com>

The earring pendants are hollow boats decorated with braided filigree and granulated triangles. On the horns of the boats, a row of granules and spiral wrapped wire precedes duck-shaped finials and long hoops. From loops soldered on the body of the boats dangle eight or ten loop-in-loop chains with duck-shaped pendants. These, like the finials, are formed of two stamped halves, with granules along the seam and forming the eye.

Boat-shaped earrings begin appearing in Scythian graves from the fifth century BC, after ties had been established with the Greek colonies along the Black Sea. The type was especially popular in the fourth century, and a number of distinct variations are known. Compared to their Greek prototypes these earrings are larger and heavier, and the pendants are of exaggerated length and number. When worn the earrings would have responded to the Scythian predilection for movement and sound. This pair was found in the burial of a Scythian woman, along with a splendid gold necklace and a headdress richly decorated with gold plaques.<sup>32)</sup>



<Fig 7> was Crescent-shaped earrings decorated with granulated triangles and sculptured figurines of ducks at the ends and suspended on chains. Graeco-Scythian 4th century BC, Gold. Novoselitsy barrow 4Kiev Province (now Cherkassy Region).<sup>33)</sup>

The basic boat shape is virtually the same as that found in <Fig 4>, with a central braided-rope wire pattern and triangular masses of granulation. On each earring, water birds sit on each of the terminals; the large wire hook emerges from one of the birds and attaches to the other. From each earring hang four simple chains, each terminating in simple modeled birds, made from two joined halves of thin sheet gold. There is a marked difference between the handling of the earring body and the birds; one might almost imagine that the body was done by one person and the chains and birds added by another.

The resulting earring-boat-shaped with birds-is not found in Greek jewelry and represents a local adaptation of a basic earring form. A comparison could be made with a pair of earrings from Olbia. In that case, the basic body is a wire hoop from which hang three tapered hoops attached to plump birds, each perched on a circular base of granulation. The naive simplicity of the birds and of the whole construction is reminiscent of the variation given to the boat shape in the Novosel' tsy earrings. A similar bird motif appears in the case of the hanging birds on earrings from Deyev. As a complex form, the boat shape with simple birds differs significantly from comparisons recovered from outside the Scythian world.<sup>34)</sup>

<Fig 8> were a pair of gold earrings with pendants shaped like birds.<sup>35)</sup> Olbia, Ukraine, 6th-4th century BC. Pair of gold earrings with bird-shaped pendants, Scythian, Olbia, Ukraine,

6th-4th century BC.<sup>36)</sup>

Earrings based on the boat shape enjoyed a long popularity among the Scythians. As that form became elaborated and combined with the disk-pendant, it reflected native rather than Asian or Hellenic tastes.<sup>37)</sup>

Earrings with dangling pendants also appeared around the Black Sea region, and Greek examples have been found dating at least as early as the 5th century BC. Around the same time, boat earrings appeared among the goods of the Scythians, with whom the Greeks had extensive contact and trade.

#### 4. Earrings with a Disc and a Pendant

<Fig 9> was a pair of Earrings with a Disc and a Pyramid. Gold; stamped, engraved and filigreed, with granulation. Bosporan Kingdom. 330-300 BC. Bolshaya Iznitsa Barrow.<sup>38)</sup>



<Fig 9> Earrings with a Disc and a Pendant  
330-300 BC Bosporan Kingdom  
-<http://www.hermitagemuseum.org>

The earrings are of the disc and pyramid form widely found throughout the Greek world. East Greek jewellers, though, seem to have particularly favoured the use of decorative figures of Eros (Love) and Nike (Victory) such as those seen here. A winged figure of Nike connects the disc and the pyramid of each earring. The goddess kneels to the left with her right hand extended, probably playing knucklebones. Paired figures of Eros are suspended by chains on each earring. These are also winged and each pair holds a iunx or magic love charm – the precursor to Cupid's bow and arrow. Overall, the symbolism evokes success in the 'game' of love.

The intricate designs on the main elements of the earrings are achieved by applying a variety of different kinds of gold wire and gold granules of different sizes to sheet gold. The figures are of sheet gold, die-formed in two halves, and traces of enamelling can be seen in places.<sup>39)</sup>



**<Fig 10> Earrings with a Disc and a Pendant**  
**330–300 BC Bolshaya Bliznitsa Barrow**  
*–<http://www.hermitagemuseum.org>*



**<Fig 11> Earring with a Disc and a**  
**Boat-Shaped Pendant Circa 350 BC Kul Oba**  
**Barrow**  
*–Scythian Art, plate 130*



**<Fig 12> Earring with a Disc and a**  
**Boat-Shaped Pendant Circa 350 BC Kul Oba**  
**Barrow**  
*Scythian Art, plate 133*

<Fig 10> was a pair of Earrings with a Disc and a Crescent-Shaped Pendant. Gold: stamped,

engraved and filigreed, with granulation. Bosporan Kingdom. 330–300 BC. Bolshaya Bliznitsa Barrow, Krasnodar Region.<sup>40)</sup>

Disc-shaped earring of filigree work, within the centre a rosette surrounded by spiral-like ornament. A crescent decorated at one end with a figure of Eros and with an openwork palmette in the middle hangs below. From it dangle rosettes and bud-shaped pendants.<sup>41)</sup>

<Fig 11> was Earring with a Disc and a Boat-Shaped Pendant. Gold and enamel; stamped, decorated with filigree and granulation. Circa 350 BC. Kul Oba Barrow, Crimea, environs of Kerch.

Ear ornament: a disk decorated with floral design and a suspended crescent with drop-shaped beads on chains. The ends of the crescent decorated with three-layered rosettes and the stamped figure of the winged goddess Nike.<sup>42)</sup>

<Fig 12> was Earring with a Disc and a Boat-Shaped Pendant. Gold and enamel; stamped, decorated with filigree and granulation. Circa 350 BC. Kul Oba Barrow. Crimea, environs of Kerch.

Ear ornament: a disk with a suspended crescent and drop-shaped beads on chains. The disk covered with microscopic floral ornament egg-and-dart pattern rosettes and stamped figures of Nereids riding dolphins. Points of chain linking decorated with rosettes and inlaid with coloured enamels.<sup>43)</sup>

Within the materials recovered from Scythian burials of the fifth to third centuries, one finds a certain number of the usual Greek earring forms, such as the splayed spiral with granulated terminals and earrings with posts ornamented with disks or rosettes from which dangle miniature figures such as Erotes, Nikai, or dancing figures.

Earrings customarily consisted of two elements: a disc and a pendant. Pendants were as a rule covered in a delicate filigree pattern, extremely fine granulation and adornments in the form of rosettes and palmettes that were soldered on. The earring based on a large disk may well represent a specifically Scythian elaboration of non-native traditions, even though most of the fine disk-pendants and earrings are often referred to as 'Greek.'<sup>44)</sup>

## 5. Earrings Shaped like the Figures



<Fig 13> Pair of Earrings with a Rosette and Artemis Riding a Fallow Deer 325–300 BC Nymphaeum barrow

–<http://www.hermitagemuseum.org>



<Fig 14> Pair of Earrings Shaped like the Figures of Nike Circa 350 BC Pavlovsky Barrow

–<http://www.hermitagemuseum.org>



**<Fig 15> Pair of Earrings Shaped like a Woman' Head Circa 350 BC Bosporan Kingdom, Panticapaeum.**

*-<http://www.hermitagemuseum.org>*



**<Fig 16> Golden earrings of Scythian queen 4C BC Tolstaya Mogila barrow**

*-<http://visualrian.ru>*

<Fig 13> was a pair of Earrings with a Rosette and Artemis Riding a Fallow Deer. Gold and enamel; cast, stamped, decorated with filigree. 325–300 BC. Nymphaeum Necropolis, Crimea, environs of Kerch.

<Fig 14> was a pair of Earrings Shaped like the Figures of Nike with a tiny rosette over her head.<sup>45)</sup> Gold; chased, engraved and with filigree. Circa 350 bc Pavlovsky Barrow, Crimea, environs of Kerch.

Each earring of this pair takes the form of a Nike figure in flight, her wings spread, her robe pressed against her body, and her right hand

raised and holding a sash. The thick wire extending from her head is decorated with a rosette centered by a granule.

Jewelry featuring tiny figures in general, and this earring type, in particular, was favored in the Hellenistic period examples have been recovered from many sites outside of ancient Scythia. The delicacy of the Pavlovsky earrings distinguishes it from the large disk-pendant forms of Kul Oba and Bolsbaya Bliznitsa. The distinction in workmanship and style between the Pavlovsky type and the earrings with female figures of the Tolstaya Mogila type is even more pronounced. One must conclude that the Pavlovsky type represents imported objects or workmanship, and certainly an imported taste.<sup>46)</sup>

<Fig 15> was a pair of Earrings Shaped like a Woman' Head. Circa 350 BC. Bosporan Kingdom, Panticapaeum. Kerch, Crimea. Gold and enamel; stamped, chased and filigreed.

The earrings was depictions of the female heads in tall kalathos headdresses.

<Fig 16><sup>47)</sup> was Golden earrings of Scythian queen. The 4th century BC. The earrings were found at excavations of Scythian barrow Tolstaya Mogila.

Earrings each in the form of a female standing against two lions. The standing females raise both arms above their heads, as if in invocation. Of the small lions we see only their forelegs and heads on either side of the women. Eight plain amphorae hang from the sides and the lower border of each earring. The figures are sitting on or standing against thrones from the sides of which appear lion-like animals; but again, these details are difficult to recognize. The figures on the earrings are each fully clothed, with a long and belted garment. The combination of such dress a calathus and a lion throne would indicate that the figures refer

to Cybel, who is frequently shown on a lion-throne. It is not usual, however, to find Cybel with her arms raised; nor can that particular posture be readily connected with other goddess figures who came out of a Near Eastern tradition and who were sometimes associated either with felines or with other wild animals.

Perhaps the only possible conclusion is that all examples appear to represent an Asian rather than Mediterranean deity and in each case the workmanship indicates a master who was relatively uninterested in Hellenic decorative formulations. In this respect, one senses an underlying connection with the Asiatic treatment of Thetis on the Bolshaya Bliznitsa pendants, with the very non-Greek treatment of the sphinx pendants from Three Brothers and with what appears to be an Asian taste reflected in the polychromatic treatment of so many objects in Pontic Scythian jewelry.<sup>48)</sup>

The earring type based on relatively large hanging images, such as Nikai, or goddess figures, may also reflect Scythian responses to the Hellenic interest in elaborating earrings with tiny and exquisitely executed figures.<sup>49)</sup>

## 6. Earring with the drop Pendant



<Fig 17> Earrings with the drop Pendant 6-1C  
BC Nymphaeum barrow  
[-http://time-lines.co.uk/](http://time-lines.co.uk/)



<Fig 18> Earring with the drop Pendant 3- 1C  
BC Siberian collection of Peter I, Russia, Siberia  
[-http://www.hermitagemuseum.org](http://www.hermitagemuseum.org)



<Fig 19> Earring with the drop pendant 3- 1C  
BC Tyutrino Burial Mound, BarrowNo. 10  
[-http://www.hermitagemuseum.org](http://www.hermitagemuseum.org)

<Fig 17> was gold, 6th-1st century BC. A matched pair of Graeco-Scythian earrings. The hoop consists of a split quadrangular-section circlet of gold with granulation on three of the four faces. A granulated loop attaches a bell-shaped pendant with a granulated collar, with a granulated hoop about the widest point below three tear-shaped bilinear motifs. Three

pyramidal clusters of granulation complete the design. Workmanship of this quality and delicacy was a specialization of the Graeco-Scythian workshops of the Black Sea region.<sup>50)</sup>

<Fig 18> was Gold, cornelian; cast, stamped. Sakae Culture. 3rd - 1st century BC. Siberian collection of Peter I, Russia, Siberia.<sup>51)</sup>

The hoop consists of an interlocking thinner ring; Its middle section contains three small leaves, the bottom section consists of a cornelian and two leaf-shaped pendant cut from plain gold sheet.

<Fig 19> was Gold, cornelian, glass; forged. Sarmatian Culture. 3rd - 1st century BC. Tyutrin Burial Mound, Barrow No. 10, Burial No. 3, Tyumen Region.<sup>52)</sup>

The hoop consists of a thinner ring; Its middle section contains two small leaves and cornelian, glass. The bottom section, attached to the middle section by spiral chains, has twin pendants of a diamond shape.

## 7. Spiral Earrings



<Fig 20> Spiral Earrings Late 5th century BC  
Bosporan Kingdom, Panticapaeum.  
-<http://www.hermitagemuseum.org>

<Fig 20> was a pair of Spiral Earrings with a Bronze Core Gold, bronze; filigreed with

granulation. Bosporan Kingdom, Panticapaeum. Late 5th century BC. Stone Sepulchre, Kerch Crimea.

The design of this ring is based on a spiral-shaped ornament consisting of a bronze core and a gold sheet overlay with twisted wire and granulation a technique used to create delicate patterns with tiny spheres of gold fused to a metal surface.<sup>53)</sup>

## V. Conclusion

The earrings of the Scythians were often made by Greek artisans and combined the richness of Greek composition and technique with Scythian motifs and allow us not only to judge the skill of the Greek craftsmen, but also to trace the development of the shapes of jewellery and techniques.

Varied in design and level of complexity, these dazzling Scythian earrings vividly illustrate the skill and tastes of Scythian royalty and nobles.

The Scythian Earrings were divided into the styles according to the shape, Earring with Ends Shaped like animal's Heads, Boat-Shaped Earrings, Bird-Shaped Pendants earrings, Earrings with a Disc and a Pendant, Earrings Shaped like the Figures, Earring with the drop Pendant, Spiral Earrings.

The Scythians prospered through trade with the Greeks, and commissioned Greek and Scythian artists to craft gold jewelry for personal adornment during ceremonial occasions. Although the figures are influenced by Greek art and mythology, they are adapted by the Scythians.

Although Scythian earrings were produced based on the shapes of Greece earrings, they recreated these as Scythian unique style. In

particular, the animal motive and the decoration have various changes.

In the Scythian period, royalty and the aristocracy acquired luxury goods not only for personal enjoyment but also as symbols of power and political authority. The exquisite earrings that have been recovered from tombs of this period attest to the elegant taste and impressive wealth of the upper classes.

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