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"Orientalizing" Art in Anatolia (8th–6th Centuries B.C.)

The topic of this paper was inspired by an exchange I had with my colleague, Nadezhda Nalimova. We were discussing some problems connected with the artistic traditions of ancient Lydia. When I used the expression "Anatolian orientalizing art," she remarked that this wording sounded slightly strange: after all, "isn't Anatolia the Orient?" This remark of hers prompted me to re-examine both the very term and its relevance to Anatolian materials.

Thus, this topic is necessarily concerned not only with art history but also with historiography. The formation of scholarship on the topic of "orientalization" cannot be reviewed here, but it has been sufficiently described elsewhere [19, pp. 33–35; 34, pp. 102–133; 21, pp. 66–67; 28]. Let us just note the main stages and tendencies for the evolution of this area. "Orientalizing" began as a term describing the peculiar style and the use of Eastern motifs and prototypes in Greek vase painting. Strong reinforcement for this area came from scholarship centered on the birth of Greek art, the problem of *ex Oriente lux*, East vs. West, Orient and Occident [26; 1]. The 1970–80s brought another shift: "orientalizing" became to signify not just certain styles but an entire period and the whole complex of transitions in society. The works of Walter Burkert, first in German and later translated into English as *The Orientalizing Revolution*, finalized the use of "orientalization" as an umbrella term for a wide array of social, economic, cultural and artistic tendencies [6; 7].

During the last decades, the term has been often discussed and reviewed [12; 28; 2; 3; 19]. The scope of analysis was extended to the entire Mediterranean region throughout the 8th–7th centuries B.C., focusing on long-range elite interactions — a horizon of "orientalizing" material culture stretching from "Assyria to Iberia." There are also voices in this scholarship that call for a further widening of the geographical boundaries. Nicholas Purcell rightfully points out: "Understanding the increasingly intense connectivity of this period, and its historical consequences, <...> is inconceivable without including in the analytical frame Anatolia, the west Asian coastlands, and Egypt, and their various relations with the Mesopotamian heartland to the east" [27, p. 21].

Still, the current wave of theoretical literature on the topic is mostly concerned with the Iron Age Mediterranean horizon. Inland Anatolia, together with the distinctive cultures of the kingdoms of Phrygia and Lydia and their "orientalizing" tendencies need to be defined in more detail[1].

[1] These problems were recently discussed in Kurtis T. Tanaka's 2018 dissertation [33]. Tanaka

The main research questions are the following:

What is the difference between the tendencies of "orientalization" in both inland Anatolia and the Mediterranean region?

Is there a dividing line between the "orientalizing" arts of Greek centers and Anatolian kingdoms?

From what sources and through which channels was inland Anatolia "orientalized"?

How should the "orientalizing" tastes of Phrygian and Lydian elites be framed?

To what extent can they be considered as part of the "Orient"? Could they serve as sources of new forms and motifs for their Greek and Mediterranean neighbors in this time period?

Naturally, these five questions cannot be answered fully in this paper. They are listed here as guidelines, and as an indication of my approach to the material. I will talk little of the "orientalizing style" of individual objects, concentrating more on the general picture, the "orientalizing tastes" and luxury models of the 8th–6th centuries B.C., particularly on some cases of the material culture of Phrygian and Lydian elites.

Phrygia

Historical accounts of the early period and the rise of the Phrygian kingdom are rare. Fragmentary sources show us a kingdom active in the Eastern direction, establishing diplomatic and political connections with the principalities of the "Neo-Hittite" world, Urartu and, of course, Assyria, both as enemies and allies.

Excavations at Gordion, the capital of Phrygia, yielded an array of interesting items from the late 9th to the 8th centuries B.C. Among them are several ivory objects. One is a horse frontlet, found in Terrace Building 2, which depicts a nude "Mistress of the Animals" type figure located under a winged sun-disk [37, pl. 46, fig. 24; 2, fig. 2.32], a scheme which finds many parallels in the arts of the Near East [18, vol. 2, p. 476, fig. 458, 549]. The frontlet was most likely produced in a North Syrian workshop [35, pp. 317–320]. As far as it can be deduced from the context, the frontlet was hanging on the wall of the building [37, p. 166]. Thus, it was prominently and, perhaps, proudly displayed in a "treasury", audience hall or similar representative space in the citadel of Gordion.

Comparable items are also found in abundance in the Panhellenic sanctuaries of the Aegean [12, pp. 124–127, fig. 42]. What we see here is one of the main "driving forces" behind "orientalization": shared votive and depositional practices and a shared taste for luxury items [12, pp. 150–152].

Furniture decorated with ivory inlays was also collected, appreciated and produced by the Phrygian elites. Several ivory details come from the excavations of Gordion, including three small square plaques depicting a warrior on horseback, a deer and a griffin holding a fish in its beak [36, p. 240, pl. 60, fig. 25a–c]. The iconography references "oriental" prototypes, but is not strictly in keeping with them. Take, for example, the griffin [36, pl. 60, fig. 25b]. It has the sharply cut, pointy wings and upward-curling tail of its peers from Nimrud [e.g. 18,

considers Anatolia as "an active participant in the Orientalizing phenomenon" [33, p. 334], and highlights several aspects where Phrygia and Lydia could have influenced Greek culture, including material and non-material spheres (such as religion and writing systems).

vol. 2, fig. 428, 507, 517]. But the fish motif is so far not attested anywhere else and should be considered a specific Phrygian addition[2]. The mounted warrior's helmet and shield [36, pl. 60, fig. 25c] also display a local origin. In this case, the raw material and the basic decorative themes were imported, but otherwise we see a Phrygian reaction to the rich, luxurious furniture types dictated by the West Asian elite models.

If we examine the inventory of the rich tumulus burials of the 8th century B.C. at Gordion [38], another demonstrative and important case can be made. On the one hand, many objects, like the wooden serving stands, are distinctive and unique local works, unparalleled anywhere else [32]. Several other things, on the other hand, can be interpreted as signs of "orientalizing tastes," such as the feasting accessories and vessels made from metal.

The inventory includes such staples of elite banqueting as bronze cauldrons with figurative attachments [38, pp. 102–112, 199–202, 219–224]. Similar objects have been found in Urartu, Rhodes, Delos, the Greek Mainland and Etruria [22, p. 317].

Numerous omphalos bowls were also discovered [17; 38, pp. 11–17, 130–147, 203–207, 233–236]. The basic shapes are well-known in Near Eastern archaeology. Phrygian workshops produced high quality objects, which were used locally and exported westward. Not only did their output include most of the common shapes but also show local tastes: this is best exemplified by the group of bowls decorated with concentric ridges around the omphalos — this type was more popular in Anatolia than in Assyria [17, p. 164].

The dining sets found in Tumulus MM also included bronze vessels with animal head terminals [38, pp. 121–123, pl. III, IV; 9], which demonstrate the complex engagement with the culture of Assyria. The lion-head situla is recognizable on Assyrian palace reliefs from the reign of Sargon II [12, fig. 40]. In these scenes, they appear either carried by tribute-bearers or, so to speak, "in action": such vessels were used to distribute wine from a cauldron during a court ceremony or feast. The vessels found in the Gordion burial were not just status items on display but, as demonstrated by a chemical analysis of their contents [20], were also used during the funerary ritual feast. Thus, we may posit that banqueting in Central Anatolian Phrygia was partially influenced or informed by Neo-Assyrian practices [12, pp. 120–122]. At the same time, parallels can also be found with the roughly contemporary Greek "Homeric" culture and burial rites — both in literary sources [31] and tombs in various areas of the Eastern Mediterranean region, e.g. Cyprus [24].

From these examples we can draw a conclusion that not only did rich and powerful residents of Gordion use and appreciate all the elements of the "orientalizing" material culture, similarly to their Mediterranean peers, but also produced their own versions and used them in parallel with objects executed in local styles.

Phrygian decorated pottery also displays connections with the eastward areas, and these "orientalizing" painted vessels provide an interesting parallel to the well-known artistic production of the Greek "orientalizing" phase.

G. Kenneth Sams in his analysis of the so-called Phrygian "linear animal style" (what may be a Phrygian or Anatolian "orientalizing" style) demonstrates the adoption of several North Syrian motifs [29]. An interesting detail is the semi-circular arc on the lions' and bulls' faces

[2] A small wooden figurine of a griffin eating a fish was also found in Tumulus P [38, p. 52, pl. 24 A-B].

on Phrygian painted vessels, for which there are strong parallels in the monumental art of Carchemish [29, pp. 184–186]. Such rendering is not employed in Greek orientalizing animal depictions — the few existing examples on Parian vessels might witness some Phrygian influence [29, p. 195]. Thus, Phrygia adopted this element via an independent channel, most likely through direct contacts with the North Syrian areal rather than through an exchange facilitated by the Greek or Phoenician pursuers of "orientalization."

At the same time, in the Western direction, the Phrygians were forging contacts with the Greek population groups. A significant piece of evidence is a passage from Herodotos, describing the offerings made by Anatolian kings in Panhellenic sanctuaries (Hdt. I.14) [14, p. 130]. The first in the line was Midas, king of Phrygia, who offered his luxurious throne to the sanctuary at Delphi. In the archaeological record, Phrygian bronze fibulae, bowls and possibly belts are attested, the largest number in the Samian Heraion [23, pp. 718–719; 12, pp. 142–154]. These objects and prominent dedications solidified the image of Phrygian and subsequently Lydian kings as "oriental" rulers in the Greek imagination [33, p. 105].

Lydia

During the 7th–6th centuries B.C., Lydia was ruled by the Mermnad dynasty. The Lydians became the main political force in Western and Central Anatolia, and invested much into the representation of their power. They strengthened their ties in the eastern direction as well. There are sources attesting to links between the Lydians and the Neo-Babylonian Empire in the 6th century B.C., e.g. Herodotus (I.74). The peace treaty of 585 B.C. between the Lydian king Alyattes and the Median king Kyaxares was negotiated by Syennesis of Kilikia and "Labynetus the Babylonian" (probably Nebuchadnezzar II). Later, Kroisos turned to the Babylonians as his allies. The time and exact details of the alliance between Lydians and Babylonians are vague; yet, Herodotos's account is enough for us to suppose that those connections existed and were facilitated by both diplomatic missions (allowing the courtiers of Kroisos to see the architectural wonders of Babylon) and an exchange of gifts.

Mesopotamia "under Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian kings", no doubt, "offered a unique reference point for expressions of wealth and status" [27, p. 27]. The Mermnad kings of Lydia emulated Mesopotamian court life. They adopted specific forms of material culture and music. Subsequently, they facilitated the transfer of this style of life further west [10].

The material culture of the Lydian royal court was lavish and eclectic. We have plentiful archaeological evidence for the use and appreciation of Mainland Greek and East Greek pottery in Sardis throughout the 7th and 6th centuries B.C. [30], alongside the production of fine wares in local styles [11]. Their figurative and ornamental motifs are identifiable as both variations and a proliferation of the main themes and ideas behind the "orientalizing" styles.

Such mainstays of the culture of the "orientalizing" elite as decorated furniture also make their appearance. For example, the ivory inlay [8] found in the area of Sardis which the excavators identify as a possible "palace" or elite residential quarter, gives us an idea about the presence and appreciation of decorated furniture of a Near Eastern type in the Lydian capital.

Another object exemplifying the lingering of the "orientalizing" tastes in Lydia as late as the mid-6th century B.C. is a stone naiskos from Sardis [13, pp. 43–51, cat. no. 7, fig. 20–50]. It depicts a goddess at the entrance to her temple. The walls of the "temple" are decorated with

figurative panels. The structure of this monument allows us to presume that this is a copy in stone of a different object, which was composed of wood with ivory inlay panels [15; 16]. At the same time, this naiskos is also in keeping with the general tendency towards innovative sculptural decoration in the 6th century B.C., which was supported and promoted by the Mermnad kings.

As mentioned above, the Lydian royalty followed in the footsteps of the Phrygians and even surpassed them, bestowing lavish gifts to the Greek sanctuaries [14, pp. 130–134]. The most significant offerings were made by Kroisos. He was also the patron and financer of the Temple of Artemis at Ephesos (Hdt. I.92) [4, pp. 42–53; 25]. This building project and its innovative architectural decoration, i.e. the carved columns (*columnae caelatae*), set a trend in the architecture of monumental temples during the 6th century B.C.

The participation of Kroisos and the Lydians in this process can be evaluated in different ways. John Boardman, for example, underlines the importance of the "cultural symbiosis" between the Ionians and the Lydians. He is quick to evaluate the Lydian participation in the symbiosis somewhat dismissively, calling it "a culture and art to which the Greeks seem to have provided much of the style, the Lydians the wealth". He provides the following characterization: "By homeland Greek standards it is rather old-fashioned, still orientalizing and betraying a certain oriental stiffness of execution, except in media which were wholly Greek in their development, notably sculpture" [5, p. 26].

But perhaps we should rather see this proliferation of "orientalizing" tendencies as a direct manifestation of Lydian aristocratic tastes and, therefore, in a certain way, as Lydian contribution to the artistic world of Western Anatolia in the 6th century B.C.

In the time of Alyattes and Kroisos, there was, on the one hand, a renewed contact of Lydia with Mesopotamia (the Neo-Babylonian Empire); and on the other hand, a period of Lydian political, military, and also sometimes cultural and artistic influence over the East Greek territories. The riches of the Lydian kings were proverbial. The Lydian lifestyle was widespread and imitated in East Greek contexts as well: we see many examples of this in the poetry of Sappho: an appreciation of fine objects, perfumes, garments; and a backlash in an account by Xenophanes, slightly later [10, p. 193, 199]. It can be argued that during the time of strong Lydian presence and expansion a new wave of "orientalization" swept the Western coast of Asia Minor. It originated from inland Anatolia, from the royal court at Sardis. This period of Lydian grandeur was cut short only by the coming of the Persians — an event which also opens a new page in the history of Anatolian "orientalizing" art.

Conclusion

This necessarily brief overview shows that, on the one hand, the kingdoms of Central and Western Anatolia were integrated into the complex system of exchanges that connected various parts of the Mediterranean region during Iron Age; while, on the other hand, those territories with their royal and elite representatives demonstrated their own approaches to "orientalizing culture".

There was, first of all, an appreciation of certain types of luxury objects. Their aesthetic allure must have played an important role, and so did the opportunity to demonstrate wealth

and status through their display. Furthermore, these objects referenced not only abstract notions of "power" but also a very specific context — for example, an association with the power and might of the Neo-Assyrian Empire for the Phrygians and those of Babylon for the Lydians. The shapes and styles of objects could carry this message as well.

Consumption of these luxury goods exceeded what could have been imported. Items received either by trade (sometimes after a chain of exchanges) or directly, as perhaps diplomatic gifts, could then be used by local artisans in various ways. One is imitation, reproduction of existing prototypes. Selective reproduction and preference of certain shapes over others are definitely strong markers of local tastes (such as the bronze omphalos bowls from the Gordion tumuli). Another widespread approach is both the use of specific motifs (ornamental or figurative) and their transplantation into different materials. The last but not least, "Orientalia" could serve as inspiration, leading to more subtle re-interpretation and changes in artistic forms (especially in the Lydian context of the 6th century B.C., briefly examined above). Consistent and iterative appeals to valuable objects and luxury models strengthened the association of the kingdoms of Phrygia and Lydia with wealth and power. Thus the kingdoms of Anatolia could have exercised a direct influence on their Greek neighbors' artistic tendencies.

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Title. "Orientalizing" Art in Anatolia (8th–6th Centuries B.C.).

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Abstract. The period between 8th–6th centuries B.C. in Anatolia was marked by the emergence of the Phrygian and Lydian kingdoms. Their material culture included not only items produced in local traditions (furniture, textiles) but also artifacts showing exotic tastes of the elites, following "oriental" examples (such as bronzes and ivories). In this paper, I examine some artistic tendencies of Phrygia and Lydia in the framework of today's debates about the phenomenon of "orientalization".

The term "orientalization" was initially introduced to describe the style of objects with "oriental" motifs created according to the prototypes imported into the art of Greece. Subsequently, however, many other Hellenic phenomena of artistry, culture and social life became to be considered as "orientalization." During the last decades, the term has been often discussed and reviewed. The scope of analysis was extended to the entire Mediterranean region throughout the 8th–7th centuries B.C., focusing on long-range elite interactions: a horizon of "orientalizing" material culture, stretching "from Assyria to Iberia."

However, the place and role of the cultures of Anatolia (mainly Phrygia and Lydia) in this system need to be defined in more detail. The Anatolian royals and elites maintained their own channels of connections with the core sources of "orientalizing" objects (North Syrian artistic centers and the Assyrian Empire). The tastes of Phrygian and Lydian elites were selective, so local artisans not only reproduced but also reinterpreted the prototypes they had had access to. In this paper, I aim to show how, on the one hand, the kingdoms of Anatolia were integrated into the elite networks of the 1st millennium B.C., while, on the other hand, displaying their own version of the "orientalizing" phenomenon.

Keywords: "orientalizing" art; "orientalizing" period; elite networks; ancient Anatolia; Phrygia; Lydia; historiography; 1st millennium B.C.

Название статьи. «Ориентализирующее» искусство Анатолии (VIII–VI вв. до н. э.).

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Аннотация. VIII — первая половина VI в. до н. э. в Анатолии ознаменованы расцветом Фригии и Лидии. В материальной культуре этих царств мы находим как предметы, выполненные согласно локальным традициям, так и изделия, созданные в соответствии с экзотическими вкусами элиты, ориентированной на «восточные» образцы. В настоящей статье предлагается рассмотреть художественные изделия, происходящие из Фригии и Лидии, в зеркале современных дискуссий об «ориентализирующем» феномене в истории древнего мира.

Термин «ориентализирующий [стиль]», введенный для обозначения группы изделий, содержащих «восточные» мотивы или созданных по импортированным образцам, впоследствии стал применяться для обозначения целого ряда явлений, изменений в древнегреческой культуре, искусстве и обществе. В последние десятилетия этот термин наряду с другими распространенными культурными категориями подвергается критике и пересмотру. Если изначально основным предметом исследований было (греческое) искусство эгейского ареала в VIII–VII вв. до н. э., то интерес современных исследователей больше всего привлекают сложные системы обмена между представителями элит в ареале всего Средиземноморья. «Ориентализирующая» материальная культура — это горизонт, простирающийся «от Ассирии до Иберии».

Однако место и роль культур внутренних регионов Анатолии (в первую очередь Фригии и Лидии) в этой системе пока что остаются недостаточно освещенными. Анатолийские цари и элиты напрямую сообщались с территориями — источниками «ориентализирующих» предметов (художественными центрами Северной Сирии и регионами Ассирийской державы). Предметы отбирались в соответствии с предпочтениями фригийских и лидийских элит. Местные же мастера воспроизводили «восточные» прототипы и интерпретировали их по-новому. В статье продемонстрированы, с одной стороны, интегрированность анатолийских царств в сложную систему обмена между элитами первой половины I тысячелетия до н. э., а с другой — анатолийский вариант «ориентализирующего» феномена.

Ключевые слова: «ориентализирующее» искусство; «ориентализирующий» период; системы обмена между элитами; древняя Анатолия; Фригия; Лидия; историография; I тысячелетие до н. э.