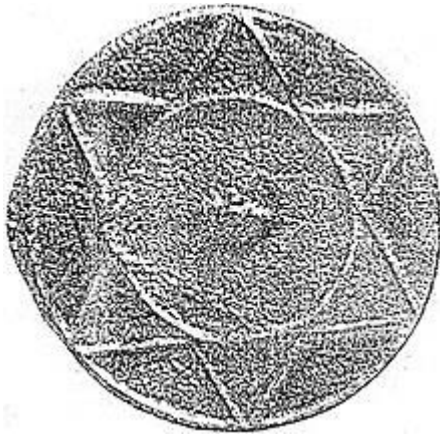


## THE KHAZARS - ART – SCULPTURE AND PAINTING

### OVERVIEW

The artifacts discovered in the early Khazarian state portrayed elements of shamanistic beliefs. However, late artifacts depict scenes of daily life and battles rather than the religious depictions found on early objects.

### SCULPTURE AND PAINTING



The early artifacts found in Khazaria revealed the the existence of shamanistic traditions. This circular metal seal from the 9<sup>th</sup> century depicts the sun disc.

Late archaeological findings consist of objects that were made of bone, metal, wood or ceramic and depicted battle scenes, hunting or animal combat. Some objects had very detailed depictions of a ritual dance or ritual wrestling.

At Sarkel, the historical settlements of Mayatskoe Gorodishche, Shilovka and Chir-Yurt, the Khazars built fortresses, and they were keen on creating handicrafts.

One of the examples of these handicrafts was a silver Khazarian scoop from the 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> century found at the town of Kotsk in western Siberia. It depicts a wrestling scene.

*Khazarian scoop at Kotsk in western Siberia*

Similar scenes could be observed on the brick wall of the fortress in Mayatskoe Gorodishche in Voronezh Oblast that depicted a scene of wrestling men and animals such as horses. According to some historians this scene portrayed a ritual dance of naked men with weapons and masks.



A horn piece discovered near Shilovka in Vologda Oblast from the 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> century also depicts scenes of war, hunting and animals.

### Discussion/Questions

1- Why might later Khazar art depict scenes from daily life and society rather than shamanistic themes as in earlier art?

## **Readings**

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- 6- Фонякова, Н.А., «Изображение одного забитого обычая на хазарском сосуде из котского городка», *Донская археология*, 2001, No. 3-4, С. 67-71.
- 5- Pict. Horn plate discovered from near Shilovka in Vologda Oblast from Плетнева, С.А., *Очерки хазарской археологии*. Иерусалим Гешарим- Мосты культуры, 1999.
- 6- Pict. Khazarian silver scoop at Kotsk in western Siberia from <http://kronk.spb.ru/library/gryaznov-mp-1961.htm>