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Viking traces – artistic tradition of the Viking Age in applied art of pre-Mongolian Novgorod

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The Novgorod archaeological collection of wooden items includes a significant amount of pieces of decorative art. Many of these were featured in the fundamental work of B.A. Kolchin *Novgorod Antiquities. The Carved Wood* (Kolchin 1971). This work is, perhaps, the one generalizing study capable of providing a full picture of the art of carved wood of Ancient Novgorod. Studying the archaeological collections of Ancient Novgorod, one's attention is drawn to a number of wooden (and bone) objects, the art design of which distinctly differs from the general conceptions of ancient Russian art. The most striking examples of such works of applied art will be discussed in this article.

The processes of interaction between the two cultures are well researched and presented in the works of a group of Swedish archaeologists, whose work showed the complex bonds of interaction between Sweden and Russia, reflected in a number of aspects of material culture (Arbman 1960; Jansson 1996; Fransson et al (eds.) 2007; Hedenstierna-Jonson 2009). Moreover, in art history literature, a few individual works of applied art refer to the context of the spread of Viking art (Roesdahl & Wilson eds 1992; Graham-Campbell 2013), but not to the interrelation, as a definite branch of Scandinavian art, in Eastern Europe.

If we apply this focus to Russian historiography, then the problem of studying archaeological objects of applied art is comparatively small, and what is important to note is that all of these studies also have an archaeological direction (Kolchin 1971; Bocharov 1983).

Even less attention was paid to the study of applied art of the north-west in the 10th–12th centuries as an artistic phenomenon that marked important milestones in the development of ancient Russian art (Zhilina 2014; Tochilova 2015).

The appearance of the art of Ancient Rus, as a rule, is viewed from the standpoint of the strong influence of Byzantine culture. This view is absolutely correct and does not require any additional comments. However, Byzantine art also reflected the spiritual (and political) ambitions of the prince's court, and, according to this author, was as such, official art. Despite this, it is also necessary to take into account the fact that Byzantine art was not the only seed in the seemingly sterile artistic soil of the time, as there is a lot of evidence of various other cultural influences in the collections of archaeological finds of the time.

Certainly, one of these components in ancient Novgorod during the 10th–12th centuries is traces of the presence of Scandinavian culture. A number of written sources, mostly of Scandinavian origin, testify to diplomatic and political relations at the highest state level (Jackson 2000). Further, based on the Novgorod chronicles, one can conclude that members of the Scandinavian military lived on the “Poromonovo Yard” in Novgorod (Nasonov 1950:174).

Following this, it is shown that active communications existed between the local population and the members of the “Gothic Court” (Milkov & Simonov 2011:428). The literary heritage and written sources presents us with a vivid picture of multi-level cultural interaction between Scandinavia (primarily Sweden and Norway) and Russia.

It would seem that communications of this kind might have had a strong impact on the material culture of the time, but archaeological data and analyses of early finds show the opposite: the sum total of early era objects is in the single digits, which lead prior research to conclude that there is no noticeable Scandinavian influence in the material culture of early Novgorod in the 10th–11th centuries (Rybina & Khvoshchinskaya 2010:66–78).

This divergence between written and material sources leads to the question of what could cause such a contradiction. However, study of this question is beyond the limits of this paper.

The focus here, as stated earlier, is on the origins of a common set of stylistic features that clearly do not belong to the Byzantine culture, in a number of objects of applied art from the time. The items focused on here do not all belong to the same typological category – they are fragments of kitchen utensils, furniture, decor – everything that could be a part of different aspects of everyday life.

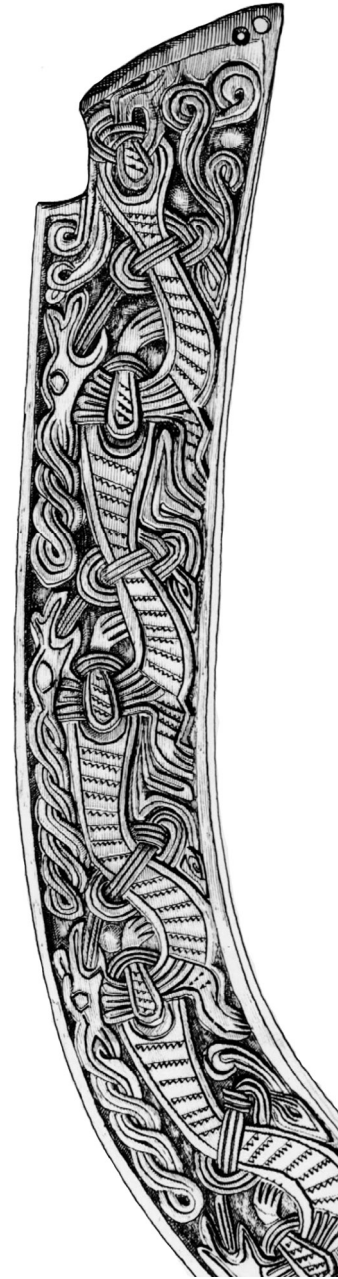


Figure 1. Arm of a chair, 11th century (after Kolchin 1971: Pl.19).

Focusing on all of them in one small research project is made possible through the approach of identifying and analyzing the similarity of any stylistic features, and, as a consequence, the artistic environment that led to the manifestation of this artistic style.

One of the most remarkable works of Novgorod applied art is the armrest of an 11th century armchair. (*fig. 1*) Its pinpoint accuracy carving in the form of a chain of fantastic animals can be safely attributed as one of the outstanding works of applied art of Ancient Rus.

The dynamism of the elongated bodies of animals creates the effect of impetuous movement. The profiles of the depicted figures are relatively flat however, and each of them seem to have two pairs of legs - the front is clearly present, whereas the back is a transverse component of a small loop at the end of the beast's body. Every knot encircles the neck of the neighboring beast. Each element of the animal's body is delineated by a double contour, and the inner surface is worked with oblique hatching.

The line of each beast's neck continues the outer contour, which fits into elongated zigzag lines thereafter. The small heads of animals, crowned with multipart figure-of-eight-shaped twisted horns, are sharply turned back. From the open mouths a long ribbon-shaped tongue protrudes out, enfolding the body of the beast in the middle. The tip of the tongue ends with a small spear-shaped leaf.

The sharp turn of the figures, the motif of the clasping loop, and the aspiration to fill the surrounding space as tightly as possible, creates the impression of great similarity between the decor of this find and the works of the bestial art styles of the Viking Age. It should be noted that this work is one of the few Novgorod finds of applied art of this time which is unquestionably included in the group of Scandinavian type objects (Roesdahl & Wilson eds 1992:303). Another object which casts no doubt on the existence of a direct Viking Age artistic influence is a small pommel, in the shape of the head of a predatory beast, dated to the mid-10th century (*fig. 2*), and whose mane is worked in the form of a clear scaly ornament (Kolchin 1971:39; Graham-Campbell 2013:78) (*fig. 3*). As direct analogies of this ornamentation, one can compare with fragments of stone carving from Väsby (Skåne, Sweden), as well as from the church of the parish of Maughold from the Isle of Man (Wilson & Klindt-Jensen: Pl. XLIV), and Gosforth (Cumberland, England) (Kendrick 1949: Pl. XLIV) (*figs. 3 and 4*).

The first impression of the similarities of the decor of the Novgorod armrest with the animal style art of the Viking Age, with more careful analysis, raises



Figure 2. The shape of the head of a predatory beast, mid-10th century (after Kolchin 1971:39, figure 15).

Figure 3. Stone from Väsby, Skåne, Sweden, left, and a stone from Kirk Maugold, Isle of Man, right (after Wilson & Klindt-Jensen 1980: Pl. XLIV).

many questions. Particularly, exact stylistic analogies between these objects have not yet been found. Therefore, the only correct way to proceed in the comparison is to isolate the Scandinavian elements, subsequently analyze what does not fit with them.

The ribbon-shaped bodies of animals, the double contour, and the internal working of the bodies make it possible draw comparisons to the so called Jelling style (from the 9th to the middle of the 10th century) and Mammen style (10th century) simultaneously. This combination of styles is not surprising - the coexistence of several styles is a known characteristic of Viking Age Scandinavian art. In the common character of the composition and bending of the bodies, and in particular, the intertwining of the knots of legs and the middle of the torsos, you can see a direct analogy of the character of this composition with the image on the Odd's cross from Braddan from the Isle of Man (*fig. 5*) which combines elements in the Jelling and Mammen styles, and even the earlier style E (Wilson & Klindt-Jensen 1980:111). Elements that are not part of the Scandinavian influence include: the nature of the inner parts of the bodies and the design of the neck in the form of a zigzag line that extends the outer contour. In the Scandinavian style, there are no stylistic parallels with the heads of animals with long swirling horns. Free space is filled with vegetative sprouts - the continuation of the languages of animals. In contrast, smoothly swirling lines, laid in curls (which are especially clear on the preserved edge of the armrest), differ from those examples of sprouts and tendrils present in the art of the Viking Age.

As such, despite the obvious hybrid nature of this work, it could be attributed to a kind of transition phase between the Ringerike and Mammen styles. The armrest dates back to

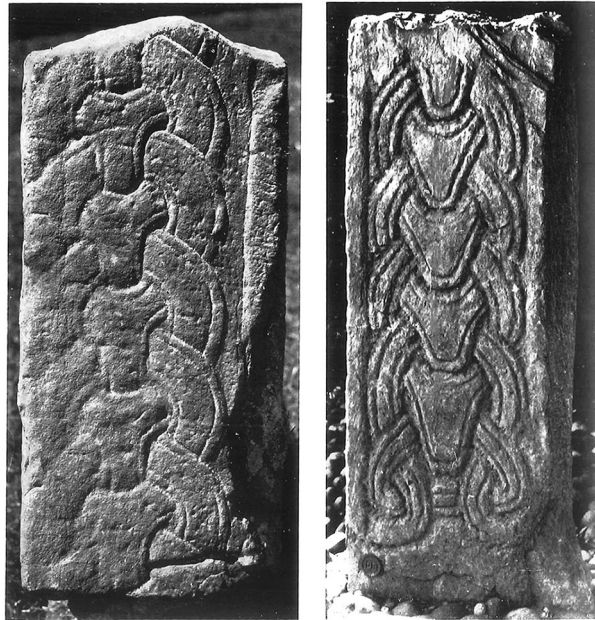


Figure 4. Cross from Gosforth, Cumberland, England (after Kendrick 1949; Pl. XLIV).



Figure 5. Ornament of the cross erected by Thorleif at Kirk Braddan, Isle of Man (after Wilson & Klindt-Jensen 1980:113, Figure 52).

the 11th century - a time when in Scandinavia these styles have already outlived themselves, which in turn allows us to treat this work as an anachronism.

The uniqueness of the armrest is further complemented by the fact it has a very close stylistic analogy in the form of an image of an animal placed on a “kopyl” (a beam piece of a child’s sled connecting the seat to the runners) (mid-11th century) (*fig. 6*). The tight animal chain was opened, or broken, providing a view of the anatomy of the fantastic creature. The figure of the beast loses knots at the end and in the middle of the body. Its front paws are thrown far forward and rest against the edge of the pictorial plane. At the back of

the torso, one leg is clearly visible, and then smoothly shifts into a swirling tail. The fourth leg of the animal, inverted, is also visible in the sharp angular curves of one of the tail curls. The figure of the beast is thus twisted, with this method allowing the image to fit into the space allotted to it, and leaving a minimum of free space.

Careful working out of the details of the beast’s figure shows some similarity with the images on the armrest, but also a number of differences: the body is still contoured, but it is clearly seen only through the outline of the back and abdomen, and gradually merges with additional lines modeling the paws and tail. The body of the “dragon” is filled with small diamond-shaped crisscrossing notches. In the outline of the head with spiraled horns one can clearly see a very similar profile as those of the animals from the armrest. Turned forward, however, this head, on the one hand, deprives the image of the expression of the runaway beast. On the other hand, it loses its expressiveness because of a short neck, tamed by the boundaries of the pictorial surface and the need to show the tongue breaking out, folded into a small, timid loop.

Nonetheless, despite some flaws of the composition, it should be noted that one of the most important features of this image is visible when viewed as a whole item. From this perspective, it is clear that the artist had a desire to fill the surface as much as possible with the images being depicted. Whereas on the armrest, the empty space is filled with the help of plant elements, this effect is achieved on the “kopyl” by twisting the animal’s body. The dislike for empty spaces on pictorial surfaces is so high that even small spaces between parts of the body are filled with round elements that are not otherwise associated with the image.



Figure 6. Piece of a beam from a child's sled, mid-11th century.
The State Novgorod Museum-reservation.

A stylistic analogy to the image on the “kopyl”, on the one hand, is the “dragons” on the armrest. On the other hand, a surprising similarity in the general interpretation of the composition of the image, is apparently, and quite unexpectedly, the relief on the grave cover at Levisham (Yorkshire, England) (*fig. 7*) (Kendrick 1949: Pl. LXVI). It is also necessary to note the stylistic similarity with the Braddan cross (Wilson & Klindt-Jensen 1980:112).

Thus, an interesting “closed circle” of stylistic analogies is presented, between objects that are separated by distance, the time of the existence of the styles used, and the historical context, that excludes direct communication. Nevertheless, one cannot deny the relationship between the carving on the armrest of Novgorod and the “kopyl”, nor can the relationship between these images and Scandinavian art be denied, based upon the work of western European colleagues (Roesdahl & Wilson eds 1992:303).

Another object whose style is undoubtedly directly influenced by the art of the Viking Age are the saber's scabbard (10th century) (*fig. 8*) found in the 30th tier of the Troitsky Excavation in 1994 (Inventory No. 662). On the surface of the scabbard are several unrelated engraved decorative elements, among which are: rows of short horizontal cuts; a number of strokes in the form of a Christmas tree; a geometrical ornament consisting of semicircles, outlined in a closed rectangular shape; an ornament, consisting of vegetation-like elements; and the image of a bird.

The highly stylized bird body, depicted on the surface in the heraldic pose, attracts attention through the slenderness of the thoughtful geometry, the body is shown in the form of a rectangle with a double contour, the tail and wings in the form of elegant, smoothly diverging three-petalled inflorescences. This scheme (body, wings and



Figure 7. Grave cover, Levisham, N.R. Yorks (after Kendrick 1949: Pl. LXVI)..

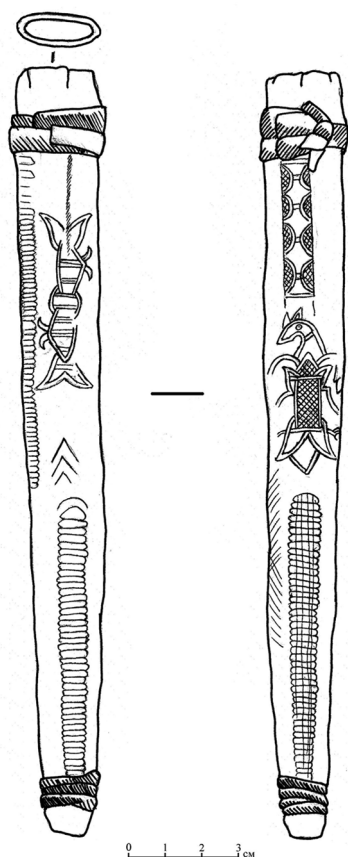


Figure 8. The saber's scabbard, 10th century, Book of Supply No 41170, A-170, No 662, The State Novgorod Museum-reservation.

tail) is already a complete and balanced composition, and provides notable further emphasis on the image of the bird's head, legs, and feet.

As already mentioned the images on the saber scabbard do not form a single composition. However, between the two decorative motifs and the bird image, one can identify a stylistic similarity that manifests itself in a double contour, as well as uniformity in creating the details of the individual motifs (the wings and the ornamental elements). In addition, there is a degree of homogeneity in the layout of the internal details of the surface, which includes small double segments and fine, neat rhombic shading. The stylistic unity of the decor, as well as being provided with a clear picture of each element, allows the observer to note the confident hand of the carver, who in this case, probably did not care to create a meaningful composition on this surface. Nevertheless, the expressive decoration of the scabbard allows it to be attributed to the field of applied art, and makes it possible to search for stylistic analogies. In this context, one can note, for comparison, a carelessly scratched similar image of a bird found on a small amulet with a picture of an eagle (Filipowiak & Gundlach 1992: Pl. 117)

(fig. 9). Another close analogy is the image of a bird on the stone from Alstad (Fuglesang 1980: Pl. 33), the body of which is modeled with the same double-contour characteristic of the Ringerike style (Wilson & Klindt-Jensen 1980:134).

It is important to note in this case that it is not a question of direct introduction, copying, or imitation by the Novgorod carver of Scandinavian samples. Rather, comparing these two images, it seems most likely that the styles get their similarity from shared knowledge of the basic principles of artistic style of the age, and the free interpretation thereof. Nevertheless, the uniqueness of these items makes one look at the collection of Novgorod archaeological applied art from a different angle, and makes it necessary to analyze those stylistic features that, at first glance, may give the impression of the direct presence of the Scandinavian artistic tradition in Novgorod at the time.

An interesting find is the bone handle of a knife (fig. 10, next page), found on the manor "A", and dated to the first quarter of the 11th century. Its surface is covered with a complex weaving of the bodies of fantastic creatures whose structure of torsos is, on closer inspection however, not so chaotic. Due to the limited visual surface and the emphatically embracing encircling movement, a grid effect with clearly

Figure 9. Bone pendant with eagle. Wolin, Poland (after Filipowiak 1992:117).

discernible horizontal directions is created. This restrains the disorder of the bodies of animals lashed to the surface of the loops, the small heads of which are moved beyond the last confining line. No less attention is given to the expansion of bodies, creating additional knots in the composition.

The totality of all of the decorative elements in the bone handle – the loosely located loops, the thickness difference of the bodies, and the characteristic design of the heads of the animals, presents one with a simplified, and quite strongly geometrized Urnes style.

A distinct category of objects of the Novgorod collection of decorative wood is carved handles, made in the form of animal heads. As a rule, it is a predatory, grinning beast, whose muzzle can remind one of a dragon or a bear. The most expressive images of this kind were distributed in the 10th–11th centuries (Kolchin 1971:35), gradually giving way to simpler forms in the 12th century, and then reappearing in the 13th century (Kolchin 1971:36–38). Some of these findings, selected from the period of the 10th–12th centuries, a period of prosperity and the gradual merging process of Viking Age art with Romanesque art, will now be presented (Fuglesang 1981:79–125).

A simple and expressive image is that of a handle with the mask of a predatory animal with a grinning mouth (10th century) (*fig. 11*). The small head of the beast, with tiny round ears, expressive drop-shaped eyes and lined eyelashes, smoothly flows into the S-shaped bend of the neck. Further decoration is added to the image through two carved belts, present from the ears to the back of the animal.

Another example is a massive handle from a large ladle (specifically, the handle of a “skobkar”), found in the archaeological layers of the second half of the 10th century (Kolchin 1971:36) (*fig. 12*). The round head of the beast on the short neck is modeled by a slight transition from the line of the forehead to the elongated nose. A grinning mouth with a severely oblique lower jaw is simply indicated

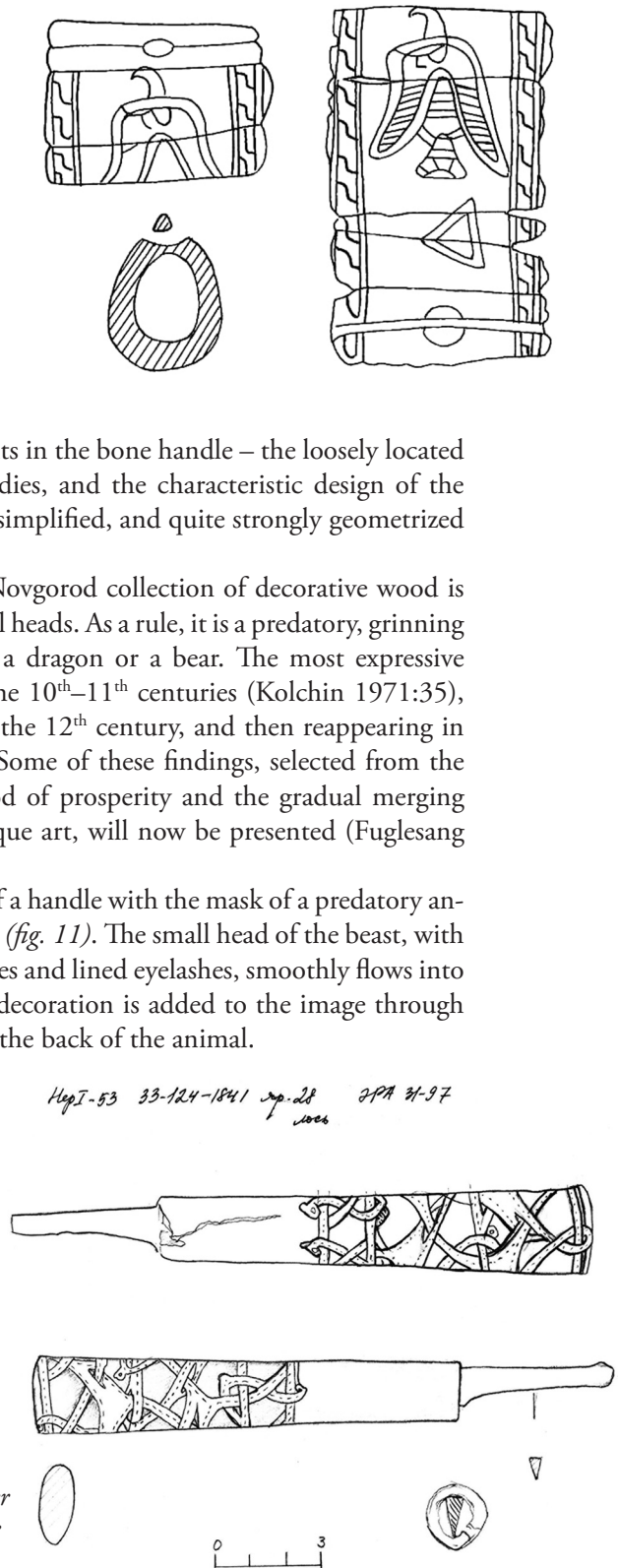


Figure 10. Bone handle of a knife, first quarter of the 11th century. Novgorod the Great. (State Hermitage, Russian archaeology, 31-97).

by two rows of uncovered teeth. The ears of the beast, which are far at the back of the head, are compositionally included in the general rhythm of the ornament with a clear symmetric axis. The side loops of the curls form two small eyes.

A further, vivid, example is a small “skobkar” handle, dated to the first half of the 11th century, in the form of a predator biting itself, which in historiography is often noted as a bear (Kolchin 1971:36) (*fig. 13*). A short, powerful turn of the neck forms a small loop, designed to hold the “skobkar”, the matching cup of which is not preserved. The beast is further portrayed with small ears and sharply chopped, slightly oblique muzzle, covered with a decor of intertwined, non-symmetrical loops of ribbon-like plant shoots, forming the small eyes of the animal.

The modeling of the surface of the animal’s head is made by casually “sketched” loops of the ornament. The irregularity of the general pattern of loops, as well as their openness, are, at first glance, associated with the Urnes style. However, there are also some stylistic contradictions: firstly, the Urnes style is not characterized by depictions of plant motifs (Graham-Campbell 1980: 140). In contrast, the Novgorod “skobkar” decoration consists of plant-like thin ribbons, and on one side of the head, a small pointed leaf is clearly visible. Secondly, the main stylistic features of the Urnes are characterized by the smoothness of the lines and the gradual change in the thicknesses of the bodies of the animals depicted, which again is not typical for the decoration of the Novgorod find. Overall, the combination of these stylistic features makes it possible to raise the question of object and applied art creation under the indirect influence of the art of the late Viking Age, or, in other words, of the possible existence of a branch of an artistic tradition that developed outside the original territory.

The artistic image of the handle in the form of a dragon’s head with a mane in the form of a symmetrical braid found in the archaeological layers of the first half of the 11th century (*fig. 14*) is no less peculiar than the examples discussed above (Kolchin 1971:35). The neck and head line is one smooth, slightly arched curve, the slight bend of which indicates a transition to the elongated nose of the animal. This small, elegant head with a thin lower jaw is modeled with a sharp angling of the anterior part of the muzzle, complemented by a smooth curve of the lower jaw, the line of which is deeply cut into the shape. The ears of the “dragon”, contrary to any anatomical logic, grow out from precisely under the lower jaw, and tightly encircle the back of the head.

The concise form of the handle is complemented by a wide symmetrical braid, tracing the entire length of the neck of the animal. Free loops of the braids, which flow down to the forehead, denote the eyes of the beast. The muzzle is formed by a thin contour line, showing the sides of the open mouth with two sharp fangs. A few small transverse notches on the nose create the impression of a grinning, growling mouth.

Each of the four examples is considered to be a unique item with individual characteristics. Nevertheless, in addition to the common characteristic belonging to these finds, several features that unite them stylistically can be distinguished: 1. The general modeling of the form, with a smooth transition from forehead to nose; 2. An animal grin with notable fangs; 3. Small round ears on the back of the head; 4. The

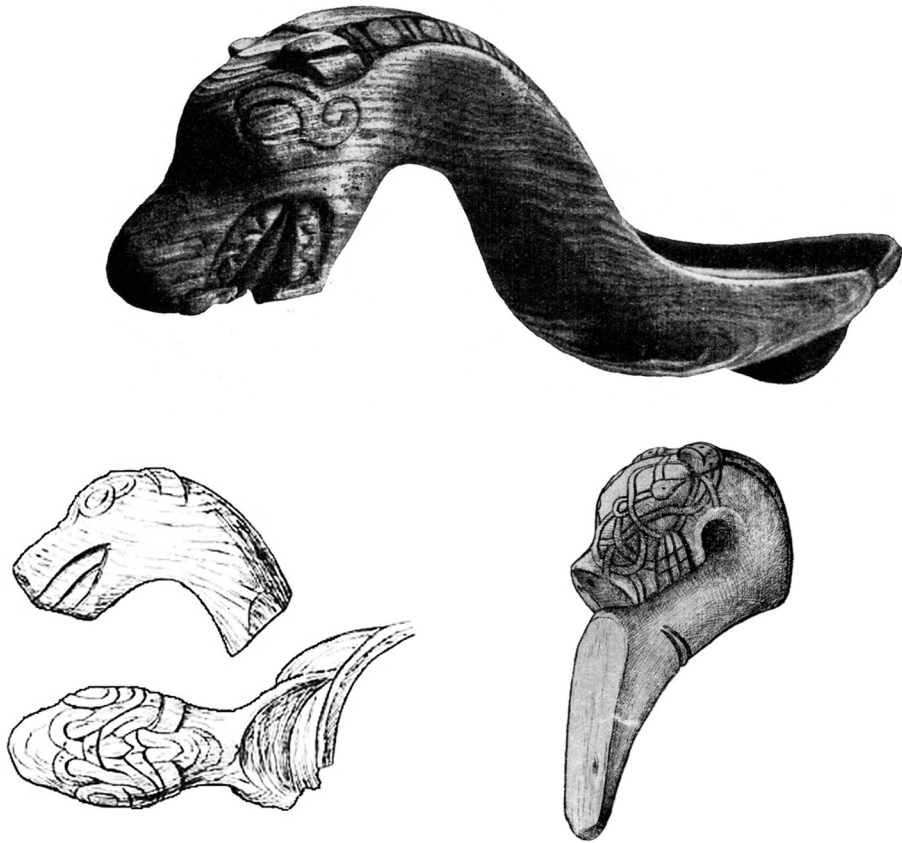


Figure 11 (top). The handle of ladle with the mask of a predatory animal, 10th century (after Kolchin 1971: Pl. 23).

Figure 12 (lower left). The handle of ladle with the mask of a predatory animal, second half of the 10th century (after Kolchin 1971: figure 14).

Figure 13 (lower right). The handle of ladle with the mask of a predatory animal, first half of the 11th century (after Kolchin 1971: Pl. 14).

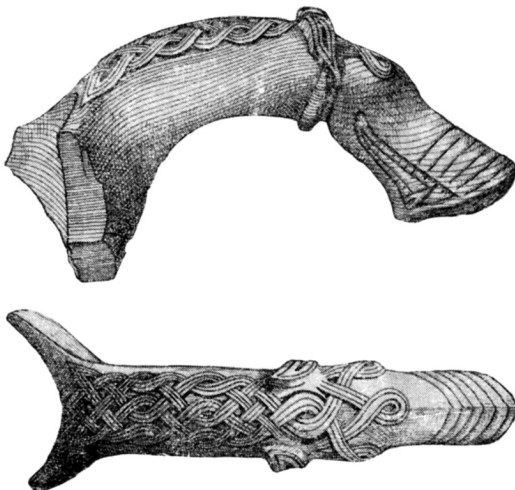


Figure 14 (left). Handle with the mask of a predatory animal, first half of 12th century. (after Kolchin 1971:36, Pl. 14).

presence of ornamental decorative elements (ribbons, braids), playing a role in the process of modeling the form (e.g. eyes).

One of the features of Scandinavian art of the Viking Age is the image of the head of a predatory beast, taken as a separate artistic object. In this case, of course, one can refer to the magnificent animal head posts in the Oseberg ship burial (Schetelig 1920:71, 76, 115–116, 126), which are both an independent sculptural form, and, at the same time, a surface for complex ornamental patterns.

Of course, it is not possible to compare the carved sculpture of Oseberg and the Novgorod “skobkar” ladles, due to their age difference, functional purpose, and artistic level. Nonetheless, this example is the most obvious and provides a base point upon which to open the discussion about the presence of such an image in the art of the Viking Age. Indeed, analogies can be found not only among outstanding works of art, but also among similar objects more closely related to everyday life – household utensils, etc.

Similar, but not identical, forms can be found among the wooden finds of the Viking town of Hedeby (Haithabu) (Westphal 2006:145–147). In these items, there are likenesses of artistic images, but stylistically no real parallel. This can be explained by the fact that the Novgorod images are not directly the product of the Scandinavian world, but rather, the product of an artistic environment that had certain points of contact with it.

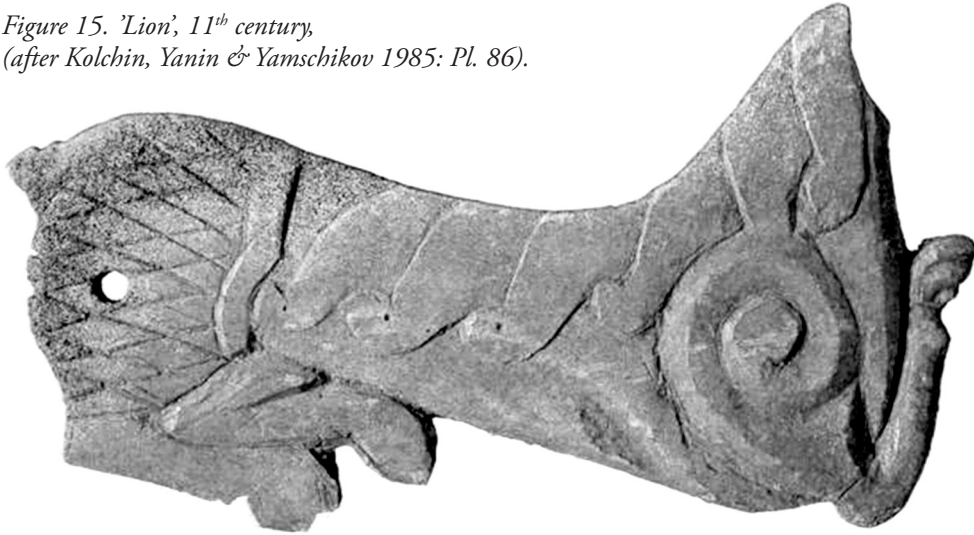
Concluding a cursory review of the archaeological bestiary of Ancient Novgorod, let us turn to the second bone object included in this work. This is a mount in the form of a figure of a carnivorous animal (11th century) (*fig. 15*), named “lion” in the national historiography (Bocharov 1983:112). Unfortunately, the head of the beast is broken off. The preserved remains can nevertheless provide interesting material for stylistic analysis.

The character of movement of the animal’s figure is shown by a slight s-shaped curve of the neck and back. The paws of the beast are pressed to the body, which creates the impression of crouching, but the figure does not look tense. Decorative elaboration of the body surface of the “lion” includes four constituent elements and is clearly divided into two zones.

The first group of elements of the Scandinavian type can include a mane, shown as separate large strands with small, round curls at the ends. Another impressive element is the development of the shoulder part of the front paw, made in the form of a large spiral. Such elements of form development are most clearly manifested in the images of the “big beasts” of the Mammen style, which are characterized not only by double contours and the filling of the internal space between them with curious circular elements (beads), but the emphasis on large joints, as well as the appearance of a set of processes or antennae (“Tendrils-ornament”) with small bud-like thickenings at the ends (Graham-Campbell 1980:139).

Crucial works of this style, which clearly demonstrate the main features of Mammen, are the caskets from Bamberg and Cammin (*fig. 16*). Bone plates on each are decorated with fantastic animals, including large predators, whose bodies have pronounced curls for joints and elaborate strands for manes. Similar techniques in

Figure 15. 'Lion', 11th century,
(after Kolchin, Yanin & Yamschikov 1985: Pl. 86).



working out details of the body are preserved, after the Mammen style, in Ringerike style, the climax of which occurs during the first half of the 11th century (Graham-Campbell 1980:140). As an example of the use of such elements, one can refer to the slab of the sarcophagus found in the courtyard of the church of St. Paul in London (*fig. 17*) and weather vanes from Swedish and Norwegian churches (Wilson & Klindt-Jensen 1980: Pl. LVIII, LIX).

Returning to the Novgorod "lion", consideration will now be given to the remaining decorative elements, those not related to the Scandinavian tradition. These include a small belt passing through the low-set waist of the "lion" and working on the surface of the thigh in the form of rhombuses. A similar way to decorate the surface of the body can be seen in the "dragon" on the children's sleds considered earlier. Once again, this item provides the situation in which, on the surface of one relatively small object, heterogeneous stylistic elements are com-



Figure 16. Detail of the Cammin casket
(after Wilson & Klindt-Jensen 1980:Pl. LVI).



Figure 17. The slab of the sarcophagus from
church of St Paul's Churchyard, London (after
Wilson & Klindt-Jensen 1980: Pl. LVIII).

bined, some of which fit well into the system of artistic imagery of art from the Viking Age of the 10th–11th centuries.

The works of applied art presented and analyzed consist of outstanding combinations of stylistic features that clearly distinguish them from the general background of arts and crafts of pre-Mongolian Novgorod. Bright, expressive animal images, complemented by the dynamics of the decor, appear to have an indirect connection with the expressive styles of art of the Viking Age.

The northwestern lands of Russia were an arena of active political, military and economic contacts between Scandinavians and Slavs long before the formation of Russian statehood. Cultural contacts between Scandinavia and Ancient Rus during 10th–12th centuries are confirmed by literary sources and a large number of archaeological finds of Scandinavian origin. Among the latter there are finds of material culture (blacksmithing, jewelry art) (Lesman 2014:46–62), created under the influence of Scandinavia and having hybrid forms. Archaeological sources eloquently demonstrate the existence of strong relations between Russia and Scandinavia. This developed system of cultural interaction, traced at different levels of society, inevitably raises the question of the artistic influence that the established Scandinavian artistic tradition should have had on the Old Russian art that had just begun its formation.

The appearance of hybrid objects has already been touched upon in the works of Lesman. In addition, the issue of the appearance of hybrid forms in arts and crafts has been considered using the example of Gnezdov material (Dementieva 2007). Such studies enable a bolder approach to research on the massive archaeological collection of wooden and bone art objects from Novgorod, isolating from it those elements that were formed under the direct or indirect influence of the Scandinavian art of the Viking Age.

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Sammanfattning

Artikeln presenterar en studie av en grupp träföremål från det förmongoliska Novgorod; brukskonst som influerats av vikingatida konst från Skandinavien. Huvudfokus ligger på utvecklingen av Novgorods brukskonst som en kvardröjande sidogren av vikingatidens konst. Resultatet av processen var uppträdandet av så kallade ”hybridobjekt” som skapats under påverkan av skandinavisk djurstil, men isolerat från den ursprungliga konstnärliga traditionen. Studien baseras på analys av stildrag hos en grupp träföremål från en arkeologisk samling från det tidiga Novgorod. Gruppen inkluderar vardagsföremål som redskap, möbelfragment, dekorativa detaljer etc. Studiens huvudmetod är en komplex stilistisk analys. Genom en sådan är det möjligt att identifiera de huvudsakliga stilistiska dragen, likväl som att bestämma spännvidden av dekorerade objekt som skapades under influens av skandinavisk konst.