



Sculpture and Applied Arts

The Heritage of Antiquity

IN no other domain are the stylistic changes that took place in the period between antiquity and the early Middle Ages so clearly visible as in that of sculpture; in it the steady decline of the creative urge of antique art can be traced stage by stage. The period of this decline lies, approximately, between the reigns of Constantine (307-337) and Theodosius (379-395), and its effects, operative not only in the East but also in the West, can be most clearly seen in the sarcophagus reliefs and ivory carvings. The sensitive, illusionist art of antiquity gradually died out, as did all attempts to render the third dimension; stripped of its plastic values, the human figure lay solely on the surface, became purely linear, and governed by an ever more rigid symmetry.

Nevertheless, even after the fall of the Roman Empire the heritage of antiquity still bulked so large in the mentality of western Europe, and above all in that of the ecclesiastical authorities, that it held its ground, if in a latent form, throughout the following centuries. Despite the rapid permeation of the West by Oriental influences, and the driving force of a new kind of art stemming from the East and the regions north of the Alps, the classical heritage was never quite obliterated in the course of this 'dark age' among the peoples formerly incorporated in the Empire. Under different guises, however, more and more marked regional characteristics developed as time went by.

Thus in the figures of two apostles on an ivory diptych from Kranenburg (now in the Metropolitan Museum, New York), perhaps inspired originally by an effigy of Christ handing over the keys, we can sense unmistakable affinities with the Early Christian sculpture of Rome and also with the Marseilles sarcophagi: a kinship evidenced by the classical form of the garments and, from the iconographic viewpoint, by the frieze of lambs at the top of the arch. In the stiff posture of the apostles' heads and the stylized eyes we have tokens of the stylistic changes that were taking place in Gaul in the early fifth century. This impression is strikingly



216-217 - GAUL. DIPTYCH: ST PETER AND ST PAUL. THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, NEW YORK.



III - ITALY. PHALERA. MUSÉE ARCHÉOLOGIQUE, STRASBOURG.

confirmed when we examine the reliefs of the end of the century (c. 500) and compare *Meleager's Hunt* on the Toulouse sarcophagus with any antique hunting scene—a revealing example of the would-be literal imitation in the Gothic West of an antique prototype. The scrollwork around the hunting scene is likewise derivative from the art of antiquity. A little later a Burgundian sculptor reproduced on the buckle of St Caesarius, Bishop of Arles (d. 542), the motif of the soldiers sleeping beside the tomb that had figured on an early fifth-century Italian ivory. This use of antique motifs persisted throughout the entire course of Merovingian art. We have an interesting example of this in the silver phalerae found in the tomb of a warrior chief at Ittenheim. In these seventh-century works the figures of the warlord and the boars point unmistakably both to the influence of the toreutic art of antiquity and to their Italian origin. The fine engraved pan bearing a hunting scene and a Greek inscription on the rim, which was found at Güttingen in the tomb of a seventh-century Alamannic chief, clearly stemmed from one of the Christian communities of the East, or perhaps Ravenna. Again, further west, we have the comb of St Lupus (d. 623), now in the treasure of Sens cathedral; here the two heraldic lions leaping towards the Tree of Life reproduce a familiar motif of ancient Oriental art.

Such ancient ornamental motifs as the cymatium and acanthus leaves were retained, unaltered, in the early Middle Ages. Though often used by themselves, they were sometimes combined with elements of the new zoomorphic imagery, and on occasion with a plain band of scrollwork, as in the small Angers diptych of the late seventh century.

There is no doubt that in Gaul this antiquizing art tradition was deliberately fostered by the great senatorial families, which, even under the kings, often supplied the Church with its highest dignitaries. Thus, alongside the growing influence of the Christian East, the links with Hellenic art remained unbroken throughout the Merovingian period, and it is no less clear that the Carolingian renaissance of the eighth century did not involve a break with the antique tradition.



219 - PAN WITH HUNTING SCENE AND INSCRIPTION. HEGAUMUSEUM, SINGEN.

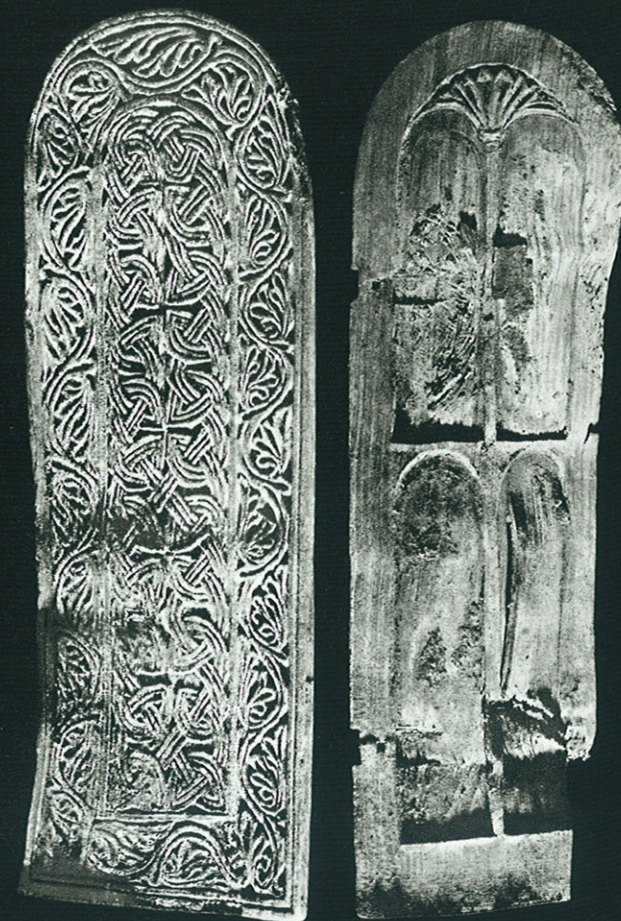


218 - BUCKLE OF ST CAESARIUS. NOTRE-DAME-LA-MAJOR, ARLES.

220 - COIN OF ST LUPUS. CATHEDRAL TREASURE, SENS.



222 - DECORATED TABLETS. CHAPEL, INSTITUTION SAINT-MARTIN, ANGERS.





The Polychrome Style

While from the year 400 on we find a marked tendency in all the western lands to spurn the antique style and almost completely to abandon plastically modelled figurations, another tendency was making rapid headway: ornamentation became increasingly important, and there was a marked new taste for emphatic colour. Plant forms fell out of favour and artists showed a preference for geometric figures. In the domain of metalwork, this new trend is evidenced by combinations of gold with red and other colours and, in glasswork, by an extensive use of the cloisonné technique. Its earliest exponents were the peoples of the East, particularly those in the Iranian provinces and the kingdoms of the Pontus (Black Sea) area.

This art of Oriental provenance came to the West in the wake of the great migrations; also, to some extent, as a result of the direct importation of eastern artifacts. The first of these westward drives was the invasion of the East Roman Empire by the Huns in 375.

The nature of the works of art that the invaders from the East brought with them into Europe is of special interest in view of its impact on the arts and crafts of the western world. For example in Austria, at Untersiebenbrunn, some handsome fibulae stemming from the Pontus region, were discovered in a Gothic tomb; likewise some other Pontic artifacts, probably made for an Alanian burial, were found in a grave in northern France at Airan (Calvados). Other objects dating to the Hun occupation have been uncovered in the heart of the Rhineland, notably in the *Waffengrab* (weapons grave) at Altlussheim, and objects contemporary with Attila have been found at Mundolsheim in Alsace. The grave goods buried about 400 near Wolfsheim in the Rhineland comprised many gold objects and a swordbelt buckle inscribed with the name of the Persian king Ardashir I (224-241). These are but a sampling of the many Pontic, Iranian and Hunnish artifacts dating to the period of Attila that have been brought to light in Central Europe. They testify to the wealth of Oriental objects—swords, fibulae, belt buckles, etc.—that found their way to Europe in the course of the invasions.

This art had far-reaching effects on the Gallo-Roman and Germanic metalworkers, who made haste to model their own work on it. Moreover it would seem that the invaders brought with them craftsmen from the Pontus region, who continued to practise their art in the occupied territories of the West. There the amount of gold available, produce of Roman tribute or the spoils of war, must have been prodigious.

Most of the precious stones, such as the garnets used for insets, had been brought from India by the Danube route, until the time when the Arab drive westward put an end to these importations. The first great phase of the Pontic art of gem-setting ended with the crushing defeat of the Huns in 451. In the Pouan tomb was found along with other objects (now in Troyes Museum) a magnificent sword with a gold hilt dating to the time of this decisive battle.



226 - PENDANT. STÄDTISCHES MUSEUM, WIESBADEN.

225 - SWORD. BADISCHES LANDESMUSEUM, KARLSRUHE.

||| - LARGE EAGLE-HEADED FIBULA. ACADEMIA INSTITUTUL DE ARHEOLOGIE, BUCHAREST.

In the following period—the age of Childeric—cloisonné work became at once more compact and more sumptuous. Large, symmetrically disposed coloured *cloisons* characterize the ornamental art of the East, in which any kind of figure imagery was prohibited. Examples are the works found in the Pietroasa Treasure (c. 375) now in Bucharest Museum and the cup of Chosroes II (590-628) (Cabinet des Médailles, Paris). In the West these large coloured zones were gradually reduced to narrow undulating strips setting off an elaborate central core. Only red garnets were used, to the exclusion of other coloured gems, and their lustre was intensified by a setting composed of goffered gold-leaf, the edges of which were smoothed and polished. The gems were tightly fitted into the cells, now grown thinner. The best example of this new style comes from the tomb of King Childeric (d. 481), uncovered in Tournai in 1653. Though this treasure was stolen from the Cabinet des Médailles in 1831, some fragments of it, including the King's long sword and scramasax, were discovered in the Seine. But his signet ring has never been recovered. The bees Napoleon chose for his emblem were inspired by the charming grasshoppers on a fibula from Childeric's tomb. Some other objects executed in the same cloisonné technique are so perfect in their kind that we may safely assume they were made in the royal workshops at Tournai. Since the shape of the *spathas* is typically Frankish, it is an open question whether the craftsmen who made these swords were indigenous or immigrants from the Pontus. This latter possibility must not be ruled out, for the gold wave pattern adorning them is also found on works of unquestionably Pontic origin, such as the Wolfsheim buckle and the somewhat later Apahida and Rüdern buckles (dated a little after the mid-fifth century). The only novelty here is the lavish decoration of the clasp, not found on the *spathas* with gold hilts made in southern Russia, and attributable perhaps to Nordic influences.

Until the mid-sixth century the elaborately decorated type of sword exemplified by Childeric's, made exclusively for the nobility, was being produced throughout the Frankish dominions; swords of this kind have been found in tombs at Lavoye, Flonheim and Planig. They were copied by the Alamanni, but in a simplified form, as is shown by the finds at Gültlingen, Kleinhüningen and Entringen. We find the same kind of cloisonné work, but less skilfully executed than that of the swords, on buckles and fibulae of the period, from the reign of Childeric to the sixth century. Besides red garnets, other gems of different colours were now employed, as in the handsome buckle from Tressan (in the Musée de Cluny, Paris). Here the rivets along the edges cease to serve any practical purpose and have become mere ornamental adjuncts. The indebtedness to Oriental works, especially those with embossed decorations (such as the Apahida buckle), is still evident.

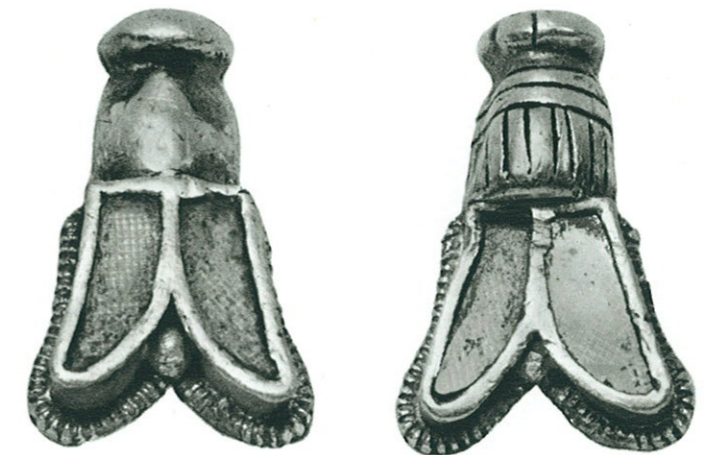
In the Frankish dominion the most perfect example of the polychrome style is a small chalice and its paten discovered near Gourdon (Saône-et-Loire) in 1845. The chalice has two elegantly shaped handles and is adorned with filigree work, turquoises and glass paste; the paten has a cross in the centre and delicately wrought insets along its margins, notably on its foot. The discovery along with it of Byzantine coins (518-537) enables us to date these objects approximately, and they may well have been owned by Sigismund, King of Burgundy (d. 524). The fine-spun decor-



227 - HILT AND SWORD ORNAMENTS. CABINET DES MÉDAILLES, BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE, PARIS.



228 - RING (COPY). BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE, PARIS.



229 - PAIR OF GRASSHOPPER FIBULAE. BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE, PARIS.



230 - GRASSHOPPER FIBULA. MUSÉE DES BEAUX-ARTS, LYONS.



232 - BELT BUCKLE. MUSÉE DE CLUNY, PARIS.



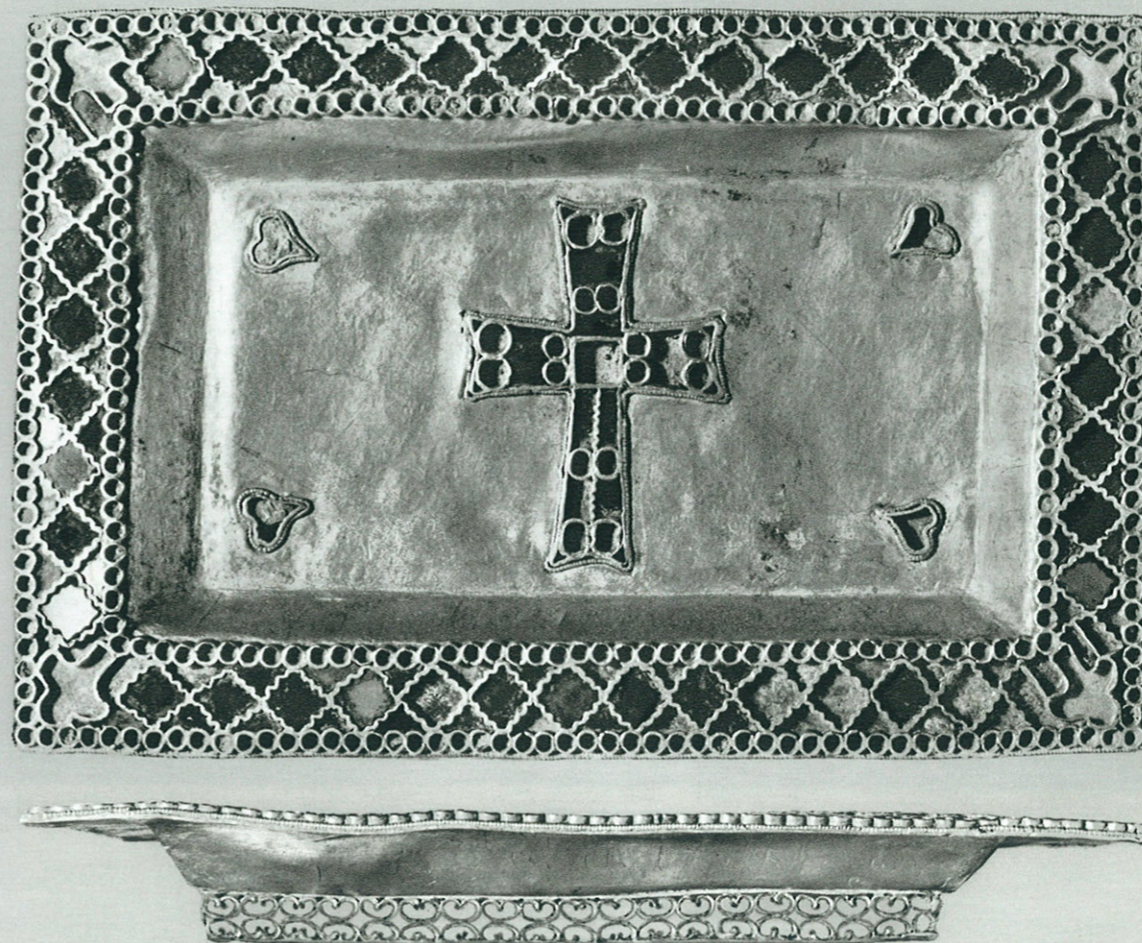
233 - CHALICE. CABINET DES MÉDAILLES, BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE, PARIS.

◀ 231 - SWORD. MUSÉE DES ANTIQUITÉS NATIONALES, SAINT-GERMAIN-EN-LAYE.

ation, the filigree, the use of two colours (green and red) and the daintiness of the openwork on the foot of the paten have obvious affinities with Mediterranean art. The same association of red and green gems occurs in the first half of the sixth century on the fishes from Bülach (Zurich Museum) and those from Kleinhüningen (Basel Museum); also in the Burgundian fibulae from Jouy-le-Comte, whose technique is exceptionally proficient. The practice of combining filigree and cloisonné work, exemplified by the Gourdon chalice, was now becoming generalized, and we find it also employed in the round fibulae from Charnay-lès-Mâcon (Saône-et-Loire). Despite certain resemblances with some Scandinavian artifacts, the affinities of these objects with Ostrogothic art are unmistakable, and they are even more apparent in the pieces from Bülach and Gourdon.

So far only a small number of objects imported from the Black Sea region have been discovered in Italy, but it is known that the polychrome Oriental style was in favour there. The earliest extant example (dating most probably to the period before the invasion of the Goths) is the lamb in the central sector of a five-panelled ivory diptych in the treasure of Milan cathedral, the reliefs on which appear to have been made subsequently to 450. The serried cloisonné work in the nimbus is, despite certain differences, in the nature of the *opus inclusorium* employed in the

234 - PATEN (SEEN FROM ABOVE AND FROM THE SIDE). CABINET DES MÉDAILLES, BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE, PARIS.



so-called 'golden cuirass of Theodoric' (discussed below) formerly in Ravenna but no longer extant. (In the light of the latest excavations made at Krefeld-Gellep, it would seem that this 'cuirass' was really a plaque affixed to a horse's harness.) Since in a later period also, in the sixth century, insets of garnets are found in Italian works, such as the cover of the Gospel Book of Theodelinda in Monza and the jewelled cross (now lost) from the Sancta Sanctorum of the Vatican, it can safely be assumed that, independently of the Ostrogoths, Italian craftsmen had, on their own initiative, adopted this Oriental technique. Thus the question whether the gold portions of the Ravenna 'cuirass' were the work of Ostrogothic or of indigenous artists is of little consequence. In this domain, too, as well as in their architecture and mosaics, the Goths may well have employed local artists who had acquired these Oriental skills at the source—that is to say in the Pontus region—or, again, the 'pincer' decoration of the 'cuirass' may have been the work of some Germanic craftsman.

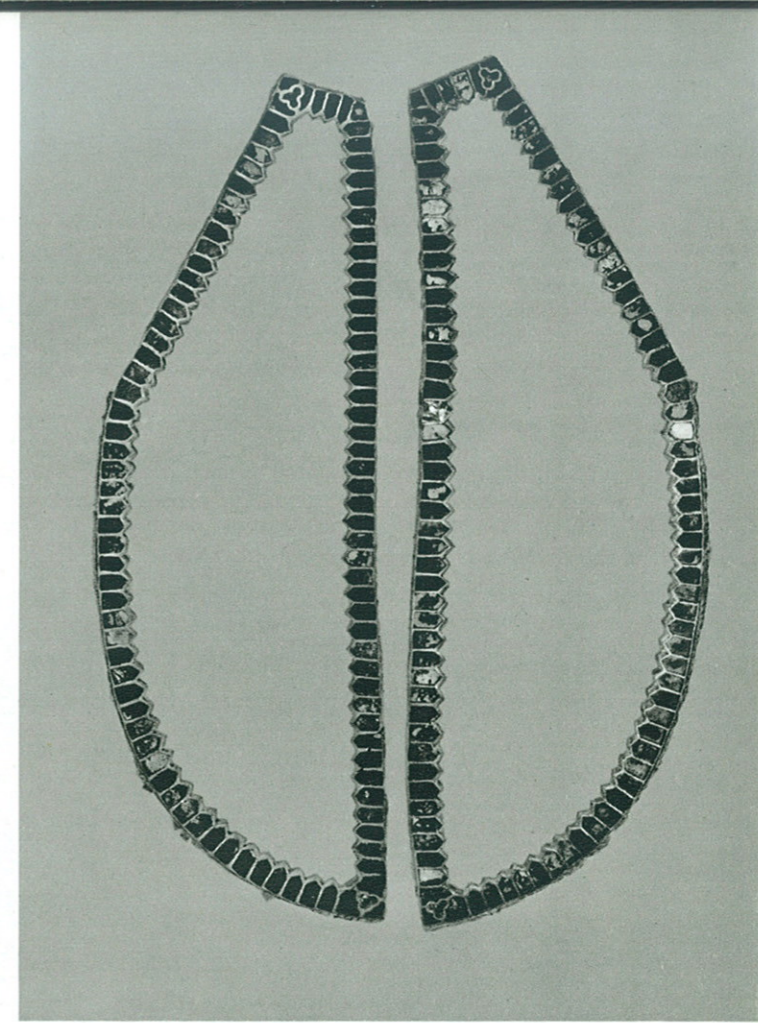
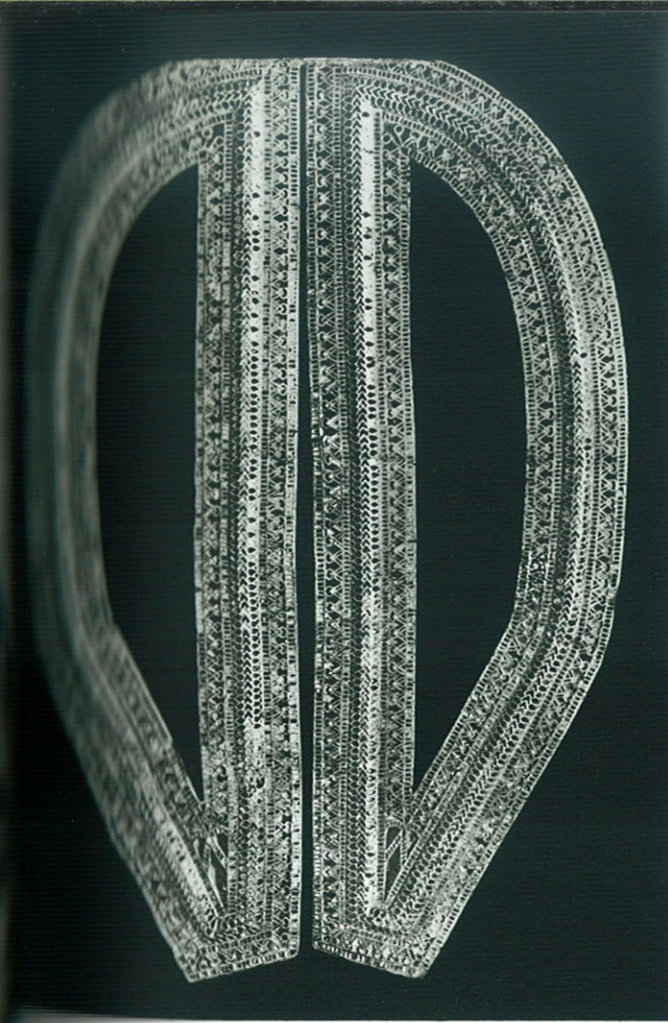
There is no question that when they occupied northern Italy in 488, the Ostrogoths brought with them from the Pontus the polychrome style of their homeland. The two Domagnano fibulae adorned with gold eagles (one now at Nuremberg, the other in the Marquis de Ganay Collection, Paris) are among the finest



235 - PAIR OF FISH-SHAPED FIBULAE. SCHWEIZERISCHES LANDESMUSEUM, ZURICH.



236 - LOOPED FIBULA. MUSÉE DES ANTIQUITÉS NATIONALES, SAINT-GERMAIN-EN-LAYE.



FRAGMENT OF A HORSE'S HARNESS (LOST).

239 - FRAGMENT OF A HORSE'S HARNESS, KREFELD.

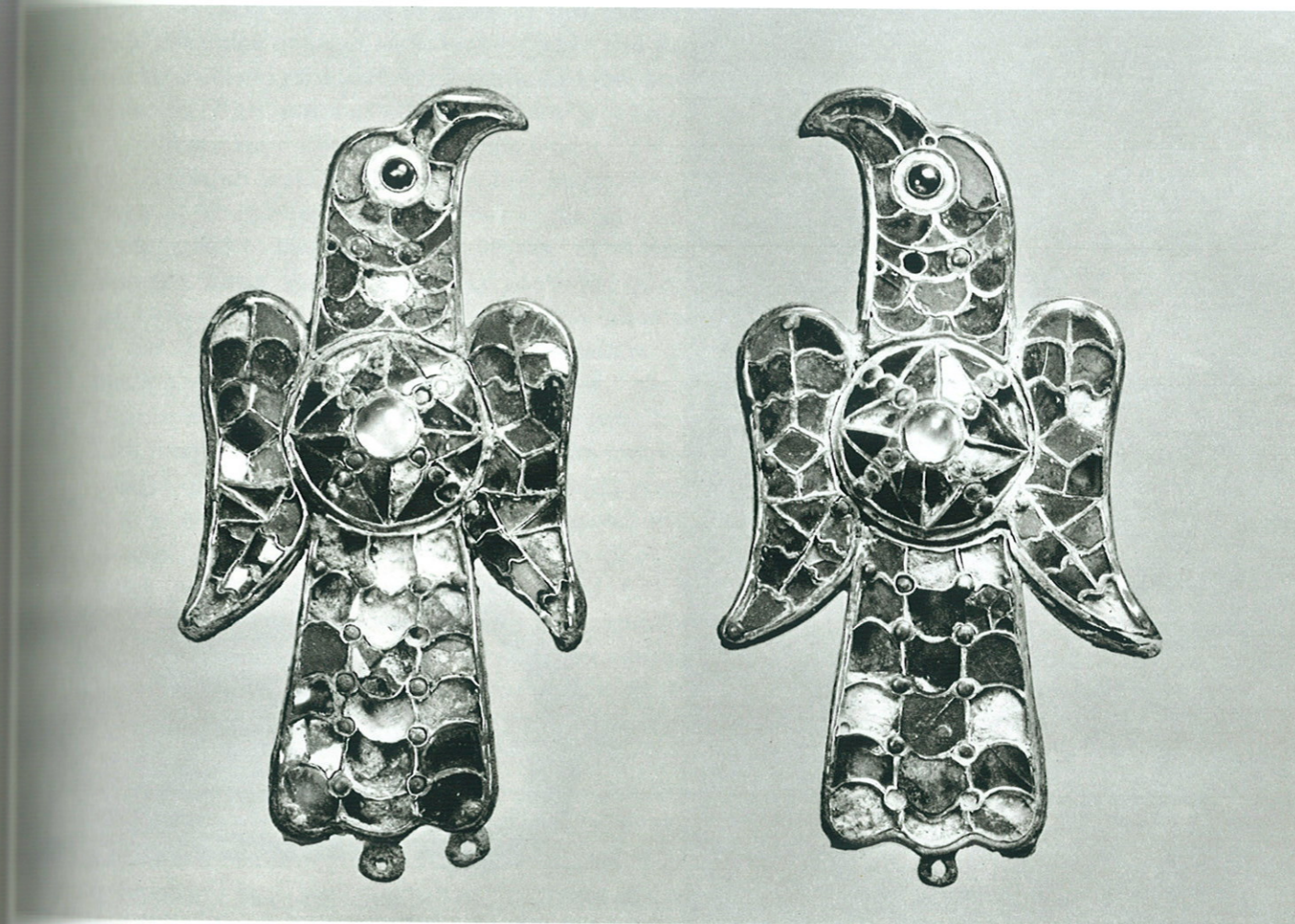
creations of this art and testify to the skill of the craftsman who so successfully transposed an animal motif from southern Russia into the Germanic style. Here the effect is due not only to the curiously painterly impression, as if on a flat surface, produced by the design, but also to the harmonious stylization of the ensemble. That fibulae of this type were in high favour with the Gothic nobility is proved by the quantity that have survived, among them the two examples found on the Appian Way in Rome.

The Visigoths, too, were partial to this type, but in a simplified form. Many eagle fibulae have been found in the neighbourhood of Toulouse and in Spain (e.g. those from Tierra de Barros, now in Baltimore). Those from the Ostrogoth tomb at Desana rank among the notable examples of the cloisonné work of the period. They date to about 500, when this art was at its apogee. Noteworthy is a pair of fibulae inset with red and green stones, some flat, some faceted, the upper edge adorned with birds' heads. These heads resemble those on a fibula from Fano and on the handsome Gothic buckles (with a more distinctively Oriental form) in the Berlin and Karlsruhe museums and also at Norcia, whose lower edges already carry strips of interlaces. All are assignable to the Pontic heritage of Gothic art. The cloisonné-work pieces of the late Ostrogothic period are less ornate. Most

DIPTYCH, DETAIL OF THE CENTRAL ELEMENT. CATHEDRAL TREASURE, MILAN.



240 - EAGLE-SHAPED FIBULA. GERMANISCHES NATIONALMUSEUM, NUREMBERG.



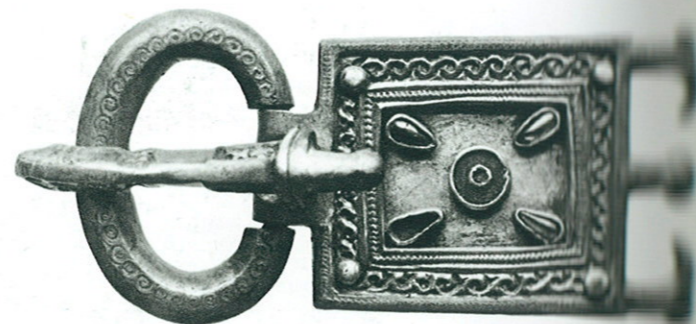
241 - PAIR OF EAGLE-SHAPED FIBULAE. THE WALTERS ART GALLERY, BALTIMORE.

are in bronze, a few in silver, and gems are now more sparingly used. The large belt buckle at Pavia illustrates this trend and the most striking examples of it are to be found in Hungary. True, these latter are lavishly decorated, but their cuneiform ornamentation and the birds' heads on the edges show a marked deterioration and are at a far remove from the achievements of Ostrogothic art in its glorious heyday in Pannonia.

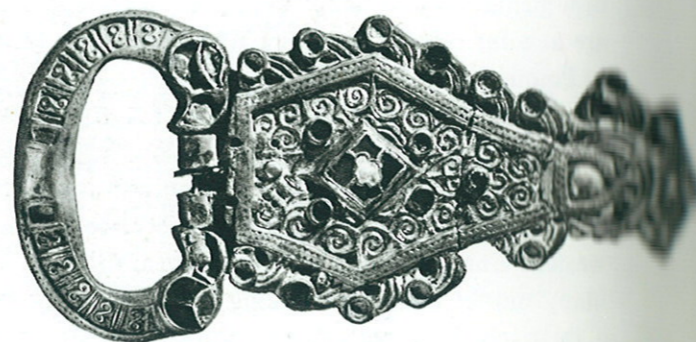
When the Ostrogothic empire fell to pieces in 553, the Byzantine emperor regained possession of Ravenna. Then came the Lombard invasion of 568. But, despite Lombard domination, Byzantium lost none of its prestige in Italy; indeed its art enlarged its sphere of influence, spreading across the Italian frontier into western Europe. Expelled from Alexandria and Constantinople by religious feuds, many monks and high-ranking prelates sought refuge in the West. Soon, and for a relatively long period, Oriental popes sat on St Peter's throne and promoted in Rome the arts of their mother countries. As early as the pontificate of Hormisdas

242 - ROME (?). COVERS OF THE GOSPEL BOOK OF QUEEN THEODELINDA. CATHEDRAL TREASURE, MONZA.





244 - BELT BUCKLE. BADISCHES LANDESMUSEUM, KARLSRUHE.



245 - BELT BUCKLE. MUSEO CIVICO, PAVIA.

◀ 243 - LOOPED FIBULA. MUSEO CIVICO D'ARTE ANTICA, TURIN.

(514-523) there were signs in Rome of this infiltration of eastern art forms, while such Byzantine outposts as Ravenna, Grado and Parenzo became active art centres. We have only to read the *Liber Pontificalis* to see how rich were the Roman churches in works of art, precious fabrics, gold and jewellery imported from the East.

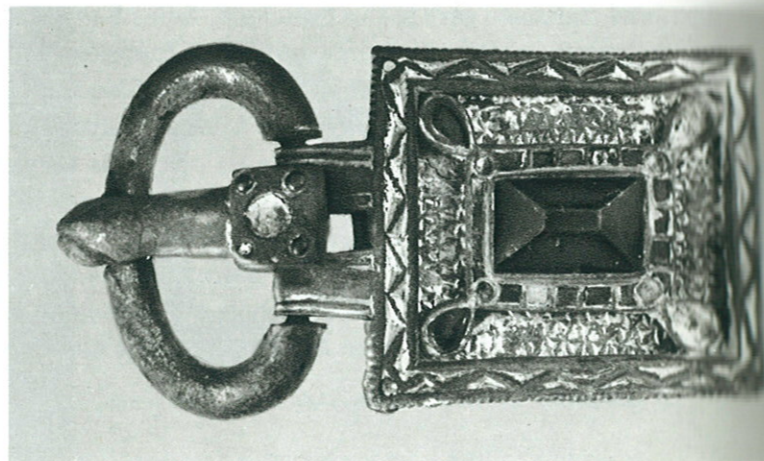
After a brief eclipse, works in the Oriental polychrome style returned to favour in the seventh century. One of the best examples is the famous cover of the Gospel Book of Theodelinda, evidently one of the gifts which Gregory the Great (d. 604) made in 603 to the sovereigns at Monza. (This binding is probably to be identified with the 'Theca Persica' mentioned in the list of presents.) That an awareness of the Oriental origin of the technique of glass inlays persisted is proved by a passage in the chronicle of Theophylactus of Simocatta where he speaks of 'a Hunnish binding with both covers bedecked with gold.' On the binding of the Theodelinda Gospels a large cross studded with coloured gems is surrounded by a frame enriched with inlays. (Similar corner decorations are found on antique cameos between the upright of a cross and the edges.) In this finely executed work, garnets are inset in rows of circles with segments of circles engraved within them. The clear-cut, near-classical layout of the covers of this Gospel Book suggests that it was made in an Italian workshop and its dedicatory inscription in Latin points to Rome.

The same technique was employed in the jewelled cross, now lost, that was once in the *Sancta Sanctorum*, of the Vatican. Alongside rows of large, uncut stones there was an ornamental border of cloisonné work executed in the same manner. This reliquary cross may, too, have been made in a Roman workshop. The widespread influence of this style is demonstrated by the similarly inset decoration of the gold votive crown of the Visigoth king Recceswinth (649-672) which formed part of the treasure hoard from Fuente de Guarrazar, near Toledo, now in Madrid. The protruding vertical arrangement of the gems on this crown obviously affiliates it to the decorative technique of such Italian works as the crown of Theodelinda found at Monza.

When the technique of Visigoth metalwork is examined closely and compared with pieces of the same kind made in Italy, it is seen to be of markedly inferior quality. Many pieces have close affinities with the works of Lombard courtly art that have been discovered in quantities of tombs, some far north of the Alps; for example the royal tombs dating to the first half of the sixth century at Saint-Denis, Cologne and Krefeld-Gellep. They demonstrate the minute attention that the Lombard craftsmen gave to this technique. Some S-shaped fibulae, inset with garnets, are technically akin to the circular fibulae, incrustated with gems, which have been discovered in large numbers in the graveyards of Nocera Umbra and Castel Trosino. A piece from Lingotto, now in Turin Museum, illustrates the extreme delicacy of this cloisonné work at its best; while its oval cells testify to the continuity of the Ostrogoth tradition. An exceptionally beautiful round fibula, with blue stones alternating with garnets, was found in a tomb at Parma. Its kinship with the circular Anglo-Saxon fibulae in the same technique, such as the one discovered at Kingston in Kent, is plain to see. Like the fibula from Lingotto it has a central boss, but it differs from Lombard fibulae in its more elaborate filigree work and its use of animal forms.



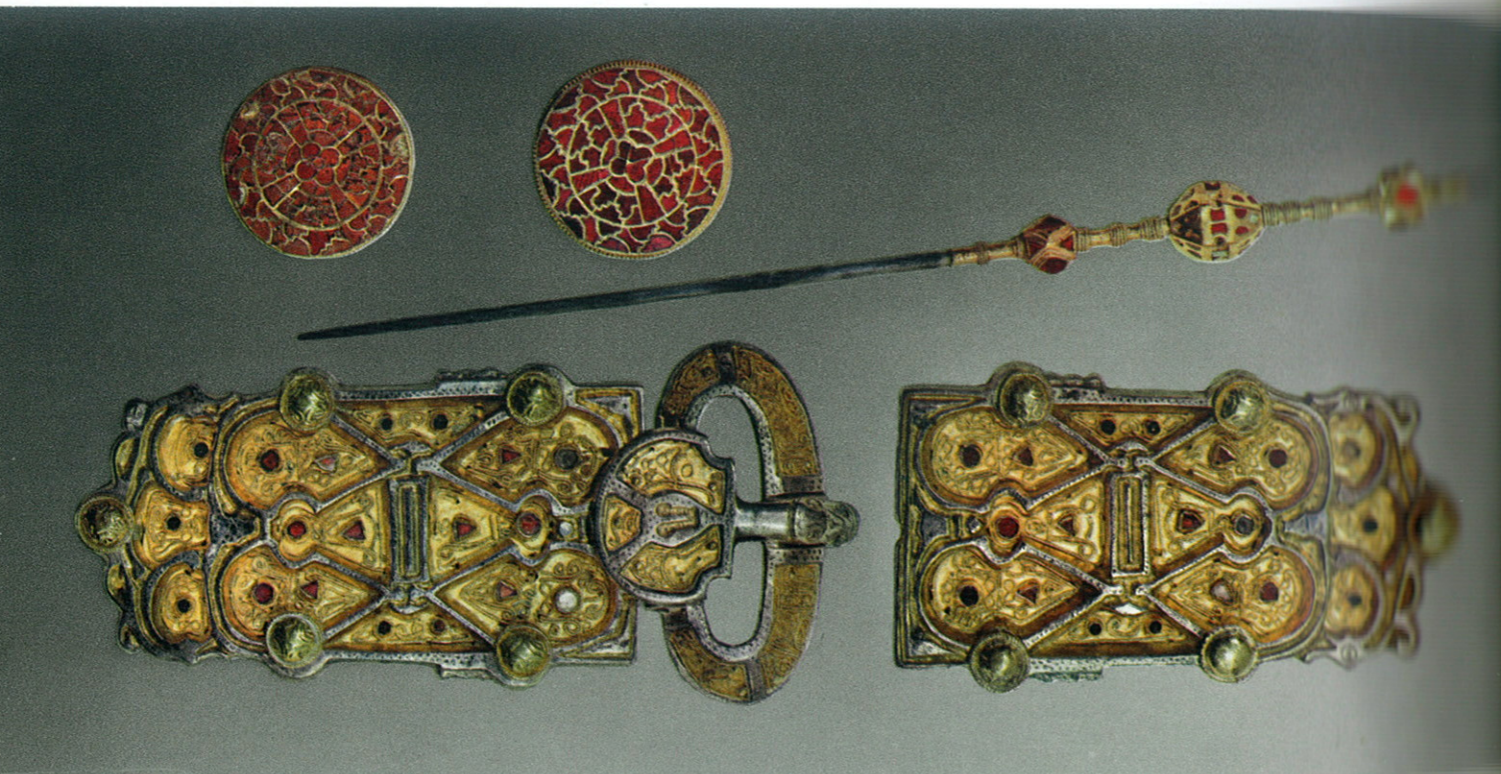
246 - JEWELLED CROSS (LOST). FORMERLY IN THE TREASURE OF THE SANCTA SANCTORUM, VATICAN CITY.



247 - BELT BUCKLE. MUSEO ARQUEOLOGICO, MADRID.

248 - JEWELLED CROWN OF KING RECCESWINTH. MUSEO ARQUEOLOGICO, MADRID.





249 - ORNAMENTS OF QUEEN ARNEGONDE. DIRECTION DES ANTIQUITÉS HISTORIQUES, PARIS.

That there was a close connection between Lombard and Anglo-Saxon art is evident—the technique of the magnificent artifacts (British Museum) found in the royal tomb at Sutton Hoo, dating to about 650, proves its existence—but how this came about, how these exchanges of ideas between the islands of the north and the Mediterranean lands took place there is no knowing. Comparing the two groups of works, Nordic and Mediterranean, we get an impression that the Lombards gave more than they received. Anyhow there can be no question that the various types of fibulae inlaid with gems found in Frankish and Alamannic tombs were imported from Italy. Moreover many of the works discovered are obvious imitations of Italian prototypes. For example the round fibulae found in a mid-seventh century Frankish tomb at Soest, in Westphalia, at Pfullingen (now in Stuttgart) and at Charnay (now at Saint-Germain-en-Laye) have close affinities with such Lombard works as the fibulae of Castel Trosino. The superb piece from Schretzheim, however, was probably an Alamannic production; the seething mass of animals, arranged in the form of a swastika (formerly containing cloisonné work) points to a convergence of elements stemming from Lombardy and northern Germany. But some fibulae, such as the silver one with handles found at Wittislingen, adorned with filigree work and inset gems, display equally close affinities with Lombard originals, though alongside these marked similarities we find no less clear associations with Nordic, in particular Frisian works.

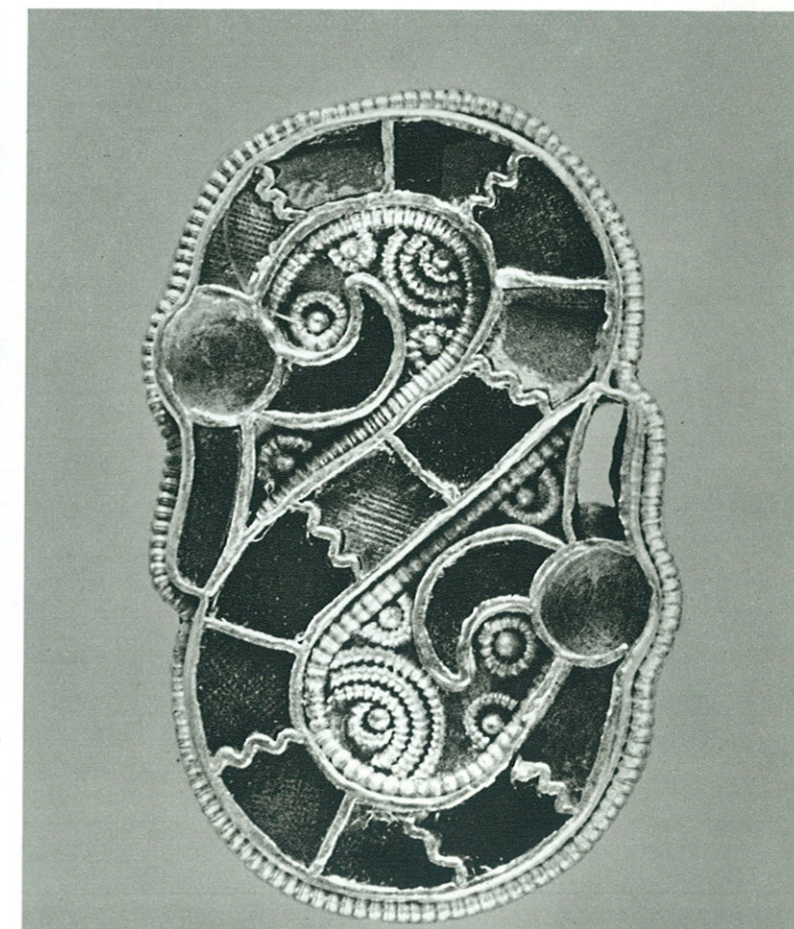


250 - ROUND FIBULA. MUSEO DELL'ALTO MEDIOEVO, ROME.



251 - ROUND FIBULA. MUSEO DELL'ALTO MEDIOEVO, ROME.

252 - LOOPED FIBULAE. RÖMISCH-GERMANISCHES MUSEUM, COLOGNE. — 253 - S-SHAPED FIBULA. WÜRTEMBERGISCHES LANDESMUSEUM, STUTTART.

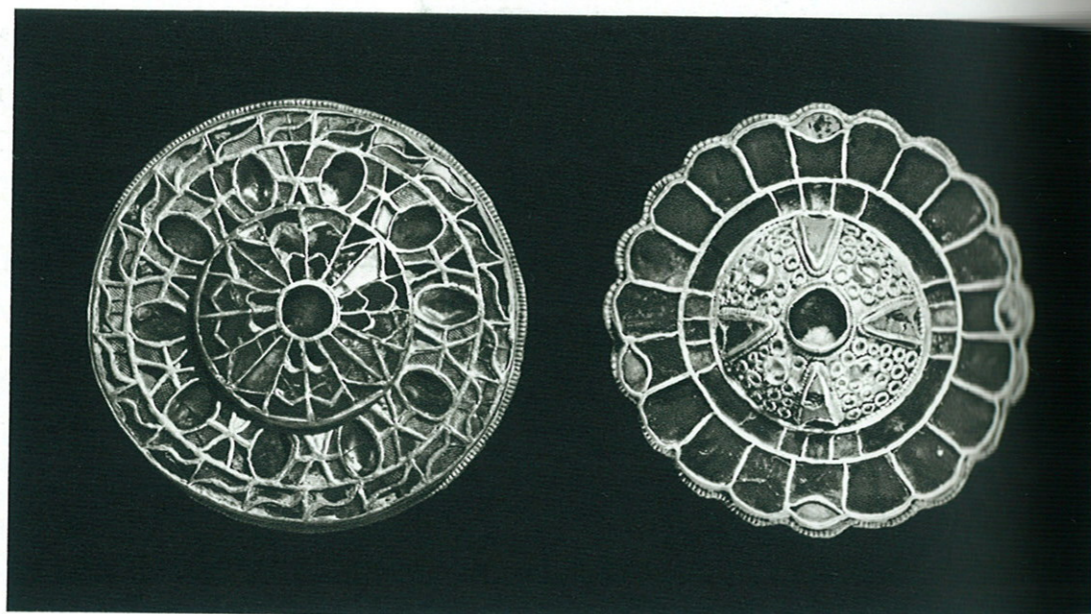




254 - ROUND FIBULA. CITY OF LIVERPOOL MUSEUMS.



255 - ROUND FIBULA. MUSEO NAZIONALE DI ANTICHITÀ, FIRENZE.



256-257 - ROUND FIBULAE. MUSEO ARCHEOLOGICO, TURIN AND RÖMISCH-GERMANISCHES MUSEUM, COLOGNE.



258 - ROUND FIBULA. MUSÉE DES ANTIQUITÉS NATIONALES, SAINT-GERMAIN-EN-LAYE.



259 - ROUND FIBULA. LANDESMUSEUM, MÜNSTER. — 260 - ROUND FIBULA WITH SWASTIKA DESIGN. MUSEUM, DILLINGEN.

In view of the exceptional technique, all these fibulae may safely be assigned to the latter half of the seventh century.

The workshop of Wigerig, the craftsman who signed the Wittislingen fibula, may well have been in the Rhineland. Representative of the final phase of the cloisonné technique, as evidenced in grave goods of the end of the century, is the large round fibula from a woman's grave at Wittislingen, executed in a technique markedly differing from that of its precursors. On it four interlacing animals project in bold relief from a hollowed-out ground of filigree work. The workshop where this magnificent piece was made has not so far been located, but there are good reasons for believing it was somewhere in south-western Germany, in Alamannic territory; this would also account for the evident influence of Lombard art and the presence of animal ornaments.

During the final phase the technique of cloisonné work developed on independent lines in the western territories of the Frankish kingdom. We find an indication of the shift from the style of work produced in south-western Germany (such as the Tübingen and Pfullingen fibulae) to that of the works produced in France, in the fibula inset with garnets and with a *solidus* of the Emperor Justinian in the centre, which figures on the narrow side of the reliquary of St Andrew in the treasure of Trier cathedral.

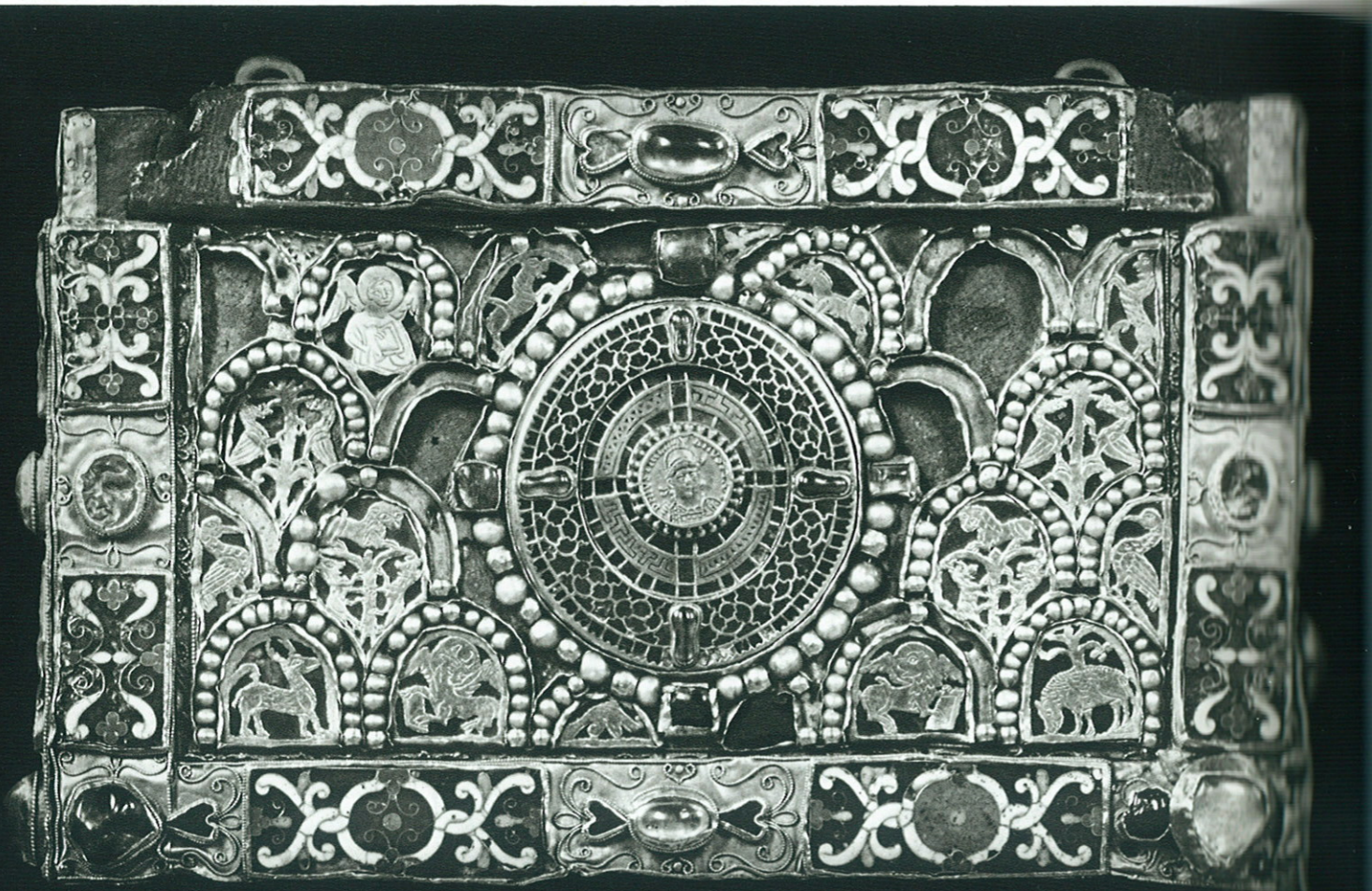
West Frankish art came to its full flowering chiefly in the workshops attached to the court of King Dagobert (628-638) in Paris, but there were also flourishing centres at Limoges, Metz, Arras, Lyons. St Eloi (Eligius), who was not only the king's



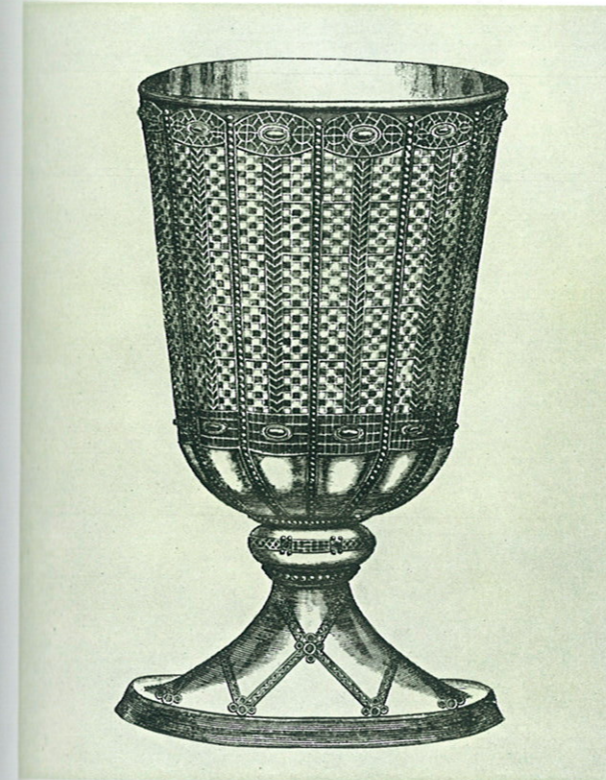
261 - LOOPED FIBULA. PRÄHISTORISCHE STAATSSAMMLUNG, MÜNSTER.



262 - ROUND FIBULA. PRÄHISTORISCHE STAATSSAMMLUNG, MUNICH.



PORTABLE ALTAR OF ST ANDREW. CATHEDRAL TREASURE, TRIER.

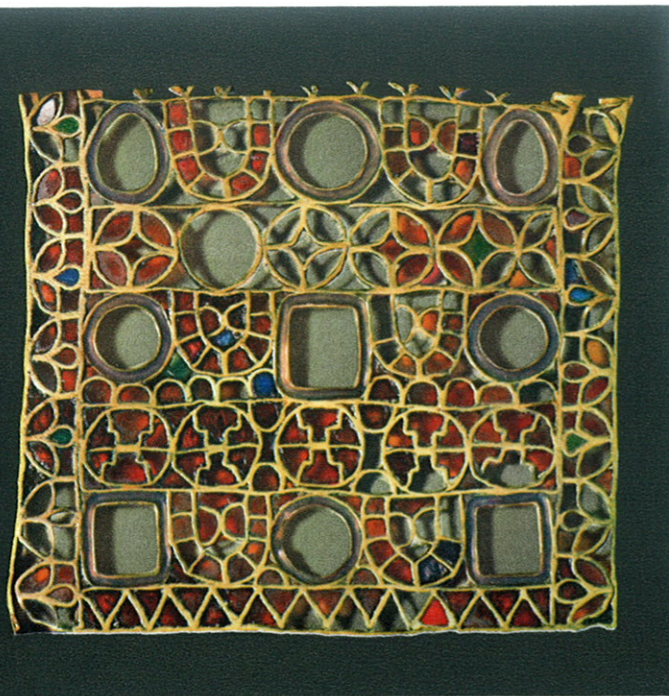


264 - CHALICE OF ST ELIGIUS. DRAWING OF 1653.



265 - CROOK OF ST GERMANUS, DETAIL. DELÉMONT. ▶

minister but comptroller of the royal mint, was an enthusiastic patron of the crafts of gold-and-silver-work and a vast number of pieces, most of which have disappeared, are said to have been commissioned by him. They were preserved in the treasures of great French churches, Notre-Dame of Paris, Saint-Denis, Saint-Loup of Noyon, Saint-Martin of Limoges, the Abbey of Chelles, and others. The most famous work of the period, the large gold chalice of Chelles, ornamented with garnets and blue, white and green gems, was destroyed during the Revolution; it is known today only by a sketch of it made in 1653. The plain, clear-cut geometric layout of the decoration is reminiscent of the Gourdon paten and the partition lines inset with garnets between its sections remind us of the so-called 'cuirass of Theodoric' which, judging by the objects recently discovered at Krefeld-Gellep, more probably formed part of a horse's trappings. In fact this chalice, too, has evident affinities with the Italian inlaid metalwork described at an earlier page and goes to show that the Mediterranean tradition was still active in France in the mid-seventh century. There is every likelihood that Count de Montesquiou-Fezensac was well-advised in identifying a fragment preserved in the Cabinet des Médailles as being part of the cross of St Eloi (Eligius) in Saint-Denis. This fragment, worked in an austere geometric style, carries a pattern of circles, ovals and rectangles alternating with spheres and truncated arcs—a design that figures in a more elaborate form on Ostrogothic fibulae (e.g. the Lingotto fibula) and on the Visigoth crown from Guarrazar.



266 - FRAGMENT OF THE CROSS OF ST ELIGIUS. BIBL. NAT., PARIS. — 267 - 'THE CROSS OF ST ELIGIUS.' NATIONAL GALLERY, LONDON.



268 - RELIQUARY CASKET OF TEUDERIGUS. TREASURE, SAINT-MAURICE D'AGAUNE.



Though it is not absolutely certain that this fragment actually figured on the great cross above the high altar of Saint-Denis, known to us by a fifteenth-century painting in the National Gallery, London, it certainly formed part of the St Eligius imagery and, since the superb cross itself was dismantled or destroyed during the French Revolution, it constitutes one of the most revealing vestiges of what was clearly a *magnum opus* of the seventh century.

Representative of the last phase of cloisonné work is the reliquary casket at Saint-Maurice d'Againe, made by Undiho and Ello for the local priest Teuderigus. The place of origin and date are not definitely established but a comparison with similar pieces justifies us in believing that this casket was made in the second half of the seventh century, perhaps in one of the abbey workshops. The curiously erratic disposition of the insets rules out any question of a pre-determined structural plan, and chalice-shaped cells of this type are not found on any Lombard model. On the other hand the layout of the planes recalls the ornamental art of certain early round Lombard fibulae, for example those from Pfullingen and Nocera Umbra. But here the technique of the models is carried a stage further and the exceptional size of the flat surfaces tends to create an illusion of infinite space. Stylistically, this casket shows affinities with a later work, the abbatial crook of St Germanus at Delémont (canton of Berne). Here the inlays are limited to S-shaped animal forms arranged in pairs, in combination with the filigree and repoussé work. The year of the foundation of the abbey (c. 640) gives a clue to the dating of this crook—some time in the second half of the seventh century. It was certainly made in a provincial workshop situated on the Alamannic-Burgundian frontier. We can trace in such objects the transition to Carolingian art, chiefly in the crosswise arrangement of large stones, of which we shall find a later example in the Enger reliquary (in Berlin). Here, too, we see in action a new art trend which, though the means employed are somewhat rudimentary, seeks to render plastic form. But the technique of incrustation of polychrome glass was dying out; two hundred years later the author of the *Gesta Dagoberti*, when giving a list of the St Eligius artifacts, observes that 'this technique is no longer employed.'