

Representations of the Lions in Monuments in Syria from the Eleventh to the Eighth Century B.C.E. During the Iron Age

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Abstract

The decoration of gates and important monuments with artistic pieces in form of lions was a characteristic of the Iron Age in Syria. Lions depicted in reliefs or lion statues in different positions were uncovered abundantly in different parts of Syria. This paper aims at investigating the role of these decorations in understanding the religious and social aspects of the inhabitants of Syria in the period extending from the 11th to the 8th century B.C.

We can see that since the emergence of the first civilizations, religious thought has a clear impact on artistic production features in terms of general shape and subject. The ancient inhabitants feared the dangerous forces that beset them. So, they embodied those in various human, animal, or even complex animal bodies.

This study is concerned with lion sculptures that appeared with abundance in all regions of Syria from the eleventh to eighth centuries B.C.E., as they were represented in the cities, inside the buildings and at city gates, and played both constructive and decorative roles .

It is clear that each city had its own distinctive style in ways of expressing its art. Moreover, it is noticeable that the artists tried to simulate the real animals by using huge stone blocks to give those sculptures reality with a natural look. Also, we can see that there were two types of carved lions: the first was carving a unique style for every piece and the other was carving two identical lions, representing different positions of the animal with different techniques.

The study will focus on the artistic and technical styles of representing lions in Syria to track their development and understand its role in the ancient people's minds.

Keywords: Lion, Syria, Buildings, Iron Age.

Introduction

This research deals with a number of artistic pieces depicting the lion in an important period of Syria's history, namely, the part of the Iron Age extending from the eleventh to the eighth century BCE. The excavations conducted in some of Iron Age sites unearthed many buildings, temples, and palaces adorned with wonderful pieces of art representing human and animal statues and mythical creatures.

This study is concerned with lion sculptures. These sculptures appeared abundantly in all regions of Syria and were represented in the cities inside the buildings and at city gates and played both constructive and decorative roles. In terms of the artistic features of these lion sculptures, it is worth mentioning that each city had its own distinctive style in the ways of expressing its art. (Osborne, 2012)

The importance of this research lies in shedding light on one of the most important art forms of the ancient East during the first millennium BCE, namely, the art of representing lions within the buildings in Syria. The research focuses on the artistic and technical styles and their development through the centuries; it also tries to identify the artistic features in the Syrian regions during the period under investigation.

Moreover, this research conducts a statistical study of the sculptures of lions whether they were statues or reliefs and highlights the points of similarity and difference among them.

It is noticeable that huge stone blocks were used to give those sculptures reality with a natural look trying to simulate the real animal. On the other hand, the positions of these lions also differed: there were lions carved in a standing position, others carved in a moving position (one of the hind feet advances over the other, in addition to the sculpted statues with fifth foot), and crouching lions. In addition, reliefs were found engraved with lively scenes representing the hunting of lions, and the lions fighting with other animals.

The beginnings of representing of the lion in ancient Near East

The oldest appearance of lions in Syria came from the site of Habuba Kabira, where an amulet made of greenish marble (Alabaster) in the form of a lion was found. This piece dates back to 3500-3200 BCE (Stromenger, 1975), where the lion symbolized control and strength in people's life at that time.

We believe the lion was one of many symbols of gods during the third millennium BCE (the god Ningirsu for example). While during the second millennium BCE, it appears as an accompaniment to the goddess Ishtar in all works of art (as in the inauguration of King Zimri Lim in Mary) (Kohlmeyer, 1985).

When we talk about the role of the lion in Syria, we can say that it had played many and varied roles in people's thoughts over the ages. It was guarding the entrances to religious buildings during the ancient Bronze Age (about 2650 BCE) as at the entrance to the god (Dagan) temple in Mari. The first appearance of the composite animal (the lion eagle) was in the city of Mari, and it was in the form of a necklace or amulet at the same time.

During the second millennium BCE, the role of the lion became a companion to the gods and a symbol of goddess Ishtar, as in the inauguration painting of King Zimri Lim in Mary (Parrot, 1937).

Around the fifteenth century BCE (the new Bronze Age) the representation of the lion had been seen on pots and weights, as in the weights found in Ugarit and the pottery cup in the form of a lion (Kohlmeyer, 1985).

However, the lion played other roles since ancient times in the civilizations neighbouring Syria.

In Mesopotamia, it first appeared to embody the role of a predator and a killer of domestic animals; it became, as we mentioned earlier, the main enemy of man in that period. Yet, we can say that in time man went over his fear of the lion and began to hunt and prepare ambushes for it (as in the obelisk of hunting lions) (Alnawab, 2003).

In the period of the Sumerian city-states (2800-2370 BCE), the first incarnation of a composite lion (the lion eagle) appeared as a relief found in the oval temple, the topic here showed a fight among lions and a compound mythical animal. (Alnawab, 2003)

The lion remained a symbol of power and supremacy during the Akkadian period (2371-2230 BCE), while during the period of the third dynasty of Ur (new Sumerian period) around (2132-2024 BCE) it appears to represent the role of a predator of the animals in nature again. We see this kind of subject in a lot of cylinder seals. (Alnawab, 2003).

After the fall of the third dynasty of Ur at the hands of the Elamites and the advent of the Old Babylonian period (about 1595-2004 BCE), the role of the lion changed from being described as the enemy to being described as the guardian and protector of buildings on the gates (Figure 8). This continued during the Kashi period, and became one of the most important symbols of the border stone (Kodoro) (Alam, 1996).

In the period of the Assyrian state during the fourteenth century BCE, we note the interest of the Assyrian kings in representing lions in a large way and portraying them in sculptural works. The idea of hunting lions returned again and became one of the favorite sports to the kings to indicate their

power at the time. In addition to the representation of lions in the process of Hunting, the role of the lion during the Assyrian era continued to present the protector and guard of the architectural structures in the city (Bertman, 2003).

Distribution of lion sculptures in Syria during the period between the 11th and 8th centuries B.C.

Sculptures of lions have been found in different parts of the Aramaic Kingdom in Syria in the period between the 11th and 8th centuries BCE (Fig.1). They were found in large quantities in the buildings of the northern regions of Syria, like Ain Dara, which was one of the richest sites with lion sculptures. Inside the temple, twenty eight reliefs were found on which realistic and mythical forms of lions were represented in addition to another twenty eight sculptures of anthropomorphic lions. A sculpture of a huge anthropomorphic lion was found outside the temple (Abu Assaf, 1991).

At the site of Zincirli (the ancient city of Shamal), ten sculptures of various real and mythical lions were found (Schloen & Fink, 2009). At the site of Tell Tayinat (the ancient city of Kinalua), two carvings representing two basaltic lions were found (Harrison & Osborne, 2012).

In the buildings of the Syrian Al-Jazīrah regions, large quantities of these carvings were also found, as lions were found guarding them near all the gates of Arslan Tash site. Also, many reliefs and statues came from inside Tel Halaf temple.

Two rare sculptures representing realistic lions were found in Hama region (central Syria). Only one sculpture representing a legendary lion (Sphinx) came from Damascus (southern Syria), and this sculpture is the only witness of this art in the Kingdom of Damascus during this period.

The huge lion statue that was found at the foot of the western tell in Ain Dara (Fig. 4), and the huge lion statue that was found lying on the ground outside tell Tayinat (Fig. 6) (Harrison, 2012) are assumed to be erected at one of the main gates of the city, but, due to their huge size, they were found outside the city and far from the official buildings outside the city.

In Zincirli, five huge stone lions (Fig. 7) were found within a hole, 12 meters away from the inner gate of the city; it is certain that these lions surrounded this huge gate. They were arranged in pairs, and this requires the presence of a sixth lion, which has not been detected through the excavations yet.

It seems that the lions were transferred to the hole that formed a large hill when the city fell. In the level directly above the lions, a layer of burnt reeds was found, and the colour of the floor adjacent to this level was reddish. This indicates that a large fire took place over the irregularly buried lions inside the hole (Ussishkin, 1970). Also, in the city of Zincirli near the outer wall of the city, it is likely that the reliefs which were found thrown on the ground adorned one of the walls (Figs. 9, 10).¹ Artists during the Iron Age period decorated the outer wall facades of the cities' important buildings with reliefs representing animal scenes and mythical creatures, as, for example, on the walls of the Ain Dara temple, and the walls of Tell Halaf temple. In Building (J) in the city of Zincirli (Fig. 8), it is likely that the statue erected on a stone base and decorated with two lions (Bonatz, 2000) belonged to a king because the art of representing lions is a royal art associated with strength and prestige, and we think that it was in one of the two rooms located in the far south of the building that formed the front side of it. On the other hand, the carving that was found in Carchemish site, west of the western gate entrance (Fig. 17), represents a procession of a god or a king and two lions were carved on both sides of the base (Woolley, 1952). This carving was possibly placed in one of the official buildings inside the city, as this art is royal and cannot be found in the homes of common people. This excavate location is an indication that it was moved to this place when the city fell and was occupied, and the statue of the distorted lion found at the southern gate of the inner city in Carchemish was certainly one of the statues that adorned this gate. It is likely that the carving which was found thrown on the ground near the eastern gate of the inner city (fig. 19) was also adorning one of its walls (Woolley, 1952). In the same site there is also a column base lying on the ground at the north-western end of the Acropolis decorated with two lions on the side (Fig. 18) (Woolley, 1952). We found this type of columns in the city of Zincirli, and in Tell Tayinat (Fig. 5) (Akurgal, 2001). These columns were erected at the entrances of the city's important buildings at that time.

¹ For more information on the decorative elements on the southern city gate of Zincirli, see: Pucci 2015.

Moving to the site of Tell Barsip, where two huge lion statues were found (Figs. 32-33) at the eastern gate of the city (thrown on the ground), it is likely that they adorned it before it was destroyed (the first in the east and the second opposite it in the west) (Dangin, 1936).

The typological study

The representations of lions in Syria in the period between 11th and 8th centuries B.C.E can be divided into two main groups: Lion Statues and Orthostatic Reliefs.

The first group: the anthropomorphic lions

1.Lion statues

This group includes the lions that were carved in natural form with huge stone blocks in a shape of real lions (but not reliefs), and it is divided into:

1.1 Singular lions (Fig.4, 7, 11, 30, 32, 33):

These lions were carved individually, and their location was in the architectural block of gates to protect the city, the temple or the palace and they are also divided into:

1.1.A Lions standing:

This group dates back to the ninth and eighth centuries BCE.

In this type sculptures were classified as real lions due to the standing position sculpted by the artist in a state of readiness and anticipation and this type of lions was placed at the gates of the city's official buildings. The carvings of this style have been found at the site of Ain Dara (the statue of a lion on the western slope of the tell) (Fig. 4), at the site of Zincirli (the city's five lions) (Fig. 7) (Pottier, 1921), at the site of Tell Halaf (the lions of the main temple-palace facade) (Fig. 11) (Oppenheim, 1939), at Tell Hama (the main gate of the royal palace in the city) (Fig. 30) (Fugmann, 1958), and at the gate of Tell Barsip (Fig. 32, 33) (Dangin, 1936).

Lion sculptures of this style have physical characteristics that distinguish them from the rest of the other styles:

The legs were implemented in a position where the left rear leg is ahead of its companion, the front legs are fixed, and the ribs are strong. We can say that the artist here is specifically concerned with depicting the legs and related muscles. The size of the of lion carvings head in this style is large and disproportionate with the body, the mouth is open and wide, the jaws are visible, the fangs are very strong, the tongue appears, and the eyes are wide. The mane's hair is fiery in shape, extending behind the head to the back, and down the abdomen too.

1.1.B Lions represented in motion:

This group dates back to the eighth century BCE.

Lions of this style were found at Arslan Tash site. There are three statues (the southern lion of the main gate of the Assyrian temple in the city (Fig. 23) (Dangin, 1931), the two lions in the eastern gate (Fig. 26) (Dangin, 1931) and the western gate of the city (Fig. 27). (Albenda, 1988)

The lion's sculptures of this style have a unique peculiarity which may have been a realistic attempt by the artist in order to give two movements to the stereoscopic statue at the same time. This may be the reason of the fifth foot that gives the impression of continuity movement as if the lion moves with you, welcomes you in entering and accompanies you with exiting. By that the lion appears as if it is watching people's movements.

We note the presence of distinctive and common characteristics of the lions carved in this style. In addition to the fifth foot, it was distinguished by the graceful sculpting of the body and its flow, the size of the head is carried out in order to be in harmony with the body, the eyes are rounded, the mouth is open, the fangs appear, the ears are small, the ends of the mane's hair are flame-shaped and extend on the lower abdomen which is also fiery in shape and the chest has a large curve which gives the scene of an offensive state. The fifth leg is carved strong. The body decoration suggests that they wear a shield covering the entire feet and the details of the carved claws have been taken care of.

1.2 Symmetrical Lions²

These lions were represented in the form of two identical adjoining double lions, and the purpose of carving them was to be based on columns or statues. Here, too, the artist represented the lion to be a similar image to the natural (realistic) lion, but the movement positions that he embodied the lion in differed, and it is also divided into:

1.2.A Twin Lions (Columns or Statues)

This group dates back to the ninth century BCE.

This style of lion carvings was executed to be a stone base for a statue of a king or a god, and due to this architectural function, it is divided into:

- Sculptures of twin lions which are the bases of the statues

Sculptures of this style are characterized by the fact of depicting the lions in a state of submission to the man holding their manes. We note that the size of the lion's head is inconsistent compared to the size of the body.

The legs are somewhat short compared to the body and end with pronounced claws. The two lions were depicted in motion status. In the image of the left lion the right front foot is ahead of the other, and vice versa in the right one. The lion carvings of this style were found at the site of Carchemish (a basaltic carving representing a procession of a god or a king, found at the western entrance of the inner city's western gate (Fig. 17) (Pottier, 1920), and at the site of Zincirli (a basaltic carving representing a worshipping man or a god with a symmetrical lion at its base (Fig. 8) (Bonatz, 2000).

- Sculptures of symmetrical lions as column bases

The lion carvings here are characterized by the head being proportional to the body, the ears are large and protruding back, the mouth is open, the fangs are clear, the eyes are almond and large, the tail hangs between the hind feet with a hooked end, the legs are short and also represented in a state of movement. The lion carvings of this style were found at the site of Carchemish (the base of a column at the northwest end of the citadel in Medina (Fig. 18) (Woolley, 1952).

1.2.B Crouching twin lions

This group dates back to the eighth century BCE.

The lion sculptures in this style are characterized by their representation in a sitting state (the lion is crouching). The two lions are identical in description: the head is large and proportional to the body, the eyes are almond-shaped, there are three lines on the cheeks representing wrinkles of the face caused by a grimace, the nose is large and flat, the mouth is open, large ears prominent to the back of the head are clear, a circular collar is engraved around the head with transverse lines on it, the mane is made like a shield, the mane is made with fiery hair, the ribs are strong and the claws are clear. This type was found on the main facade of Building II at Tell Tayinat (a stone pillar base engraved with two crouching lions on both sides (Fig. 5) (Bittel, 1976).

1.3 Carved stone blocks with a facade lion

This group dates back to the tenth century BCE.

This pattern of lions is carved to be single and real, as no mythical patterns of these lions were found. They were carved standing immobile (the two front legs are fixed). The sculptured lions of this style were found at the site of Tell Hama (the lion statue at the main gate entrance of the citadel) (Fig. 29) (Brown, 2008), at the site of Arslan Tash (the two huge lions found at the northern gate of the city) (Fig. 28), at the main gate of the Assyrian temple in the city (the northern lion, Fig. 25) (Dangin, 1931), and at the site of Ain Dara (The front side's lions that form the bases of the main and chapel facade of the temple, which are 28 sculptures) (Fig. 3) (Abu Assaf, 1991).

This type of carving is characterized by the presence of a lion's front only, meaning that after the artist cut the stone block to be carved, the lion was carved in the front of the stone block deciding (head, front body, and front legs), and left the back of the stone block without carving. Representing a

² This art formed the basis for the art of arabesque, which later spread globally.

full lion, the artist engraved writings and texts to please the ruler on both left and right sides of the lion (we find this in some Arslan Tash sculptures) (Fig. 28) (Dangin, 1931).

The sculptures of this style are characterized by the roughness of expression, looking forward and the clear appearance of the fangs. Those sculptures were carved to be placed on the wall, to serve a decorative and architectural function, in addition to supporting the wall.

The second group: reliefs with lion figures

By this style we mean the lions carved on the surface of the stone panels. Those ones were placed on the outer and inner walls of official buildings such as temples and palaces. The purpose of placing these stone frescoes was to protect the bases of the walls by covering them (Orthostats). But they also served artistic and decorative purposes by engraving and sculpting different scenes including lions.

In view of the diversity of these reliefs, they are divided into:

2.1 Reliefs engraved with a real lion in motion

This group dates to the tenth and ninth centuries BCE.

The artist engraved these reliefs with forms of lions as he saw them in nature and represented them while they were stepping to the right or left. The lion appeared alone, as no other form was with it.

Reliefs of this style were found at the site of Ain Dara (lion reliefs in the main facade of the temple at the main entrance) (Fig.2), at the site of Tell Halaf (the lion in the main facade of the temple to the left of the main entrance) (Fig. 12) (Oppenheim, 1939), and at the site of Zincirli (a relief representing a lion at the outer door of the citadel in the city (Fig. 9) (Pottier, 1921), and at the site of Tell Barsip (Fig. 31) (Dangin, 1936).

These carved lions have similar characteristics. They have somehow a graceful body, the mouth is open (the lion is roaring), the fangs are clear, the muscles of the body are represented by curved lines, the front leg is ahead of its companion, an oval-shaped bulge appears in the middle of the legs representing the joints, and the tail that extends between the two hind legs is hooked.

2.2 Legendary lion reliefs

2.2.A Body of a lion with two heads (a man and a lion) and wings of a bird

This group dates back to the ninth century BCE.

The carvings of this style are characterized by a body of a lion with two wings, and two heads: the first is of a lion, and the second is a human head carved above it.

This type of reliefs was found in Zincirli at the outer door of the citadel (Fig. 10) (Pottier, 1921), in Carchemish (Fig. 21) (Pottier, 1920), and in Tell Halaf Temple (Fig. 16) (Oppenheim, 1939).

We note that these carvings in general were represented sideways (the body with the head), in addition to the presence of a hat on the man's head, the hair hangs on the neck from the back with a coiled end. The size of the lion's head is consistent with the body, the lion's mouth is open, the tongue is hanging, the wings are pictured as straight abstract, the legs are represented in a state of movement and the tail rises from the body in the back in the form of (S) shape.

2.2.B winged lion

This group dates back to the ninth century BCE.

It was found in Carchemish (the eastern gate of the inner city (Fig. 19) (Woolley, 1952).

The mouth is sculpted open, the ears are bouncing behind the head, the ribs are in motion and the front legs are slender unlike the back legs which are thicker.

2.3 Reliefs representing lions with other scenes

This group dates back to the tenth, ninth and eighth centuries BCE.

In this style, the artist wanted to embody real scenes he saw in nature, so the lion was represented with other figures.

It is divided into:

2.3.A The hunting of lions

These reliefs were found at Tell Halaf (Figs. 13,14) (Oppenheim, 1939), at Carchemish (Fig. 22) (Bittel, 1976), and at Tell Barsip (Fig. 34) (Dangin, 1936). They represent one of the most important practices that prevailed during the first millennium BCE in Syria and Mesopotamia, namely, the sport of hunting, and this sport was associated with the king in person, as it highlights his strength and greatness by representing him while defeating the most powerful animals in nature. His people engraved the victory through reliefs representing the process of hunting lions.

These reliefs are similar to each other in terms of the general theme, which is the process of hunting and killing lions; thus, the artist did not care to show the anatomical details of the carved lion's body. (Fig. 34 in Tell Barsip) and sculptured the lion in a state of surrender and submission to the man who kills him with an arrow or dagger, as in (Fig. 14) in Tell Halaf, and (Fig. 22) in Carchemish.

2.3.B the scenes of the lions fighting with other animals

This type of sculptures was found on the walls of Tell Halaf temple (Fig. 15) (Oppenheim, 1939). The scenes of the lions also have unclear anatomical details. The reliefs represent a fight between a lion and a bull. And the artist highlighted the lion's strength and dominance by representing it as defeating other animals.

3. Analytical study of the studied patterns

Through this investigation of the various styles of lion representation in sculpture, we can conclude the following:

We find that each style of the lions produced through this study has specific characteristics and functions with a unique type and style, as we notice in the single standing lions pattern that they were carved in a huge size to be placed on the cities' gates, temples and palaces, to perform functions of guarding and protection. The artist carved specific details to show that; the face, for example, reflects a state of anticipation and readiness; also a pattern of brutality has been applied through roaring for example and this is meant to create fear and panic in the heart of the person coming to this building.

The characteristics of the lions in the previous group differ from those of the lions that were represented in a state of movement, because of the fifth foot that was added to create the posture of anticipation. We see an example of this movement in the Assyrian carvings in Mesopotamia (bulls and lions) and this leads us to conclude that there is a clear Assyrian influence and qualities through the gracefulness and fluidity of the body, in addition to paying special attention to the physical details of the carved lion with high accuracy. This group dates back to the eighth century BCE, unlike the previous group, which dates to an earlier period (the ninth century BCE).

By moving to the symmetrical carved lions, we find that they all share the function and purpose of placing them within the architectural building, as they serve two main functions: the first is decorative, as it decorates the base of the column or the statue standing above it, and the second is architectural, as it performs the function of a pillar for the base carrying the weight of the column or the statue standing on top of it. These Symmetrical lions date back to the ninth and eighth centuries BCE, and the movement positions in which they were sculpted differed: they are either crouching or animated (one of the two legs advances over the other). With these features, they are different from both standing guard and carved lions with two front and side movements.

As for the stone lions that were not liberated from the stone blocks to be within the wall of the façade, they have several functions. The first is an ornamental one for the wall, the second is supporting the wall, and the third is a guarding function as the artist highlighted the brutal qualities in the face of the carved lion, and this pattern leaves an impression as if the lion will emerge from inside

the wall carved within it to the viewer. It is noteworthy that this pattern of lions is the oldest as it dates back to the tenth century BCE which can be considered the beginning of the Iron Age in Syria.

The main purpose of placing the reliefs that belong to the second group in the building was to decorate the building wall, as it came with a great diversity in the subjects. In the reliefs portraying real lions in the pattern of movement, which dates back to the tenth and ninth centuries BCE, the lions were engraved individually, and the physical details were not taken care of.

In this style, the artist wanted to document the process of hunting lions by the king and his courage or wanted to document the strength of the lion by defeating other animals in nature. We note here that the artist also did not mean to highlight the physical details of the carved lion, unlike the group of anthropomorphic ones. Rather, he tried to document the general scene only, and these reliefs were dated over three centuries -the tenth, ninth, and eighth centuries BCE-.

4. conclusion

From the above we can conclude these results:

A precise observation of the many different pieces studied in this paper can reveal a number of interesting issues. In terms of the material used for these statues and reliefs, most of them were made from the strong solid basalt stone. An exception occurred in Carchemish where limestone was used to manufacture the lion monuments, unlike the case in Assyria, where marble was used. Also, we can conclude that the artists focused on representing male lions in most of the sculptures found in all Syrian sites, while female lions (the lioness) were rarely represented (apart from the façade of the Temple of Tell Halaf where a lioness was carved (Fig. 12). Most of reliefs and statues depicted male lions).

On the other hand, the carvings placed within the buildings served several functions. They were either to decorate the architectural construction (decorating the outer walls of Ain Dara temple, Tal Halaf temple, the outer walls of cities and palaces), or to play a role of protection and guarding to the major cities (statues of lions erected at the main gates of most cities), or to serve an architectural function, like many carvings used as bases for huge stone columns within the building (Tell Tayinat temple (Fig. 5) and (Fig. 18) from Carchemish), or as bases for huge statues at the entrance of buildings (Tell Halaf Temple (Fig. 11), Carchemish (Fig. 17), or as orthostats (stone reliefs placed at the bottom of the building's facade wall to protect it architecturally (for example: the reliefs on the walls of the Ain Dara temple, and the walls of Tell Halaf temple).

Through this study, we were able to identify the distinctive artistic features of lion carving in Syria over the first millennium BCE centuries. We also identified the distinctive features of each period separately. We also traced the development of this art through the centuries and revealed the following.:

A) technical features of carved lions in the eleventh and tenth centuries BCE:

It is noticeable that the lions here had these special features: the size of the head is large and inconsistent with the size of the body; the neck is inconspicuous and covered with felt; the shape of the chest with an elongated coil and little prominence does not suggest the brutality of the attack; the four legs were simply carved and their muscles and their details were not highlighted, which suggests that the artist was paying attention to the artistic aspect and decoration and moving away from realism. Additional movements were meant for artistic purposes only (such as the lines that decorate the area under the ears of Ain Dara lion, and the decorations of the area under the body of Tell Halaf lion). In addition, we notice more dependence on the straight angles than the detours ones, as we notice them in several places (decorating the ends, especially the front carving of the claws, the end of the back mane in the form of a geometric decoration and the end of the chest mane in form of a straight line) and finally, the appearance of carved stone blocks, with lion shapes in front. All this indicates the luxury in the artist's work.

B) Technical features of carved lions dating back to the ninth century BCE:

During this century, we notice the emergence of new subjects in sculptured lions (lion with a man's head, two-headed lion, lion with a woman's head, winged lion, symmetrical lions and realistic lion), in addition to ignoring highlighting the physical and subtle details of the sculpted form. We can say here that this style is abstract in sculpted lion shapes.

C) The artistic features of the carved lions of the eighth century BCE:

Moving to the 8th century BCE, we see that the size of the head is proportional to the size of the body and it is rich in details and precision of carving. The head was carved out of the stone block, the mouth is open (the lion is roaring), the chest has a large curve which gives the scene the impression of the offensive state, the agility of sculpting the body and its fluidity and avoiding corners in favour of detours, the four legs were carved strong bearing decoration which suggests that they were dressed for a shield that covered the entire foot, taking care of the carved claws details, in addition to the hair of the mane which is flame-shaped and extends clearly to the lower abdomen. This style of hair belongs to characteristics the flame and frond school, this school thrived in the early 1st millennium BCE in North-Syria and its main centre where the products were made is located in Tell Halaf. (Herrmann, 1989).

We found a special case in Arslan Tash's sculptures, a feature (the fifth foot) appeared to give a new movement to the carved shape.

Table (1)

The lion's number	Provenance	Period	Dimensions	Material	Shape
Fig.2	Ain Dara – The main façade of the temple – main entrance	950-750 BCE	1.64m×1.10m ×0.28m	Basalt	Relief
Fig.4	Ain Dara - main façade of the temple – main entrance	950-750 BCE	2.70m Height	Basalt	Statue
Fig.5	Tell Tayinat – Building (II)	8 th Century BCE	0.77m Height	Basalt	Column Base
Fig.6	Tell Tayinat – Building (II)	738 BCE	1.6m Length 1.3m Height	Basalt	Statue
Fig.7	Zinçirli – City gates	730 BCE	-	Basalt	Statues
Fig.8	Zinçirli - Building (J)	10 th – 9 th Century BCE	3.70m Height	Basalt	Statue
Fig.9	Zinçirli	9 th Century BCE	1.25m Height	Basalt	Corner Stone
Fig.10	Zinçirli	9 th Century BCE	-	Basalt	Relief
Fig.11	Tell Halaf – Main façade of the temple	1000 – 900 BCE	-	Basalt	Statue
Fig.12	Tell Halaf – Main façade of the temple	1000 – 900 BCE	3m Height	Basalt	Relief
Fig.13-14-15-16	Tell Halaf – Main façade of the temple	1000 – 900 BCE	-	Basalt	Reliefs
Fig.17	Carchemish - western gate entrance	850-750 BCE	-	Limestone	Statue
Fig.18	Carchemish - north-western end of the Acropolis	850-750 BCE	-	Limestone	Column Base
Fig.19	Carchemish - the eastern gate of the inner city	850-750 BCE	1.5m×1.10m	Limestone	Relief
Fig.20-21	Carchemish	850-750 BCE	-	Limestone	Reliefs
Fig.22	Carchemish	9 th Century BCE	2.47m Height	Limestone	Relief

Fig.23	Carchemish	9 th Century BCE	0.90m Height	Limestone	Relief
Fig.24	Arslan Tash – The Southern lion of the main gate – Assyrian temple	800-700 BCE	2m Length	Basalt	Statue
Fig.25	Arslan Tash - The Northern lion of the main gate – Assyrian temple	800-700 BCE	-	Basalt	Statue
Fig.26	Arslan Tash - The Northern lion of the eastern gate of the city	800-700 BCE	-	Basalt	Statue
Fig.27	Arslan Tash - lion of the western gate of the city	800-700 BCE	-	Basalt	Statue
Fig.28	Arslan Tash – lions of the Northern gate of the city	800-700 BCE	-	Basalt	Statues
Fig.29	Hama – The entrance of the gate	1100-1000 BCE	-	Basalt	Relief
Fig.30	Hama – main gate of the royal palace in the city	700 BCE	-	Basalt	Statue
Fig.31	Tell Barsip	824 – 885 BCE	-	Basalt	Relief
Fig.32	Tell Barsip - the eastern gate of the city	824 – 885 BCE	-	Basalt	Statues
Fig.34	Tell Barsip	824 – 885 BCE	-	With Colours	Painting

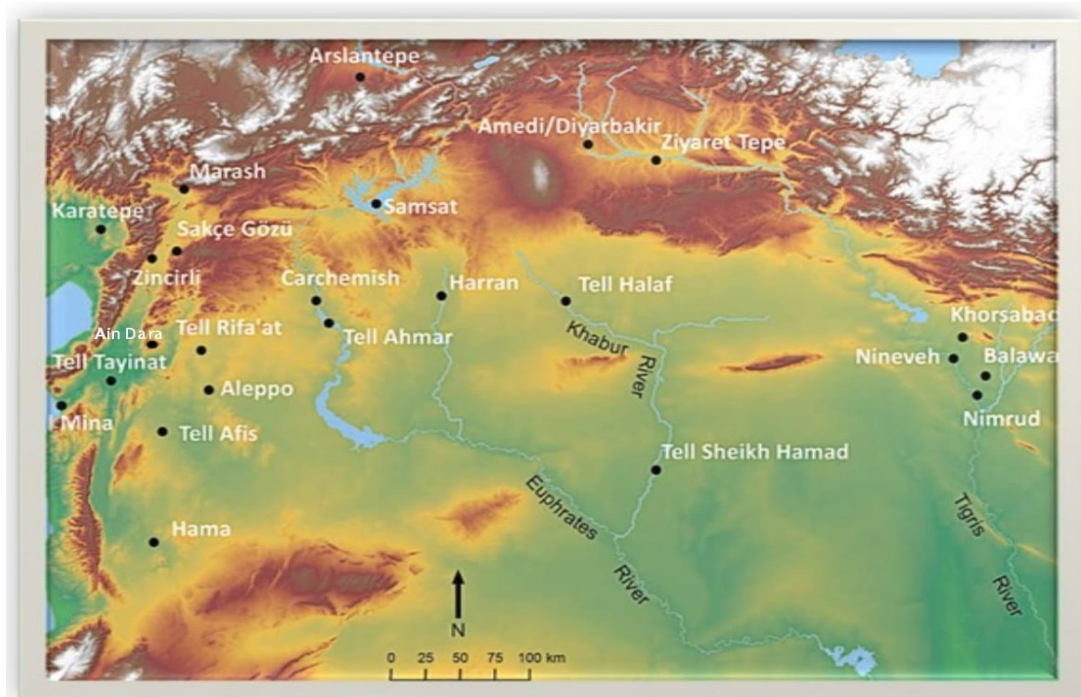


Fig.1: Map representing the sites of the early first millennium BCE in Syria (Osborne, 2012)



Fig.2: The lion of the main facade of the Temple of Ain Dara
<https://ar.wikipedia.org>



Fig.3: The stone blocks of the crouching lions in the Ain Dara temple
<https://ar.wikipedia.org>



Fig.4: The huge lion that was found in the western hill at the site of Ain Dara
<https://ar.wikipedia.org>



Fig.5: Column base from Temple II at Tell Tayinat
 Harrison, 2005, fig 6



Fig.6: A lion that was found outside the site, lying on the ground in Tell Tayinat.
Harrison, 2012, fig.1

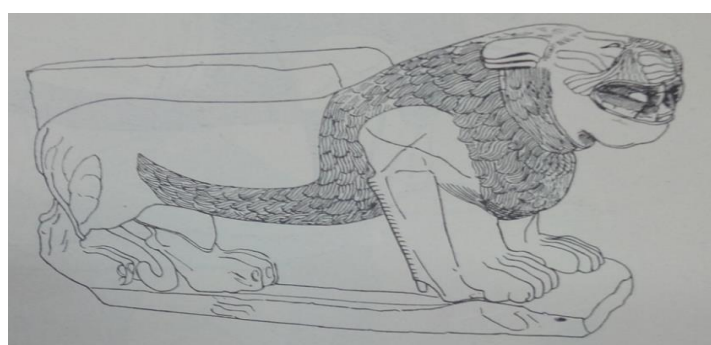


Fig.7: The Lions of the City Gates from Zinçirli
Pottier, 1921, fig.6



Fig.8: A statue of a king or God with two lions from Zinçirli on either side.
Bittel, 1976, fig.303

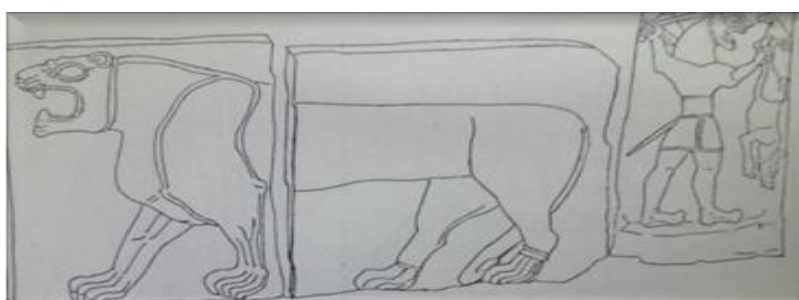


Fig.9: A cornerstone of a lion roaring from Zinçirli
Pottier, 1921, fig.78

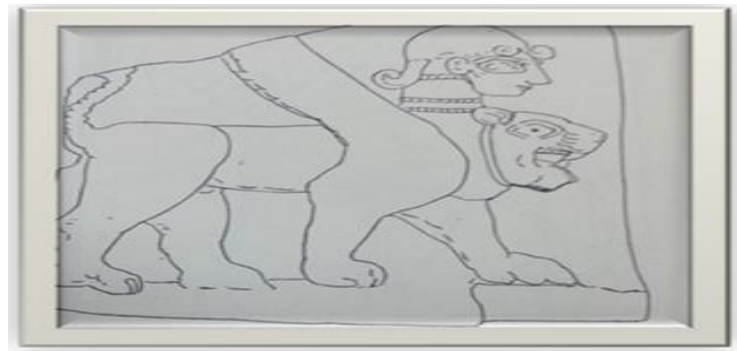


Fig.10: Relief of a winged lion roaring from Zinçirli
Pottier, 1921, fig.75



Fig.11 :One of the lions in the facade of the temple in Tell Halfa
Oppenheim, 1939, PL.XIIIA



Fig.12 :A lioness relief in the main facade on the left of the main entrance to the temple at Tell Halaf.
Oppenheim, 1939, PL.IXA



Fig.13: Scene representing a lion chasing a chariot, relief of the lower part of the wall of the rear facade of the temple at Tell Halaf
Oppenheim, 1939, PL.XIXA

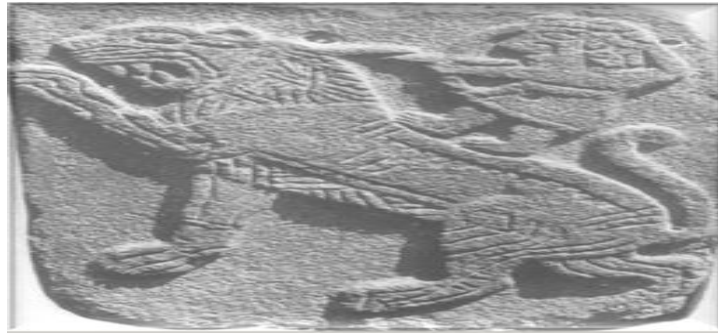


Fig.14: A man kills a lion, relief from the lower part of the wall of the rear facade of the temple at Tell Halaf
Oppenheim, 1939, PL.XXIB



Fig.15: A scene representing a fight between a lion and a bull, the lower part of the wall of the rear facade of the temple at Tell Halaf
Oppenheim, 1939, PL.XXVIA



Fig.16: A scene representing a winged lion with a man's head above his head, the lower part of the wall of the rear facade of the temple at Tell Halaf
Oppenheim, 1939, PL.XXXIVA



Fig.17: A basalt carving representing a procession of a god or a king, and two stone lions from Carchemish were carved on both sides of the base.
Woolley, 1952, Fig.B15

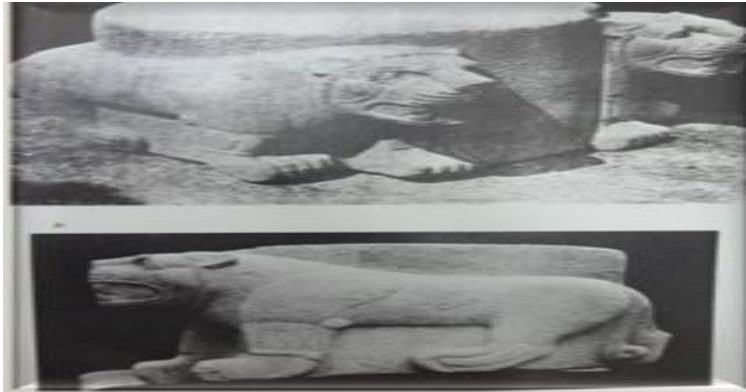


Fig.18: Basalt stone column base with two identical lions engraved on both sides from Carchemish
Woolley, 1952, Fig.B32



Fig.19: Limestone relief engraved with a winged lion from Carchemish
Woolley, 1952, Fig.B29

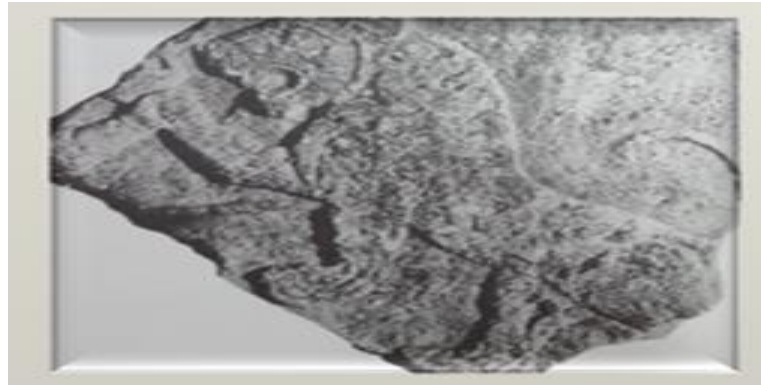


Fig.20: A relief of limestone with a lion roaring from Carchemish
Woolley, 1952, Fig.B11



Fig.21: Relief with a winged roaring lion on top of his head, a human head from Carchemish
Woolley, 1952, Fig.B14



Fig.22: Relief on it is a lion bending its legs and standing on its back two gods from Carchemish
Bittel, 1976, fig.285



Fig.23: Relief on it a lion bending its legs, and above it the throne of King Kubaba from Carchemish
Bittel, 1976, fig.289



Fig.24: The southern lion of the main gate of the Assyrian temple at Arslan Tash site
Dangin, 1931, PL.III



Fig.25: The northern lion of the main gate of the Assyrian temple at Arslan Tash site
Dangin, 1931, PL.III



Fig.(26): The northern lion of the eastern gate of the city at the site of Arslan Tash
Dangin, 1931, PL.VI

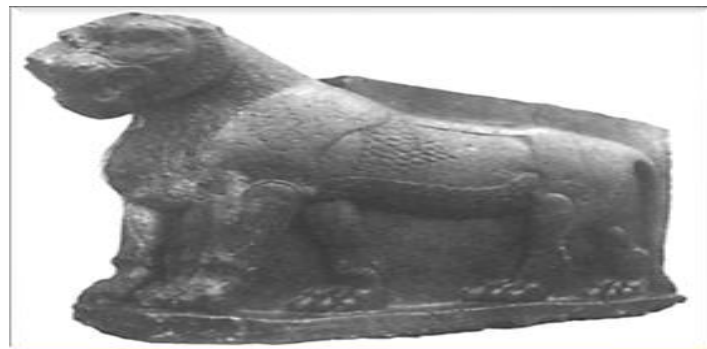


Fig.(27): A lion at the western gate of the city at the site of Arslan Tash
Albenda, 1988, Fig.14



Fig.(28): Lions the northern gate of the city at the site of Arslan Tash
<http://www.esyria.sy/eraqqa/index.php?p=stories&category=places&filename=200805112225028>



Fig.(29): The front of a lion found on the inner corner of the sidewalks that surround the entrance to the gate of the Aramean palace (the Citadel) in Hama.

http://znobia.com/archive/?page=show_det&select_page=5&id=6510



Fig.(30): Lion of the main gate of the Aramean palace (the Citadel) in Hama
Riis, 1990, Fig.22



Fig.(31): A fragment with a lion on it from the site of Tell Barsip
Dangin, 1936, fig.112



Fig.(32): A huge lion statue from the site of Tell Barsip.
Dangin, 1931, Fig.66



Fig.(33): A huge lion statue from the site of Tell Barsip.
https://www.arab-ency.com/_/details.artifacts.php?full=1&nid=166012



Fig.(34): A painting representing the hunting process of lions from the site of Tell Barsip.
https://www.arab-ency.com/_/details.artifacts.php?full=1&nid=166012

منحوتات الأسود في المباني في سورية خلال الفترة بين القرن الحادي عشر الى القرن الثامن قبل الميلاد

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الملخص

كان للفكر الديني تأثير واضح على ملامح الانتاج الفني من حيث الشكل العام والموضوع منذ ظهور الحضارات الأولى. كان السكان القدامى يخشون القوى الخطيرة التي تحرق بهم. لذلك، قاموا بتجسيدها على شكل تماثيل بشرية أو حيوانية أو حتى مخلوقات أسطورية مركبة.

تهتم هذه الدراسة بمخلوقات الأسود التي ظهرت بكثرة في جميع مناطق سوريا منذ القرن الحادي عشر إلى القرن الثامن قبل الميلاد، حيث تم تمثيلها في المدن وداخل الأبنية وعلى أبواب المدن، ولعبت دوراً معمارياً وزخرفياً.

يمكن أن نستشف من خلال دراسة الملامح الفنية لمنحوتات الأسود في سورية أن لكا مدينة أسلوبها المميز في طرق التعبير عن فنها. علاوة على ذلك، من الملاحظ أنه تم استخدام كتل حجرية ضخمة لإعطاء تلك المنحوتات مظهراً طبيعياً، في محاولة لمحاكاة الحيوان الحقيقي. أيضاً، يمكننا أن نرى أن هنالك نوعين من الأسود المنحوتة: الأول كان عن طريق نحت أسلوب فريد لكل قطعة، والآخر بنحت نسختين متطابقتي، يمثلان أوضاعاً مختلفة للحيوان بتقنيات مختلفة.

ستركز الدراسة على الأساليب الفنية والتقنية لتمثيل الأسود في سورية لتتبع تطورها وفهم دورها في معتقدات الناس آنذاك.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الأسود، سورية، العصر الحديدي، الأبنية، منحوتات.

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