

Abstract

The aim of this study is to determine and define the Persian Achaemenid style produced in the North-Western satrapies (imperial provinces) of Anatolia (modern Turkey) in the period of the Persian dominion of the area, roughly 550 – 300 BCE. The North-Western Anatolian satrapies are the II. nomos of Herodotus – Sardes, and Hellespontine Phrygia (the III. nomos).

The roots of the Achaemenid style emerge from the rich artistic traditions of the cultures in the area of modern Iran influenced by Mesopotamian sources as well as nomadic handicrafts. The expansion of the Empire towards the Aegean resulted in extensive contacts with the creative expression of the Anatolian kingdoms and especially the Greek sphere. A unique style of luxurious ware, designated for customers of the local elite and Persian immigrants, is created. The depiction of the Persian court iconography is modified according to the local art-school customs.

The clearest representation of the Achaemenid style is observed in the metalware production. The forms and designs of golden and silver vessels are specific. Despite their wide geographic distribution, the majority of the workshops were supposedly located in the area of modern Turkey. The production of jewelry and gems was most likely concentrated in the same workshops. The creative and technological advantage of the new artistic style is obvious in the careful execution of the engraved gemstones. The scenes depicted on the wall paintings and relief decoration of North-Western Anatolian funerary monuments, represent an insight into the everyday lifestyle of the satrapal nobility.