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Sensorial Materiality: A sensorial and material reanalysis of elite Pazyryk (600-200 BCE) textiles from Pazyryk Barrow Number Five.

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Master's Degrees by Examination and Dissertation

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Abstract:

The Pazyryk (600-200 BCE) represents a uniquely preserved and mysterious Scythian group culture, that has been subject to academic debate since its discovery. The exquisite material culture has enamoured scholars from around the world, and display some of the most dynamic, animated, and symbolic textiles of their time discovered globally. However, there is a stagnation that looms over the study of Pazyryk materials, with an academic prominence on textual evidence and a dissociation from the vibrant matter that enraptures them. Pazyryk barrow five held captivating textiles that have been subject to limited empirical analysis since their uncovering by S.I Rudenko in the 1940's. This study aims to reanalyse the elite textiles of Pazyryk five with a hybridized approach rooted in sensorial and material scholarship offering an alternative method of engagement. The application of a sensorial-material framework examines the multifaceted ability of Pazyryk textiles extending agency, control space, mediate socio-mythological worlds, aid in memorial function and instigate the metamorphosis of borders. The Pazyryk creation of hybrid beings and adaptation of foreign motifs, was to challenge temporal identities in an epoch of heightened mobility, which the entanglement of socio-political networks followed. To examine the textiles, a dataset of four textiles was assembled from Pazyryk barrow five to offer an in-depth assessment of their material properties and the sensorial experiences they project. The discussion while a theoretical engagement, reveals the negotiated identity, personhood, and relationships of the Pazyryk elite through material and sensorial arbitration of both material and immaterial realms. Pazyryk textiles were created to evoke the senses, and such engagements should not be denied to them.

Keywords:

Pazyryk, Textiles, Materiality, Sensorial, Borders, Hybridity,

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1.0 Introduction



Fig. 1 (Balabanov, 2010). An artist's depiction of a Pazyryk elites funeral in the steppes beneath the Altai mountains.

The aim of this dissertation is to provide a reinvigorated sensorial and material analysis of the rich textiles, hybrid entanglements, and exceptionally preserved artefacts of the Pazyryk archaeological culture (6th-2nd BCE). Moreover, this dissertation aims to stimulate reconsiderations of the empirical and metaphysical nature of Pazyryk material culture, (re)investigating the elite textiles of Pazyryk barrow five. Furthermore, by illuminating the sensorial properties with the intention to develop a narrative that reveals a hybrid and symbiotic culture that established a distinct form of symbolic communication that: mediated complex socio-political life, sustained bonds with realms of 'otherness,' and perpetuated the cycles of nomadic life. There is a sustained, yet often divergent material debate amongst Western, Eastern European, Central Asian, Middle Eastern and Chinese scholars of the interpretations of Pazyryk textiles. This dissertation hopes to amalgamate numerous material and contextual studies, to provide a dynamic and updated insight into the rich material world of the Pazyryk culture. The nomadic Pazyryk peoples represent a mystifying Central Asian steppes (Saka) culture whose domain lay along the cultural borderlands of ancient silk roads. The Pazyryk

were initially researched for their distinctive burial kurgans and later revered for their exquisitely preserved and lavish material culture that has provided extensive matter for archaeological and anthropological study. The application of a multidisciplinary material and sensory analysis of the Pazyryk textiles strives to provide a diverse alternative for the investigation of the Pazyryk textiles. To view these textiles and their sustained communication as beyond a material vestige, but as transformative loci for consolidation of changing multifaced boundaries involving the: communal, social, economic, geographical, mythological, and political, that reflect the malleable and mobile identities of the Pazyryk peoples. This transdisciplinary study aims to reexamine the textiles of the Pazyryk culture in the light of new materialities and sensorially to explore material aspects of the 'world of the Pazyryk' away from the limits of the empirical or textual.

Chapter 1 will introduce the material and sensorial aims to reanalyse the Pazyryk textiles of Pazyryk barrow 5. Chapter 1 will also provide contextual foundations about the Pazyryk burials, material culture, social structures, and introduce the hybrid entanglements of their cultural sphere. Chapter 2 examines the extensive literary debates on the origins, directions, themes, and gaps in Pazyryk academia. Moreover, Chapter 2 addresses the lack of in-depth material and sensory analysis of Pazyryk textiles (and materials) and assert the direction of this study's objective to address this gap. Chapter 3 engages with new materialities and sensorial theorists to generate a conceptual framework for analysis of the Pazyryk textiles. Chapter 3 asserts that a different approach offers a unique engagement with Pazyryk textiles to address material symbolism and the sensory experiences they evoke. Chapter 4 examines the empirical qualities of the chosen textiles and provides a visual basis for the examinations of Chapter 5. In Chapter 5 the discussion of the material and sensorial attributes of Pazyryk textiles is examined. It is posed they offer the ability to engage with multifaceted aspects of the natural, human, and celestial worlds to mediate relationships with extra-regional Pazyryk and more distant entities. Chapter 6 is the conclusion of this study and affirms the alternative direction of this studies research. Which formulates that the elite Pazyryk textiles broadly represent a multifaceted focal point of Pazyryk social negotiation, identity, and blur the boarders of life, death, natural, and mythical realms.

1.1 Pazyryk Cultural Background:

The Pazyryk culture (Russian: азырыкская культура, *Pazyrykskaya kul'tura*, and Eastern Scythian horizon) is a Central Asian Scythian (Saka) nomadic Iron Age archaeological group (6th – 2nd century BCE) situated in the Altai Mountains across modern-day Russia, Kazakhstan, Mongolia and China that thrived for a chronologically short period of four-hundred years due to historical and environmental changes (Rubinson & Linduff, 2024, pp. 1). The Pazyryk culture were a part of the larger 'Scythian-Siberian' cultural group (Gonzalez-Ruiz et al, 2012, pp. 1-2). The enchanting Altai mountains is a breathtaking area in Central Asia, where China, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, and Russia converge, creating a natural point of diverse geographical

terrain and cross-cultural engagement that formed a one of many ancient silk roads (Han, 2008, pp. 13; Yao, 2021, pp. 251)). Moreover, the Altai region possessed a great variety of vegetational zones ranging from steppes, forest-steppes, sub-alpine, alpine and mixed forest zones (Han, 2008, pp. 49; Linduff & Rubinson, 2022, pp. 1). The Altai region was a focal point of inter-regional Eurasian trade and exchange networks of ideas and goods originating from many ancient sedentary states including Greece, China, Persia, and the Achaemenid Empire (Korolkova, 2023, pp. 2; Tishkin & Dashkovskiy, 2019, pp. 76; Francfort, 2008, pp. 38))



Fig. 2 (Rubison & Linduff, 2024, pp. 3). Map Displaying Pazyryk archaeological culture sites across a range of geographical and modern cultural boundaries. Pazyryk sites exist along junctions of inter-cultural exchanges (silk roads) pre-dating modern concepts of nation-states.

The identifying aspects of the Pazyryk archaeological culture include the plethora of richly decorated artefacts and the mummified humans found preserved in Siberian permafrost within the Altai mountains of Mongolia and Kazakhstan. The mummies co-interred with horses where artefacts were discovered buried in ‘kurgans’ (burial mounds) sharing many similarities with Scythian (and Yamnaya) burial mounds in Ukraine and across the Pontic-Caspian Steppes (Torbat et al, 2017, pp. 221; Artamonov, 1965, pp. 105;). The materials left in these burials provide evidence of a society organized for the rearing and trading of horses (Argent, 2013, pp. 190;), and required a fluid hierarchical and heterarchical (Rubinson & Linduff, 2024, pp. 3)

structure of leadership that permitted sharing of tasks, duties, and goods. The Pazyryk 'animal style' extensively decorated much of their material culture and is considered distinct even amongst homogenous Scythian groups. The Pazyryks travelled across the Altai and beyond via horseback making use of wheeled wagons providing them advanced mobility which enabled cultural entanglement between a variety of cultures, across a vast geographical area (Torbat et al, 2017, pp. 221; Unterlander et al, 2017, pp. 1). The Pazyrykians possessed no discernible written language, however, it is evident that an oral tradition was present creating a sense of intangible heritage that may have been the predecessor to the Altai Oral Epic tradition of modern day (Harvilahti, 2000, pp. 215). Many Pazyryk bodies display abundant injuries and fatal wounds that appear across several Pazyryk burials, suggesting (skirmish) violence was commonplace in the Pazyryk world, with evidence of scalping and regular interpersonal conflict ((Murphy et al, 2002, pp. 2-3; Jordana et al, 2009, pp. 1319). Pazyryk culture is characterized by the shift away from subsistence hunting and into pastoral nomadism, which still proliferates in the Altai today (Linduff & Rubinson, 2022, pp. 1). Pastoral nomadism permits wide-ranging demographic expansion in an environment where agriculture, predation, hunting and gathering may not be as productive (Francfort, 2008, pp. 35).

1.2 Pazyryk Kurgans & Burial:

The Pazyryk kurgans are not the primary focus of this study, however, kurgans and burial barrows provide important information for both the discovery of Pazyryk materials and the contextualisation of the sensory and material environment that led to the earthly deposition. Much of what is known about the Pazyryk culture is from the frozen mummies and plethora of artefacts found within the Pazyryk Tombs. Pazyryk tombs are Scythian (Saka) type kurgans, which are artificially constructed mounds containing wooden chambers, before being covered by large cairns of boulders, stones, and earth. It is evident that the kurgans must have altered the steppe landscape in some way which created permanent geographical (and memorial) markers to the past (Polosmak, 2014, pp. 6; Tishkin & Dashkovskiy, 2019, pp. 81). Moreover, the kurgans provided visual indication of cultural boundaries and guided movement between different extra-mobile Pazyryk groups (clans) for many generations (Linduff & Rubinson, 2022, pp. 13). Pazyryk kurgans have been found within the valleys of the Altai mountains, Mongolia, China, Russia, and Kazakhstan, revealing the large cultural frontier of Pazyryk communities.



Fig. 3 (Polosmak, 2014, pp. 11). A recreation of a Pazyryk burial that envisages the extensive social organization, sacrifices, and material depositions necessary to bury the Pazyryk elite.

The first kurgan mounds were discovered by V.V. Radlov in 1865 (Berel, Kazakhstan) revealing distinguished clothing and wooden artefacts preserved in the permafrost. Later kurgan discoveries (Ulagan) were found by archaeologist M.P. Gryaznov (1929) who excavated Pazyryk Barrow 1, which contained a variety of equestrian, and decorative artefacts. Additional barrows were discovered and excavated by S.I. Rudenko (1947-9) who explored 5 larger (tsar) barrows (Pazyryk 1-5) preserved in permafrost, and 3 smaller ones (Polosmak, 2014, pp. 7). All these tombs had suffered from extensive internal permafrost and grave robbing dating from ancient times; Pazyryk No. 5 contained the embalmed mummified remains of individuals (2 men and 2 women) were found, together with a plethora of grave goods, sacrificed horses (Polosmak, 2005, pp. 42; Andreeva, 2018, pp. 100;). More contemporary excavations include the mounded tombs across the Ukok Plateau in eastern Altai (Ak-Alkha) and revealed richly dressed Pazyryk funerary remains (Polosmak & Molodin, 2000). Additionally, it is believed the larger burials were of upper elite Pazyryk leadership of the time (Polosmak, 2014, pp. 14; Linduff & Rubinson, 2022, pp.13). Gryaznov (1969) suggested that the size and complexity of construction separated cultural 'elites' from 'regular' Pazyryk burials. Kurgan burials were usually divided into a primary chamber where the deceased would be laid, and side chambers for horses (and carriages) (Schurmann, 1982, pp. 16). Horses inhabited a vital aspect of the tapestry of life and death

for the Pazyryk, individual and groups of horses were interred alongside Pazyryk people as an ordinary custom (Argent, 2016, pp. 19). The degree of preservation of material depositions, textiles, and biological remains across many of the Pazyryk kurgans provides intriguing and extensive material for archaeological investigations into the social systems, lives, mythology, ideology, and sensorial experiences of the Pazyryk horizon.

1.3 Pazyryk Material Culture

As part of the broader Scythian-Siberian style Pazyryk material culture possess many homogenous similarities to other Scythian groups (Murphy et al, 2002, pp. 1). The common (but broad) material of the 'Scythian Triad' consists of weapons, equestrian harnesses, and decoration in the 'Animal Style.' However, the Pazyryk 'Style' can be considered distinct and extends to all aspects of Pazyryk culture, offering a unifying materiality amongst extra-social groups (Polosmak, 2021, pp. 43). Moreover, the Pazyryk style drew inspiration from heterogenous conglomerations of peoples and culture, and thus their material culture was extraordinarily receptive to foreign influences (Korolkova, 2023, pp. 12). Additionally, the Pazyryk borrowed visual designs and imagery from external groups and integrated them into their own material and mythology. Due to the large area the Pazyryk inhabited they were neighboured by many significant civilisations across a large cultural area including modern day Iran, China, Mesopotamia, Anatolia, and Greece). The Pazyryk animal style can be found on objects, garb, and individuals across all burials, hierarchical positions, and displays frequent adaptable and cultivated style (Polosmak, 2021, pp. 55). Animal style perpetuate all aspects of Pazyryk material life, from clothing, tattoos, textiles, equestrian equipment, decorations, and utilitarian objects. Furthermore, Pazyryk animal style represents a non-literate but pro-social and inter-cultural communication method, that could draw from the natural world and incorporate hybrid, foreign or familiar elements selected from within the Pazyryk spheres of entanglement.



Fig. 4 (Polosmak, 2021, pp. 54). A visual recreation of the Pazyryk clothing, horse decorations, and textiles that embodies the Pazyryk Style.

The Pazyryk animal style commonly features depictions of ungulates (elks, deer, moufflons, ibexes) being attacked by predators, (tigers, griffins, and wolves) in a distinct 'S' motion with the rear body being thrown back and upwards as the predator bears down, Pazyryk animal style also includes horses, fish, birds, and hybrid combinations while other geometric shapes include 'solar' representations (Good, 2011, pp. 149; Cheremisin, 2009, pp. 85). Material finds across Pazyryk tombs include captivating textiles such as: the Pazyryk knot rug detailed with deer, warriors upon horseback, and geometric symbols (Schurmann, 1982, pp. 6). In addition, a plethora of unique saddlecloths that feature foreign and local Pazyryk designs. The permafrost preserved clothing includes coats, tunics, trousers, skirts, dresses, hats, shoes, and mittens, and include both polychrome (often red tones) and monochrome examples (Korolkova, 2023, pp. 5; Linduff & Rubinson, 2022, pp.9). Alongside human outfits, the Pazyryk made elaborate horse outfits, lavished with colour, geometric shapes, and elaborate head gear (Argent, 2010, 166-7). Wooden materials found include wooden mirrors, weapon scabbards, tables, dishes, horse gear, and headdresses that depicted animistic figurines. Wooden objects were covered in metal (tin and gold) foils, decorated, and painted with leather attachments. Leather was also decorated with metal foils, painted, and covered with fur and felt. Felt was also likewise decorated with metal foils, dyed, embroidered, and altered with horsehair, wool, and beads

(Rubinson, 1990, pp. 57). Gold was popular in its use as decoration of garments, saddles, bags, and horse outfits, it is a vibrant metal used generously across Pazyryk material productions (and imports) (Polosmak, 2021, pp. 53). Body modifications are observed in the wonderful tattoos of the Pazyryk Chief (Pazyryk-2) and the Ice Maiden (Gornyi Altai) both of whom are decorated in Pazyryk animal style animals, and hybrid predators and further accentuates the rich artistry of these Altai nomads. The bedazzling materials of the Pazyryk cannot be hoped to be all researched in a single discussion, yet a sensory and material analysis of a selection of four of textiles the elite burial of Pazyryk 5 offers a focused investigation, that can delve deeper into the experiences, senses, and ephemeral lives of the Pazyryk peoples. The superlative preservation of organic materials allows a sensorial-material analysis to engage with the materials much closer to their peak of vibrancy.

2.0 Literature Review

The scholarship around the Pazyryk cultural sphere has been a mixture of heterogeneous and heavily contentious debate, evolving from the classical era, antiquity, and into modern day. Pazyryk cultural studies has been a gradual theoretical development, which has benefited from a diverse multi-cultural literature that has grown as more excavations, debate, and material analyses emerge. However, within much of the literature the Pazyryk archaeological culture has become bound into the broader nomenclature of Scytho-Siberian research. Despite doing wonders in expanding the scope of research, has condemned it in part, to literary ambiguity. The term Scythian and Saka have come to represent an extremely broad cultural horizon of nomadic groups of which the latter has been vaguely associated with Western nomadic peoples, and the former Eastern nomadic peoples. While cultures of the Scytho-Siberian world share numerous characteristics (equestrianism, distinct bows, and animal style decoration) of which the Pazyryk culture is situated. The Pazyryk culture also possess a distinct branch of elaborate decorative art coined as Pazyryk Style. For the advancement of this discussion and chronology, both terms will be considered where applicable to the Pazyryk culture, who's material remains and burials sits along a diverse geographical and cultural junction. This literature review seeks to critique and amalgamate research on the Pazyryk material culture, lifestyle and burial practices and address the current literary stagnation particularly within western scholarship, in hopes of offering a reinvigorated view of the Pazyryk material culture and animal style.

2.1 Pazyryk Literary Themes:

Pazyryk literature has drawn a variety of academics with a plethora of omni-directional research that seeks to illuminate, debate, or reinterpret various aspects of Pazyryk culture. This dissertation will address a proposed re-analysis of Pazyryk textiles, through relevant themes that re-appear across academic literary texts and will be critiqued further in this literary discussion. The aim of this study is to engage with material and sensorial approaches to the Pazyryk material culture, and within the Pazyryk literature several key

themes amongst Pazyryk scholars emerge. The key themes selected for academic analysis include: (1) Pazyryk burials and mortuary practices are the primary lens in which the Pazyryk culture has been investigated, particularly the unique mummification, material depositions and rituals. However, in addressing the research question of a material (re)analysis the themes of cultural identity will be addressed in the hybridity of the Pazyryk peoples. Furthermore, the evolving literature on the gender-roles in Pazyryk society will be amalgamated into the Social-Structure as it represents a complex and contentious issue amongst Pazyryk researchers. (2) Pazyryk Nomadic Lifestyle and Social structure, reveals a specific brand of Pazyryk pastoral nomadism that extensively used horses and adapted to survive the Altai climate. Furthermore, it presents a key area of environmental and socio-economic organization that many academics seek to (re) construct with material evidence. (3) Pazyryk Material Culture and Hybrid Identity, which represent the beautifully produced art (Including Animal Style) alongside exquisite artisanry, since its discovery it has constituted a rapturous and vital aspect of Pazyryk Literature. Due to the hybrid entanglements of their material culture the Pazyryk material hybridity is a literary expansion of the material culture, that seeks to unravel the many threaded cross-cultural engagements and networks (cultural, military, trade) that enriched Pazyryk society and influenced its material developments.

2.2 Pazyryk Burials (Mortuary Practice)

Literature on Pazyryk burials has provided the most populous and oldest rhetoric on Pazyryk culture, centred around the physical preservation via permafrost, mummification, material depositions, and mortuary practices of the deceased. The literature and the burials have been a catalyst in instigating and developing Pazyryk studies, as they represented a vital gateway to explore the world of the Pazyryk. The Pazyryk cultural identity, derives from the name of the famous group of mounded kurgans in the Ulagan River valley, where Russian (soviet) archaeologist M.P. Gryaznov (1929) and S.I. Rudenko (1947-49) explored five great (Tzar) barrows, and three smaller ones preserved via permafrost. Despite the evidence of tomb looting in ancient era, the mummies of four individuals (two women and two men) were discovered in them, in addition, to the skeletal remains of other individuals, alongside grave goods and sacrificial horses (Rudenko 1953; Linduff and Rubinson, 2022, pp. 7-8). The Greek Historian Herodotus (484-425 BCE) was one of the first academics to record the burial traditions of the Scythians in his *Historias* (Books I-IV). Herodotus' *Historias* (4.72.1) addresses the burial processes of Scythian Kings, involving construction of square cut graves supported by wooden interior construction (Herodotus 4.71,1) and then piled earth onto to the grave to create a mound (Herodotus 4.71.5). Herodotus' account of the Kurgans construction aligns broadly with archaeological evidence and literature produced in modern day (Polosmak, 2005, pp. 14; Linduff & Rubinson, 2022, pp. 9-10), as confirmed by Rudenko's (1953 pp. 7-8) excavation of the famed Pazyryk Kurgans (Pazyryk 2-5). However, Herodotus' *Histories* provides only a generalised view of possible elite or chieftain burial mounds, which were constructed across the Eurasian steppes, a large geographical and

cultural area as Hiebert (1992) attests (Hiebert, 1992, pp. 117). Rudenko (1953) provides an extensive empirical debrief of the burials (1953, pp.8-15), but he does seek to provide reasoning for their ideological construct beyond monumental pan-Scytho-Siberian practices (Rudenko, 1953, pp. 309).

Polosmak (2014), suggests a more detailed funerary ceremony, where a larch framework was built over the bottom of a burial, pit and the mummified dead was placed onto a wooden 'bed', with the mound being formed of stones, boulders, and pebbles (Polosmak, 2014, pp. 6). Good (2011) provides an interesting insight into the wooden burial construct as reflective of Pazyryk 'dual house forms' (Good, 2011, pp. 151) of the summer (yurt) and winter (timber hut), which would (Yurt and Hut) be ideologically and physically amalgamated to form the burial tombs of the Pazyryk. The limitation of this proposal is the lack of archaeological evidence of sedentary structures amongst the Pazyryk, thus Good (2011) relies on heavily ethnographic comparisons of nomadic Kazakh groups.

Tishkin & Dashkovskiy (2019) suggest in nomadic societies a burial site is a model world; in which a royal complex performed to perceive the 'worldview centre' for the sociocultural group (Tishkin & Dashkovskiy, 2019, pp. 81). Which in the case of the Pazyryk elite led to the heroization and near deification of those buried idealised 'chieftains' of the Pazyryk culture. Tishkin & Dashkovskiy (2019) provide an intriguing framework to examine the elite Pazyryk burials beyond areas of commemoration as idealized and preserved monuments contributing to the continuation of Pazyryk life. Linduff and Rubinson (2022) encapsulate an extension of this framework as elite burials and their material depositions were public proclamations of Pazyryk economy, higher status, and position in localized society (Rubinson & Linduff, 2022, pp. 9). In Rubinson & Linduff's (2024) later literature they develop the idea that a Pazyryk burial was a multifaceted process involving objects, imagery and processing of the body and to 'capture, display and maintain' important communal concepts including: kin and external relationships, respect for 'wild' animal kingdoms, domesticated herds (particularly horses), and post-mortem bodily health (Rubinson & Linduff, 2024, pp. 1-2). Andreeva (2018) and her research coalesces well with this interpretation indicating that burial and zoomorphic art acted to create ritual not practical space and to respond to various types of audience, a staged (real) and an imagined one to aid in the formation of space (Andreeva, 2018, pp. 325-6). However, Andreeva does not explore the practical elements of burial space that may have aided in the (re) mediation of fluid Pazyryk identities that Lymer (2002, 191-2) suggests was required in nomadic communities.

Ochir-Goryaeva (2020) observes that in the elite burials individuals were stretched to their full (often taller) height with a slight bend in the knee, while more common burials were positioned in a deeper knee bend (prostration), indicating the level of supine flex was determined by burial rituals and social positions of Pazyryk individuals not shape nor size of coffins (Ochir-Goryaeva, 2020, pp. 1326-7). Furthermore, Rubinson

& Linduff (2024) analyse burial patterns and suggest that the composition of ritual materials, usage of Pazyryk motifs and burial patterns were shared by all Pazyryk persons of all social groups, suggesting it (re)confirmed bonds amongst funerary observers and the wider community, and could unify local and individual ambitions of mobile pastoralist groups (Rubinson & Linduff, 2024, pp. 2). Torbet et al (2017) further supports the idea of a widely inclusive burial system in excavations of Mongolian burials (Kurgan 8) that revealed children and adults were provided the same funerary goods with no differences emerging with age nor sex, which they suggest differs greatly from normal Nomadic funerary rites (Torbet et al, 2017, pp. 229). While this is outdated compared to modern research Gryaznov (1969, pp. 193) infers those burial goods belonged to both the interred dead and living owners who took part in the funerary ceremony. Pazyryk burials must have been highly materially charged and socially inclusive event, which would benefit from future studies into the reactive world of sensorial studies.

Herodotus records the 'embalming' of Scythian kings, and the removal internal organs (Herodotus 4.71.4), whose bodies were then filled with organic scented material (cypress, parsley seeds) which was confirmed by the archaeological discoveries of various Pazyryk mummies (Pazyryk 2 & Ukok) with displaced organs, internal stuffing, and restitching of partitioned skin. (Gryaznov 1969; Rudenko 1953 pp. 8-9; Polosmak, 2014, pp. 7; Argent, 2013, pp. 182). However, Gryaznov (1969, pp. 135-6) lacks any directional research into the reason for Pazyryk mummification and accepts it as a simply elite burial. Mummification and preservation of the deceased is a key component of Pazyryk burial, but beyond symbolic and spiritual purposes; Polosmak (2014) believes that the mummification and deposition of the body was multifaceted in securing areas of the landscape for the nomadic Pazyryk community (Polosmak, 2014, pp. 16). Furthermore, Polosmak (2014) indicates the need for mummification is related to the Pazyryk beliefs that a person's life after death was intertwined with the condition and life (both pre and postmortem), and so mummification extended the condition of body between death and burial (Polosmak, 2014, pp. 20-1). Polosmak (2005; 2014; 2021; Molodin & Polosmak 2016), is a prominent Russian archaeologist who discovered in 1993 the Ukok Mummy (Ice Maiden) has produced some of the most insightful research in the field of Pazyryk 'style' and mummification, and her research has proved invaluable to conceptualising the Pazyryk burial and material culture. However, Polosmak and other Russian archaeologists have been encompassed in geo-political disputes over ownership and appropriation of the Ice Maiden, which were removed from their place of burial in the Altai and taken to Novosibirsk (Plets, 2019, pp. 308-9). Despite the contemporary political issues present, the focus of this study will be the material and sensorial properties of Pazyryk textiles, and the problematic hunt for 'Pazyryk origins' is deemed contentious and irrelevant to this analysis.

Horses are present across a majority of Pazyryk burials and are vital in maintaining the composition of Pazyryk funerary and burial rituals. Gryaznov (1937) is dismissive of the major role horses would play in

Pazyryk burial, acknowledging the advance of mobility and military use, but not the significance of their burial alongside humans. Rudenko (1953) develops the literature noting that horses are an obligatory part of Pazyryk burial, regardless of sex or social positions, yet there is no expansion on the meaning beyond them as a prerequisite of nomadic pastoralism in the Altai (Rudenko, 1953, pp. 115). Linduff and Rubinson (2022) offer a simplistic view that horses may have reflected the socio-economic power of the deceased. However, Tishkin (2019) advances this perspective suggesting the presence of so many horses in burials was a testament to the practical needs of horses, and that excessive horse burials may have displayed a surplus of wealth in Pazyryk peoples (Tishkin, 2019, pp. 77). However, to conclude the horse burials was simply a display of wealth is dismissive of the exceptional material and horse decoration found within the burials and requires greater literature development.

Argent (2016) also supports the significance of extended horse use, in her analysis of equine use and burials, indicating the number of horses was determined by grave sized but regardless of status horses were interred alongside elite and commoners (Argent, 2016, pp. 19). Andreyevich (2021) likens the Pazyryk use of horses to the horned horse cults of the Indo-Europeans, which provides an alternative view of the costumed horses (Argent, 2010, pp. 163 Polosmak, 2005, pp. 49) as aiding in physical and metaphysical transformations of burials (Andreyevich, 2021, pp. 31). Francfort (2008) supports this theory in suggesting the hybridising of the horse's body through burial dress further engaged them into realms of 'otherness' (Francfort, 2008, pp 39-40). Moreover Argent's (2016) analysis suggests that the relationship between horses and the Pazyryk was not one of pure domination (Argent, 2010, 170), and the elder horses honour was the first empathetic sacrifice, after which chaos would erupt among the other horses (Argent, 2016, pp. 26). Argent's (2010; 2013; 2016) analyses is particularly poignant to this study as the burial and control of horses would have involved many individuals and a cacophony of extreme violence, sensorial experience, and death that would have instigated a shift in sensorial response and temporality (Argent, 2016, pp 27-8). Furthermore, Argent's (2013) earlier study suggests the 'reverse' 180-degree articulation of horses in burial may have also been to engage with a physical and metaphysical transformation to direct the horses alongside the deceased into realms beyond (Argent, 2013, pp.182). Lepetz et al (2021) affirms this direction of horses in burials as constituting a primordial purpose and a fundamental part of Pazyryk burial and cosmology (Lepetz et al, 2021, pp. 245).

2.3 Nomadic Lifestyle & Social Structure

The Pazyryk archaeological culture, has often come under the broad descriptive branches of 'Scytho-Siberian' cultures, and while they share substantial features with the Pazyryk, Pazyryk literature has developed independently to debate the construction of a unique nomadic lifestyle and social structures. Herodotus identifies the Scythians as nomadic horse riders, who had a cattle-based economy and were

skilled in ranged mounted and infantry combat (Herodotus, 1.215.1). Francfort (2008) also advances this perspective, indicating that pastoral nomadism permits demographic expansion in an environment where agriculture is not viable, and hunting (and gathering), is not fruitful (Francfort, 2008, pp. 35) Linduff & Rubinson (2022) update this conception to infer that the Pazyryk developed a distinct form of cattle based mobile pastoralism that relied more extensively on advanced horse mobility and social organisation (Linduff & Rubinson, 2022, pp. 1). However, while this examination proves insightful it does not address the extra-regional engagements the Pazyryk must have had with other nomadic groups. Rubinson & Linduff (2024) decide to update their pastoral model as a regional horse herding economy, organized into local to regional network of interdependent communities, that promoted a (mostly) self-sufficient society, supported by interregional engagements (Rubinson & Linduff, 2024, pp. 2). This is relevant to this study through the contextual cultural foundation of material and sensory examinations of Pazyryk textiles which occurs through the practice of nomadic lifestyle and social structure and can be viewed further in the discussion.

Tishkin & Dashkovskiy (2019) examine the social complexity of the Pazyryk culture and review former Soviet archaeologists' examinations on the Pazyryk social evolution as a distinguished 'military democracy' which is limiting when compared to the modern literature (Tishkin & Dashkovskiy, 2019, pp. 74). Moreover, amongst many Soviet Archaeologists, there is a reoccurring search to identify the nature of 'statehood' within the Pazyryk culture, which Gryaznov (1937; 1969) and Artamonov (1965, pp. 109) insist on an underdeveloped social system focusing on an enhanced military democracy. This was broadly supported by other Soviet anthropologists and archaeologists who believed that economic conditions of nomadic societies predisposed them to limited conservatist developments into their socioeconomic organisation. Many earlier Pazyryk scholars suggest the existence of inflexible early class (or proto statehood) among Nomadic societies (Golomshtok & Gryaznov, 1933, pp. 43). However, such an interpretation of Pazyryk social structures is too dismissive of their unique burials, materials and cultural entanglements and lacks definition of a 'state' in which modern socio-political anthropology possess many definitions. N.N. Kradin (2009) offers an alternative perspective that there must be an interconnectedness of 'integration' and 'conflict' approaches (2009, pp. 30-1). To Kradin, the 'nomadic state' must be a political system to address varied communal needs and for the state as a means of preventing struggle for vital resources between homogenous groups (2009 31-2). While Kradin's definition is of greater use in envisioning the complex social sphere of the Pazyryk it is complimented further by Rubinson and Linduff (2024) who suggest a tripartition of class can be delineated through the quantity and quality of grave materials and the size and location of mortuary structures and can be broadly broken down into: Upper-Elite, Mid-Elite and Commoner (Rubinson & Linduff, 2024, pp. 8).

Rubinson and Linduff (2024) renegotiate the nature of Pazyryk societies beyond a singular nomadic group stuck in perpetual warlike activities that ancient and later sources have argued (Rubinson & Linduff 2024, pp. 15; Herodotus, 1.215.1; Jettmar, 1970, pp. 253). Instead Rubinson and Linduff (2024) suggest that Pazyryk society is ordered by burial patterns and exchange of goods as part of a system of pastoral communities where the (upper) elite leadership was situated into a status-orientated hierarchical system. Furthermore, with evidence of ritual guidance and independence among the mid-elites and commoners whose skills were necessary to sustain trade, and maintain seasonal needs of the wider group, allowing for heterarchical leadership to reemerge within a functioning hierarchical system (Rubinson & Linduff, 2024, pp.15). Moreover, Yao (2021) and Tishkin & Dashkovskiy (2019) suggest that women had a heightened social status in Pazyryk society and may have controlled livestock and protection of territory, with females able to move beyond traditional gender constructions, and participate in traditionally male occupations while achieving a highly revered socio-economic status (Yao, 2021, pp. 252; Tishkin & Dashkovskiy, 2019, pp. 78).

Polosmak (2021) keenly identifies the existence of inter-tribal styles existed amongst homogenous Scytho-Siberian groups, and the Pazyryk 'style' was used to differentiate and unite Pazyryk peoples despite similarities between their lifestyle and subsistence to their neighbours (Polosmak, 2021, pp. 43). Moreover, Davis-Kimball (1995), suggests that the variation amongst burial kurgans signified the development of advanced systems of property and social differentiation (Davis-Kimball, 1995, pp. VI). Artamonov (1965) refers to the buried Pazyryk riders as belonging to one of the 'great tribes of barbarians', who roamed the steppes of Eurasia and appertain to a barbaric state (Artamonov, 1965, pp. 101-109). Philips (1972) develops this discussion to suggest Pazyryk (Scythian groups) roamed as great raiding bands without wives as did the Indo-Europeans before them, with men of military age sent out to conquer new homes and find women in new regions (Philips, 1972, pp. 137). This perspective is rooted in the 'stateless' and culturally backwards prejudice, that has been propagated by ancient sources (Herodotus) and many Soviet academics (Gryaznov, 1937, pp. 5; Rudenko, 1953, pp. 53) to encapsulate political agendas that seek to 'own' or lessen the origins of Pazyryk groups and use them for political clout. Gryaznov remarks upon the Altai and its millennia of history as beautiful yet inhabited by 'culturally backwards tribes of nomads, pushed aside by tsarist colonization,' (Gryaznov, 1937, pp. 5) unlike the Soviet ideology, who Gryaznov imply brought 'culture'. This remark does set a theme for early Soviet analyses of Pazyryk sites and Soviet era literature which heavily clashes with more modern and flexible schools of thought (Linduff & Rubinson, 2022; Tishkin & Dashkovskiy, 2019; Rubinson & Linduff, 2024; Francfort, 2008; Han, 2008). There also exists a linguistical division in Pazyryk literature due to the omni-cultural origins of many studies alongside academics with a variety of interests, approaches, and languages. This division between linguistical interpretations has limited what an English speaker can access without extensive translation with many papers published and never translated from Russian, Chinese, German and French. Moreover, this has required the author to manually translate

several papers into English, which has limited the literary scope of this dissertation to those accessible to a primarily English-speaking academic.

2.4 Pazyryk Material Culture & Hybridity

The beautifully rich material culture and art of the Pazyryk has emerged as a formative component of Pazyryk literature, and a primary form of engagement amongst scholars to investigate the production, usage, and symbolism of material objects. Herodotus observed several material features that are present across the Scythian groups namely, the heavy use of bronze and gold, particularly gold use on horse reins, cheek plates and the adornment of headgear, belts, and girdles (Herodotus 1.215.1). Herodotus' Scythian descriptions are remarkably accurate when considered as a broad interpretation of Scythian culture, burial processes, and material culture, with Pazyryk archaeological sites supporting many claims. Scythian gold adornment, objects, and art has become an iconic aspect of their material culture in modern academia with gold being present across many burial objects (textiles, headgear, horse reins, etc) within the Scythian world (Jordana et al, 2009, pp. 1320; Korolkova, 2023, pp. 4; Gryaznov, 1969, pp. 156). The first emergence of confirmed Pazyryk art was the excavation and subsequent documentation within Radlov's 'From Siberia' (Aus Siberia, 1884), which catalogues finds that include a variety material object: a wooden sarcophagus, birch bark, fur clothing, saddles, and Chinese silks (Radlov, 1884, pp. 104). Radlov, despite being the first to discover material from what would later become the Pazyryk culture, did not attribute his finds as 'Pazyryk materials and art' beyond cataloguing them as broadly Scytho-Siberian and displacing his finds to the State Hermitage Museum of St. Petersburg.

It was Gryaznov's excavations (1929) and subsequent literature (1937) that the development of a unique Pazyryk identity began to emerge (Gryaznov, 1937, pp. 8). Gryaznov found gold gilded adornments, ornamented clothing, horse outfits, leather saddles, and polychrome tapestries that covered burial walls (Gryaznov, 1937, pp. 11). Despite this it was Golomshtok & Gryaznov (1933) who remarked on the preservation and uniqueness of the (Now Pazyryk) animal style and materials found within Pazyryk 1 (Golomshtok & Gryaznov, 1933, pp. 30). However, they did not have enough material nor comparable burials to formulate it as a separate archaeological culture. It was not until Rudenko's excavation (1947-9) and literature (Rudenko 1953) that the 'modern (re)birth' of the Pazyryk animal style and material identity could begin to emerge. However, it is important to note, that many of these early Soviet academics (Rudenko, Gryaznov, Artamonov, Radlov, etc), research was forcibly restricted in academic circles by Stalinist repressions in the 1930s and later communist censor, which limited scientific exchange amongst the Soviet academic community and the Western academics (Lonzy, 2017 pp. 111), and would leave a lasting divisions and stagnation within Pazyryk literature.

Meyer (2024) accurately derives that a constraint in the modern literature in studying Pazyryk material culture, is a lack of fit between textual and archaeological data which has denied extensive scrutiny of the material and sources themselves (Meyer, 2024, pp. 4). Murphy et al (2002) accepts the broad and generalized view of the Scythian Triad as beholden to all Scythian cultures, which is limiting when attempting to develop an advanced framework of the Pazyryk material culture (Murphy et al, 2002, pp. 1). Hanks (2010, pp. 124) keenly criticizes the commonly applied 'Scythian Triad' which defines a material funerary package made of three categories: weapons, equestrian equipment, and use of Animal Style patterns, as having reduced the material understanding and complexity associated with such a large cultural spread (North Pontic steppes to Altai Mountains). Hanks (2010) instead proposes a more nuanced and sophisticated approach of Pazyryk material identity and art as involving contest (combat), hybridism (adaptation), and metamorphosis (transformation) (Hank, 2010, pp. 132).

Rudenko (1953) identifies a key compositional component of Pazyryk Animal Style as herbivorous ungulates involved in 'combat' with carnivorous predators often referred to as the 'predator-prey' motif (Rudenko, 1953, pp. 229). Hancar (1952) expands Rudenko's identification and proposes the naturalistic and fluid movement of animals imbues a vital creativity to the attack by predatory animals based both on environmental and symbolic abstraction (Hancar, 1962, pp. 187-8). Rudenko suggests that the predator-prey motif may have embodied bloodthirstiness, ferocity, and sensitivity of warriors (Rudenko, 1953, pp. 288). However, such an approach is simplistic and does not engage with the vibrancy of the matter, even Rudenko himself does not seek to develop this ideology. Instead, Chereminsin's (2009) study into animal style iconography indicates that predatory representations were ideologically flexible regardless of a real or mythical (or hybrid) predator (wolves, felines, or griffins) and were vital in the transitioning to 'lower' realms, supporting mythological complexes (Chereminsin, 2009, pp. 91-2). Lymer (2018) supports Chereminsin's (2009) narrative and insinuates that griffins (hybrids) were intimately connected to the creation of Pazyryk identity and demonstrated international contacts with Persia (Lymer, 2018, pp. 18-19).

Artamov (1965) suggests that the art of the Pazyryks encompassed their life birth to death, and that art served to shape aesthetic, ideological, economic, and social relationships within the framework of their environment (Artamov, 1965, pp. 109). Artamov (1965) instigates a stimulating theoretical debate but does not deliberate what ideological or aesthetic narrative is revealed beyond the broadly aesthetic and ideological similarities between Scythian peoples. Korolkova (2023), offers a re-examination of Aratamov's literary gaps and advocates that the formation of the distinct Pazyryk style was not a homogenous nor singular artist tradition. Instead, it the result of regional art and cultural permeability within the Altai environment and positive Pazyryk reception to foreign influence, which the Pazyryk wove visual patterns, imagery, and integrated hybridity into their own mythological sphere (Korlokova, 2023, pp. 12). Andreeva

(2018) supports Korolkova's analysis inferring that cultural contact, artistic patterns, and concepts were imported from peripheral cultures within the Pazyryk sphere of entanglement thus creating regional styles that could be integrated or rejected mediating the artistic development of Pazyryk Animal style (Andreeva, 2018, pp. 308).

Good (2011) in his examination of Altai textiles proposes that Pazyryk animal style in textiles is a compositional play between abstract (e.g repetitive geometry) and representational elements (e.g Pazyryk 5 pile rug & seated goddess), that engage with differing aspects of the Pazyryk world (Good. 2011, pp. 149). Depictive motifs to Good (2011) suggests the illustration of a socially animated style engages with the Pazyryk supernatural world, while the abstract is form of social continuum that can be altered to renegotiate social relations (Good, 2011, pp. 151). Hedeager (2011) offers an alternative symbolism to the use of animal style that integrates with social power dynamics, as well as communicating with heavenly forces via choice depictions of natural and hybrid animal creations (Hedeager, 2011, pp. 195).

Tishkin & Dashovskiy (2019) advocate the multifaceted design of Animal Style to function as a worldview layer, for information storage, and as a transmission medium (Tishkin & Dashkovskiy, 2019, pp. 80) To investigate the idea of Pazyryk art and dress as a social medium, Argent (2010) suggests that the variety of costumes that adorned the horses may be metaphorical decorations of real accomplishments of buried horses, and their embellishments were symbolic of extraordinary feats as well as a form of honouring the horse for his protection of his rider (Argent, 2010, pp. 169). To extend Argents (2010) interpretation Hank (2010) proposes that due to the predator-prey configuration as commonplace across saddles and saddles covers, the decoration of saddles and horses would have perpetuated a 'symbolic interface' between rider and horse (Hank, 2010, pp. 132). However, Andreyevich (2021) differs from this sentiment to suggest the adornment of horses was not for actualized achievements but instead was to enact a physical transformation (Andreyevich, 2021, pp. 23), which Andreeva (2018) also promotes as the transformational qualities of Pazyryk adornment, dress, and animal style to bridge the gap between realia and the supernatural (Andreeva, 2018, pp. 60). Polosmak (2021) extends this transformational idea that the extensive use of gold foil (applique) in saddles, clothing and adornments was a socially equalizing symbol that would bind all Pazyryk social classes, however she does not address the sensorial performance nor otherworldly connotations gold use may entail.

Argent's later (2013) study into equine-human relationships across Pazyryk material culture via the intricately tattooed individuals (Pazyryk 2 Chief and Ice Maiden) and the 180-degree twisted ("S") horse tattoos serve as multifaceted symbolic communication. Argent (2013) correlates a shamanistic connection of animals to 'unseen' worlds in which they may undergo transformations, and through animal's humans

may move between (three) levels of the unseen world (Argent, 2013, pp. 187). Furthermore, Argent (2013) suggests the reversal of the horse's body is a transformational motion to the otherworld, and the spiral 'S' body is symbolic of life and death that could capture the movement of life-force away from the body Argent, 2013, pp. 187). Skeates (2010) and Hank (2010) offers contention to the supernatural element's aspect of Pazyryk material and animal style, instead offering that the hyper-visual style of the Pazyryk was centred around the changing conceptions of warriors, personhood, and the individual identity amongst an emergent Pazyryk warrior elite (Skeates, 2010, pp. 10-1; Hank, 2010, pp. 124). However, the lack of textual Pazyryk written records means their symbolism and material methods visual communication must be considered a contextual and theoretical-

Pazyryk textiles represent a polychromatic world enriched with silks, furs, felts, hemp, dyes, and rich adornment that revealed a mixture of local, foreign and hybrid fusions of style and origins (Rudenko, 1953, pp. 243). Gryaznov (1969) iterates that the textiles of the Pazyryk reflect their distant cultural connections involving a plethora of 'settled' peoples including China, Greco-Bactria and Achaemenid Iran (Rudenko, 1953, pp. 225), he identifies that silk fabrics (Kurgan 5) with elegant patterns were made in China for persons of status and princesses on occasion of marriage (Gryaznov, 1969, pp. 158). Schurman (1982) agrees with this examination of the textiles of Pazyryk burials and identifies they were collected from China, Hellenistic areas, and particularly Assyria due to the repetitive rows of animals along the famed Pazyryk pile rug (Schurmann, 1982, pp. 24) yet he does not address as to why these motifs were chosen. Unlike Rubinson who (1990) provides a foundational examination of the Pazyryk textiles, and suggests the imported textiles being removed from people who created them, imbued them with exoticism, and enhanced the status of those who owned them, (Rubinson, 1990, pp. 60). Xiaomin (2022) indicates the reputation of exquisite pile-carpets as prized possessions and referred to as 'soft gold under your feet' in eastern Chinese cultures (Xiaomin, 2022, pp.5).

The 'elite' perspective of imported carpets, fabrics and textiles is echoed by Tishkin & Dashkovskiy (2019), who affirms that Pazyryk elite must have received significant spoils of war or income from trade to obtain such materials (Tishkin & Dashkovskiy, 2019, pp. 79). Andreeva (2023) develops on the simplicity of 'elite materials' suggesting foreign objects were 'governable otherness' that had now been tamed, indicating the use of the 'foreign' was to propel the deceased into a global political stage (Andreeva, 2023, pp. 27-8). Rubinson (1990) discusses the origins of Pazyryk textiles which locally likely consisted of felts, vegetable fibres and plain-woven wool, while imported textiles included the pile carpet, tapestry-weaved fabrics, and embroidered silks (Rubinson, 1990, pp. 53-4) Moreover, Rubinson (1990) addresses that the primary categories for imported fabrics are Chinese silk and woollen fabrics (pile carpet) and the new contexts were

created by Pazyryk peoples who borrowed them, and imbued them with their own meanings as they integrated them into Pazyryk culture.

Polosmak (2005;2021) denotes that due to the heavily customized nature of Pazyryk textiles, fabrics played an important role in the daily life of the Pazyryk, whose clothing garments were painstakingly constructed (Polosmak, 2021, pp. 46) and heavily mended (Polosmak, 2005, pp. 48). Spath et al expands Polosmaks interpretation that Pazyryk textiles creation was a cross-generational process having evolved across several human lifestyles to maintain and produce such artistically rich materials (Spath et al, 2021, pp. 1). In discussing the material qualities of Pazyryk textiles the literature displays a strong bias into the importance of the origins and production methods of textiles, and even in modern literature there is a considerable gap into the material and sensorial qualities beyond empirical measurements and their deposition, this study poses that such vibrant textiles are underdeveloped and would benefit from further studies into the ephemeral and sensorial through the expansive gateway of new materialities.

3.0 Materiality & Sensory Framework

As has been discussed in the previous chapter within Pazyryk literature there is a notably lack of sensorial or materially rooted approaches to examine the exquisite artistry, craftsmanship, and symbolism present across Pazyryk textiles. Material and sensorial engagements shape our interpretations of the physical and immaterial worlds, the senses hold sway over emotions, relationships, interactions, and the formation of material and immaterial concepts, while materialities engage with transformations, symbolic-storage, agency, and the life-force of objects beyond the empirical. Post-processual material and sensorial literature homogenise fluidly to form a material based and sensorially extended analysis to examine Pazyryk materials beyond the well-trodden path of the empirical or broadly Scytho-Siberian research, and instead into vibrant, living and fluid realms (yet highly theoretical) of new materialism

3.1 Materialities

Schiffer (2009 pp. 677-8) ascribes the value of the Material World as dynamically in-motion and capable of evoking experience that lie beyond realms of the lingual, the conceptual and the cognizant world. Shriver-Rice (2009 pp. 2) in her post-processualist review suggests a modern paradigm shift which agency has viewed archaeological material as no longer static signs to represent socio-economic formations, or blank slates awaiting human contact. Instead, the material world is as a dynamic mediator which could deny or enable, transform, or maintain it and provides a duality of engagements that accesses a more active, omnivocal world of materials and agents (Shriver-Rice pp. 14, 2009). Barad (2003, pp. 803;820) stipulates the nature of matter is not immutable nor passive, matter (objects, artefacts, art) is an active participant in the becoming of the world, it has an ongoing vibrancy and pro-activity. Barad (2003) also notes that matter is

not simple hollow entities but is things-in-phenomena it is a dynamic agency that perpetrates an ever-ongoing re-configuration and entanglement of the world, a world which we (people) and objects are mutually included. To Ingold (2007 pp. 1) 'things' are not energized because agency has been imbued upon them, but because of their absorption of the 'currents of the lifeworld'. Moreover, the properties of materials are not finite nor fixed but are processual and relational and reveal the 'story' of materials. Materials are active constituents in a state of becoming which animate beings can enforce through regeneration or destruction of materials (Ingold, 2007, pp. 13). Ingold (2010b pp.12) refers to the mind as a 'leaky organ' that is not confined to the head, but mingles with the body, the world, and the incorporeal its operation, this is to say the mind effects materials as materials influence the mind, both are formational to the temporality around them. In pursuit of the objective of this dissertation the transformational properties of matter alongside the Pazyryk textiles reveal an entangled, vibrant matter that can dynamically enact and react to the multi-faceted cultural stimuli present in Pazyryk life.

Pazyryk textiles as materials embody a rich exuberant artistry rooted in a network of exchanges, ideologies, and parasocial communication. Gell (2010 pp. 43) suggests the power of art objects stems from technical processes they embody, the 'enchantment' of an object imbues it with magical properties due to the skill of the craftsman. In Pazyryk materials the polychromatic creation (and importation) of textiles, amplified optical attention exerts 'magic' over the beholder, as a reflection of the magic that exists inside the images imbued by the craftsman, it could be directed by the owner who could extend the craftsman's magic into his, and display this to the spectator (Gell, 2010, pp. 49). However, as Broodbank (2010 pp. 320-2) notes to unlock such esoterica or magic objects may require elite knowledge of construction and through its ownership. Hoskins (2005 pp.75-6) develops upon Gell (2010) to affirm that agency cannot be restricted to persons, and that objects endure through a range of identities and transformations over their life cycles that embody intentionality's and mediate social agency.

Bennett (2010 pp. 20-49) ascribes that the vital power of objects (non-human bodies) and actors to enact and react to each other sustains formative and transformative processes. Moreover, objects can mediate life through social embedding and are imbued with a living 'thing power' that has both fluid and immutable properties that challenges the static and passive properties many objects-actant relationships have been relegated too. Moreover, Maran & Stockhammer (2012 pp.2-4) infer that objects may not speak but they address our senses and can embody a hybrid material as a functional tool to adapt to environments, as symbols in non-verbal communication objects can influence or instigate human action. Stockhammer (2011 pp. 50-1) refers to the process of cultural hybridization as entanglement, which he believes begins with the moment of cultural encounter and leads to the construction of otherness in a liminal space, in such encounter's objects redefine ideas of social space and movements with them. The advanced mobility of the

Pazyryk culture across ancient loci of exchange meant there were likely many areas of liminal space, which instigated material exchanges and sustained new identities, ideologies, that could be passively 'entangled' alongside existing material symbology.

Malafouris (2008 pp. 7-8) suggests material depositions can be bound into the agency of the deceased, expanding the perceived boundaries of the body, and materials can obtain a 'lifeforce' by sustaining dynamic networks of concepts, peoples, and hybrid worlds, instigating a transformative ability of material objects long after death. Joy (2009 pp. 543) perpetuates the biographical and transformational abilities of objects as fundamental to mediating society as they can extend human agency beyond typical temporal spatial limits of biological lives being used and exchanged. Weiner (1985 pp. 211) provides a coalescent ideology proposing that inalienable objects are imbued with immaterial properties (mythical, foreign, hierarchy) that enhance individuals corporeality of self through powers of the past. In addition, Rowlands (1993, pp. 144) suggests objects function as mediators between the past, present, and future, and lasting or purposefully preserved objects in Pazyrykian context; form their own memories and personal trajectories. Renfrew (1998 pp. 5-6) expands this perspective that objects aid in the construction and maintenance of social realities as an external symbolic storage of concepts, beliefs, and ideologies which could be mediated and embodied by structures (monuments) and artefacts (object). Which reinforces the idea of a pro-active material culture which acts upon and reacts to human and object actants.

Sharp (2000 pp. 295), examines the commodification of the body, and how diverse constructions of the body (age, class, gender) alongside specialised areas of knowledge and power (magic, military, foreign) have the potential for bodily fragmentation which objectify the body and may charge the body and associated materials with transformative powers to harm, heal, or symbolical transferal. Sackett (1977 pp. 370-1;372) while dated in the age of post-processual theory suggests that objects have a passive voice of 'style' and active one for 'function' and that objects 'work' in economic and technological realms alongside societal and ideological worlds to compose an 'real' and 'idealised' worlds. Style is entwined into a spanning network of social, economic, and political relations, which can materialise through objects, In the case of the Pazyryk style, it is an interesting consideration due to the hybrid exchanges that must have made style a multifaceted product of passive transmission, survival and identity mediation.

3.2 Sensoriality

The senses reveal an overlooked world of material nuance, they commune with conscious and subconscious perceptions and engage with material and natural worlds on an intimate level. The senses involve the mundane to the exceptional and offer a unique framework for analysis amongst the hybrid textiles of the Pazyryk. Traditionally sensory perceptions are described as five senses: visual, tactile, auditory, olfactory,

and gustatory (Tringham, 2012, pp. 179-80; Hurcombe, 2007, pp. 537). Hurcombe (2007) views on the senses are underdeveloped and promotes a more holistic approach to explore the greater sensory dimensions of material culture which exists in three dimensions and are perceived by a union of the senses. The senses have been subject to a limitation through their objectification, regarded as filters to mediate movement to the world and mind. Instead, Ingold (2011 pp. 314) suggests that the senses are emerged aspects of beings in the environment and gain powers from being of the world, engaged in its flux and flows not as a static or separate participant.

Hahn (2012, pp. 9) infers that the sight, smell, or touch is only the initial experience and for it to be embodied it must be contextualised within culturally defined expectations of the object to affirm its status, and social context. However, Hahn's (2012) approach denies the continual metamorphosis of sensorial experiences, this can be applied to some ancient objects, nevertheless, the Pazyryk culture context has been theoretically 'reformed' by modern academia and material evidence as discussed in the previous chapter. Hahn (2012) raises the concept of varying levels of sensory experience deviating greatly depending on the social, political, or economic standing of the audience and an excess of perceptions that can be hard to prove. Each culture creates its own sensorial environment, through the construction of a material world entwined with its individual set of sensory values (Harris, 2020, pp. 16). Hamilakis (2017, pp. 173) asserts that the primary role of the senses allows the metaphysical and affective connections of touch between other bodies, objects, and the world. To Hamilakis (2017, pp. 177) sensoriality is more than sensorial stimuli received by the brain, but the enactment of temporal memories and perceptions that are uniquely configurable. It involves the actualization and re-enactment of past formational memories and events, producing new emotional responses in the present that co-exists alongside previous experiences.

Bailey (2014) proposes that a more nuance understanding of objects can be created through a cheriotic approach, which engages with 'touch' and examines its ability (hand manualism) to reveal intersubjective and transcendental properties of objects (Bailey. 2014, pp. 27). To Bailey, touch is concerned with limits boundaries and surfaces which can be breached through touch, inviting a more particular analysis, in examining textiles it may offer the proximal importance of self, one's relation to others, whilst (re)negotiating functions and forms of the human body (Bailey, 2014, pp. 36-9). Tringham (2012 pp. 179) explores the sense of touch beyond simplistic haptic sensations, but as full body sensations, that involves a tactile-kinaesthetic sense as a fundamental and sensual for the structuring of space and sustaining relationships within the material environment. Moreover, the use of touch is a vital form of engaging with Pazyryk textiles which present exotic textures, surfaces, pressure or pain in the creation and deposition. Heed et al (2015, pp. 251) affirms the overlooked importance of the body in directing our movements, reactions, and object-based engagements in which bodily senses such as, touch defines our location in

space. While the skin is an active anatomical frame, the brain must integrate the movement of the body and limbs to position itself within natural, social, and materially manufactured worlds. Presentation of the body amongst Pazyryk groups was a vital aspect of identity, and through material creations such as the figures upon textiles, we view the realia and the idealised form of how the body should exist in personal and social space.

DeMarrias (2014, pp. 157-9) dissects mortuary (ritual) performances as a sensory catalyst involving evocative sensory and captivating material experiences that would disrupt social and bodily routines to challenge social identities and aid in communal-mnemonic function. Moreover, DeMarrias offers a nuanced perception of the ability of performance to communicate power, hierarchy through embodied matter and diverse experiences which are evident at many of the Elite Pazyryk burials (DeMarrias, pp. 161, 2014). The Pazyryk textiles stimulate optical reactions through a fluid animal style and an extensive use of colour. Chen & Choi (2008) examine the biological response of visual perception as based upon the importance of objects in the visual field, with heightened visual response to stimuli around moving objects, that extend into colours, texture, faces, which are captivating for survival as well as shaping a visual selection process that can be purposefully stimulated by a specific choice of objects, materials, or matter (Chen & Choi, 2008, pp. 14).

Edwards et al (2006) explore a more holistic approach to the sensory examination of material culture as distinctions in hierarchy, class, wealth emerged they are displayed through clothing and representational forms, they were revealed through new conventions around food, odours, sounds, sights, and bodily contacts in which material objects are entangled (Edwards et al, 2006, pp. 5) To extend Edwards (2006) observation, touch and the embodied senses helps us to experience and perceive the world, whilst understanding the physical dimensions of the wider environment, habituation tends to render us unaware of how frequently we haptically engage with each other (Skeates, 2010, pp. 17-8)., Harris (2020, pp. 4) proposes a broad spectrum of sensory modalities including balance, emotions, and movement. Hamilakis also affirms that sensorial modalities are effectively infinite and inherently synaesthetic; working in coalition not separately (Sanik 2021; Hamilakis, 2017, pp. 177). The Pazyrykians are known to have inhaled cannabis sativa and Ember & Carolus (2017 pp. 7) remark of the ability of narcotics to induce altered states of consciousness (ASC) which can affect sensorial engagements, enhancing emotional expression, changes in haptic engagements, mental rejuvenation, or intense visual phenomena as well as isolate sensory processing. Harris (2020 pp. 1-2) provides an invaluable insight into the sensory archaeology of textiles which he ascribes as sensuous and respondent to touch, vision, smell, sound, and movement; through these sensations' textiles embody 'emotions of identity' and define hierarchies, Through the preserved Pazyryk textiles it opens a diverse sensorial cacophony of matter and materials. Moreover, Harris (2020, pp. 19)

compiles the ability of textiles to enchant and transform bodies, places, and objects; they perform actively, perpetually and in subconscious way they are made to evoke sensations.

4.0 Materials

A post-processual approach to materials, matter, and sensoriality seeks to offer a fresh interpretation into the uniquely preserved vivacity of Pazyryk textiles. Such an interpretation aims to not disengage the textiles from their burial context amongst the kurgans, but to (re)contextualize and weave Pazyryk mortuary practices, ideologies, alongside vibrant matter, and sensorial experiences to rehabilitate the academic engagement between the matter and (hu)man. To analyse the Pazyryk data within the theoretical framework established, a collection of four textiles have been selected from the elite Pazyryk burial kurgan No. 5, the textiles presented are some of the best preserved, vigorous, and engaging Pazyryk textiles discovered.

4.1 Pazyryk Barrow No. 5 Textiles



Fig. 5 (State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, 2024 – IN 1687-98). Saddlecloth Decorated with Applique (Dimensions: 218x68cm; Pazyryk 5th – 4th BCE), found at Pazyryk Barrow No. 5 by S.I. Rudenko (1947-9). The Saddlecloth is constructed of 'scaly' felt by Pazyryk craftsmen and features: extensive use of polychromatic colour which alternates between rows of abstract palmettes and geometric spirals across the centre; horseshoe-shaped appliques along the felt border.



Fig. 6 (UNESCO, 2015). Chinese Silk Shabrack (Dimensions n/a; Pazyryk 5th BCE) found at Pazyryk Barrow No. 5 by Rudenko (1947-9). The silk is a delicate import of Chinese embroidery, that the Pazyryk altered adding red and blue felt ornamentation, with gold foil cut outs to form the border of the shabrack. The design features dynamic oriental (Chinese) phoenixes alongside floral representations. Materials involved in construction are wool, silk, gold, and leather.



Fig. 7 (State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, 2024 – IN: 1697-93). The Pile Carpet (Dimensions: 183x200cm) was found at Pazyryk Barrow No.5 by Rudenko (1947-9) and is the world's oldest preserved pile carpet. The decoration is dynamic and varied, with the central square frieze is occupied by 24 cross-shaped figures, each of which possess 4 stylized floral buds. This first composition is framed by a border of hybrid griffins, followed by a frieze of 24 fallow deer. The next border contains 28 figures of men upon horseback and dismounted. The colour is faded but still highly vibrant with bright yellows, blues, and reds. The carpet was woven from wool in the technique of double knot (Turkish knot: 3600 knots per 1 dm², 1,250,000 knots in total).



Fig. 8 (State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, 2024 – IN 1687-94). The Rider Felt Carpet/Tapestry (Dimensions 640x450cm) was found at Pazyryk 5 By Rudenko (1947-9) and is large ~30sqm which could be connected to poles and form a yurt. Construction involved a cloth of white felt covered with colour felt appliques, the figure was painted with vegetable dyes and sewn to the rug with sinew thread. The wide friezes repeat a female figure sat upon a throne, holding a branch of a plant; with a mounted warrior approaching in decorated attire and bow suspended from his belt. The figures in each depiction are similar yet not identical suggesting no single template use. Fragments on the second and first row depict two hybrid creatures: one with a human's head, horns, lions' body, and feathered wings. The second bears similarities to a phoenix.

5.0 Discussion

The deposition of the magnificent Pazyryk textiles in Pazyryk barrow five reveals a complex network of socio-political, economic, and mythological systems used to passively and proactively mediate relationships, reform identities, and reinforce communal memorial function in an area of heightened environmental and cultural diversity. Pazyryk textiles were created to evoke the senses, which are deeply imbued with vibrant matter and symbolism to conjure the realized and ideological world of the Pazyryk. The polychromatic design and foreign motifs may have functioned as focal points in funerary performances and connected with

individuals and communities to address their communal and elite identities in a homogenising epoch through the unified socio-material world. It is possible that new stimuli involving, art, ideas, materials, and concepts may have made its way into the world of the Pazyryk directed through silk roads, and introducing a new sense of personhood and self, the choice selections could reject or embrace new concepts of personhood and self. Furthermore, A material-sensorial approach reveals how Pazyryk textiles are a material that embodies a combination of sophisticated ideas through hybridism, metamorphosis and contest which extend into realms of the divine, domestic, military, and the natural. The limitations of such an approach are discussed, suggesting that while highly theoretical it offers an often-overlooked insight into the experienced and engaging world of sensory perceptions.

5.1 Applique Saddle Cloth (Fig. 5)

The Saddle cloth decorated with applique (Fig. 5) features dyed polychromatic felt with vibrant use of red, yellow, and blue. Within the Pazyryk context, the use of these colours is beheld to symbolic qualities that represent aspects of the realized and ideological worlds. The use of red as the 'background' colouration evokes the vivacity of life-force and energy, while blue covering the border in stylistic spirals may symbolize the sun or sky and link to the divine, spiritual or realms of otherness (Sztuka et al, 2022, pp. 13; Bluhm & Frutiger, 1989, pp. 277). The colour yellow is a more contentious debate and could share similarities with the multi-dimensional transformational properties of gold (Costache, 2012, pp. 107), or due to the more practical abundance of yellow pigments (Hurcombe, 2007, pp. 539) it may represent a metaphorical bridge created by the natural realms between the divine (blue) and mortal (red). In Pazyryk textiles the intricate polychromatic creation and importation of textiles amplify optical attention exerting 'magic' over the beholder, as a reflection of the magic imbued by the craftsman and directed by the owner who could extend the craftsman's magic into their own, to then perform this upon the spectator (Gell; 1994, pp. 48-9; Gell, 2010, pp. 49). The magic imbued through harmonious colour and sacred geometry acted to capture collective attention (Rowlands, 1993, pp. 142) and perform as a passive method of communal symbolic storage (Renfrew & Scarre, 1998, pp. 6) which mediated dynamic relationships between intimate and external Pazyryk communities (Hoskins, 2005, pp. 74).

The abstract geometric designs of Fig. 5 can be configured to represent several separate but unifying motifs within Pazyryk burials. These include the centre of the saddlecloth and two sets of alternating palmette blue spirals one appearing as a negative of the other. In addition, there are one set of yellow shapes appearing stylistically as curved deer horns, and the second yellow set appearing as a branching tree or the dawning sun motifs, similarly to the blue spiral the yellow ones performs in a negative space to the other. Moreover, the border of the saddlecloth presents recurring horseshoe shapes which frame the centre geometry. Spirals embody ideological transformations connecting cosmic powers through concepts of fertility, life,

death, and regeneration (Caddy, 2016, pp. 51-2). Furthermore, to extend Argents (2013) interpretation, the spiral also represents the arcana of creation and entropy, a self-sustaining display of regeneration that blurs the border between realia and supernatural realms allowing the owner of the saddlecloth to interface with both spheres of existence (Argents, 2013, pp. 187). One set of yellow geometric shapes may exist as an abstract to the Pazyryk style of flowing deer antlers which is known to have subsisted and possessed cosmologically sacred meaning across the Scythian and Pazyryk spheres (Polosmak, 2021, pp. 50; Good, 2011, pp. 150). The horns may have been a transformational motif that aided in ritual metamorphosis of the horse (Andreyevich, 2021, pp. 23;31) into the 'horned horse'. The hybridised horse-form further instigated a blurring of the cosmic and natural to mediated relationships between 'lower' and 'upper' realms of death in the Pazyryk mythological complex (Cheremisin, 2009, pp. 92). Moreover, the (deer) antler symbology may be entwined into the ideological 'cosmic deer' who may have embodied a two-way agency (Bennett, 2010, pp. 122; Shriver-Rice, pp. 12-3, 2009) to guide the dead and living towards the Pazyryk World Tree (Polosmak, 2005, pp. 42; Barnhart, 2022, pp. 48).

The second layer of yellow geometry may represent an abstract branching tree which could be an abstraction of the Pazyryk World tree. In Altai oral traditions the World Tree unites upper and lower worlds, by travelling through the middle, it also is said to sustain and generate life, and mediates human destiny (Babenko, 2022, pp. 220; Harvilahti, 2000, pp. 220). The use of tree symbology on saddlecloth may have performed a dual function as a focal point of metaphysical conversion, that allowed the rider (and horse) to interface with other realms (Pearson, 2017, pp. 5). The tree imbues the saddlecloth with (super)natural power and vitality in the mortal world through transformative symbolism the saddlecloth is a phenomenon of matter instigating an unending state of becoming (Barad, 2003, pp. 829). Furthermore, the use of the world tree positioned between abstract antlers may indicate the saddlecloth as an inter-realm traversal aid and as a living boundary object (Huvila, 2016, pp. 4) between the mundane, sacred, and the human and natural (Malafouris, 2008, pp. 8). This perpetuates a concept of affixed dualities in the Pazyryk network of vital metamorphosis (Bennett, 2010, pp. 117) between the saddlecloth, the deceased, and audience. The suggestion of the saddlecloth as a boundary object in the hybrid entanglements of Pazyryk life, indicates it may have mediated socio-mnemonic function amongst observers (DeMarrais, 2014, pp. 158), performing as a visual experience in funerary contexts to promote or contest ideas of belonging (Harris, 2020, pp. 19).

The applique technique of the saddle creates a risen and textured surface to the saddlecloth, acting as form of symbolic interface between rider and the horse (Hanks, 2010, pp. 132), as Ingold (2007) notes surfaces are where radiant energy is reflected and absorbed and the saddlecloth represents an active haptic canvas of action (Ingold, 2007, pp. 5). The textured surface may have enhanced the captivating visual stimuli operating as a tactile map for the hand (Heed et al, 2015, pp. 251), which across a vibrant surface embodied

the flow of matter and life-force through social and divine worlds sustaining the temporal negotiation of sensorial memory (Hamilakis, 2017, pp. 177). The repetitive yellow horseshoe shaped border may reveal the symbolic and practical importance of the horse in the Pazyryk nomadic model (Linduff & Rubinson 2022, pp.6;). Moreover, it may represent the importance of horse in the transitioning of world layers, while also representing a physical and metaphysical liminal space between the divine (centre geometry) and the actualised world (end of the textile). To cross such a boundary an avatar of the natural world; the unified body of a horse and rider would become symbolically and socially charged within heightened emotional and energetic environments of funerary events (Sharp, 2000, pp. 295; Büster, 2021, pp. 8). This extends the agency of the saddlecloth beyond the corporeality of the deceased allowing the final display of elite socio-political power through the entwined Pazyryk mythological and heterarchical systems (Rubinson & Linduff, 2024, pp. 1-2). The temporal disconnection from Pazyryk contexts renders this saddlecloths discussion as highly theoretical and subject to the author's contextual biases and interpretations. However, it is the aim of the author to reveal the ability of the sensorial world and new materialities as an expansive tool for the exploration of vibrant Pazyryk materials regarding the lack of literature to challenge or reinterpret the nuanced matter of Pazyryk textiles.

5.2 Chinese Silk Shabrack (Fig. 6)

The Chinese Silk Shabrack (fig. 6) is of Chinese origin and was imported into the Pazyryk world likely through complex extra-regional exchange networks (Yao, 2021, pp. 251; Artamonov, 1965, pp. 108; Rubinson & Linduff, 2024, pp.14). These networks not only provided pathways for the trade of goods and animals but also the acquisition of prestige materials that were consumed by the Pazyryk Upper elite, as evidenced through prestigious funerary displays of the Silk Shabrack (Polosmak, 2014, pp. 22). As Rubinson's (1990) Pazyryk textile study revealed, the life story of Chinese silk (fig.6) embroidery had been physically altered by the Pazyryk peoples transforming it into a hybrid shabrack (Rubinson, 1990, pp. 53-4). The Chinese embroidery was revised by adding a border consisting of two strips of dyed blue felt and a wider centre strip of red felt, yet it still retains both Chinese and Pazyryk symbology. The central strip features a saw-toothed pattern filled with gold leaf, while the tail side of the fabric features yak hair tassels. The original design is a remarkable example of Chinese artistry featuring a mix of partridges and mythical phoenixes singing across flowing floral trees (Kyuzo, 1992, pp. 8; Cheremisin, 2009, pp. 85). Gryaznov (1969) suggests such fabric were made in China for individuals of impressive wealth and for princesses on the event of their marriage (Gryaznov, 1969, pp. 158) likely to Pazyryk chiefs like the deceased male of Pazyryk 5, who were emergent powers on the socio-political global stage.

The shabrack in a Pazyryk burial context suggests a representation of kinship and peace between external groups (Rudenko, 1953, pp. 224), or as a trophy of trade, raids, expansion, or tribute (Andreeva, 2018, pp.

160;). However, the possession of a foreign object featuring a phoenix (Gell, 2010) in an elite Pazyryk burial as Helm (1988) suggests is imbedded into the unusual, the unfamiliar, and the esoteric, and represents the actualised and mythical journey of elite knowledge that can be 'controlled' or 'conquered' (Helm, 1988, pp. 59). Moreover, it may be a material manifestation of the far-reaching networks of physical and metaphysical power amongst Pazyryk elite. The ownership of foreign silk (prestigious materials) regardless of rivalry can legitimize new ideologies of power while maintaining an image of cultural continuity (Hoskins, 2005, pp. 79). In discussing the shabracks burial deposition, its earthly confinement could suggest the changing notions of self-amongst the new elite and its communal accompaniment with the mummified bodies ensured the transformation of worldly power to realms of otherness (Argent, 2013, pp. 190; University of Helsinki, 2020, pp. 455). Moreover, the nature of the phoenixes as a symbolic of renewal, rebirth, transformation, and immortality (Dalton, 2015, pp. 9) is poignant in the usage of gold leaf due to its similar transitional properties. However, the Phoenix shabrack may not be a marker of the buried male's worldly power, but a mnemonic symbol of his 'divine mandated' union to a foreign bride. The later Pazyryk alteration of a Chinese silk tapestry to a shabrack may indicate the amalgamation of differential (foreign) cosmic power and the induction of the female into Pazyryk world sphere. With their deaths, the shabracks deposition may have aided in an ideological metamorphosis of which may have involved unique saddlecloths to empower funerary performances and engage with concepts of identity (re)negotiation, social reconstruction (Laneri, 2007 pp.9; Maran, 2011, pp. 64) and the politics of memory (Andreeva, 2018, pp. 232). Such a symbiosis of materials encourages the conceptual ritual of physical and immaterial movement between realms as necessary for elite propagation and transforming a social person through a non-living but vibrant entity.

The Pazyryk addition of gold leaf to the red perimeter layer of the shabrack is a common practice across Pazyryk textiles (Linduff & Rubinson, 2022, pp.10). Gold presents an extremely reactive and provocative sensorial material that performs upon and with the senses. Gold has an embodied beauty from the multifaceted way it interfaces with light, it is a sensorial thrill, it enchants, captivates, and creates desire for the unanimously beautiful (Harris, 2019, pp. 1). In everyday life the shabrack would have been used on horseback, and in funerary performances it was displayed amongst burial goods creating a socially charged and transformable material when stimulated of light. Gold has a physical aura, its shine, beauty, and lasting lustre (inability to tarnish) promote gold as a substance of socio-political power, in both its acquisition and application it demands attention, respect, and encapsulates aspect of the divine (Holland, 2005, pp. 139; Schoenberger, 2010, pp. 19). To the Pazyryk, gold may have performed as a mimesis of the suns golden glow capturing the rhythmic movements of visual reflection for the shabrack owner to 'possess.' Moreover, the concept of a light driven sensorial performance, imbues the shabrack with transformational capabilities into the realms of the natural and divine (Youvan, 2024, pp. 1-3). Gold reacts uniquely to diverse sources of light, in which the uncontrolled dancing of funerary firelight may promote an irregular yet rhythmic visual

heartbeat. This would focus ocular attention to imbue a fluid motion of 'life' to the surface of the shabrack that would be capable of challenging temporal and communal memory (Hamilakis, 2013, pp. 15). While the more consistent flow and reflection of sunlight across an ethereal surface may exist to manifest divine stability, and apotropaic protection on earthy realms. Moreover, the use of cannabis sativa in Pazyryk funerary contexts (Rudenko, 1953, pp. xvii; Andreeva, 2018, pp. 170-1) may have instigated altered states of consciousness (Skeates, 2010, pp. 20; Ember & Carolus, 2017, pp. 5). These altered states may have enhanced optical stimuli from gold, geometric shapes and the fantastical, transforming perceived realities and bringing the observer into a liminal experience, between the mundane and divine to mediate social and political changes caused by the death of the elite (Attala, 2019, pp. 49-50). The pungent aroma of burning hemp and coriander (Polosmak, 2004, pp. 34) would cling to textiles evoking vivid, emotionally charged odours that would be bound to memories of the past and bear associations with the transition of states, magic or the divine (Skeates, 2010, pp. 15-16).

5.3 Pazyryk Pile Carpet (Fig.7 & 9)

The Pazyryk Pile Carpet (fig. 7) has a contested origin, with some scholars (Rubinson & Linduff, 2024, pp. 8) placing its manufacture in the Iron age Achaemenid Empire, Central Asia, or Armenia, while other academics suggest a homogenous creation from settled Scythian groups (Francfort, 2008, pp. 40). Despite this contention of origin, the Pile Carpet is a beautiful textile imbued with a unique homogeneity of Pazyryk and foreign symbolism. It is constructed as a boundary challenging textile to encapsulate the Pazyryk World model and aid in the arbitration of elite identity, sensorial memory, and sustaining links to ephemeral realms. The composition of the carpet is framed by hybrid Griffins with the body and tail of a lion, a backward-looking eagle's head with beak, and wings standing upright. These Griffins are embedded into infernal and benevolent ideology as archaic ungulate torturers who also could transverse borders between life and death (Cheremisin, 2009, pp. 91-3). Griffin motifs were an adopted symbol of power from Central Asia, Mesopotamia, and the Near-East (Hanks, 2010, pp. 129;). Yet their usage may indicate a transitional power, in which association with distant foreign, sedentary communities generated a distinct exoticism that reflected a physical and mystical movement between realms (Helms 1988; Andreeva, 2018, pp. 60). Moreover, the repetition of a rear-facing eagle head is an evocative manifestation of a psychopomp to direct the deceased towards the top of the world tree (Cheremisin, 2009, pp. 87) and could have guided and transmogrify the soul beyond corporeal limits. In the creation of hybrid animals' borders must be crossed (Kristoffersen, 2010, pp. 265), and in bridging these borders at the periphery of the carpet the observer is drawn into a socio-mythological narrative. Through this narrative they become a communal participant of a liminal (Stockhammer, 2011, pp. 49) and spatial networks that could evoke more reflexive themes of socio-political and divine control (McMahon, 2013, pp. 176-7).



Fig. 9 (REFERENCE). A digital reconstruction of the Pazyryk Pile Rug to repair temporal damage.

Pazyryk textiles are like a skin, a portal to the realm of the ideological, they can be altered, controlled and broken, they act as a flexible membrane that facilitates the movement of abstract or the defined and are involved in the formation of identity, community, and boundaries (Harris, 2020, pp. 4; Fahlander, 2015, pp. 49-50). The equestrian frieze is the widest layer and pictures alternating twenty-eight riders on foot and horseback with colourful and differential outfits that presents the first layer of compositional movement. The continual directional movement draws optical attention (Chen & Choi, 2008, pp. 14) to the riders, who may be a materialization of the rhythmic flow of the mortality into the cosmos and the entanglement of the world's life force in sustaining socio-divine networks amongst Pazyryk groups (Barad 2003, pp. 803). Furthermore, as Ingold (2010a, pp. 98) iterates the rhythm of creational movement is a process of continual correction a state of becoming. Through the riders and deer's directional movement the Pazyryk pile carpet

may perpetuate ideological continuation or transformation. Moreover, the use of vibrant colour pigments is a stimulus to emotionally charge the carpet in a funerary space (Petru, 2010, pp. 2), which amalgamates alongside the use of visual repetition, spatial dimensions, and dense texture (Lundstedt, 2021, pp. 24-5) to produce strong memorial performance to both the conscious and subconscious (Rowland, 1993, pp. 142; Harris, 2020, pp. 4). However, the weakness of sensorial experiences is that objects can become ascribed to rigid list of attributes without considering the Pazyryk contextual perceptions, which represents a difficult challenge to reconstruct. The equalized visual balance, and symmetrical composition across the carpet promotes a phenomenological experience of the senses (Edwards et al, 2006, pp. 2) and expresses an embodied beauty and aversion to chaos (McManus, 2005, pp. 158). The use of symmetry is an evocation of an elite enforced equilibrium (Mason, 2002, pp. 24; Skeates, 2010, pp. 19) of life in relation to the natural world, it orders, sustains, and may evoke the continuation of life cycles (Moss-Redman, 2014, pp. 2). This suggests that textiles were a significant part of the funerary rituals of the Pazyryk elite, propelling power, control, and worldly mastery as key themes in the sensorial memory of elite burials.

A material life-force has been imbued to the figures on the Pile Carpet through an extension of the craftsman's technical magic (Gell, 2010, pp. 49), and as representational of divine and elite agency which has been controlled, layered, and ordered across the carpets surface composition (Wegner, 1997, pp. 35-6). Furthermore, the size of the carpet and tapestry when presented would belittle the average observer, enacting with spatial associations (Heed et al, 2015, pp. 251) to make the observer feel subservient or in the presence of a powerful individual. In the developing notions of personhood in the Pazyryk sphere of the 5th century BCE, the expansion of elite authority and identity would be a highly performative task, and the pile rug would have been a polychromatic conduit of sensorial interactions. The rugs creator may have sought to mirror foreign symbology to achieve both; greater sensory impact but also to engage the viewer with processions of military strength (the riders), accumulated wealth (the exquisite artisanry), and the continuation of the Pazyryk life model (the deer). The deer as discussed with the geometric saddlecloth may be a naturalised pathway to the divine through an intermediatory between natural and human realms. The use of eight pointed cross figures in both the centre and lower row may be a decontextualised lotus flower (Gryaznov, 1969, pp. 159; Schurmann, 1982, pp. 9) repurposed by the Pazyryk elite as a solar symbol (Kyuzo, 1992, pp. 8-10). Such a solar motifs acts as unifying ephemeral junction between the rider and deer to symbolically purvey the deceased chief, his warriors, and their sacrificed horses safely to the golden pastures of heaven i.e. the centre of the carpet (Argent, 2016, pp. 28). However, the lotus (or lily) if not an adapted symbol of solar worship, may be a local interpretation of foreign symbolic vocabulary to heighten communal response and aid in ideological self-regeneration with the transition of the spirit (Shahri & Ashgehsou, 2019, pp. 99; Neumann, 2033, pp. 7-8). Furthermore, Pazyryk elite were mummified to immortalize their earthly forms, but the spirit must also be preserved and immortalized. Visually

mummification could only preserve the physical form, while more nuanced textiles developments and sensorial transmissions were necessary to sustain the immaterial movement of the humans to divine (Weiner 1985 pp. 211).

The placement of hybrid, transformational, and polychromatic designs across the carpet is the extension of the buried chief's agency by capturing aspects of his essence (Joy, 2009, pp. 543). Through direct association with intricate textiles materialized him as a master of trade, warriors, diplomacy and gave perceived power over death (Andreeva, 2023, pp. 24). The use of captivating funerary performance involving textiles, senses, and space project elite ideologies (DeMarrais, pp. 158, 2014) of a cosmically relevant and materially powerful chief. The chief and carpet are bound together to project the image of a resplendent warrior who was integrated in the natural realm of the lived environment, and as a powerful figure entangled with foreign, domestic, and divine realms upon the global political stage.

5.4 The Rider Felt Tapestry (Fig. 8 & 9)

The Rider Felt Tapestry (fig. 8) is a spatially encompassing textile that promotes the full sensory engagement of space alongside matter and requires the observer to 'imbibe' the material qualities to participate in its display. Atalla (2019, pp. 41) suggests as we physically digest food we engage in a transformative material process, but we also are able (albeit differently) to digest materials with the senses, as our senses imbibe the matter around them, we are shaped, and in turn shape matter (Ingold, 2010b, pp. 7). The process of sensory digestion is innate, complex, and often highly socialized, it is a sensual and materially driven flow of substance and matter (Steel, 2019, pp. 102) that intertwines people into social networks, transforming material, space, and objects while negotiating new boundaries and relationships. The sensory digestion of materials is particularly interesting in examining the Rider Tapestry, as due to the size (640x450cm) and wooden poles at each end, it could have covered the internal chamber of the burial to mark the tombs spatial parameters (Johnson, 2024, pp. 2; Andreeva, 2018, pp. 1). In addition, its dimensions transform the space into sacred liminal area (Stockhammer, 2011, pp. 50) capable of instigating hyper-sensory interactions and social mediations. As Skeates (2010, pp. 20) suggests large materials can project an imposing experience as a materialization of the buried Pazyryk chief's power which creates a sense of authority and in turn elite authenticity (Luz, 2020, pp. 82-3). However, the use of the tapestry in such a 'encompassing' form may also be to transform the space into the 'cosmic yurt' (Good, 201, pp. 151-2; Polosmak, 2005, pp. 34; Andreeva, 2018, pp. 231) which could be further reinforced using the pile carpet and saddlecloths to recreate domestic spaces in a burial to familiarize the living and protect the essence of the dead. The control of space is vital to creating shared and embodied experiences that legitimatizes power and emphasizes social relationships, ideas, and memory function (Dyke and Alcock. 2003, pp. 5) The creation of controlled liminal space via

material constructions can distort reality, temporality, and matter to force Pazyryk funerary participants away from the normal flow of life, material, and self (Harrison, 2016 pp. 2).



Fig. 10 (Azbelev, 2022). A digital enhancement of the Rider approaching the seated figure.

The construction of Pazyryk space is the renegotiation of matter and sensory experiences, to direct changing social, economic, or political experiences (Bruck, 2006, pp. 298-299; Helm, 1998, pp. 44). Tilley (1996 pp. 175) affirms as agents engage with space, they become bound to it and its phenomena, events such as burial may represent a high intensity experience, which would promote intensified communal bonding and memorial experience (Barad, 2003, pp. 817; Knapp, 2009, pp. 56). The large dimensions of the Tapestry also direct the kinaesthetic placement of human bodies in such space, a process of tactile remapping (Heed et al, 2015, pp. 251) in which the movement and placement of bodies engages with tactile dimensions of surfaces, limits, and boundaries (Bailey, 2014, pp. 33). Which suggests that because the Tapestry was capable of breaking and sustaining boundaries it could participate in the temporal unification of materials, ideas, and bodies (Hamilakis, 2013, pp. 12-3). It extended the deceased's control over living bodies from beyond the grave, but also generated the search for new temporalities, new materials, and new restrictions which when overcome, offers new paths for Pazyryk entanglement (Hodder, 2016, pp. 142).

The sacralization of Pazyryk rulers at worldview, ideological, and material layers played an important role in the life of Pazyryk nomads (Askarov et al, 2015 pp. 463). The ruler would be a personification of unity and harmony and the entwined nature of the cosmological and social worlds, and so the death of a ruler may

mark a destruction of the world (Tishkin & Dashkovskiy, 2019, pp. 80). The Pazyryk world view was derived from natural phenomena (Maran & Stockhammer, pp. 4, 2012; Andreeva, 2018, pp. 153-4), and so the inclusion of natural and human elements in the tapestry may be portals for enabling relationships between different bodies, species, and planes of existence (Fahlander, 2015, pp. 65). Moreover, the rider approaching a seated goddess holding a flowering branch of the tree of life ((Philips, 1972, pp. 136; Hann, 2007, pp. 73) may represent the metamorphosis of the deceased through the divine. It may also pose as a symbol of a 'heaven mandated' regeneration allowing communal unity and social continuation through the integration of the next ruling elite. However, the representation and repetition of the armed rider may also be the ideal visage of the elite Pazyryk male and so to approach the seated figure may be a materialization of the cyclical powers of the past to enhance legitimacy of future elite and promote cultural continuation (Weiner 1985 pp. 211). This material lead metamorphosis is the idealized deification of the deceased into a primordial ruler-hero who was vital to the formation and continuation of past and future Pazyryk world layers. Moreover, the human eye is drawn to the repeated depictions of human bodies across the tapestry asserting an intimate metaphysical connection that links realized bodies to idealized bodies, and offering the ability to challenge, accept or reject certain perceptions of self (Hamilakis 2017, pp. 177).



Fig. 11 – (Azbelev,2022). A recreation of the damaged hybrid motifs along the periphery of the tapestry.

The sphinxes' contest with the phoenix instigates an energetic use of colour and representation of animal, human and divine aspects that suggests its creation was involved in the vital (Benett, 2010, pp. 119-20) border blurring fluidity that may have been an expression of shifting new ideas of self and identity (Ahlqvist

& Vandkilde, 2018, pp.182). Hybrid creatures are an embodiment of a hybrid and fluid relationship with different aspects of the natural world. Hybridity as Maran (2011, pp. 62) suggests is an opposition to a current state of being and represents a challenge to social orders and identities. The Tapestry may be a focal point of reconsideration were traditional Pazyryk motifs were combined with hybrid forms and foreign symbols (Phoenixes, Lotus, etc) to construct new social memories and individual identities (Hanks, 2010, pp. 129). Furthermore, socio-political power can be legitimised by association with supernatural entities, where aspects like the sphinx and seated Goddess may have enhanced perceptions of earthly and otherworldly power (Lymer, 2018, pp. 18).

The sphinx was created with celestially symbolic antlers that enable the passage between different borders of the material and immaterial, which suggests the rider and the deceased the tapestry enraptured; have engaged with a liminal state between realms (Eaton & Hornborg, 2009, pp. 1-2; Peter, 2021, pp. 77; Stockerhammer, 2011, pp. 50). The seated figure could be a representation of the Scythian deity Tabiti (Hann, 2007, pp. 73) but it is also possible she is a hybrid figure who holds not just a symbol of divine restoration but an animal style deer antler. The hybrid fusion of features may create a 'Natural Goddess' holding an exaggerated 'flowering antler' which promotes cyclical regeneration or the metamorphosis of celestial, natural, and earthly forces amongst Pazyryk observers (Barnhart, 2022, pp. 23-4). The tapestry and textiles material qualities act to enhance engagement between the mobile Pazyryk viewer, the environment, and memorial function to transform the Pazyryk burial area into locale of human and celestial metamorphosis (Meyer, 2024, pp. 7;). The elite Pazyryk textiles are both a physical and metaphysical canvas of the self, the extensions of an individual (or communal) agency into networks beyond death and depositions may reveal ability of Pazyryk matter to blur the boundaries of realia, temporality, identity, and social dimensions (Joy, 2009, pp. 542).

5.5 Summary

There can be no doubt that the craftsman, artistry, and usage of the selected Pazyryk textiles from Barrow five display a mastery of a multitude of realized and idealized realms of existence. This extends into a primordial mastery of the natural world, displayed through vivid and fluid renditions or abstractions of foundational creatures that sustained the Pazyryk social, political, and economic world model. These creatures as with the deer, griffins, and sphinx provide a gateway to a heavily embedded social-mythological complex that offers the ability to mediate identity, shape memorial functions, and manifest aspects of the esoteric or divine. The mastery of the Pazyryk over material and sensorial attention is revealed in their ability to adapt symbology from traditional, foreign, and hybrid vocabularies to challenge concepts of self as a product of hyper-mobility and expanding foreign entanglements. The material and sensorial interpretations of Pazyryk textiles are insufficient within academic approaches, with numerous academics

unwilling to engage in extended discussion due to a lack of textual information. A material and sensorial approach offers a rich and pro-active engagement with the Pazyryk textiles, it provides a unique analysis of the entangled flow of matter, vitality, and ideologies ((Joy, 2009, pp. 543-4; Benett 2010; Barad 2003).

This dissertation suggests that textiles functions as ideological canvas for multifunctional experiences to mediate and direct the constant and fluid entanglements of Pazyryk life cycles. However, a limitation of this study is that material and sensory worlds are beheld to cultural 'retrieval functions' which renders analysis without cultural context as highly theoretical which can lead to an excess of perceptions (Hahn, 2012, pp. 9). While an overreliance on textual sources has caused a material stagnation (Meyer, 2024, pp. 7). Moreover, this studies small selection of four textiles, which captures some of the finest elite Pazyryk burial depositions provides a limited but focused dataset of the rich Pazyryk material culture. In future studies a more varied dataset examining the Pazyryk tattooing would provide stimulating supplement for a sensorial analysis. By engaging with the haptic canvas of the skin future studies may reveal greater material and sensorial themes rooted into identity, unity, and communality. Additional research should aim to establish a more nuanced approach the phenomenological and natural elements of the Pazyryk material which can be rendered overly simplistic. The textiles of barrow five functions as a focal point for the renegotiation of Identity, the metamorphosis of socio-celestial borders, and the regeneration of communal relationships between the nomadic Pazyrykians.

6.0 Conclusion

This study of Pazyryk textiles has aimed to re-evaluate the material and sensorial qualities of the Pazyryk archaeological culture (6th-2nd BCE), examining the material symbolism, sensorial experiences, and the implications they integrate about the material and immaterial worlds of elite Pazyryk groups. The sensorial and material examinations of these selected textiles reveal they function as multifaceted focal objects that sustained, challenged, and blurred boundaries between aspects of the mythical, mortal, natural and hybridized worlds. These boundaries were reconfigured by the Pazyryk through a selection of material inclusions that controlled sensory engagements between textiles and agents.

The heavy use of geometric and abstract shapes, alongside intense colour is a form of symbolic storage that evoked association to the natural and celestial world to control aspects of the phenomenological. The polychromatic colouration is a visual enhancement to stimulate the senses and animate textiles to derive motion, contrast, and vivacity.. The use of sacred geometry was a unifying symbol that communicated ideologies between intimate and more distant Pazyryk communities. The Applique Saddle uses repetitive spiral imagery to reveal a duality of creation and entropy that would have enhanced the funerary environment to blur the borders of realia and the supernatural. While the use of antlers motifs is a

hybridisation of form, to merge the boundaries between natural and cosmic realms. Whereas the presence of the world tree is a metamorphic symbol used alongside antlers marks the saddlecloth as a living boundary object between the common and the sacred. While the textured body of the saddle cloth engages with the realms of the tactile acting as a canvas of action and symbolic haptic interface between rider and horse.

The use of foreign motifs as examined in the Chinese Silk Shabrack and Pile carpet, display distant regional exchange networks that brought prestigious, exotic, esoteric, materials, and concepts that were consumed by the Pazyryk upper elite. The imported Shabrack engages with ideological notions of control, power, or kinship with Chinese and eastern cultural groups. But also represents the legitimizing of new ideologies of power while maintaining cultural continuity. The Pazyryk alterations to the shabrack are an amalgamation of foreign cosmic powers into the Pazyryk world sphere. Gold (and gold applique) is a reactive material that could temper and proactively charge funerary performances with notions of otherworldly or actualised power and sustain communal cohesion. Furthermore, altered states of consciousness could enhanced sensory or memorial experiences of geometric shapes, fantastical beasts, and gold to control social changes caused by the death of an elite.

The Pile Carpet was constructed as a multifaceted boundary challenging object, to embody the Pazyryk world model and aid in the (re)formation of elite identity, sensorial memory function, and challenge perceptions of self. The use of hybrid creatures in the Pile Carpet and Rider Tapestry, represent adapted foreign motifs, which blur the boundaries between realms. It also blurs the boundaries of association with distant sedentary societies and reflects how real and idealized movement between realms are necessary for nomadic societal perpetuation. Such hybrid animals were sensorial guides to the realms of life and death, and their use marked the crossing of metaphysical and material limits. Moreover, the creation hybrids invites the observer to bridge borders of creation, and they become embroiled into a narrative of changing states in both social and natural worlds. The simulation of movement imbues a living vibrancy to the Pile Rug, and encompasses the flow of the cosmos, mortal worlds, and the divine through different layers of the carpet's frieze. The Pile Rug's ordered composition is a phenomenological experience that expresses an aversion to chaos and sustains that to return to order through the unification of natural and human realms. The carpet performs to extend the buried elite's agency, captivating the idea of a worldly and cosmically significant chief, who was integrated into the natural world, while entangled with foreign, domestic, and divine realms on the global stage.

The Rider Felt Tapestry is a spatially powerful textile, which forces the observer to intimately imbibe the funerary environment and requires metaphysical digestion to engage in its transformative process. It instigates an encompassing flow of substances that intertwines people into socially driven networks, capable

of transforming materials, objects and space while supporting new boundaries and relationships. The Rider Tapestry creates a liminal space for hyper sensorial interactions which promote extra-ordinary memorial performances. Control of space is vital in creating shared and embodied experiences, and the textiles each uniquely perform to control an aspect of these elite spaces.

To expand the implications of this discussions, future studies into Pazyryk textiles and materials would benefit from the new direction sensorial and material frameworks bring to Pazyryk academia. To engage directly with the evocative vital matter of Pazyryk textiles (and exquisite material culture) offers less contextual reconstruction. Moreover, it offers the ability to engage with animated experience, and ephemeral networks that they project upon the observer, even over two-thousand years after earthly deposition. Areas of future research would benefit from comparative analysis of Pazyryk textiles alongside the tattooed mummies, which offers a unique expansive direction as the skin represent a canvas of the self, like the textiles. Moreover, a sensorial and material analysis of tattoos would provide the ability to explore even more personal concepts of personhood, identity, and communal belonging amongst the Pazyryk peoples. The current literature on the Pazyryk has provided a diverse contextual foundation to this study. However, the lack of integration between different linguistical or temporal studies displays the literary stagnation that persists in Pazyryk studies. To address this a greater emphasis on multi-cultural and holistic interpretations to stimulate more engagement Pazyryk material studies.

The inclusion of human, mythical and natural elements represent conceptual portals for relationships between different bodies, species, and realms of mortal and immortal habitation. Through the Pazyryk textile's social identity could take on new meaning. Increasingly regional and interregional entanglements enabled the movement of images, meanings, and concepts, all which became available in the Pazyryk symbolic vocabulary. This expanded vocabulary materialised as a mastery over the symbolic and visual agency of hybrids, animals, and human imagery. Which through the Pazyryk textiles provided them a rich metaphysical tapestry to (re)negotiate their relationship to important natural, human, foreign and divine aspects of the world.

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