



ĒRĀN, TŪRĀN, HRŌM TALK SERIES (ETHS)

ELEPHANTS IN CENTRAL ASIAN AND IRANIAN ART OF LATE ANTIQUITY AND EARLY MIDDLE AGES



**Patryk
Skupniewicz**

UNIVERSITY OF SIEDLCE

Elephants entered Western Asian history in the Hellenistic period; earlier Achaemenid references are late and likely reflect ethnic diversity in the army facing Alexander. Actual military use began with the Hellenistic dynasts and expanded under the Sasanians. Though used in warfare and executions, elephants remained marginal in Iranian visual culture, with rare depictions in sigillography and Taq-e Bستان. In Central Asia, elephant imagery ranged from naturalistic to stylised, shaped by Kushan and Buddhist influences. Linked to royal power and narrative art, these motifs spread via Sogdiana to Tibet and China.

**MAY 13, 2025
18:00 CET**



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