

As one of the first domesticated animals on record, references to the goat exist across multiple cultures, even in the earliest cultures. As symbols of agriculture and plenty, their likeness can be found in Egyptian carvings, and in their pyramids. The Golden Horns of Gallehus, shaped to look like goat horns, were discovered in Denmark and an illustration of goats taking their place on Noah's Ark were created in the early 1900s.

Goats were worn on clothing as clips and adorned the covers of decorative boxes. They can be found on ancient goblets from Persia and oval, clay storage jars from the land that is modern day Iran. Even tea kettles decorated with goats have been found – also found in Iran and apparently having been used for funeral ceremonies.

They also played a role in holiday art. The Yule goat was a sign of holiday celebration in many cultures as part of pagan rituals. In early illustrations, Santa Claus is seen as riding goats and the Yule goat – created from straw or wood - was believed to oversee the preparation of holiday preparations.

Not all art is visual, of course. The ancient Norse wrote poems praising Heithrun, the goat who produced an eternal supply of mead for the warriors waiting in Valhalla. She is said to eat the foliage of the tree at the center of the world and is able to produce enough mead each day for all of the warriors to drink their fill every day. Even in the realms of the gods, it was goats who provided luxury and plenty for fallen heroes.

Modern day art is more likely to envision goats as a piece of a quaint farm scene, or a funny face in a cartoon. In most of the developed world, they are no longer remembered as a cornerstone of civilization. Our ancestors knew their value, however, and gave thanks by enshrining their likeness throughout time.