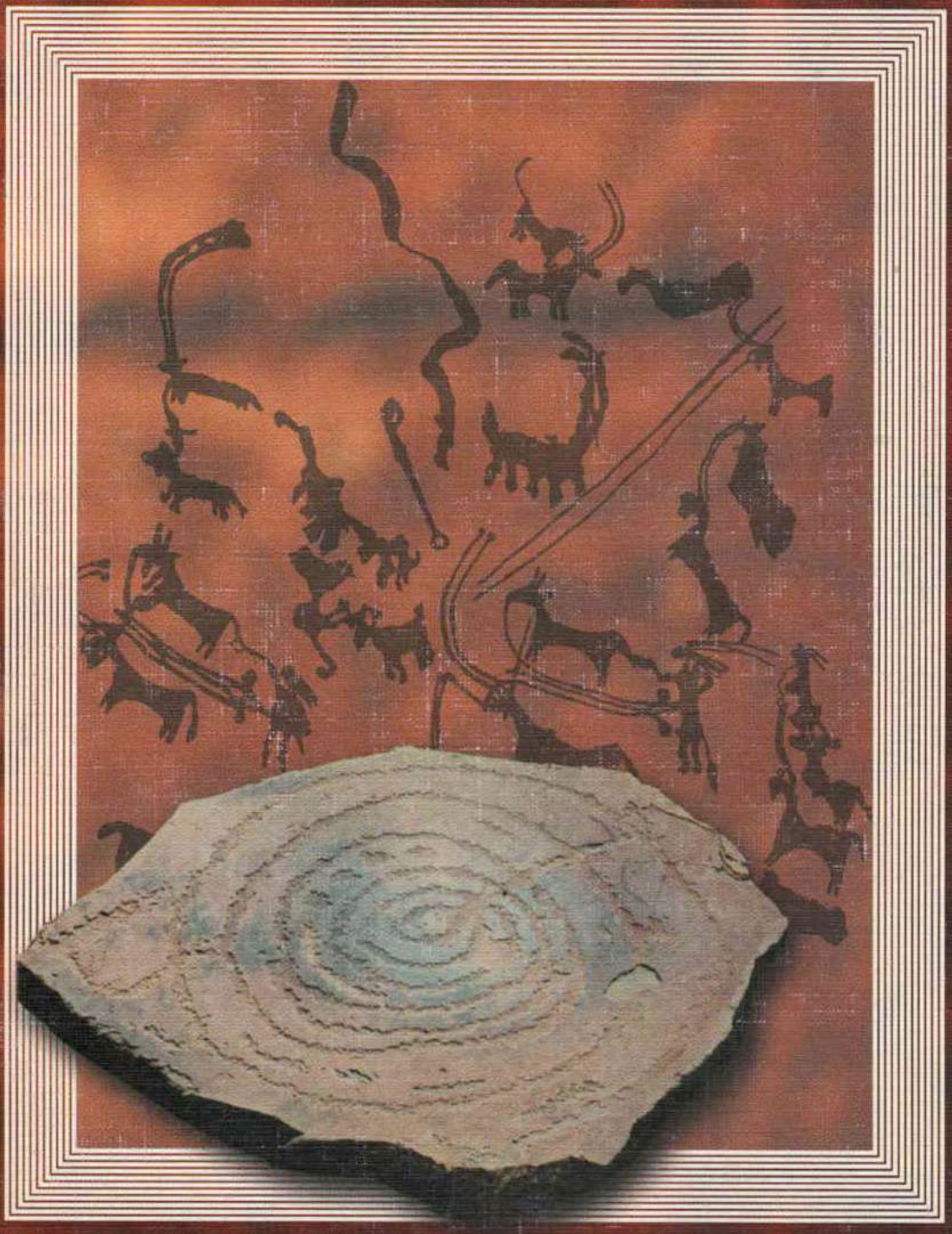
K.TASHBAYEVA, M.KHUJANAZAROV, V. RANOV, Z. SAMASHEV

PETROGLYPHS OF CENTRAL ASIA



INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR CENTRAL ASIAN STUDIES
SAMARKAND

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PETROGLYPHS OF CENTRAL ASIA

BISHKEK – 2001

ББК 63.2 (2) Ku
P 31

P 31 K. Tashbayeva, M. Khujanazarov, V. Ranov, Z. Samashev.
PETROGLIPHS OF CENTRAL ASIA / Translated by O.Titova.
– B.: 2001. – 220 pp. The edition of 1000 copies
ISBN 9967-20-776-0

Editor-in-Chief K. Tashbayeva

The present work is devoted to the most interesting and significant rock art sites found in Central Asia. For the first time, one work has absorbed all the information about the whole Central Asian rock art. The work considers both general issues concerning the prevalence of petroglyphic monuments and issues relating to the study, age determination, and semantics of separate images. The book is well illustrated and supposed for both specialists (archaeologists, ethnographers, and art critics) and all interested in Central Asian nations' ancient history and culture.

P 1805080000-01

ISBN 9967-20-776-0

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CONTENS

INTRODUCTION

The study of the Petroglyphs of Central Asia: the state of the rock art.

Hundreds of thousands of petroglyphs are widespread along the ancient roads and territories of Central Asia, from Pamir to Altan, in steppic and montaneous areas. They date from any time from the prehistory to contemporary period. They are organized as simple elementary images as well as complex and elaborated compositions.

Petroglyph sites have been recorded and studied from the time of the 17th century travellers. However, a great impulse was given by professional archaeologists during the Soviet period. Teams recorded and published rock art sites in Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Siberia, Mongolia. Related sites were also studied by scholars in China, Pakistan and India.

PRESENT WORK

Presently, a notable part of the work achieved in Central Asia is being performed by joint teams.

German archaeologists from the Academy of Sciences of Heidelberg and Pakistani specialists work in the Upper Indus Valley.

In Uzbekistan, Dr M. Khuzhanazarov cooperates with Polish specialists from Poznan.

In Mongolia, Pr. Tseveendorj cooperates with Pr E. Jacobson (University of Oregon, USA) and Dr V. Kubarev (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology SORAN, Novosibirsk, Russia).

The rock art research programme of the French Archaeological Mission in Central Asia (MAFAC) was initiated by Ya. Sher and H.-P. Francfort in 1990, after it was observed that strong similarities were connecting rock art from Northern India (Ladakh, Zanskar), Tibet and Central Asia (Siberia, Kazakhstan). This programme operates mainly in Siberia and Kazakhstan in cooperation with partner institutions : Kemerovo University, Siberia, Russia (profs A. Martynov, Ya. Sher); Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Novosibirsk, Russia (prof. V. Molodin, Dr D. Cheremisin, Dr V. Kubarev); Institute of Archaeology Margulan of Almaty, Kazakhstan (Dr Z. Samashev).

UNESCO

This Petroglyphs Projet has been originally patronized by the Silk Road Programme and the Cultural Heritage Division of UNESCO, as well as CAR of ICOMOS. Presently the Division of Intercultural Dialogue and ICAAS in Samarkand have accepted the Petroglyphs Programme as part of their activities. It is subsidised by the French National Centre for Scientific Researche (CNRS), the Commission for Foreign Archaeological Researches and the Central Asian partner institutions.

The Central Asian Petroglyph Project is of the type of a scientific network linking specialists of the field with a minimum of normative aspects.

The aims of the Project are listed below: field work study, elaboration of database, data collection for conservation, publications, symposia.

FIELD WORK

I will deal here only with the field seasons in which CNRS specialists took place.

Since the projet started, six field seasons took place in both countries, in the Minusinsk basin, in the Altai, in Jungarian Alatau, Alatau.

Beside extensive recording of engravings by various means (photo, stereo-macro-photo, calque, moulage), the teams performed more specialized intensive studies (geology, surfaces alterations, technology of making, etc.) in collaboration with the Museums of Franch Research Laboratory (Decorated Caves Section) and the Research Research Group on Extreme Environment.

The sites visited and studied have been : Oglakhty, Tepsej, Ust'-Tuba, Sukhanikha, Shalabolino, in the Minusinsk basin; Bizhigtig-Khaya in Tuva; Kalbak-Tash, Chaganka, Elangash in Altay; Ters, Karasay in Alatau; Yeshkeolmes, Bayan-Zhurek in Jugarian Alatau; Maiemer in Eastern Kazakhstan; Tamgaly, Dzharyk-Kuduk, Khantau in Balkhash area.

The work performed varies from simple photographic recording to systematic copy on polyane film, harmless casting of especially interesting or endangered pannels or scenes for recording and laboratory studies. The most detailed observation concerns the study of the techniques of pecking and engraving for which macro-photo, moulage have been used. The study of rock alterations was also undertaken: chemical, biological, physical, etc. Part of it is published.

The photographic archives are digitalized for a more convenient processing on computers.

A great number of petroglyphs have been documented and a part of them already published along with earlier rock art archives from distroyed sites, notably from the Yenissei cliffs that were documented before the raising of the Krasnoyarsk dam.

PUBLICATIONS

A special series of the Memoires de la Mission Archeologique Française en Asie Centrale, the Repertoire des Petroglyphes d'Asie Centrale is devoted to rock art. Five volumes have already been published: see bibliography below.

Other sites are presently being processed to be published in a near future, from Kazakhstan and Russia and from Mongolia, Kirgyzistan, Tadjikistan. The series includes monographs elaborated by scholars from Central Asia and from other countries: prof. E. Jacobson (University of Oregon).

The future generations of monographs will be oriented towards a greater use of electronic tools like Geographical Information Systems for a better understanding and rendering of the environmental setting of rock art sites, and electronic storage devices that may improve the capacity of the data base presently build on PCs of a limited scale and

therefore of a limited volume. The sixth volume of the Repertoire series, presently in press, by Profs D. Tseveendorj, V.D. Kubarev and E. Jacobson will be the first example of this new generation.

Simultaneously, Dr A. Rogozhinski elaborates in collaboration with UNESCO office a direct online Web publication of the rock art site of Tamgaly: this will be a unique experience useful for all students of Central Asian Rock Art.

DESCRIPTIVE CODES, DATABASES, DATA PROCESSING

From the beginning, it was obvious that large quantities of petroglyphs was necessary in order to study them seriously and for getting the better results.

This is the reason for which the idea of large databases were elaborated.

This concept was refined in 1990 in Kemerovo by Ya. Sher, H.-P. Francfort in cooperation with of archaeologists and computer scientists.

The participants to the project always maintain the conception that there is no point in using any sophisticated and expansive computer device, if the Central Asian participants are not in a position to get also involved in the same time on the same footing.

For this reason, it was decided to elaborate and propose a simple descriptive code allowing any participant to store a large amount of data without loosing time and scientific perspective in deciding all details of images and scenes, especially that many of them are incomplete or ambiguous.

The basic unit is the individual image and some elementary and recurrent basic compositions are also described in the code. Special attention was paid to the technique of image making, the orientation and the superimposition (palimpsests) of images.

No special software was recommended, but attention had to be paid to the transportability of the data. It was also envisioned that special data bases, more detailed, could be elaborated for special purposes, for instance a given theme (chariots) or a given site, etc. Technically, relational data bases allow such local extensions.

On the basis of the recorded data, processing could be of both statistical type, and more sophisticated type, including GIS (local details for some sites or alleys or even general for all Central Asia) and artificial intelligence (such treatment is made presently in order to elucidate the concept of style as used in the literature).

Nothing is strongly normative or compulsory in the Petroglyph Project, but it is aimed at sharing knowledge, experience and data for the benefit of all.

INTERPRETATIONS

After collecting, storing and processing the data, it is necessary to interpret them.

The petroglyphs of Central Asia are scattered by thousands in all the mountains and rock outcrops of Central Asia. They represent one of the most useful data available in the steppe zone, beside funerary archaeology. They reflect in many respects the art, ideology and religion of the past nomadic societies of this vast area.

They range from the earliest time (Neolithic, perhaps Palaeolithic) to Bronze, Iron Age and Turkic periods up to our days.

Many typological, chronological and cultural interpretations are published in the available literature. They are welcome and interesting but nowadays they ought to be complemented by more informations coming from the following: more precise technological and environmental studies, more ecological and art historical perspectives, a more critically specific use of ethnological comparatism and historical records. It is striking for instance to see that the same figures (for instance a radiating headgear) may be interpreted by various authors sometimes as Indo-Iranian related and sometimes as shamanic inspired. How to scientifically decide. This is one example of the interprestive questions that we may hope to solve with both more detailed new data and more theory.

STELES

Petroglyphs are closely connected to the representations on the stelae erected in the steppes of Central Asia during the same periods and frequently associated with contemporary burial structures: Afanasyevo stone slabs, Okunevo stelae, "deer stones" of the Iron age, Tagar decorated stone enclosures, Turkic "balbals".

STYLES AND ART HISTTORY

Most of the petroglyphs belong to animal art, they are of various styles, from Palaeolithic and Neolithic including the Scytho-Siberian: elk, deer, maral, wild cattle, horse, boar, feline (panther, snow leopard), montain goat, sheep, camel, bear, goose, eagle, crane, wild shep, wolf, dog, etc. Animals are represented in proportions varying according to place, time and purpose of the images.

The way of making images (sketches)as well as the rendering of body parts, legs, horns for example are stylistic markers. In relation with the techniques and superimposition of figures they give chronological informations.

The established denominations like "Angara style", "Minusinsk style", "Pazyryk style" are useful but more chronological and or regional style definitions are to be made in Central Asia, especially for the more recent periods (Turkic, Medieval).

They include also humans alone or are used in fascinating narrative compositions: hunts, fights, sexual intercourse, caravans, dancing, birthing, charioting, taming of animals, worshipping, etc.

Realia sometimes appear also: dagger, spear, architecture, chariot, boat, sword, dwelling, etc.

Imaginary beings are not forgotten: headgears, masks and horned anthropomorphs similar to shamans and various monsters and composite animals, some kinds of predatory "dragons".

All the images and their organisations on surfaces have to be analyzed, using proper methodology. In this perspective, the important theoretical approaches like structuralism and semiotics have to be reevaluated, taking into account the numerous publications and great progresses recently made in other areas of rock art in Asia and Europe, notably in Palaeolithic art in caves and in open air.

SURFACES

The study of the composition of complex surfaces, the spatial and temporal relations between figures, including the very important superimpositions or cross-cutting of incised or pecked lines are a prioritary task to be fulfilled. Similarly, the unachieved images, the remains of preparatory sketches and the refreshing of designs are searched actively. Details can be studied with electronic microscopy.

Patina, repatinations, lichens are in the scope of the research. They include the physics and chemistry of rock surfaces and climatic alterations.

A general interpretation of such a rich and polymorphous corpus of data is at present out of reach, but with the help of the building of a huge body of properly recorded data, there is a strong feeling that new pictures will emerge for individual figures and for compositions or regional subsets.

Archaeological and art historical understanding are not the only goals of the project, the Petroglyph Project is also concerned about conservation.

CONSERVATION

The destructions of sites accelerate, due to natural climatic and tectonic factors and to anthropic factors, due also to public works programmes (roads, mines, etc.), and pollution, wild tourism, etc. The monitoring of temperature and hygrometry, the consideration of seismicity are all different within different environmental settings and rock mineralogy. They are to be mastered before undertaking the protection and restoration of remarkable selected petroglyphs sites.

Restoration include also testing of methods before the usage of devices such as glue for the fixing of rock fragments under different environmental conditions.

The creation and maintenance of natural and cultural preserves may also be considered.

Conservation has to take into consideration also the education of a wider public for the protection of this rich cultural heritage. Diffusion of books, articles, brochures about the protection of sites, and education campaigns in schools and by using mass media are also important. This meets also the purposes of UNESCO.

This concerns all Central Asian petroglyph sites, especially in our times, when more and more people in the world feel concerned with rock art as a part of cultural heritage inserted in often remarkable environmental settings and ecological conditions which deserve also proper conservation.

In Kirgyzstan, the efforts made by Dr. K. Tashbayeva and by the National Commission for UNESCO to protect and valorize major rock art sites such as Cholpon-Ata and Saimaly-Tash must be strongly supported at international level.

This Central Asian Petroglyph Project programme of documenting, protecting and publishing rock art will be continued in the following years.

Henri-Paul Francfort
(CNRS, Nanterre, France)

PETROGLYPHS OF KYRGYZSTAN

Kyrgyzstan is an alpine country located in the north-east part of Central Asia. It occupies the entire west area of the Tien Shan high mountains and the north-east part of the Pamiro-Alai. Its relief is of a folded and strongly billowy character. The chains of high mountains and mountain ranges alternate with deep gorges, intermountain troughs, and valleys throughout the whole country. In hypsometric aspect, the altitude of Kyrgyzstan's territory varies from 500 m to more than 7,000 m above sea level. Nearly one half of its area lies at the height between 1,000 and 3,000 m, and almost one-third, at the altitude from 3,000 m to 4,000 m. This factor predetermines the variety of natural-climatic conditions in Kyrgyzstan.

The mountain ranges are of predominantly latitudinal disposition. They occupy three-fourth of the whole territory and extend for hundreds of kilometers from the east to the west. The orographic center of the Tien Shan is Khan-Tengri, one of the world's highest plexuses of mountains (with Pobeda Peak 7,439 m high), from which three mountain arcs, the largest in the Tien Shan, diverge. These are north, middle, and south arcs, each consisting of several large ridges, which cover nearly the whole territory of Kyrgyzstan. The Tien Shan is also notable for large and small intermountain depressions and hollows, which lie between the mountain ranges and are parallel with them (Murzayev, 1957, pp. 90-91). The depressions gradually diverge and widen to the west. The whole relief noticeably becomes lower from the east to the west.

Chui Valley is located in the north of the Kyrgyz Republic. In north-east it bounds not very high Chu-Ili mountains, and in the south, the high and snowy Kyrgyz Mountain Ridge. The north-west part of the valley is open and unnoticeably turns into Moyunkum desert of Kazakhstan. The lowest point of the valley is 539 m. The Kyrgyz Mountain Ridge stretches for 350 km, its climax being 4,875 m high. From its middle the Talas Ala-Too Mountain Ridge branches off, with its climax 4,488 m high. Talas Valley lies between these two chains. Its lowest mark is 650 m above sea level, and its widest part reaches 50 km.

Issyk-Kul intermountain basin is situated to the east of Chui Valley and connects with the latter by means of narrow Boom Canyon, which is nearly 20 km long. From all sides Issyk-Kul intermountain basin is surrounded with the following mountain ranges: the Kungei Ala-Too in

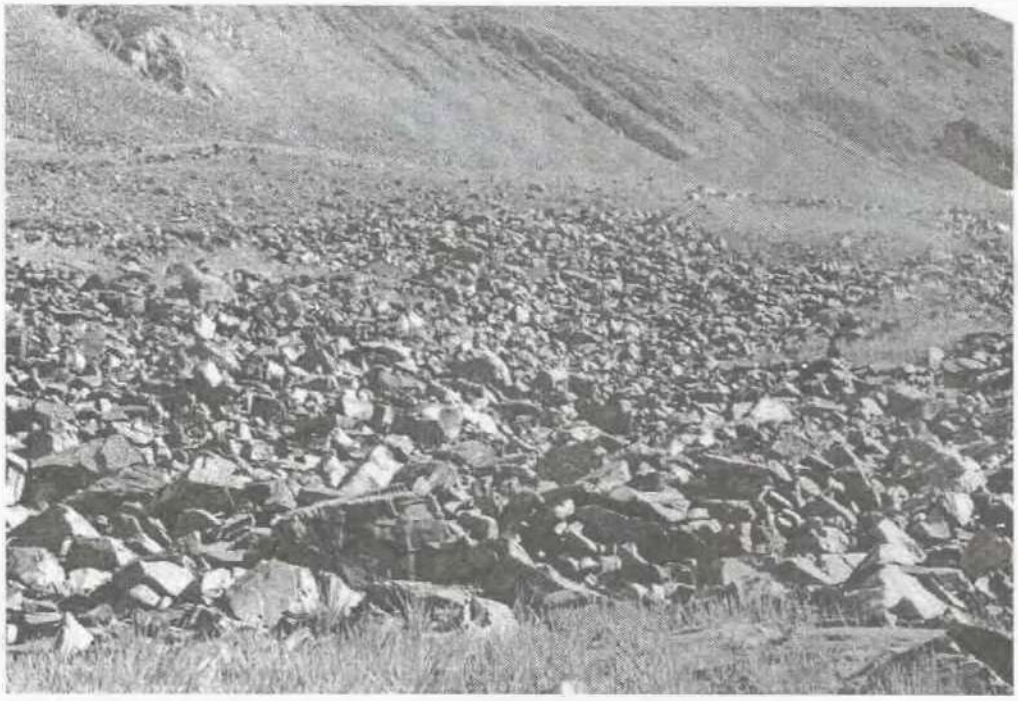


FIG. 1.
The view of the rock stream in Saimaly-Tash

the north, the Terskei Ala-Too in the south, and the east termination of the Kyrgyz Mountain Ridge in the west. Issyk-Kul, a very beautiful lake, occupies the lowest part of the valley. The whole mountainous area located to the south of the Terskei Ala-Too, the Kyrgyz, and Talas Mountain Ridges, is called Inner Tien Shan. This part, situated in the heart of Kyrgyzstan, is rather original in terms of its natural conditions and economy, and differs from the other regions of the republic. Geographers note that mountain-steppe valleys in Inner Tien Shan resemble Mongolian landscapes.

The role of the Fergana Mountain Ridge is specific and significant: it presents a climatic border between South-West and Inner Tien Shan. The ridge stretches for about 200 km. In some places its width exceeds 80 km, its climax is 4,940 m above sea level. The north-west termination of the Fergana Mountain Ridge ends in closed Ketmen-Tyube valley, which is notable for a very favorable climate and was flourishing in recent past. Now it is mostly flooded with the waters of Toktogul reservoir.

There are the Alai and Turkestan Mountain Ridges in south Kyrgyzstan. The slopes of the Fergana, Chatkal, Alai, and Turkestan Ridges look like a mountainous frame of vast Fergana Valley. A periphery narrow strip of the valley belongs to Kyrgyzstan.

The Trans Alai Mountain Ridge (with Lenin Peak 7,134 m high) is situated to the south of the Alai Mountain Ridge. Alai Valley, one of the largest high-altitude hollows in Kyrgyzstan, is located between these two mountain ridges. The valley stretches from south-west to north-east for 190 km. Its average width is 25 to 40 km. Its altitude ranges from 2,500 to 3,200 m above sea level. The most of the valley presents a level area, on which runs the Kyzyl-Suu River and a plenty of its tributaries. The streams flow down the slopes of the mountain ridges and form a very dense dendric drainage there. The formidable Tsunlin, the even higher Pamir, towers beyond the Trans Alai Mountain Ridge.

So, the relief of alpine Kyrgyzstan combines high mountain ridges and chains with deep canyons, intermountain hollows, and valleys. Such a rugged topography and the availability of large Lake Issyk-Kul make the climate of the republic vary from dis-

tinctly continental to maritime. The climate in the mountainous area is that of the temperate zone.

All these conditions favored the engendering of very ancient culture centers here, like it was in other places. The history of the development of Kyrgyzstan's territory by the man begins from the Lower Paleolithic period. The archaeological finds of recent years testify to a rather wide dissemination of ancient population there, during the Mousterian Period.

Since those antique times life in the Tien Shan goes on, overcoming gradually all stages of the human society's development and all phases of the general history processes. The archaeological finds witness that primitive people developed all kinds of landscape zones on the multifarious territory of Kyrgyzstan. Thus, archaeological monuments were found both in the alpine Arpa Valley (2,800 to 3,000 m above sea level), in Alai Valley (2,500 to 3,200 m above sea level), and in lower points of Talas, Chui, Ketmen-Tybe, and Fergana Valleys. As for rock engravings, they can be found everywhere - at the highest points on mountain ridges and chains, at passes, on the bottoms of deep canyons, in stream valleys, and in intermountain hollows. Practically speaking, they can be seen in all places, where smooth rock surfaces more or less convenient for drawing are available, and in places with the concentrations of boulders, or large stone outcrops. Kyrgyzstan is extremely rich in monuments of such a kind. There are almost no areas without burial mounds or carved rock drawings in the country. The largest assemblages of rock drawings were discovered in Saimaly-Tash Tract, on Issyk-Kul lakeside, in Talas Valley, in Ketmen-Tyube Hollow, on Alai, also in Noukat and Aravan Regions, on Sulaiman-Too mountain in Osh, and in many other places.

For the first time, Kyrgyz rock drawing drew the attention of scientists at the close of the 19th century. Thus, during his research-oriented traveling in Central Asia in 1893 and 1894, V.V. Bartold, a Russian historian-orientalist, paid attention to carved rock drawings in Naryn outskirts, also in Issyk-Kul Province, in Choktal and Cholpon-Ata points, near the Juuke River. He didn't attach great importance to the finds, however, and briefly mentioned roughly carved images of human beings (bowers) and animals (camels, horses, and ibexes) found by him in his report about his trip to Central Asia. He also expressed his doubt about the antiquity of the finds (Bartold, 1996, pp. 415, 422).

Some time later, such researchers as N. Pantusov, F. Poyarkov, and V. Kallaur also reported about rock drawings in Kyrgyzstan. They didn't pay due attention to them either, as they didn't specialize in studying them and came across the rock drawings just incidentally.

1902 witnessed really sensational discoveries in this domain. During the construction of a mail-service road from Naryn to Andizhan, N.G. Khludov, a military topographer and an artist, as he was busy with a topographical survey at Kek-Art mountain pass at the Fergana Mountain Ridge, became interested in the name of a neighboring pass – *Saimaly Tash* (a stone decorated with designs, as translated from Kyrgyz) and a tract bearing the same name. He learned that there were boulders with the images of people and animals in that locality. With a great difficulty, N.G. Khludov got to the place, saw stones with the carvings, examined the site, drew its plan, and made some sketches of the images carved. He submitted all these materials to the Turkestan Archaeological Study Group in Tashkent. The members of the group became interested in Khludov's information and a year later dispatched a special team headed by General I.T. Poslavski, a member of the Group, to that particular place with the task to make a

thorough examination on the object. Unfortunately, the general failed to fulfil the task. Because of the road difficulties, I.T. Poslavski reached the place much later than it had been planned and made only a brief survey of the locality. He also traced over some images. In his report to the Turkestan Archaeological Study Group I.T. Poslavski confirmed N.G. Khludov's supposition that the carvings belonged to high antiquity and were numerous, and that many months might be necessary to study them (Khludov, 1902; Poslavski, 1903).

This is how Saimaly-Tash was discovered in 1902. It appeared the largest and most interesting rock art site not only in Central Asia but in the whole world. True, the discovery of this unique archaeological complex failed to entail its active studying. The study of Saimaly-Tash began only 40 years later. According to some statements, N.G. Malitski, a student of local lore, history and economy well known in Central Asian, also visited Saimaly-Tash Tract in 1906, though he left no information about his trip there (Zima, 1958, p. 113).

In the second half of '30s, B.M. Zima, a lecturer of the Kyrgyz State Pedagogical Institute, became involved in researching petroglyphs. In 1937 the expedition led by him discovered two new rock art sites. One site was in the locality called Ak-Ulen situated 20 km from the town of Rybachye, Issyk-Kul Province, and the second was in Chiyim-Tash Tract, in Talas Valley. These were small assemblages, each consisting of about 40 rock drawings, which depicted separate animals and hunt scenes. The results of this activity were reflected very briefly in a work by B.M. Zima (Zima, 1958, pp. 113-114).

In 1946 B.M. Zima mounted a special historico-archaeological expedition to study petroglyphs in Saimaly-Tash. The team examined the east section of the tract. B.M. Zima made an attempt to give primary characteristics of the rock drawings and determine their age. Later these materials underlay his dissertation. Still, for reasons unknown, he didn't devote a separate work to Saimaly-Tash and considered this site together with other rock art complexes (Zima, 1947; 1950; 1958). B.M. Zima's merit is that he again drew scholars' attention to this outstanding monument of ancient rock art.

1939 signaled the beginning of studying rock drawings in south Kyrgyzstan, including those found in Osh Province. That same year, Prof. M.Ye. Masson inspected Airymach-Too rock drawing site located near Osh city and not far from the village of Aravan, which had already been known from newspapers and other brief statements (Masson, 1940; 1948).

That same year M.E. Voronets and T.G. Obolduyeva, Uzbek archaeologists, made a reconnaissance trip along Fergana Valley, visited several places in south Kyrgyzstan territory,and discovered two rock art sites. The first site was in Surottuu Tract, not far from the village of Limburn, Batken Region, and the second one, near the village of Okhna, 50 km south-east of Surottuu. M.E. Voronets focused attention on the stylistic peculiarities of the drawings,the level of their patination, the technique of making them, and made an attempt to classify them according to periods (Voronets, 1951).

In 1946,during his work with the Tien Shan-Alai expedition, A.N. Bernshtam became busy with rock drawings found near the village of Aravan and then, for the first time, presented their graphic copies. On basis of their technique of making and stylistic peculiarities,he referred the petroglyphs to the 3rd and 2nd centuries B.C. Having considered the semantic aspect of the drawings in detail, he came to the conclusion that these were the images of famous Davan horses, which had been known from Chinese written sources (Bernshtam, 1948; 1952, pp. 222-230; or 1997,

pp. 380-387). As is known, the desire to possess the pedigree "sky horses" of Davan caused China's long-term (during the 2nd and the 1st centuries B.C.) military aggression against Davan state situated in Fergana.

Researches conducted by the Pamiro-Fergana archaeological expedition under the direction of A.N. Bernshtam in 1950 appeared a milestone in studying rock drawings in Kyrgyzstan. The expedition examined Saimaly-Tash, this largest rock art complex. Before that time Kyrgyz rock drawings had never been the object of scholars' special investigation, nor had they been duly reflected in scientific works. A.N. Bernshtam was the first, who took a scientific approach to studying this kind of archaeological monuments. He made a more thorough survey of the whole area with rock drawings. As the result, he distinguished Saimaly-Tash I (western Saimaly-Tash) and Saimaly-Tash II (Eastern Saimaly-Tash), paid attention to the topography of the monument, and gave its geomorphic description. Unfortunately, A.N. Bernshtam wrote only one, though exceptionally pithy, article in which he gave a very substantial characteristic of the monument, made the first classification of the petroglyphs of Saimaly-Tash and divided them into periods on basis of their motifs, the technique, and style of drawing (Bernshtam, 1952; or 1997, pp. 388-407). This article hasn't lost its meaning until now and presents a basic research work significant not only for Saimaly-Tash but for other Central Asian rock art monuments as well.

At the end of '40s and in '50s, N.D. Cherkasov, V.M. Gaponenko, and later Yu. Golendukhin, students of local lore and secondary school history teachers of Frunze (the former name of Bishkek), made a certain contribution to studying Kyrgyz petroglyphs. Thus, N.D. Cherkasov discovered a number of rock art monuments in Chui Valley, Issyk-Kul Basin, and on the Tien Shan. He took many photos and made copies from nature, but wrote only one work about petroglyphs found in Chumysh mountains (Cherkasov, 1960).

In 1956 V.M. Gaponenko proceeded to the search for and study of rock drawings in Talas Valley and discovered a number of new sites with petroglyphs in Tekeh-Tash, Kurgan-Tash, Terek, Kulan, Karakol, Kugandy, Kyurkyuresu, and Ur-Maral gorges. The most interesting and important among all these assemblages appeared rock engravings found in Ur-Maral gorge. V.M. Gaponenko traced them over, took photos of, and partly introduced them into scientific circulation (Gaponenko, 1963, pp. 101-110).

In '60s and '70s a number of researchers focused upon studying petroglyphs in Saimaly-Tash. Thus, in 1963 N.L. Podolski, a mathematician from Leningrad, proposed a typological classification of engravings in Saimaly-Tash with the employment of mathematical statistics. At that time this idea was an innovation. Its results, however, basically confirmed A.N. Bernshtam's chronological scheme. (Podolski, 1966). Though being a new method of studying rock drawings, N.L. Podolski's classification,rather laborious and detailed, could not give the whole picture of the whole diversity and richness of the monument's rock carvings, in general, in our opinion.

In 1966 through 1968 Yu. Golendukhin, a student of local lore and a school teacher,a man with an inquiring mind and of a research bent, became busy with Saimaly-Tash. During three years he thoroughly inspected the main part of the archaeological complex located round its central lake. As the result, he came to the conclusion that the technique of making the drawings, the depth of the carvings and the color of the patina correlated with the style of the images, and consequently, depended on their age. Some points in his research work are rather controversial, for instance, his definition of the function of the mountain temple as an

observatory for watching the movement of celestial bodies in order to determine the beginning of a year and time when spring field works were to begin. We have to point out, however, that this was namely Yu. Golendukhin, who, on basis of V.M. Masson's remark, for the first time proposed to refer the most ancient rock drawings of Saimaly-Tash made in the geometrical style to the 3rd millennium B.C. By the way, A.N. Bernshtam, in his time, didn't dare to do so. Yu. Golendukhin's another noteworthy supposition was that the flourishing and the climax of the rock art and the acme of the meaningfulness of the petroglyphs corresponded to the most ancient stage of "the mountain temple" functioning, that is, the 3rd millennium through the first half of the 2nd millennium B.C. (Yu. Golendukhin, 1971). Yu. Golendukhin didn't give substantial proofs for his conclusions, and proposed them in a very modest manner, though his deductions present a considerable contribution to Saimaly-Tash study, to my mind. Later, Ya. Sher, a renowned researcher of petroglyphs in Central Asia and Siberia, substantiated dating drawings in Saimaly-Tash to the 3rd millennium B.C. (Sher, 1978).

In 1968, archaeologist G.A. Pomaskina started purposeful study of rock drawings in Kyrgyzstan. Nearly simultaneously with Yu. Golendukhin, she began to investigate petroglyphs in Saimaly-Tash. A group of specialists from the Kyrgyz State Historical Museum led by her was exploring Saimaly-Tash for two years, in 1968 and 1969 (see Pomaskina, 1969, 1970, 1974, 1975). The objects of G.A. Pomaskina's study, however, were again the same central parts of the site, which had been previously examined, along with some selected rocks with petroglyphs on. The group failed to conduct research on the entire Saimaly-Tash area, though a considerable volume of the documentation of rock drawings was created by it.

Later, G.A. Pomaskina examined rock drawings in Issyk-Kul lakeside area and in Ketmen-Tyube Valley (Pomaskina, 1973; 1974). D.F. Vinnik, a Kyrgyz archaeologist, was working in Issyk-Kul lakeshore area for many years, analyzing archaeological monuments of different types and age, including petroglyphs. As the result, the two people published a joint work presenting summary data on the petroglyphs found near Lake Issyk-Kul, in which they dwelt on age determination of the petroglyph objects (D.F. Vinnik, G.A. Pomaskina, 1975).

In Ketmen-Tyubeh, G.A. Pomaskina discovered two small rock art assemblages in different places bearing the same name (Tekeh-Tash), which mainly contained the images of ibexes. Somewhat earlier, in 1971, in the same area, namely in Chaar-Tash alpine tract, archaeologist I. Kojomberdiyev found and examined a large assemblage of rock drawings containing more than 700 scenes (Kojomberdiyev, 1972). Regrettably, in their joint work the two authors again gave only a general brief description of the assemblages discovered by them and reproduced only separate petroglyphs (Kojomberdiyev, Pomaskina, 1977).

In 1977 and 1978, Yu. Golendukhin and Ya. Sher organized trips to Saimaly-Tash, this time as a team, with the aim to make their previous materials and the information collected by their predecessors more accurate and complete. As the result of namely these expeditions, the researchers came to the idea about the necessity of a complex study of Saimaly-Tash, the application of new methods of tracing rock drawings and processing documents obtained with the employment of video apparatus and IBM. They also gave more substantial proofs that the most ancient group of petroglyphs made in geometrical style belonged to the 3rd millennium B.C. (Sher, Golendukhin, and Polyakov, 1979; Sher, 1980).

As the result of these activities and some other work conducted in Siberia,Ya. Sher became engaged in theoretical issues related to studying petroglyphs, in working out methods of search for petroglyphs, their recording,and description. Besides,he proposed new semantic interpretations of rock drawings in general, and of those found in Saimaly-Tash, in particular. (Sher, 1978, 1980).

At the end of '80s, a number of researchers from Kazakhstan, Kemerovo, and Moscow visited Saimaly-Tash. True, their study of the rock art site didn't result in any fruitful scientific achievements. We'll note as a casual remark, that in the second half of '80s, the workers of the Kemerovo University, for some reason, stirred up their investigation of the territory of Kyrgyzstan. For instance, they went on with studying petroglyphs in Ur-Maral, in Talas Valley, which once had been discovered and introduced into scientific circulation by V.M. Gaponenko (see Sher, Sovetova, Miklashevich, 1995), and in 1986 to 1988 they examined petroglyphs in Cholpon-Ata and in the locality called Uch-Koshkon situated in Issyk-Kul lakeshore area (Martynov, Miklashevich, 1995; Miklashevich, 1988; 1995).

In aggerate, all the researchers of Saimaly-Tash site have made a considerable contribution to studying petroglyphs found in this area. Despite some differences and disputes, they produced the interpretation of some scenes, determined the chronological borders of the rock drawings, and made attempts to rank Saimaly-Tash site among analogous monuments and compare its significance with them.

Still, we must confess that in spite of a rather lengthy history of studying Saimaly-Tash, the rock art complex wasn't completely investigated. Trips there were rather short and covered mainly the central part of the area, just round the lake. Maybe because of this, the same drawings and scenes from Saimaly-Tash were most often shown in works by different researchers. Nobody conducted a complete study of the area. There was no single opinion about the number of drawings in Saimaly-Tash. In '50s A.N. Bernshtam wrote about nearly 100,000 drawings (91,900), while G.A. Pomaskina said that only 6,000 rock images were there, and Ya.A. Sher mentioned the figure 9,000. As we can see, the opinions about the number of the drawings at the rock art site differed strongly. All the variety of the motifs, scenes and images were not brought to light either.

In 1991 an archaeological team from the Institute of History under the National Academy of Sciences of the Kyrgyz Republic, led by the author of the article, started research work in Saimaly-Tash (Tashbayeva, 1995; 1998; 1999). Taking into consideration the whole experience and the results of previous scholars' activity, the group undertook the task of more complete and complex examining and studying of the monument in order to:

- obtain a more complete characteristic of the entire area,together with the information about its relief, topographical, stratigraphic, and climatic peculiarities, along with data on local flora and fauna;
- examine the whole area of the Saimaly-Tash Mountain Range with a view to find and analyze other possible rock art assemblages;
- to determine the exact number of rock drawings, not relying on averaged statistical data calculation, as had been done by our predecessors;
- expose all the diversity of scenes and compositions of the petroglyphs, along with their stylistic, technical,and other peculiarities;
- finally, to approach to the issues of age determination of the rock drawings in Saimaly-Tash and their interpretation; to estimate the

significance of Saimaly-Tash and define its place among other Central Asian rock art monuments, etc.

Our archaeological team was studying Saimaly-Tash during eight field seasons, from 1991 through 2000, with a break in 1997 and 1998. Of them, in 1991 through 1996 we worked at Saimaly-Tash I, and in 1999 to 2000, at Saimaly-Tash II, in very difficult alpine region conditions.

We conducted a visual survey of the whole area and of each separate site. As the result, all rocks with petroglyphs on have been found and comprehensively recorded: each being numbered,described,traced over,and taken photo of. As the result, we detected and completely documented about 10,000 rocks with engravings in Saimaly-Tash I and about 1,500 rocks in Saimaly-Tash II. It is to be noted that many rocks have ten and sometimes several tens of rock drawings on. This is a colossal number of drawings different in the technique and style of carving, which contained tremendous information on the history, culture, and especially the world outlook of people, who inhabited the Tien Shan and the areas close to Fergana Valley in the 3rd through the 1st millenniums B.C. At present these materials are in focus of thorough analysis and study.

The '90s saw a noticeably more active investigation of rock art in Kyrgyzstan. Apart from Saimaly-Tash, where the archaeological team headed by K. Tashbayeva from the Institute of History worked, main work became concentrated on Sulaiman-Too mountain situated almost in the center of Osh city. Because of its unusual position on the plain area, the configuration of its pointed peaks, the availability of large and small caves and various archaeological objects, Sulaiman-Too attracts the attention of researchers since long ago. However, the petroglyphs of the mountain have never been the object of their special research work, though they were known aboutfrom periodicals and brief statements in scientific works.

At the end of '80s L. Jusupakmatov, a philologist, became actively engaged in their documentation and semantic interpretation (See Jusupakmatov, 1988). In 1989, on the instructions of the Scientific-Research Bureau under KyrgyzRestavratsiya association, archaeologist Ye.G. Devlet, a member of an archaeological team headed by B.E. Amanbayeva, became busy with detecting and recording these rock drawings. She gave a general characteristic of the object, introduced a considerable number of rock drawings from Sulaiman-Too into scientific circulation, and gave a semantic interpretation to separate scenes (See Amanbayeva, Devlet, 1998; the same authors, 1999). During preparation for the celebration of the 3,000th anniversary of Osh, K. Maltayev, E. Sulaimanov, and T. Nasyrov, lecturers of the Osh State University, also became involved in studying the petroglyphs of Sulaiman-Too. They examined the mountain more thoroughly and scrupulously and discovered scenes and images earlier unknown, thus supplementing the number of known rock drawings. The most important among newly found motifs were the images of horses dating from the Davan Period and stylistically looking very much alike the famous drawings found on Aravan cliff and on Airymach-Too. After studying the rock drawings together with other cult findings, the researchers launched the idea about a specific functional significance of Sulaiman-Too as a religious monument, a kind of a church under the open sky, and substantiated the supposition (Maltayev, Nasirov, 1997; Sulaimanov, Nasyrov, 1997; Sulaimanov, Maltayev, Nasyrov, 1998; the same authers, 1998a; Maltayev, 2000; and others).

When studying burial mounds of different epochs in Inner Tien Shan, K. Tabaldiyev and Yu. Khudyakov simultaneously recorded rock drawings they met. Thus, in 1991 on some edges of

Kara-Too Mountain Range, in Kochkor Region, they found an assemblage of rock drawings of different age. The scholars described them in detail and then introduced into scientific circulation nearly in a full volume. (Khudyakov, Tabaldiyev, 1999). Similar work is also being done by the archeological team under the direction of K. Tabaldiyev in Alai Valley. (Tabaldiyev, Bozer, Moskalev, Soltobayev, 2000)

Of no less importance was a new interesting rock art site found by the Saimaly-Tash archaeological team led by Tashbayeva, when the team, after its stationary work at Saimaly-Tash during the field season of 2000, was busy with reconnaissance. The new site was in south Kyrgyzstan, in the locality called Unkur-Tash. Rock drawings were found in shelters and small cavities of a narrow canyon, one side of which completely consisted of huge stone outcrops of fantastical forms and configurations. It became clear that first the drawings were made by pecking and polished very accurately and strictly as if carved, and then painted scarlet or murrey. The team found five groups of paintings. Two groups of drawings made on huge stone blocks more than 100 or 75 m long contained images in a rather large number, and other groups contained several or sometimes several tens of images each. Prevailing motifs were ibexes, horses, and camels, along with many images of riders. This appeared the second site with rock paintings. Until then, widely known was Ak-Chunkur Cave whose walls were covered with paintings made with red ochre. The cave is located at Sary-Jaz wide and shallow morainic depression. (Okladnikov, Ratsek, 1954; Mosolova, 1983; 1987, pp. 9-13). These two sites shall not be compared, however. Paintings in Ak-Chunkur Cave were made with ochre and present a pattern of primordial painting. Zaraut-Kamar, a monument similar with Ak-Chunkur Cave, is situated in Zaraut-sai, Uzbekistan (Formozov, 1966; Kabirov, 1976). Paintings found in Zaraut-Kamar and Ak-Chunkur Cave belong to the Mesolithic and Neolithic. As for the Unkur-Tash paintings, they were made with the application of a different technique. First the drawings were gouged or carved and only then became painted. Judging by their stylistic peculiarities and the themes, paintings in Unkur-Tash can be referred to a time period from the Late Bronze or early nomads up to the Turkic time, and maybe to the Late Medieval Age.

So, during archaeological investigation in Kyrgyzstan, a large number of rock art monuments have been discovered here. A preliminary list of rock art monuments with division into separate geographic regions was quoted in some works by I. Kojomberdiyev, D.F. Vinnik, and G.A. Pomaskina (see Vinnik, Pomaskina, 1975; Kojomberdiyev, Pomaskina, 1977). The resumptive list of petroglyphic monuments in Kyrgyzstan discovered before '80s, was presented in the work by Ya. Sher *Petroglyphs in Middle and Central Asia.* (Sher, 1980, pp. 90-115). During recent twenty years, a number of new assemblages were found or old sites underwent a more thorough research.

As was stated above, the assemblage of rock drawings in Saimaly-Tash Tract proved to be the largest, the most interesting and important monument not for Kyrgyzstan alone, but even on the entire Central Asian scale. It presents a world's unique phenomenon, and, naturally, has drawn the attention of researchers, though failed to become the object of their special and extensive studies. Some motifs in Saimaly-Tash site, such as chariots, for example, were in focus of Ya. Sher and V. Novozhenov's serious research work. Other motifs of this site were also actively used by other scientists in their semantic interpretation of other various monuments in Central Asia, Kazakhstan, and south Siberia, or when they looked for analogies in a wide range of motifs, or

tried to identify the stylistic peculiarities of some rock drawings, etc. (see Pomaskina, 1976; 1982; Sher, 1978; Samashev, 1992; Novozhenov, 1994; Maryashev, Goryachev, 1998; and others).

Unfortunately, in spite of such a long-time scientific interest in this type of monuments, Kyrgyz rock drawings were not the object of independent and serious researches until recent time. Factually, all the activities in this area came to gathering relevant materials alone. To date a considerable volume of important materials have been accumulated, which contain a comprehensive information on ancient rock art monuments, on the peculiar features of this or that monument, also about the evolution of the Kyrgyz rock art in general, and its significance and place among other ancient rock art monuments, etc. Time is ripe to more thoroughly comprehend them, to systemize voluminous information collected by all the researchers involved in studying Kyrgyz rock drawings, and to semantically interpret the most prevalent or unique rock art motifs. There are already some works, which present initial attempts in this area (see Vedutova, 1999; 2000; Tashbayeva, 2001). The present work is also an attempt of a preliminary generalization of the materials available,without a pretence of an exhaustive analysis or coverage of the information collected.

AK-CHUNKUR CAVE PAINTINGS

Paintings found in Ak-Chunkur Cave belong to the most ancient rock art layers, to the final stages of the Stone Age. The cave is situated in the Tien Shan alpine valley bearing the poetic name of Sary Jaz (Golden Valley), at the altitude of about 3,500 m above sea level. It was discovered by V.I. Ratsek, a student of local lore, in early '50s, and examined by Kazakh archaeologist Kh.A. Alpysbayev in 1953. The results of the preliminary examination of Ak-Chunkur Cave were published in 1954 by A.P. Okladnikov and V.I. Ratsek. (Okladnikov, Ratsek, 1954). In '80s L.M. Mosolova, an art critic, studied the cave.

Ak-Chunkur Cave was formed in a limestone zone, which explains its name (*White Cave,* as translated from Kyrgyz). The cave consists of a grotto, a fissure, and an upper gallery. The cave is 45 m long, 12 m high at the entrance vault and 1.5 m in the depth. Its width varies from 1.5m to 7.5m. The ceiling of the grotto is stepped. The walls are covered with tiff or ferromanganese leakage in some places and look polished or smoothed.

Lines, spots, dots, parts of images, and other traces of paintings are seen everywhere on smooth surfaces of the vault and walls in the grotto. Probably, there were a lot of drawings here in ancient time, but only a few of them have remained until our days. These are the images of human beings, animals, and some grouped symbols.

Two groups of images can be seen on the ceiling of the vault. The first group includes two female images, one over another, and a rather sketchy but still a very expressive drawing, probably, of a male figure. The head of the figure is semi-oval, its body presents a vertical line, and its shoulders are lifted a little. One of its legs hasn't been preserved in full, and the other is half-bent, as if in a walking movement. The second group of images consists of a human figure, an anchor-shaped anthropomorphous figure,and an image looking like a bow with a string.

The most expressive image, a perfectly depicted argali with two arched horns thrown onto its back and a knob on its neck, is in the central part of the grotto side

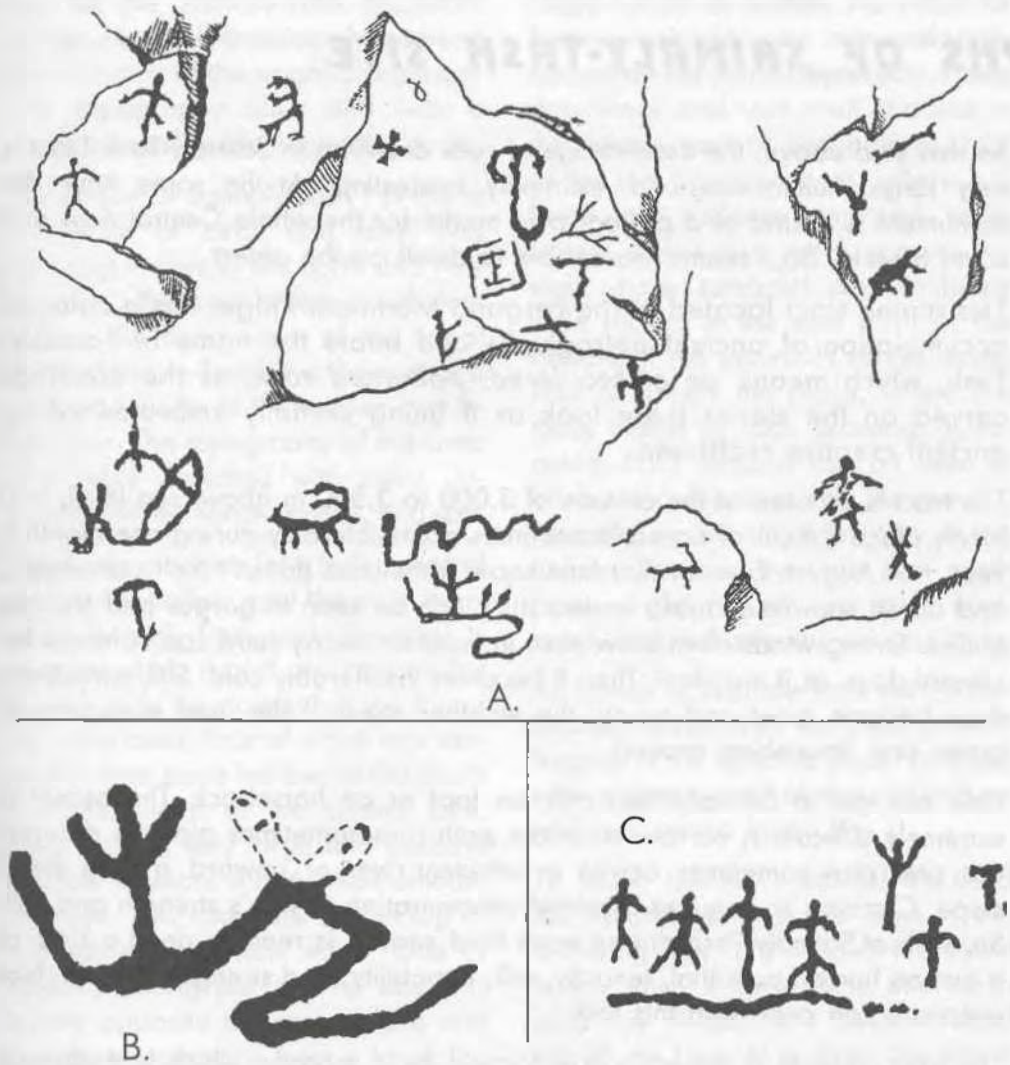


FIG. 2. ***Paintings found in Ak-Chunkur cave***

wall. The drawing of a snake is in front of it. Half figure of a man with raised hands and legs as if spread out (or maybe this is a broken line?) is depicted under the snake. To the left of them is a very small profile image of an ibex.

There are two images of ibexes drawn on the top of the right wall, in the depth of the cave. One of the figures is very graceful, with a long neck, its head is lifted, and its horn is strongly twisted. There are some fragments of poorly preserved drawings nearby. A very interesting scene resembling a ritual dance is drawn next to them. (Fig. 2) Seven figures, obviously masculine, some with elevated shoulders and some with upraised hands, are rhythmically disposed in a long row. An undulating line drawn under the row of the dancers probably stands for the ground.

A.P. Okladnikov and V.I. Ratsek, in their time, referred the paintings in Ak-Chunkur Cave to the Neolithic. V.N. Ranov, an archaeologist, who has been studying monuments during his whole life, including cave paintings in alpine Pamirs, seems to share this opinion. Art critic L.M. Mosolova is inclined to consider them dating from the Mesolithic. It seems to her, that Ak-Chunkur Cave images, especially human figures are more sketchy, which is typical of that epoch. In support of her assumption she makes references to the topics of the drawings, their stylistic peculiarities and the analogy with other paintings alike (Mosolova, 1985; 1992). Similarly, paintings found in Zaraut-Kamar, Uzbekistan, are also referred by M. Khujanazarov to the Mesolithic (see the article written by him in this book).

PETROGLYPHS OF SAIMALY-TASH SITE

As was said above, the assemblage of rock drawings in Saimaly-Tash Tract is very large, multifarious, and extremely interesting. At the same time this monument is a kind of a petroglyphic model for the whole Central Asia and south Siberia. So, it seems reasonable to dwell on the object.

This alpine tract located at the Fergana Mountain Ridge, has a colossal accumulation of ancient petroglyphs and bears the name of Saimaly-Tash, which means *an embroidered, patterned rock*, as the drawings carved on the stones there look as if being skillfully embroidered by ancient creative craftsmen.

The tract is situated at the altitude of 3,000 to 3,500 m above sea level, in a lonely place difficult of access. It becomes accessible only during one month a year – in August. Even at that time snow sometimes doesn't melt completely, and dense snowfields many meters thick can be seen in gorges and shallow gullies. Strong winds often blow even in summer, heavy rains can continue for several days, or it may hail. Then it becomes insufferably cold. Still, sometimes days become quiet and sunny, the weather seems calm, and everything is green and flourishing around.

One can get to Saimaly-Tash only on foot or on horseback. The ascent is extremely difficult. A narrow mountain path runs sometimes along a dangerous precipice, sometimes across a turbulent river, or upward a long steep slope. Climbing so requires maximal concentration of one's strength and will. So, work at Saimaly-Tash during each field season is really a deed, a kind of a test on human potential, tenacity, will, capability, and strength of mind. Not everyone can cope with this task.

The tract presents a closed hollow formed by a moraine, which had slipped obliquely between two spurs of Saimaly-Tash Mountain Range edges. The tract stretches for five or six kilometers from south to north, and for 700 to 800 m from east to west. Its climax is 3,450 m above sea level. From this point the tract declines by terraces to the north, where two spurs of the mountain range edges almost join. The altitude here is 2,800 m. Then follows a narrow flume with the Sogot River (its another name is the Saimaly-Tash River), which rises in Saimaly-Tash Tract and flows down into the Kek-Art River (eastern) far below. From two sides, the hollow is framed with steep slopes of the Saimaly-Tash Mountain Range. The mountains here are bare, woodless. Standing on an edge of the mountain range, one has the sensation of being on "the roof of the world" – a vertiginous height, a far field of vision with endless mountain folds, intermountain troughs, and narrow intermountain valleys around. It seems that life originates right from here, at this high altitude. One can see a drop of water sparkling under each stone. Then the drops gather and change into a plenty of tiny brooks, which form larger brooks a little below, and further turn into turbulent streams. Far below wide and deep rivers flow, which spring from these brooks. People settle only along the rivers. Higher are only temporary summer shelters for cattle, while people have permanent residence in a warmer area.

The examination of the whole massif with the contiguous areas has allowed to distinguish two large rock art sites, such as Saimaly-Tash I (Saimaly-Tash itself) and Saimaly-Tash II, the latter being located on the other side of the eastern

spur of the Saimaly-Tash Mountain Range. No rock drawings have been found in any of the neighboring tracts with topography alike and with a plenty of similar black basaltic rocks.

The hollow of Saimaly-Tash I presents a number of large and small hills declining in tiers to the north and very steeply to the west, where a turbulent stream, the head water of the Sogot (or the Saimaly-Tash) River flows almost under the slope of the western mountain spur. The topography of this area is strongly dissected with steep descents, ravines, narrow gullies, and sais.

There is a moraine lake in the central part of the hollow, and the main massif of Saimaly-Tash rock drawings is concentrated round this particular lake. It is to be noted that we found six more lakes, four of which are situated in that same hollow, to the south and south-west of the central lake. They are not very large and become shallow in years with a small amount of snow. Two lakes are on the top of the western mountain edge. One of them, situating just on the edge, is nearly opposite the central lake and becomes recharged from a large firn basin located in that same area. It is the second-largest lake in Saimaly-Tash, and there are rock drawings, true, not very numerous, around it, like around all other lakes. So, there are seven lakes in Saimaly-Tash, not one. None of our predecessors has ever mentioned the presence of seven lakes here. All the researchers knew the largest one, stopped at that place, and examined only the area around it. Probably, this can be explained with the impermanence of their work at Saimaly-Tash and the impossibility to thoroughly examine the whole massif.

Our team conducted research work at Saimaly-Tash during eight field seasons, from 1991 through 2000, with breaks in 1997 and 1998, in very hard conditions, at this alpine tract difficult of access.

Huge heaps of stones, the result of heavy rockfalls, are non-uniformly spread on the entire depression. There are dense and vast rock streams in the upper part of the hollow, right under the mountain pass, where not large rock surfaces remained, while lower, stones are more sparse. An even more spacious and multi-ply slide rock is in the east part, at the bottom of the mountain range slope. That is namely the place, where the main massif of rock drawings is located. Rock streams can be seen in all sais and depressions in the ground, factually, on the entire territory of the hollow. Rocks in the west and north parts of the hollow are more scattered, and rock streams are rare here.

All stones in Saimaly-Tash with drawings carved on their surfaces, present fragments of basaltic rock covered with a dense crust of deep-brown or jet-black patina layer. (Fig.1)

To make our work easier, we used the natural relief of the area in the following way. We divided the entire hollow into 12 large plots, then each plot was divided into squares sized 10x10 m, beginning from the lower point, where two spurs of the mountain range almost joined, toward its topmost point. Then came the turn of visual survey of each plot, search for rocks with drawings, and their comprehensive recording, including their numbering, description, tracing over, and taking photos of.

As the result, we have found and completely documented nearly 10,000 rocks with drawings in Saimaly-Tash. It is to be taken into consideration that many stones had several or sometimes tens of rock drawings on. Less frequent were 50 to 70 drawings on a rock. Here we mean visible petroglyphs drawn above the earth. As was found out, a part of stones with petroglyphs was strongly turf-covered, thus remaining invisible. Probably, the formation of the complex was a re-

peated action. Apart from these, digs at the place of a shelter for a flock of sheep located in this area also revealed rocks with petroglyphs hidden under caprolithic stratification of many years.

In most cases drawings were made by carving smooth surfaces, with the application of the pecking technique, and were from 0.5 to 1cm deep, or, less frequent, from 0.2 to 0.4 cm. The surfaces strongly differed in size. In some cases these were small or diminutive surfaces, sometimes it could be a huge flat or many-sided boulder fully covered with drawings on all its planes, from top to bottom, sometimes even almost on the bottom.

We couldn't see any regularity in the disposition of the rock drawings. They could be seen on surfaces facing different directions: upward, northward, southward, eastward, westward, or occupying intermediate positions.

A distinguishing feature of petroglyphs in Saimaly-Tash, making them different from other complexes, is their small size and a very clear-cut technique with the employment of deep pecking, along with the thorough drawing of all details. There are many tiny drawings, not exceeding three to five cm.

One more peculiarity of rock drawings in Saimaly-Tash is that they never overlap each other, i.e. the absence of palimpsest cases, though it is a rather common phenomenon in other regions of Kyrgyzstan and everywhere else. In Saimaly-Tash each drawing occupies its own space, even in scenes with many figures, though one can see drawings of manifestly different age there, facing different directions, stylistically different, and made with the employment of different methods. Still, they never superimpose on one another.

These peculiarities of the drawings in Saimaly-Tash distinguish this site from other similar monuments. Despite their tremendous chronological spread covering a 3,000-year term, all the drawings in Saimaly-Tash have a certain stylistic commonness. It seems as if the ancient artists, who made these drawings during such a long period, kept to a very similar, if not the same, manner typical of this area alone. It is impossible to confuse the petroglyphs of Saimaly-Tash with those from other numerous complexes. Let's take, for instance, Tamgaly, a complex not less famous, which is situated in Chulli mountains, Kazakhstan. Tamgaly contains a number of motifs also typical of Saimaly-Tash, including sun-headed personages. Still, the manner of drawing them and their stylistic features in Saimaly-Tash and in Tamgaly are different enough.

Saimaly-Tash is a rare monument, in terms of the availability of such a tremendous number of rock drawings. As was said above, there are about 10,000 rocks with petroglyphs. Most of them have one petroglyph on, but there are many such rocks, which contain two, three, four, five, up to ten various images, and sometimes even 50 to 70. This number being multiplied by 10,000 will give a very impressive figure. Perhaps A.N. Bernshtam was right speaking of 100,000 images in Saimaly-Tash. In any case, this is such a colossal number of images, with such a great variety of motifs and styles, that it is almost impossible to characterize them in full volume. The catholicity of Saimaly-Tash rock drawings motifs is amazing even at a cursory acquaintance with them, not speaking of serious schemes, which classify the rock drawings according to their stylistic and other peculiarities; or getting to the essence and the purpose of making these petroglyphs.

What drawings and motifs are presented in Saimaly-Tash and how were they made? The images of ibexes and argalis are most numerous, and they constitute the biggest share of all the drawings there. In general, the

FIG. 3.
An ibex
(Saimaly-Tash)

FIG. 4.
An ibex
(Saimaly-Tash)

FIG. 5.
An ibex
(Saimaly-Tash)

image of the ibex was the most favorite of all other beasts. It prevails or is the only motif in most of rock drawing assemblages. In Saimaly-Tash these animals are depicted in different styles. The size and the shape of their bodies along with other specific signs greatly vary, especially their horns, which are shown straight or highly and far thrown backward, or rounded over the animal's head and linked with its tail. Rather often horns are shown in the form of one or two parallel strombuliform lines.

Rather interesting are the drawings of ibexes, whose bodies are shown in a bitriangular manner (Fig.3,4). Very expressive are the images of ibexes depicted in the so-called Saka style (Fig. 81, 91). These are graceful figures shown running or jumping. The dynamism and the impetuosity of their movements are reflected very accurately.

In Saimaly-Tash one can see many rock drawings depicting three, four, five, or six ibexes walking in a line. Usually all animals in such rows are drawn in the same manner, the size and the shape of their bodies and horns are identical (Fig. 70, 83). Or the leading animal can be the largest and those bringing up the rear are smaller, though the proportions of their bodies, horns, and their images in general are the same. Peaceful and quiet poses of animals slowly walking give the idea that most probably these are herds of domestic animals. The figures of dogs running behind such a file or alongside confirm the supposition. We think that these scenes graphically characterize the cattle-breeding economy of the population, who made these drawings.

The images of bulls are most interesting and can be found chiefly in the most ancient rock drawing layers in Saimaly-Tash. In most cases the carvings are thoroughly made as well, their specific features being clear-cut, such as mighty bodies, small heads, and horns straight or slightly bent. Sometimes the horns are rather long and bent backward. The animals are drawn both single and in groups. Rather often bulls are shown harnessed (Fig. 6,7,9,16).

The images of bulls with a circle and a dot in center instead of horns present a peculiar interest. These are sun-bulls Their tails end in bulges. There

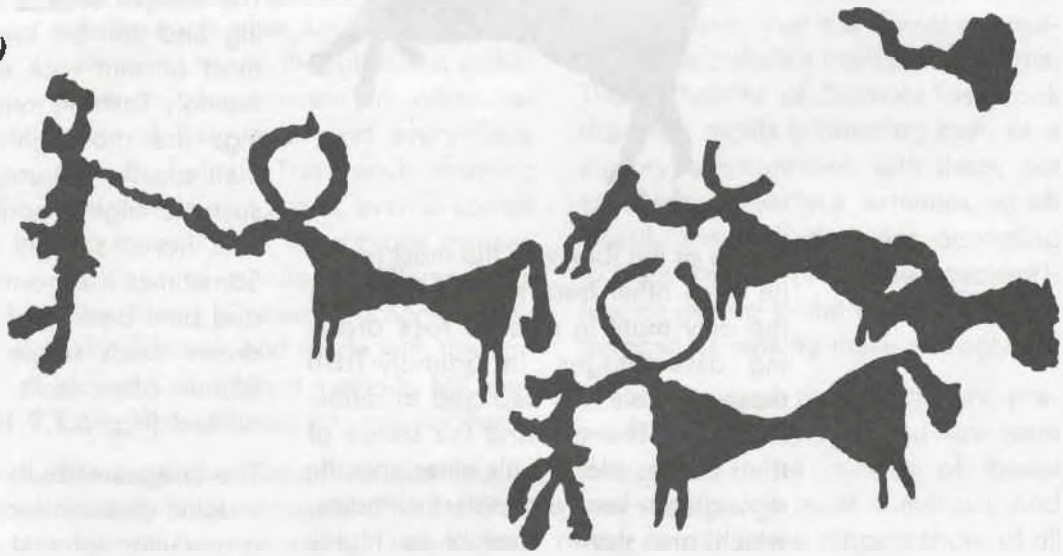
FIG. 6.
Drawings of bulls (Saimaly-Tash)

are several such images there. Most probably, these are mythological scenes with bulls (Fig. 7,10,14).

The images or deer are rather numerous. They are also depicted in different styles, with the application of various kinds of the technique of making, as these drawings date from different epochs. Their horns present the most expressive parts of their bodies. They are depicted in the form of one or two straight lines from which off-shoots go in one or several directions (Fig.11,12,34); also in the form of arches with branches going inside (Fig. 31, 33); and as very bushy and beautiful horns like a tree or herring-bone (Fig.32). The size of horns often exceeds that of the animal's body or its whole figure. Deer are often shown alone, then they look more static. They are carved distinctly and clear: a strong body of a rectangular or bitriangular shape, long legs, an oblong and thick head, a short tail, and, of course, two small extensions on the nape. Their genitals are emphasized nearly in all cases.

Some drawings depicted on a large boulder are very interesting. One of them carved on the north-west side of the boulder shows two files of walking ibexes driven by dogs. The files are placed one over another. The animals in both files are carved in a similar manner and shown walking in the same direction. On the side of the boulder facing south-east there is the image of a big branchy deer with herring-bone horns. A man with a club in his hand is standing over the deer, and one more figure, a bower, is in front of it. Unfortunately, the lower part of the drawing is

FIG. 7.
Bulls (Saimaly-Tash)



hidden under piled stones and can hardly be seen (Fig. 32, 83). The deer's figure is massive, the outline of its body is close to a bitriangular shape. The deer's horns are large and extremely branchy. They present three main branches with multiple herring-bone extensions. The figures of the hunters are drawn exaggeratedly small.

There are many images of horses in Saimaly-Tash. Sometimes they are clear-cut, with pronounced specific features. Especially well drawn are their small heads, ears, long legs, and tails. Some figures are shown pretty graceful (Fig. 21, 47). Almost all of them are carved with genitals emphasized. Sometimes a small extension is on the nape. Sometimes there are two extensions in the form of wings going from the back spine. It is possible that here depicted are mythological winged horses (?). Some other drawings of horses are not so legible, and their species can be identified by intuition. Quite often horses are depicted driving chariots.

The images of camels in Saimaly-Tash are not very numerous, still, they number about 100. For reasons unknown, camels were carved in a rougher manner. Their only distinctive feature is their humps. All of them are two-humped (Fig. 29) A clear-cut image of a camel with a long neck, a small head lifted high, and a tussock is a rare case (Fig. 17, 85, Foto 7).

The images of dogs can be easier identified in scenes with many figures, when they run after a herd or a flock or take part in hunt scenes. When dogs are depicted alone, it is difficult to distinguish them from other animals, especially from wolves. In group scenes dogs are shown rather realistic, not very big, and with curly tails (Fig. 11, 70, 83).

Drawings of wolves are numerous. They can be recognized mainly from some pronouncedly expressed features, such as a more massive body, a large head with bared teeth, and a long dropped tail; but most often by

FIG. 8.
Saimaly-Tash

intuition, as it is difficult to distinguish between wolves and dogs or other beasts of prey. She-wolves are depicted quite often as well.

There are many images of other predatory animals in Saimaly-Tash but it is hardly possible to identify the species of each one. Sometimes we can identify figures looking like bears, snow leopards, tigers, lions and other beasts of prey. We think we can identify foxes and jackals. All these animals could and can be found in the Tien Shan mountains and in neighboring areas, so, it is quite natural that these animals were reflected in petroglyphs of Saimaly-Tash. To date, however, we find it difficult to strictly differentiate between the species. Clear-cut are the drawings of wild boars. They are not very numerous and can be identified with certainty (Fig. 82). There are drawings of birds, which, unfortunately, are neither clear-cut nor realistic. In most cases these are only sketchy contours of birds sometimes resembling eagles and sometimes griffins. The graceful figures of hawks and other birds are less frequent.

The petroglyphs of Saimaly-Tash also depict animals available neither in the fauna of high-altitude Tien Shan, nor in the whole Central Asia, for instance elephantine animals. There is a scene of hunt carved on a large flat boulder. The object of hunt are three elephantine animals. They have massive rectangular bodies, large heads with trunks, and a

FIG. 9.
Seven bulls in a circle (Saimaly-Tash)

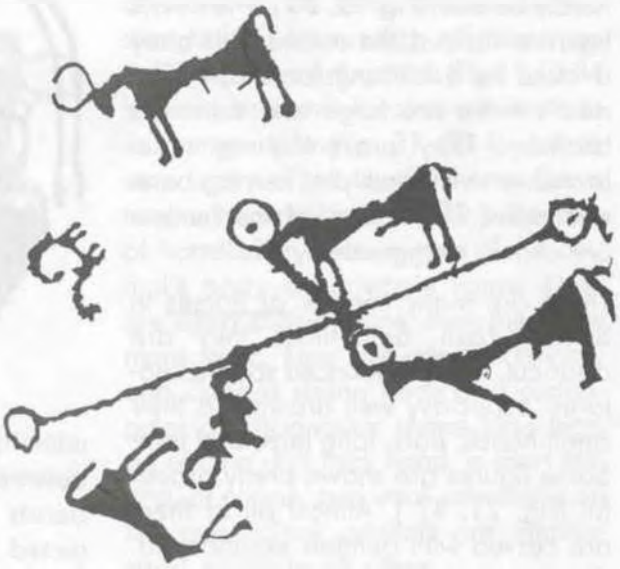
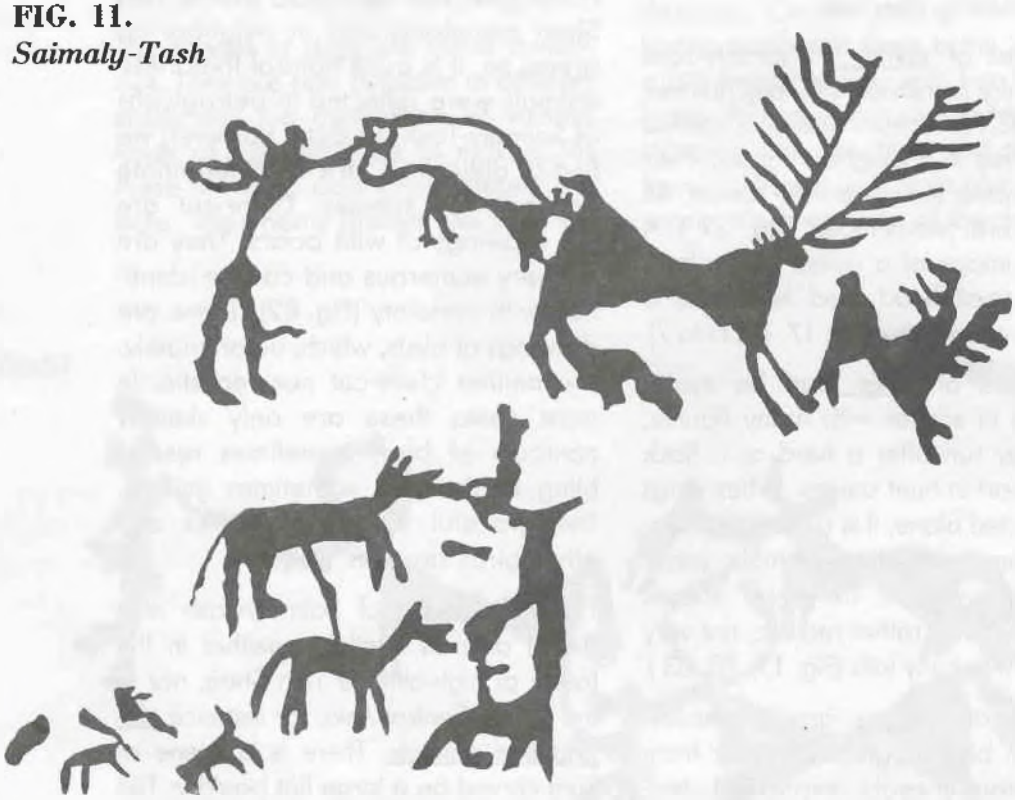


FIG. 10.
Bulls and a spectacles-like symbol

FIG. 11.
Saimaly-Tash



pair of strong tusks. All three figures resemble elephants rather than any other animals (Fig. 55). Each of two elephants is attacked by two bowers, one standing in front of the animal and the other at its side. The third elephant is in the foreground, and only one man, without a bow, is standing in front of it.

It is quite interesting that petroglyphs in Saimaly-Tash show such fantastic creatures as centaurs shooting from bows. It wasn't a single case, by the way. Tree centaurs have been discovered in Saimaly-Tash, and two of them are depicted in a similar stylistic manner (Fig. 87).

The images of human beings and antropomorphous creatures are also frequent in the rock drawings of Saimaly-Tash. They are presented in various styles, with the application of various technique of making, differ in quality, etc. Noteworthy is the absence of realism in such images. Rather often people are shown comparatively sketchy, with spread arms and big spread fingers. Their hair or braids are also sketchy, their genitals being emphasized, and what is especially interesting, they have tails with incrassate ends. In comparison with them, the images of some animals are depicted absolutely realistically. It seems that these drawings reflect all the peculiarities and ethos of the animals, while the images of people, or better to say of antropomorphous creatures, are neither legible nor realistic.

It can simply be a sole figure of an antropomorphous creature carved in a rather sketchy manner. In most cases the arms of such beings are spread (Fig. 15, 15a). The semantic load of such drawings is not clear enough.

There are several scenes in Saimaly-Tash depicting antropomorphous figures with a semicircle, a crescent, or a segment over them. Usually the antropomorphous creatures are shown with their arms spread or lifted and bent in the elbows, their fingers being spread, or they may hold an object looking like a bow in a hand (Fig.54). The meaning of such drawings is rather complex. Earlier some scientists thought that these were the images of mushroom-headed people, while others interpreted such a creature as the image of a man standing in front of his abode, and the third considered it to be a man under the vault of heaven.

FIG. 12.
Ibexes (Saimaly-Tash)

Apart from single or group images of animals and antropomorphous beings, there are a plenty of concrete subject plots. Sometimes these are large and complex compositions consisting of several or of even a great number of personages, or of two or three figures only. Such motifs contain a certain idea, a certain plot, as, for instance,scenes of hunt,ritual dances, erotic scenes, etc.

Hunt scenes. This is a prevailing motif typical of all epochs., Hunting in the period under review was the only means to obtain food. In most cases these are scenes of hunt for ibexes, sometimes for deer, and other animals. In such scenes one, two or sever-

FIG. 13.
Saimaly-Tash

al hunters with bent bows or clubs are depicted. Remember the scene with a big beautiful deer for whom two people are hunting: one standing in front of the deer and provided with a bow and the other standing at the side with a club in his hands (Fig. 32).

Hunt scenes often present large and complex compositions. Sometimes these are scenes of pursuing a wild animal and sometimes these are pictures when hunters and dogs surround a prey. A drawing of a hunter with a bow is not a rare case, less frequent are the images of a hunter and a dog, still, with no prey (Fig. 37, 38, 71).

There is an interesting scene on a rock, which in a masterly fashion shows the process of hunting. Four hunters with bows have surrounded an ibex. The figures of bowers depicted in various poses express the tension of the situation during the last decisive moment. There is a dog there. For some reason it is rather large and looks a beast of prey rather than a dog (Fig. 71a).

Not less interesting is the scene with three bowers possibly performing a hunter's ritual dance. The figures of the bowers are sketchy and rough. They are shown en face, with raised bows. Two uncertain images are alongside.

The images of hunting riders appear in the drawings of a later period.

Ritual dance scenes. Noteworthy are drawings of people rhythmically dancing, most probably during some ritual ceremonies. Usually, these are paired figures facing each other, their hands lifted, their legs slightly bent in knees. Such a canon dancing pose is typical mainly of the petroglyphs of Saimaly-Tash and Tamgaly, Kazakhstan. All figures are expressive and dynamic. As a rule, they are provided with rather long tails bulging at the end. Rather often their hair is braided. Nearly in all cases their arms gradually widen from elbows toward hands and end in circles, thus resembling clubs. Sometimes their arms are excessively long like loose sleeves. Maybe these are the details of dancers' ritual-ceremonial costumes (Fig. 40).

FIG. 14.
An aurochs (Saimaly-Tash)

Scenes of riding in chariots or carts. These are the most interesting and significant scenes in Saimaly-Tash, and they drew the attention of the very first researchers, who interpreted them as ploughing, but later Ya. Sher defined them as mythological scenes. Carriages depicted are sacral chariots, not simple carts or ploughs, and the difference in species of paired draught animals, such as an ibex and an aurochs, or an ass and an aurochs, less frequent a horse and an aurochs, proves this assumption, since in real life such combinations were hardly possible (Sher, 1978; 1980). Of course, the images of matched draught animals are also present here. These are mainly bulls. Draught ibexes, argalis, and later horses are represented as well. As has become known, chariot worship had been existing for a long time and primarily was very tightly connected with the solar cult. Later, notions connected with chariots became more complex and considered sacral.

Most of such drawings in Saimaly-Tash depict two-wheeled carts. The wheels are monolithic, without spokes, though, there are some deviations from this rule, and one or two drawings depict wheels provided with spokes. A cart is usually followed by a man

shown half face. Most of such charioteers or drivers have their hair braided and a tail (Fig.19-29).

These are the most ancient drawings in Saimaly-Tash, as in spite of the fact that different species of animals are shown harnessed, their figures are stylistically similar and all of them are drawn in the same geometrical manner – as bitriangles or rectangles. Such scenes are carved very clear and thoroughly. Some details, such as the animals' horns and tails, also the drivers' hair, and the harnesses are drawn in thin lines, with a very sharp tool.

We discovered a great number of the images of chariots and carts in Saimaly-Tash. Usually scenes depicting chariots and carts consist of one conveyance, not infrequently two, and sometimes several carriages. Rather often other animals and people stay around such conveyances (Fig. 20, 24, 25, 28). Saimaly-Tash offers a great number and variety of this mythological motif – riding in chariots and carriages, and in this aspect it is also a unique monument. Namely the carriages of Saimaly-Tash became the object of all researchers' focused attention and made it possible to distinguish a specific group of "the wonderful" carriages and refer the most ancient group of images in Saimaly-Tash to the Eneolithic and the Early Bronze Age, i.e. the 3rd and beginning of the 2nd millennium B.C.

Erotic scenes. There are drawings in Saimaly-Tash showing people in frankly erotic positions. It can be simply a pair having sex, sometimes in presence of the figures of snakes and ibexes (Fig. 50). Sometimes three persons are shown in union (Fig. 48). Well known is the composition, where several groups of people, each group consisting of two or three persons, are in coition poses. A snake and an ibex are in the center of the composition, and one more snake is on the right (Fig. 49, Foto 8). In such scenes human beings are usually depicted with braids. Most probably, the scene reflects a complex ceremony connected with the cult of fertility, and the availability of the images of the ibexes and the snake can serve as corroboration.

FIG. 15.
An antropomorph (Saimaly-Tash)

There are a plenty of scenes linked with the solar cult among rock drawings in Saimaly-Tash. First of all, these are the figures of "sun-headed" people, i.e., when a human body is crowned with a large disk with eyes, a mouth, and outgoing beams, instead of the head (Fig. 41, Foto 1). Some drawings depict single creatures of such a kind, and some contain two, three or more such figures. The beings are shown with their arms spread or raised. There is the image of a man as if carrying the sun in his hands (Fig. 39). Opinions differ how to interpret such scenes.

FIG. 15A.
An antropomorph (Saimaly-Tash)

FIG. 16.
An aurochs (Saimaly-Tash)

Some scientists believe that these are the images of the sun, the others think that these are the images of the sun deities, and the third consider them sun-like divinities.

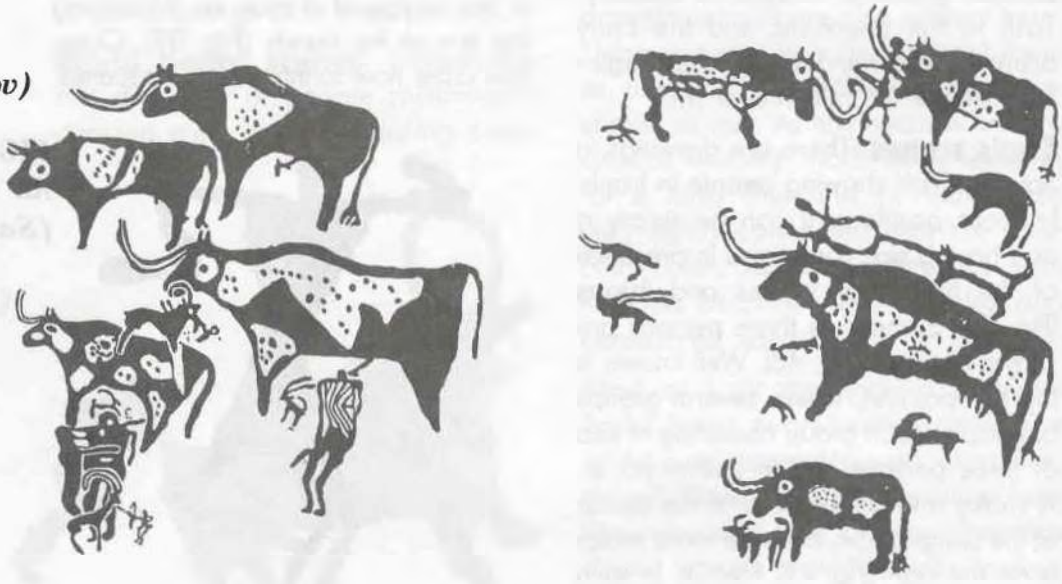
A number of images are somewhat stylized. Their heads are in the form of disks with outgoing beams, and their bodies and legs are presented as straight lines or lines divided into two in their lower part. Some drawings depict a disk without beams resting on two extensions – the sun on two legs. Obviously, such images stand for the sun itself (Fig. 27, 56).

In general, there is a great number of various symbols of the sun among petroglyph in Saimaly-Tash. Such drawings depict the celestial body in different ways: as simple circles with a dot in the center or without any, circles with beams outgoing or enclosed into the circle, also as solid disks, crosses, swastikas, and in the form of so-called "spectacles-shaped" signs (Fig. 56-64, Foto 3).

Spectacles-shaped signs, which are believed to be solar symbols, number in large quantities in Saimaly-Tash. Such a sign presents two rings connected with a straight line. Quite often there are several of even a great number of spectacles-shaped signs of various length on a plane. Sometimes they are depicted in combination with animals, zigzags, and other signs in complex scenes with many figures (Fig. 10). These images are the evidence of a developed system of worshiping the sun by the ancient population of Kyrgyzstan, true, like in the whole Central Asia. Worship of the sun,the source of life on the earth was one of the ancient population's main cults.

Noteworthy are two compositions drawn on large planes and depicting a plenty of neighboring circles connected with each other with a line. Each circle

FIG. 17.
Aurochses (Surottuu), (according to M.Khujanazarov)



nas a dot in center (Foto 3). As is known, a simple circle with a dot in the center is one of widespread solar symbols. In this case, a whole system of such signs is presented, with one straight line running somewhere in the middle and connecting all the rings. A bower is depicted at one side of the plane. The meaning of this drawing is very complex. With a great share of uncertainty, we can conjecture that it is the picture of the starry sky or the universe.

FIG. 18.
A camel (Saimaly-Tash)

FIG. 19.
A chariot (Saimaly-Tash)

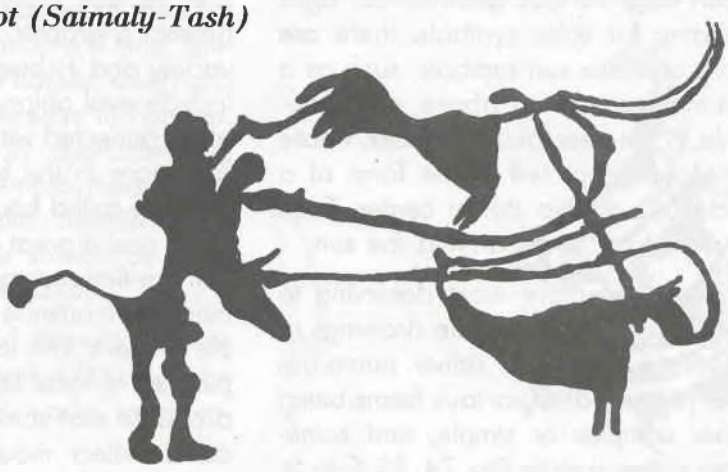
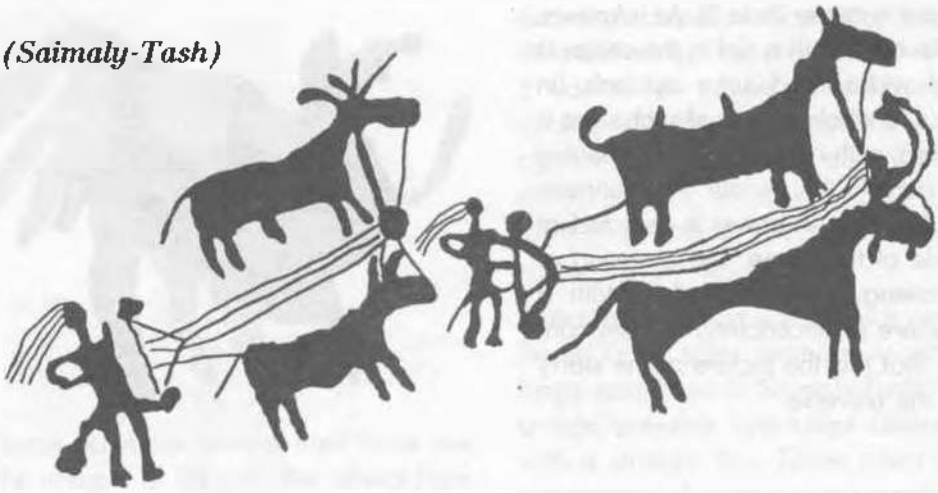


FIG. 20.
Saimaly-Tash

FIG. 21. ***Chariots (Saimaly-Tash)***

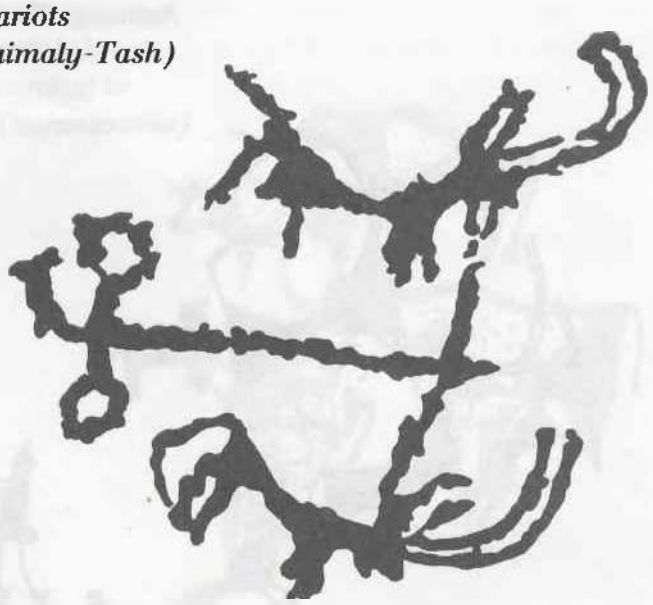


Apart from various geometrical signs standing for solar symbols, there are more complex sun-symbols, such as a sun-man mentioned above, a sun-aurochs, a sun-deer, and a sun-ibex, whose horns are depicted in the form of a circle also with a dot in center. Such animals look as if carrying the sun.

There is one more motif deserving to dwell upon. These are the drawings of labyrinths. They are rather numerous and presented in various forms, being either complex or simple, and sometimes rather sketchy (Fig. 74, 75, Foto 5).

The repertory of Saimaly-Tash rock art contains many other geometrical figures, various signs, and images, which present a graphic evidence of a great variety and richness of its motifs. They include oval oblong figures most probably connected with the cult of phallus, also signs in the form of human footprints, so-called house or settlement "layouts," and a great deal of zigzags, and compositions consisting of such elements, with animals and sometimes people present. The latter seem to be the pictures of local landscapes. It is quite probable that some pieces of rock art could reflect mountains with running paths and flowing rivers shown in the form of wavy lines and zigzags, among which were the figures of animals and people, sometimes along with the images of their abodes (Fig. 77, 88-90).

FIG. 22.
Chariots (Saimaly-Tash)



Admittedly, the earliest drawings of Saimaly-Tash date from the 3rd through the beginning of the 2nd millennium B.C., i.e. the Eneolithic and the Bronze Age. They are made in a so-called geometrical style when the bodies of animals and people were carved in the form of rectangles or triangles. This style was used in carvings depicting ride in chariots and carts, sometimes in scenes of ploughing, and in some images of animals and human beings.

The drawings of the Developed and Late Bronze periods stay very close to this group. Figures depicted in such drawings lost geometrical shape to

some extent. This group includes many antropomorphous images, solar signs, the drawings of single animals, and separate scenes of cult character, which differ slightly from the petroglyphs of the former group. Both groups present the most ancient, the most interesting and the most numerous groups of drawings in Saimaly-Tash.

The next group belongs to the 1st millennium B.C., i.e. the Early Iron Age. Drawings completely lose geometrization, and pecking becomes deeper and rougher. This time witnessed the prevalence of images with zoomorphic motifs and the appearance of numerous scenes of hunt for and the domestication of wild animals. The images of horses, deer, and especially ibexes increase in number. A striking peculiarity characterizing this period is the employment of so-called Scythian-Saka animal style, when animals were shown as if on tiptoe or rushing in gallop.

The fourth group of drawings dates from the 1st millenium A.D. Here the rock drawings are made in a so-called linear style. They become simpler and rougher, and lose specific traits. Complex motifs stop existing. Single animals, mainly ibexes, prevail. As a rule, drawings are made with some roughly cut lines, and without special details. However, one can sometimes find images made very skillfully and close to nature among the petroglyphs of this group.

FIG. 23. ***Saimaly-Tash***

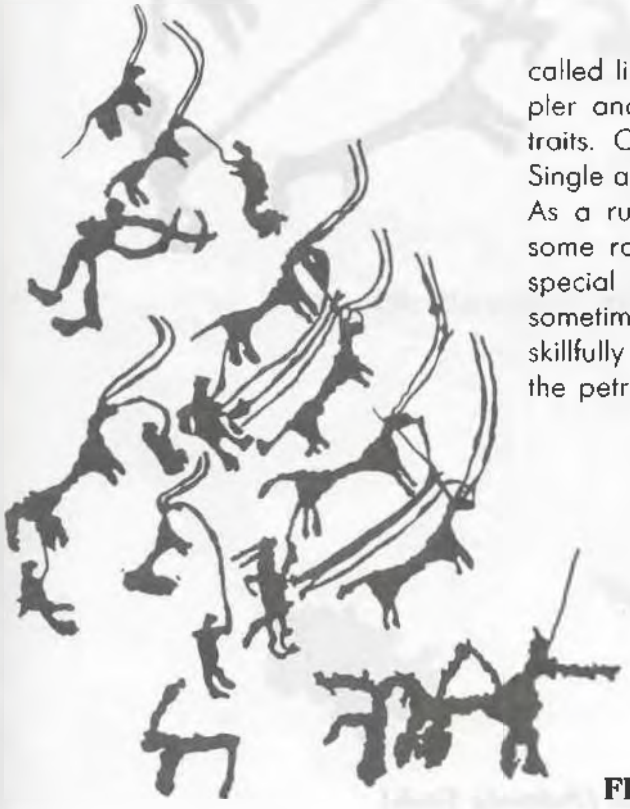


FIG. 24. ***Saimaly-Tash***

FIG. 25. *Saimaly-Tash*

FIG. 26. *Saimaly-Tash*

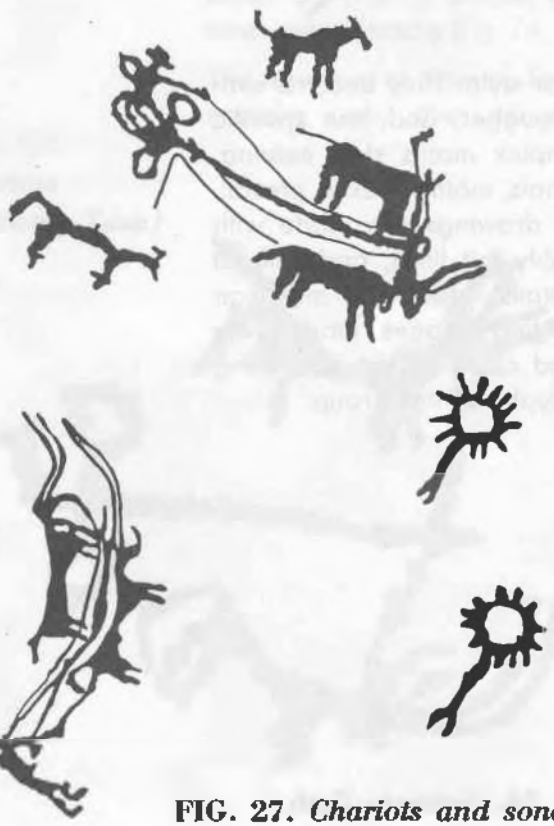


FIG. 27. *Chariots and sonages (Saimaly-Tash)*

FIG. 28.
A many-figure composition consisting of chariots and various animals (Saimaly-Tash)

FIG. 29. *Harnessed animals (camels) (Saimaly-Tash)*

FIG. 30. *Saimaly-Tash*

FIG. 31. *A deer (Saimaly-Tash)*

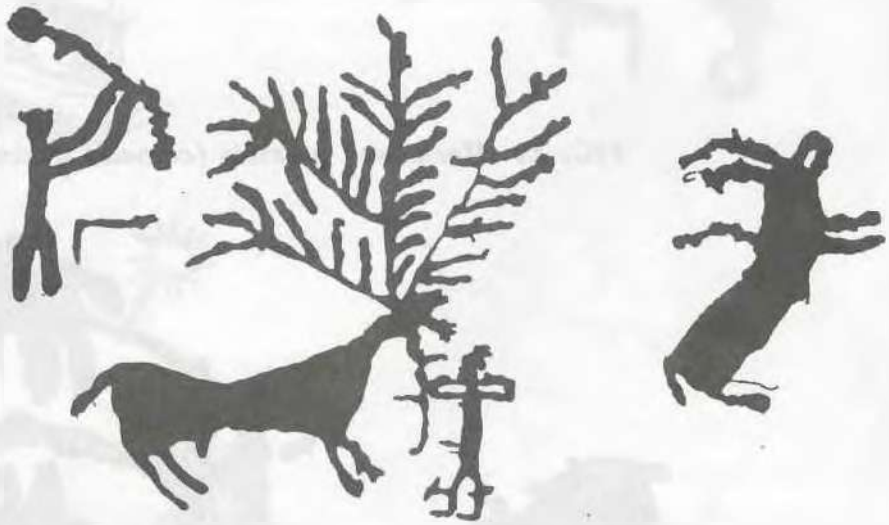


FIG. 32. *Hunt for a deer (Saimaly-Tash)*

FIG. 33. *A deer (Saimaly-Tash)*

FIG. 34. *A deer and dogs (?) (Saimaly-Tash)*

FIG. 35.
An elk (Japyryk, Inner Tien Shan)

FIG. 36.
Animals and zigzags (Saimaly-Tash)

FIG. 37. *A scene of hunt (Saimaly-Tash)*

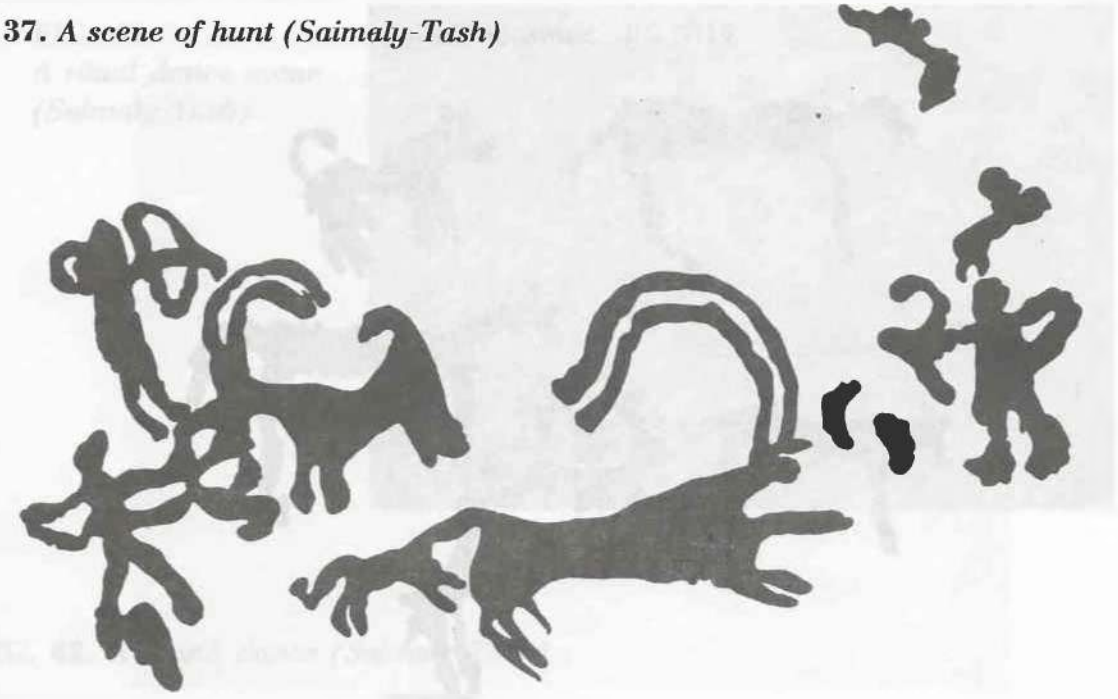


FIG. 38. *A scene of hunt (Saimaly-Tash)*

FIG. 39. *Saimaly-Tash*

FIG. 40. *A ritual dance scene (Saimaly-Tash)*

FIG. 41.
A ritual dance scene (Saimaly-Tash)

FIG. 42. ***A round dance (Saimaly-Tash)***

FIG. 43. ***Figures facing each other (Saimaly-Tash)***

FIG. 44. *Saimaly-Tash*

FIG. 45. *A scene of hunt and processions with clubs (Saimaly-Tash)*

FIG. 46. *A sporting competition scene (?) (Saimaly-Tash)*

FIG. 47. *A man and an animal (Saimaly-Tash)*

FIG. 48. *An erotic scene (Saimaly-Tash)*

FIG. 49. *Scenes of coition (Saimaly-Tash)*

FIG. 50. *An ibex and a couple in a coition position (Saimaly-Tash)*

FIG. 51. *Saimaly-Tash*

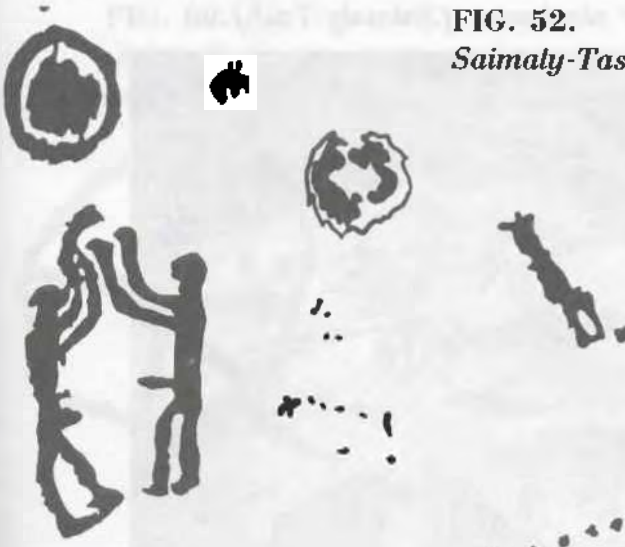


FIG. 52.
Saimaly-Tash

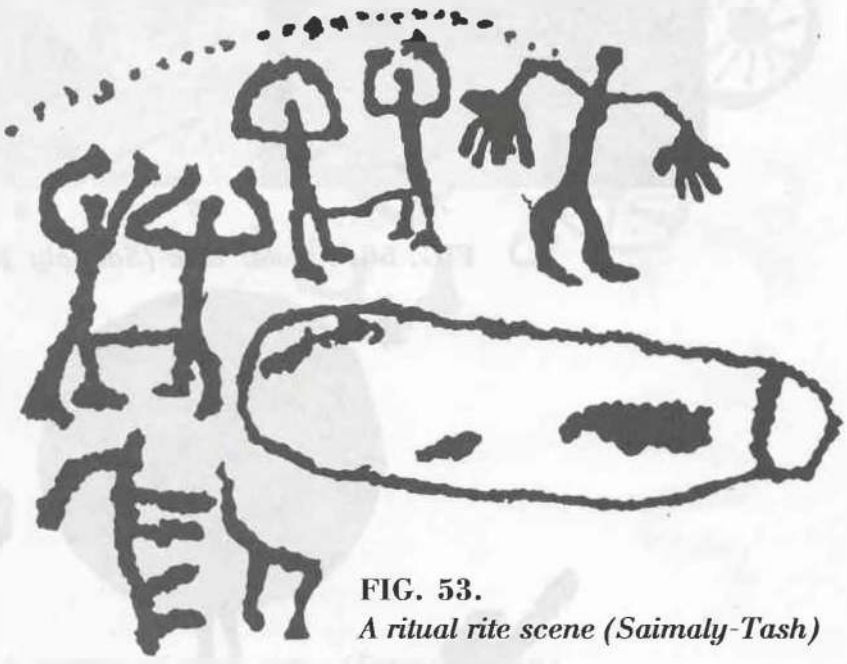


FIG. 53.
A ritual rite scene (Saimaly-Tash)

FIG. 54.
Saimaly-Tash

FIG. 55. *A scene of hunt for elephants (Saimaly-Tash)*

FIG. 56. *A solar disk (Saimaly-Tash)*

FIG. 57.
A spectacles-like symbol (Saimaly-Tash)

FIG. 58.
A spectacles-like symbol (Saimaly-Tash)

FIG. 59.
Solar signs (Saimaly-Tash)

FIG. 60.
A solar sign
(Saimaly-Tash)

FIG. 61.
A solar sign
(Saimaly-Tash)

FIG. 62. *Solar signs (Saimaly-Tash)*

FIG. 63. *A system of solar signs (Saimaly-Tash)*

FIG. 64.
A spectacles-like symbol (Saimaly-Tash)

FIG. 65.
An ibex and a snake (Saimaly-Tash)

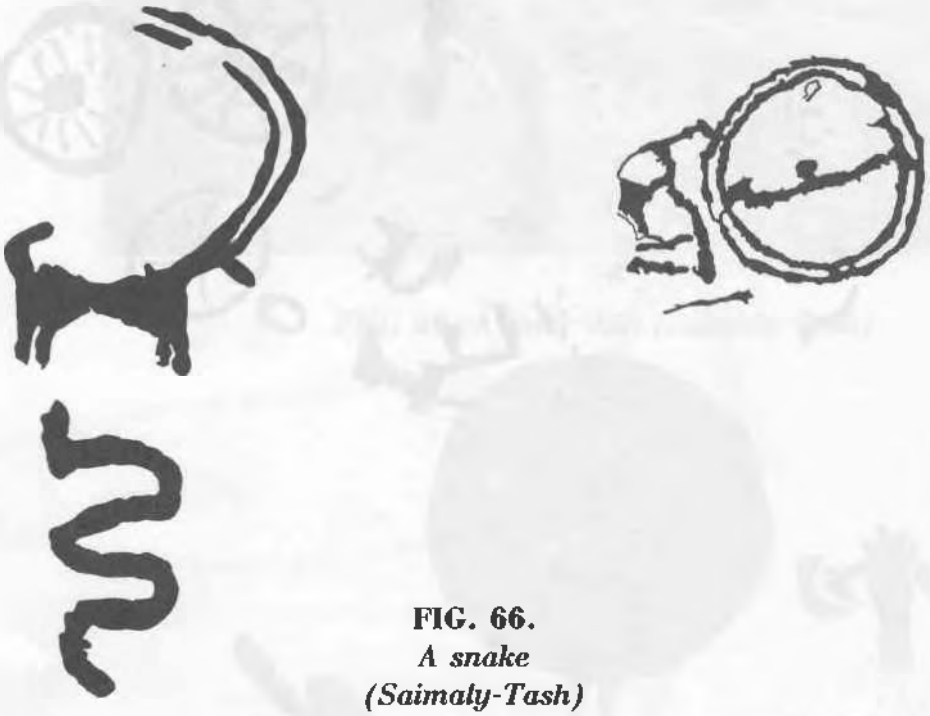


FIG. 66.
A snake (Saimaly-Tash)

FIG. 67.
Saimaly-Tash

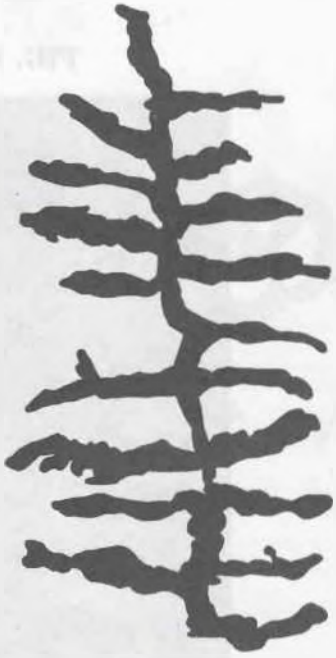


FIG. 68. *Anthropomorphs and ibexes (Saimaly-Tash)*

FIG. 69. *Saimaly-Tash*

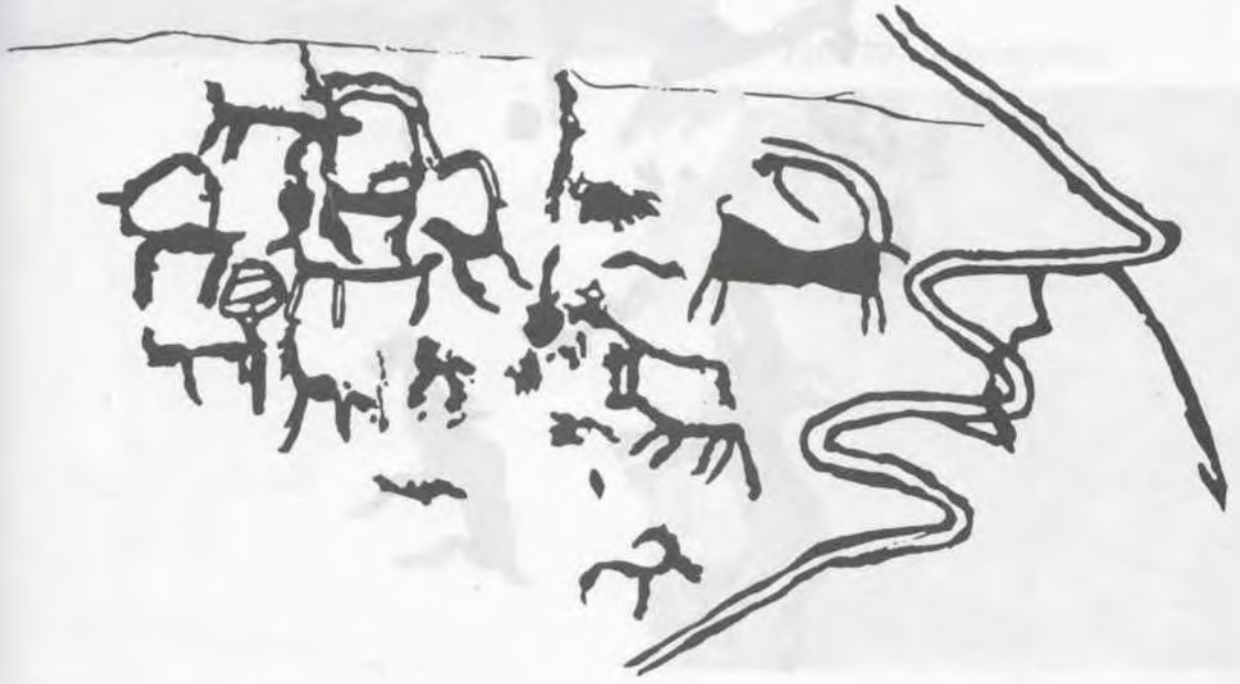


FIG. 70. *A line of ibexes (Saimaly-Tash)*

FIG. 71. *A scene of hunt (Saimaly-Tash)*

FIG. 71A. *A scene of hunt (Saimaly-Tash)*

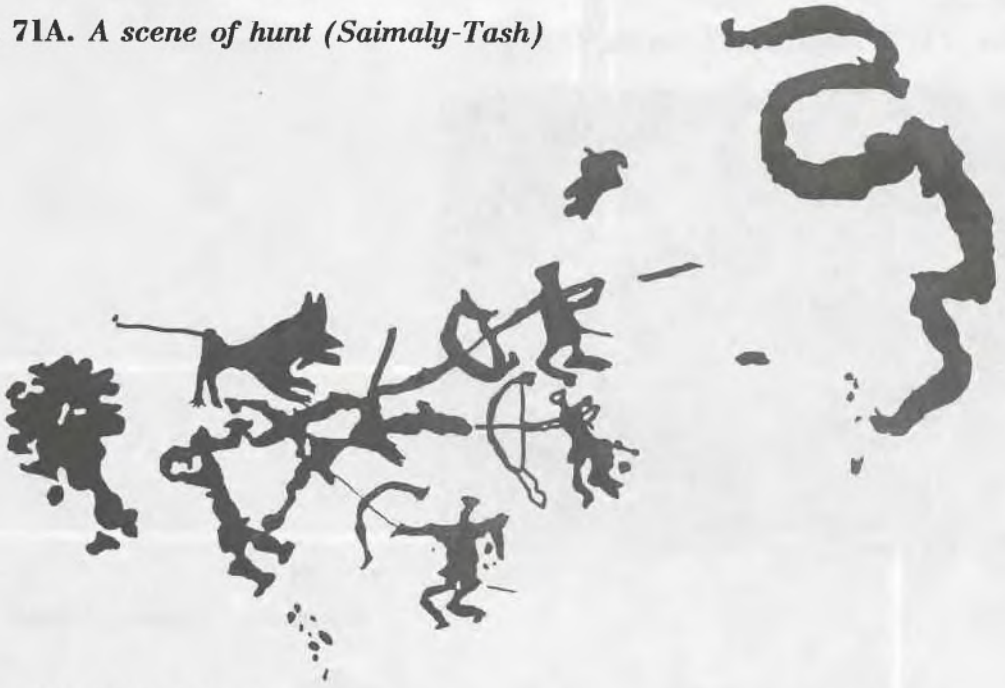


FIG. 72. *Saimaly-Tash*

FIG. 73. *Saimaly-Tash*

FIG. 74. *A labyrinth (Saimaly-Tash)*

FIG. 75.
A labyrinth (Saimaly-Tash)

FIG. 76.
Labyrinths (Sulaiman-Too)
(according to K. Maltayev)

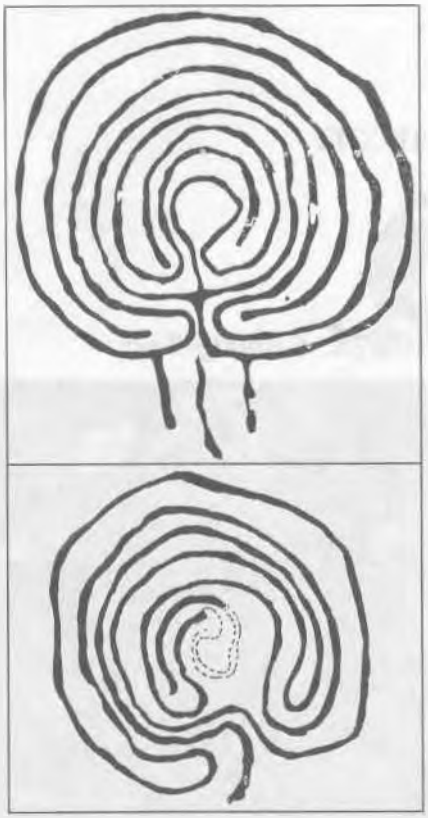


FIG. 77.
The ground plan of a house
(Saimaly-Tash)

FOTO 1.
A ritual dance scene (Saimaly-Tash)

FOTO 2.
An ibex and a cauple in a coition position (Saimaly-Tash)

Foto 3.
A sistem solar signs (Saimaly-Tash)

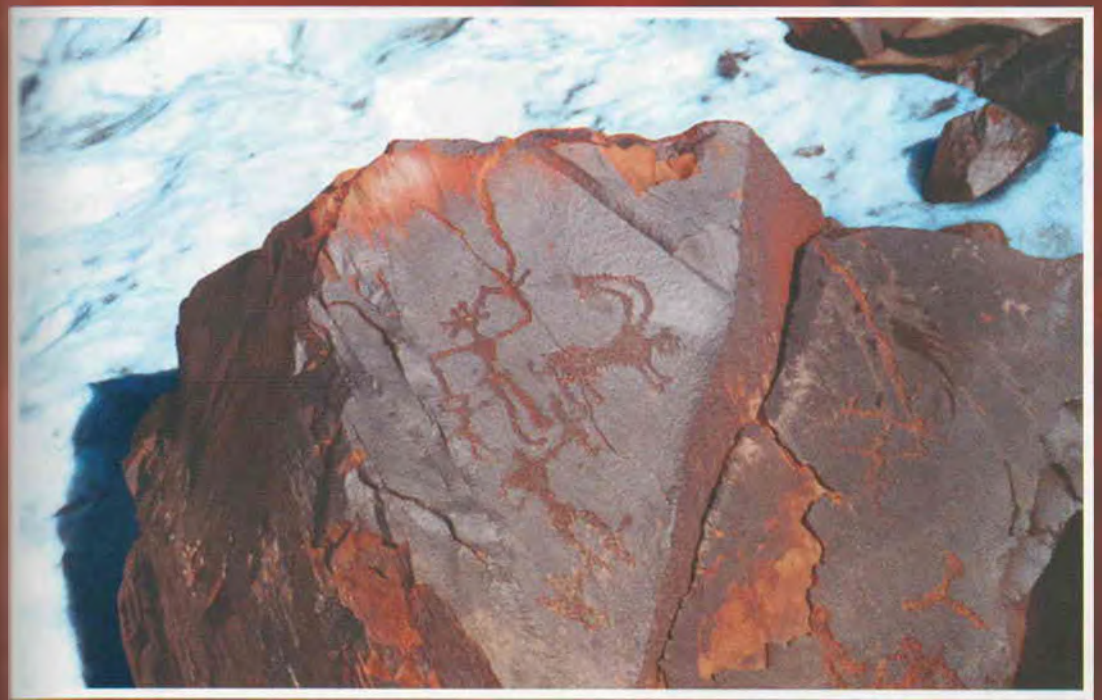


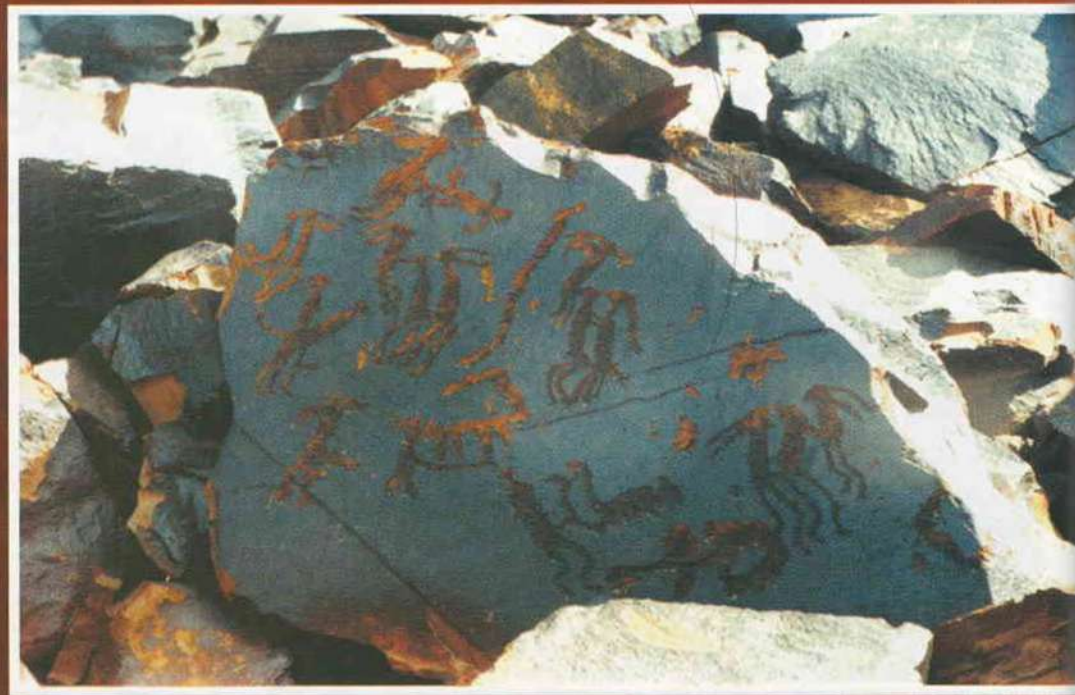
Foto 4.
Compositions with many figures (Saimaly-Tash)

FOTO 5.
A labyrinth (Saimaly-Tash)

FOTO 6.
Ibexes (Saimaly-Tash)

FOTO 7.
Camels and ibexes (Saimaly-Tash)

FOTO 8.
Erotic scenes and ibex and snacks (Saimaly-Tash)



PETROGLYPHS IN JALTYRAK-TASH SITE

Jaltyrak-Tash petroglyph site is located in Talas Valley, on the left bank of the Kaman-Su River, which joins with the Tabylgaty River, thus forming the Ur-Maral River. The latter flows into the Talas River, the main water artery in Talas Valley. Rock drawings can be found in a number of places along the river-beds, but the richest petroglyph assemblage is situated in the upper reaches of the Ur-Maral, in Aman-Su Gorge, on a huge rock lump 60 m long and eight to ten meters high, which stretches from the east to the west. The rock is known as Jaltyrak-Tash, which means "a shining stone" in Kyrgyz, and is completely covered with carvings.

V.M. Gaponenko, a student of local lore, who first discovered petroglyphs in Jaltyrak-Tash in 1956, later introduced them into scientific circulation under the name of Ur-Maral site (Gaponenko, 1963, pp. 101-110). In 1985 and 1986 other researchers published information about a new exploration of this site, which they gave a different name - Jaltyrak-Tash (Sher, Sovetova, Miklashevich, 1995, pp. 81-85).

The drawings of Jaltyrak-Tash are made on two surfaces of a huge rock outcrop – on the upper horizontal plane and on the oblique surface facing north. The sloping surfaces of the rock are covered with a thick and dense crust of patina, which looks jet-black, and shines and flashes under the sun, thus justifying its name. The drawings lie compactly and cover entirely all more or less convenient places on the rock.

The petroglyphs of Jaltyrak-Tash differ from others in the technique of making drawings and their size. There is a number of large drawings of deer, camels, and other animals there. It happens not infrequently that two small images are drawn inside one large image (of a deer, more often). Most of the petroglyphs are made with the application of deep pecking, some are carved, and a few carvings are ground.

The repertory of petroglyphs in Jaltyrak-Tash is rather multifarious. Apart from the drawings of various animals (such as deer, camels, bears, ibexes, wild boars, and beasts of prey), we can see here, like in Saimaly-Tash, many scenes with carts and chariots, erotic scenes, and the images of such fantastic creatures as centaurs, dragons, and Sanmurvs, which is a remarkable fact. Some drawings of centaurs show them shooting from bows. In terms of the richness of its motifs, stylistic peculiarities, and chronological coverage, Jaltyrak-Tash petroglyph site can be ranked as the second most interesting and significant monument in Kyrgyzstan, following Saimaly-Tash.

The most ancient drawings in Jaltyrak-Tash are believed to date from the Bronze Age. These are the images of animals, mainly ibexes, drawn in a bitriangular style. True, they are not very numerous. In terms of the manner of making, they are very close to the drawings of Saimaly-Tash also made in the bitriangular style.

More numerous is the group of drawings dating back to the Developed Bronze Age period, which includes the images of antropomorphous creatures with spread fingers, erotic scenes, the drawings of carts and chariots, along with horses and animals of uncertain species, whose hoofs are shown in the form of circles.

The Early Iron Age, or the Saka period, is presented in Jaltyrak-Tash most interesting and multifarious. The numerous images of ibexes, deer, wild boars, camels, moufflons, and some beasts of prey are made very thoroughly, in an

original manner typical of Scythian-Saka period,which style was used on a vast territory. Graceful figures of animals stand on long thin legs, as if on tiptoe, and their thighs are accurately outlined. The animals' hoofs are drawn especially thoroughly (Fig. 78 – 80). Typical of this time are the images of birds - eagles. There are also many drawings of hunters or warriors armed with bows. Noteworthy is one more motif in Jaltyrak-Tash - panthers drawn in the Scythian-Saka style (Fig.78). Usually one cannot find the images of panthers made in this style among rock drawings, but they are often found in small plastic art objects discovered in burial complexes.

A group of Jaltyrak-Tash petroglyphs dating from the Middle Ages is also very numerous and include manifold drawings. The distinctive feature of this group in this site is that in most cases the drawings present engravings made with thin grooves and are sometimes hatched inside. Some drawings depic

FIG. 78. ***Petroglyphs found in Jaltyrak-Tash site (according to V.M.Gaponenko)***

horsemen with horse-tails and flags. Also interesting are the figures of men shooting from bows. There are also pictures of warriors armed to teeth, rushing deer, ibexes, and other animals.

Imaginary creatures, such as dragons, Sanmurvs, and centaurs are the most interesting images in Jaltyrak-Tash. Centaurs are known from Saimaly-Tash, while the clearly drawn images of dragons and Sanmurvs are seen here for the first time. There are many drawings of the ethnographic contemporaneity here, including tamgas, various symbols, inscriptions of different time written in Sogdian and Arabic scripts, etc.

So, in terms of the variety of images and scenes, and especially the technique and style of making the drawings, Jaltyrak-Tash is no less important rock art monument of Kyrgyzstan than Saimaly-Tash, and needs to be more comprehensively studied and introduced into scientific circulation in a full volume.

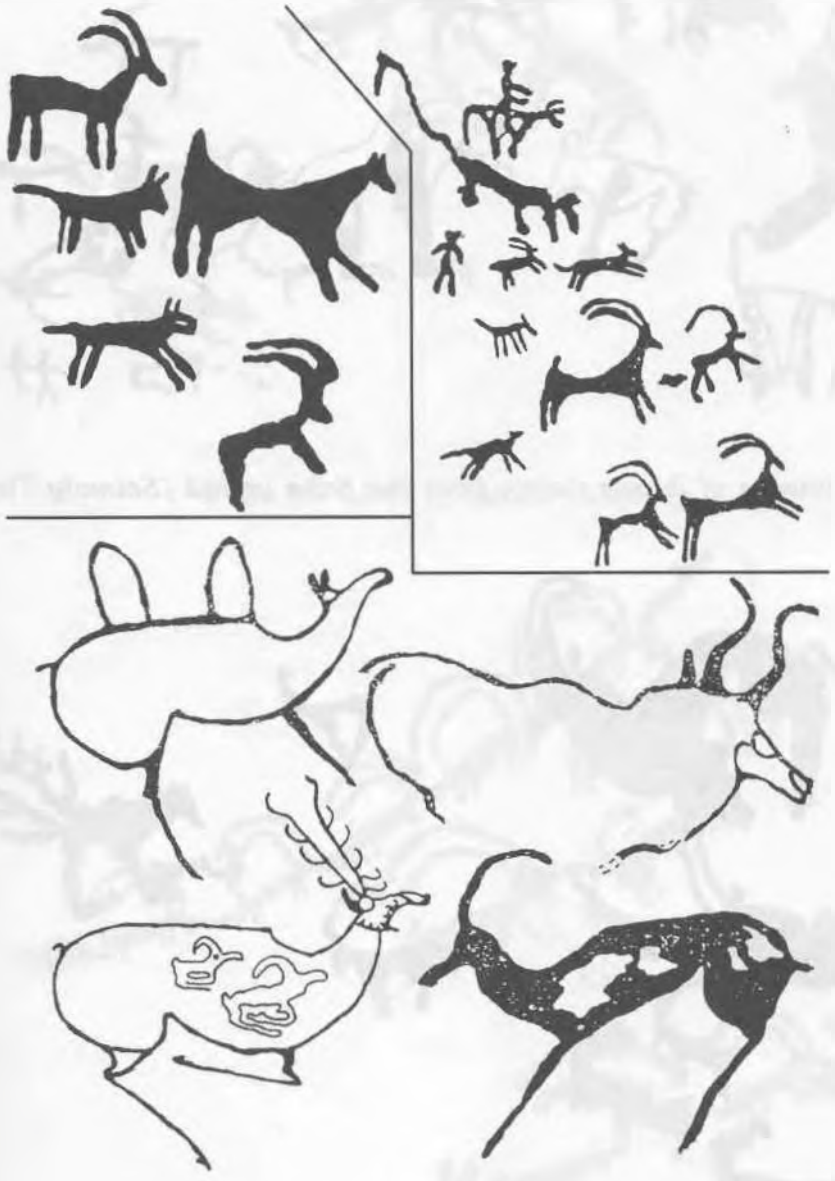


FIG. 79. ***Petroglyphs found in Jaltyrak-Tash site (according to V.M.Gaponenko)***

FIG. 80. *Petroglyphs found in Jaltyrak-Tash site (according to V.M.Gaponenko)*

FIG. 81. *The images of ibexes dating from the Saka period (Saimaly-Tash)*

FIG. 82. *Various animals (Saimaly-Tash)*

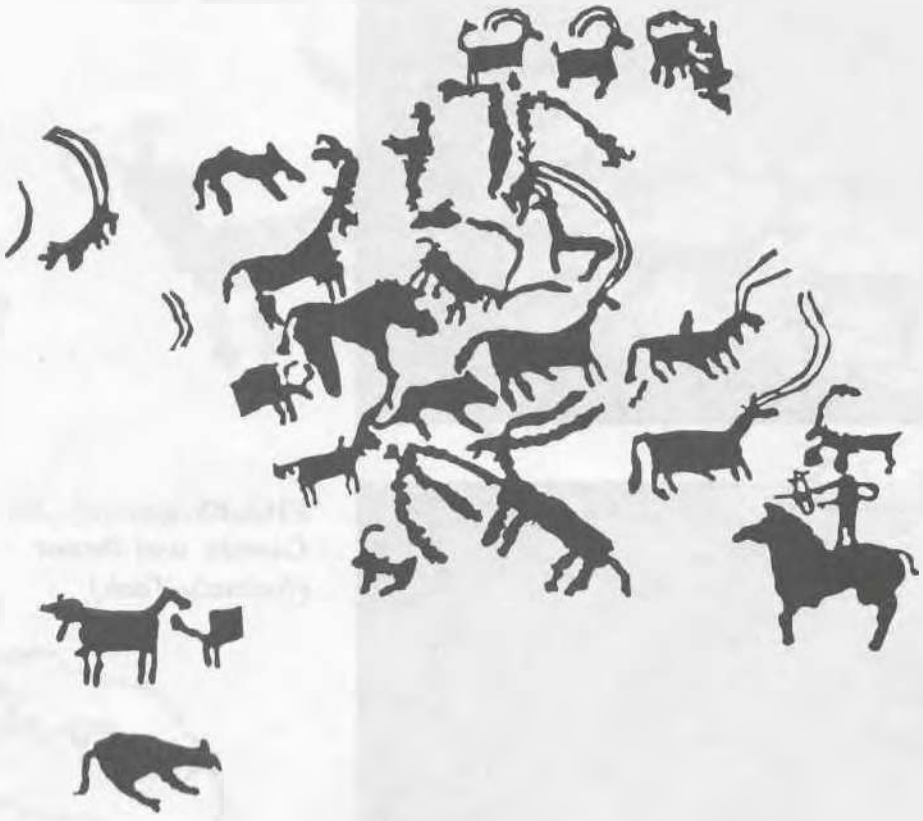


FIG. 83. *Lines of ibexes (Saimaly-Tash)*

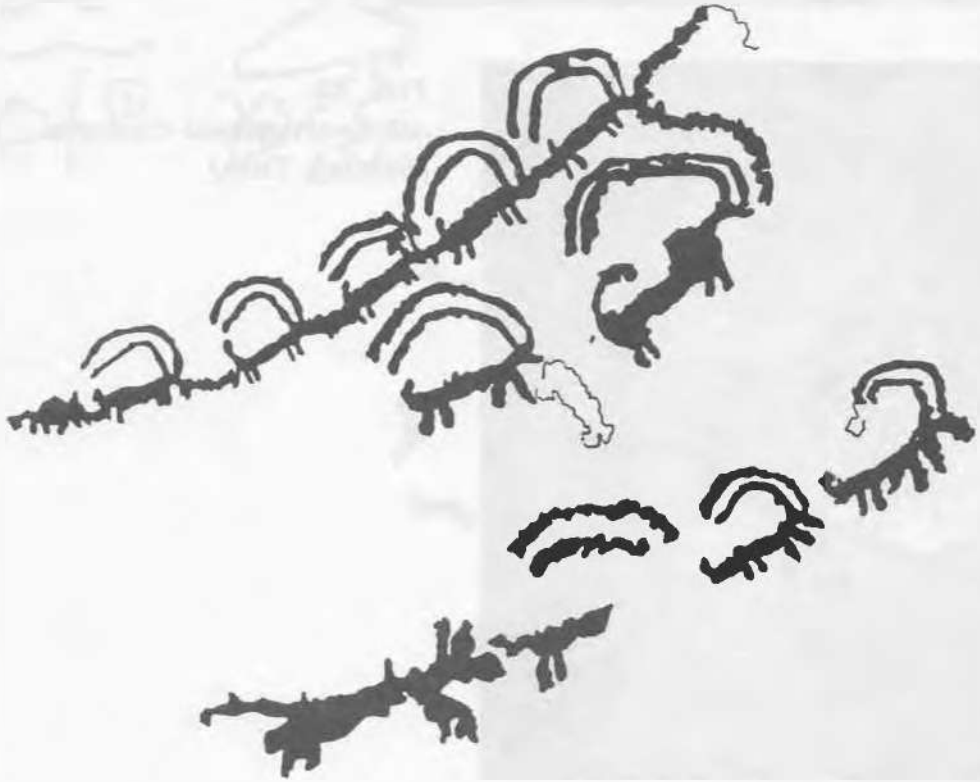


FIG. 84.
Saimaly-Tash

FIG. 85.
Camels and ibexes (Saimaly-Tash)

FIG. 86.
Antropomorphous creatures (Saimaly-Tash)

FIG. 87. *A centaur (Saimaly-Tash)*

FIG. 88. *Saimaly-Tash*

FIG. 89. *Saimaly-Tash*

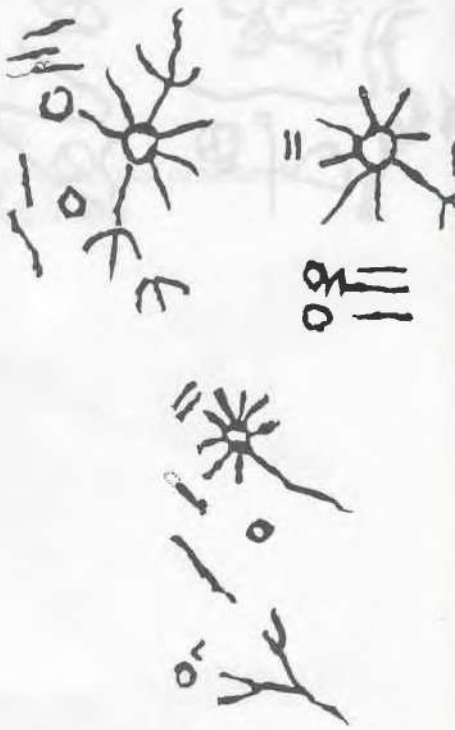
FIG. 90. *Saimaly-Tash*

FIG. 91. *An ibex (Saimaly-Tash)*

FIG. 92. *An ibex (Saimaly-Tash*

FIG. 93. *A scene of hunt (Saimaly-Tash)*

FIG. 94. *Solar signs (Sulaiman Too), (according to K. Maltaye*



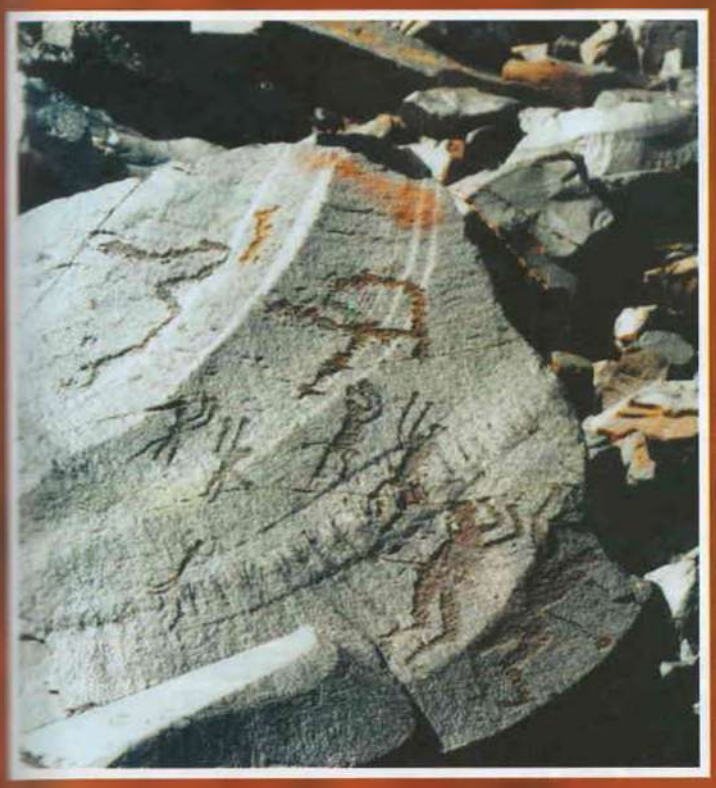


FOTO 9.
A ritual dance scene (Saimaly-Tash)

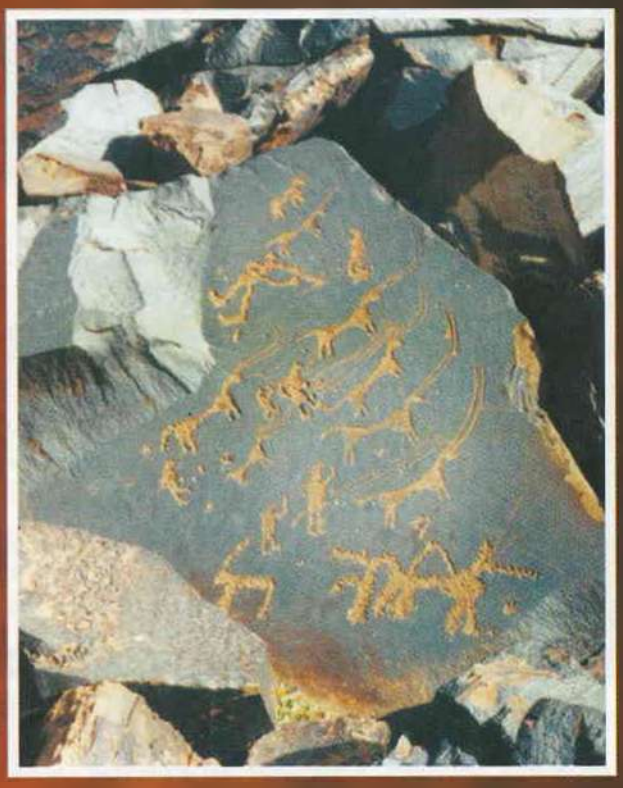


FOTO 10.
Composition with chariots and animals (Saimaly-Tash)

FOTO 11.
Compositon of Saimaly-Tash

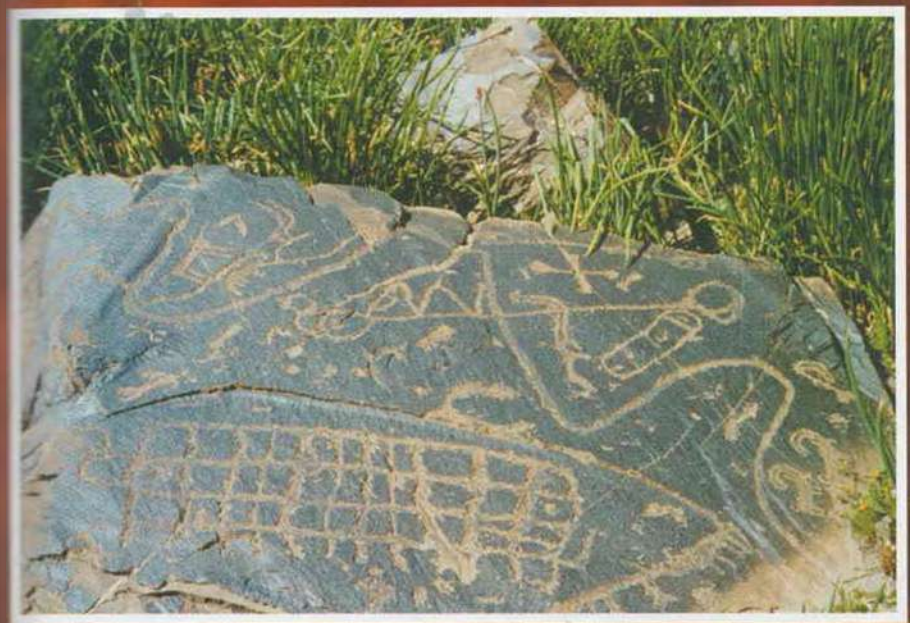


FOTO 12.
Composition with many figures (Saimaly-Tash)

FOTO 13.
Composition with ahimals (Saimaly-Tash)

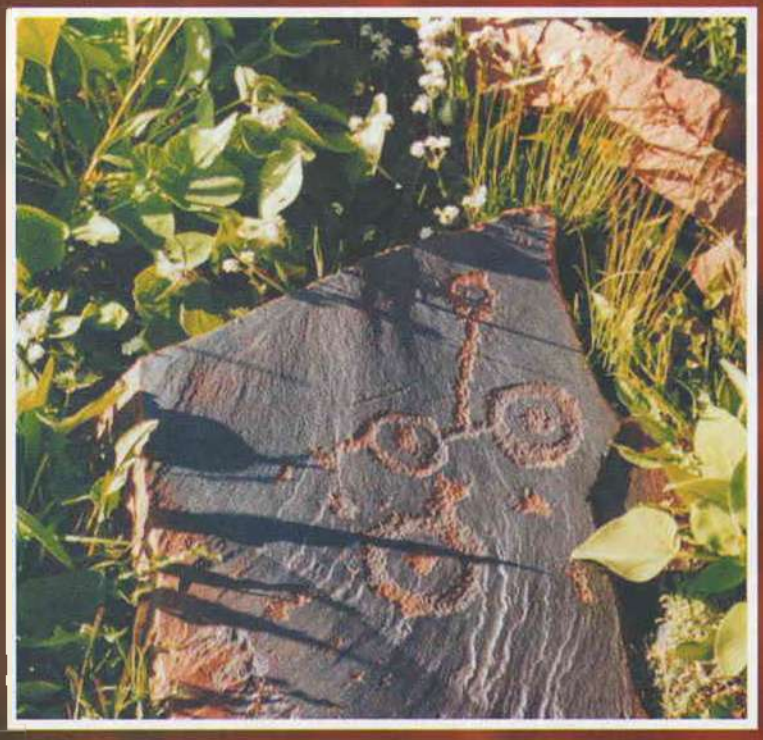


FOTO 14.
Solar signes (Saimaly-Tash)

FOTO 15.
Chariot (Saimaly-Tash)

FOTO 16.
Composition with many figures (Saimaly-Tash)

SULAIMAN-TOO PETROGLYPHS

At present Sulaiman-Too mountain (*too* in Kyrgyz means "a mountain") is located practically in the center of Osh city. The city is situated in the south-east purlieu of Fergana Valley, near the north bottom of the KichiAlai Mountain Range, at the altitude of 940 to 1,070 m above sea level. The territory of the city presents a typical piedmont plain dissected with the Ak-Bura River. The sharp cone-shaped peaks of Sulaiman-Too stand out clearly against the background of the flat and slightly slant left bank of the Ak-Bura River. In horizontal section, the mountain presents an irregular oval and stretches in latitudinal direction. It is 1.5 km long and 120 m wide, on average. Its vertex is 160 m high. Three peaks of the mountain are situated in its middle part, stretching in east-west direction, and the fourth peak is located to the north of the second height, in the widest part of the mountain. The slopes of Sulaiman-Too are very steep and cliffy, and its foot is covered with mudflow friable deposits. The mountain consists of siliceous schist, crystalline marble-like limestone, and sandstone. Its surfaces are strongly weathered and smoothed, and because of this no traces of the ancient settlement have remained. At present the contemporary city blocks of buildings surround the mountain from all sides.

Due to its configuration and location, the mountain has been considered a sacred place in Fergana Valley since the earliest times. The traces of rendering this area habitable by the man date back well from the Paleolithic, when primitive people occupied some caves and grottos of the mountain. The Bronze Age witnessed a settlement there, which, most likely, played the role of the sanctuary of the whole oasis.

Rock outcrops of Sulaiman-Too have many rather flat and differently oriented surfaces convenient for making rock drawings on them. The planes are covered with a dense layer of jet-black patina. Many surfaces contain rock drawings, which attract the attention of researchers, students of local lore, and workers of the museum located at the bottom of the mountain, from long ago (Sher, 1980; Jusupakmatov, 1988; Amanbayeva, Devlet, 1998, 2000; Sulaimanov, Maltayev, Nasirov, 1998, 1998a). The images are chiefly made by means of deep pecking on horizontal and vertical planes. A considerable part of the rock drawings present various geometrical figures, lines, and uncertain symbols. Like in Saima-ly-Tash, there are a lot of various solar signs here, in the form of crosses, swastikas, circles with a dot in the center, circles with radiating beams, etc. Worship of the sun, the chief celestial body, the source of light and warmth, influencing ripening the crop, became pronouncedly reflected here owing to the religious character of the mountain.

The images of animals are not numerous in Sulaiman-Too site and mainly present ibexes, horses, and birds obviously connected with the-then cults and the totemistic conceptions of the population, who belonged to the Chust culture.

Among these drawings noteworthy is the image of a horse. In terms of the style and the technique of making, it is analogous with the widely known images of horses on Aravan Rock and in Airymach-Too. This horse also has a sinewy body, slender long legs, and a small head on a long and smoothly curved neck (Fig 100, see also: Maltayev, 2000, pp. 22-23; and Fig. 29).

The images of snakes at Sulaiman-Too are also interesting. Very often they are presented in pairs, facing each other, their mouths open (Fig. 96, 97).

The drawings of two labyrinths will arrest your attention (Fig.76). Such labyrinths-symbols are interpreted by researchers in many ways. It is quite possible that they reflected some ancient magic conceptions, or a complex link with the next world, and transition from the earthly world to the beyond, or maybe presented a model of a religious construction used during various ancient devotions.

It is interesting that the drawings of labyrinths in Kyrgyz petroglyphs are common enough. For instance, we are aware of about ten such images among rock drawings in Saimaly-Tash.

Labyrinth is a widespread motif in the mythology of ancient Indo-European nations. According to the Greek mythology,the labyrinth is a palace,where one cannot find the exit. The sepulchres of Egyptian Pharaohs were built upon the model of labyrinths and presented a kind of closed temples, without access. L.M. Vedutova has proposed another interpretation, which sounds absolutely contrary to the former one. Vedutova considers the notion "labyrinth" not as intricacy and the arrest of movement, but, on the contrary, as an absolutely open map of Universal Stadium (Vedutova, 2000).

Various geometrical signs and zigzags were used to reflect a sophisticated complex of the Bronze Age population's conceptions connected with the worship of mountains,rivers,stones,rocks, and inexplicable nature forces. Obviously, Sulaiman-Too itself, sharply silhouetting against the plain with its unusual configuration, was an object of worship since time immemorial.

In general, about 400 various drawings and inscriptions have been discovered in Sulaiman-Too. Most of them belong to the Bronze Age (Fig. 94–100). These are the above-mentioned drawings of labyrinths, solar signs, the images of some animals, various geometrical figures,and symbols. A part of the drawings date from a later time, up to the Turkic Period. Many drawings of Sulaiman-Too have close analogues with the petroglyphs of Saimaly-Tash. Rock drawings at Sulaiman-Too are not very large in numbers,in comparison with the colossal quantity and a great variety of motifs in Saimaly-Tash site, still, they also reflect a complex picture of interaction between two different cultures - farmers and cattle-raisers. Most likely, these drawings were left both by the members of the Chust culture, who possibly inhabited Osh settlement, and by the representatives of steppe culture tribes,who lived in the neighborhood. The point is that there were cases, when ceramics of two different traditions (vessels decorated with designs belonging to the Chust culture and vessels with stereo-

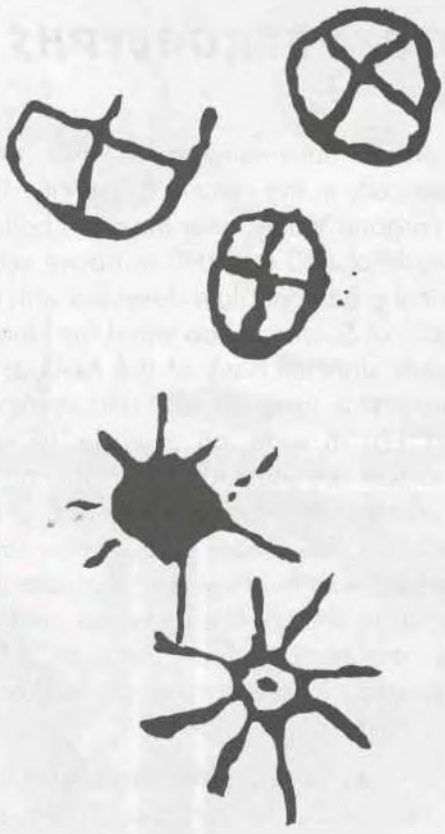
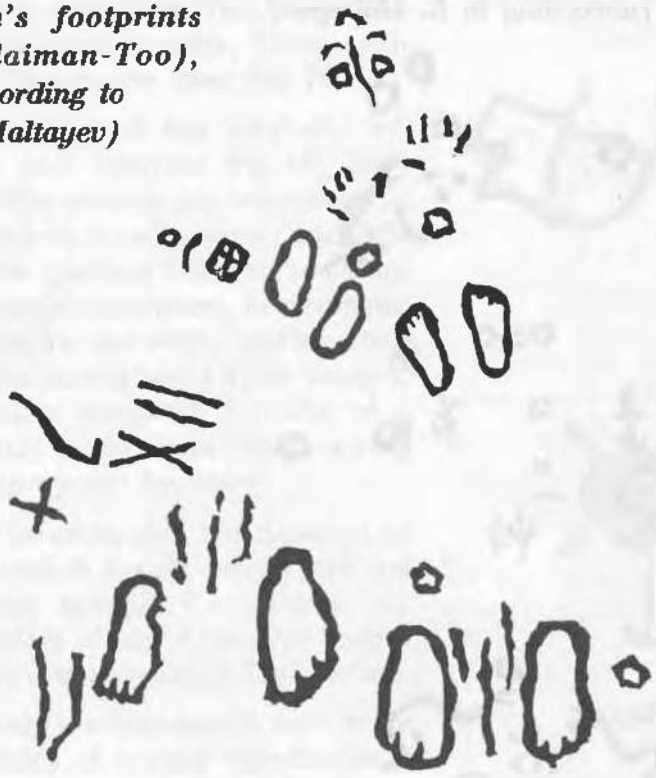


FIG. 95.
Solar signs (Sulaiman-Too) (according to K. Maltayev)

FIG. 96. *Snakes (dragons) and solar signs (Sulaiman-Too), (according to K. Maltayev)*

FIG. 97. *Solar and treelike signs, and snakes (Sulaiman-Too), (according to K. Maltayev)*

FIG. 98.
Man's footprints (Sulaiman-Too), (according to K. Maltayev)



typed ornaments of the steppe cu
ture) were found in the same layer,
the former Osh settlement dating fro
the Bronze Age.

As has already been said, amor
other drawings found in Sulaima
Too, especially noteworthy is the ir
age of a horse, which strongly diffe
from the drawings of other anima
here, in terms of style and the tec
nique of making the drawing. Th
horse has a sinewy body, slender lor
legs, and a small head on a lor
and smoothly curved neck (Fig. 10

The drawing is very similar to, eve
almost identical with the widely know
images of horses found on Arav
Rock and in Airymach-Too si
(Fig.101); so, the latter deserve
special attention.

FIG. 99.
Drawings of birds (Sulaiman-Too), (according to K. Maltayev)

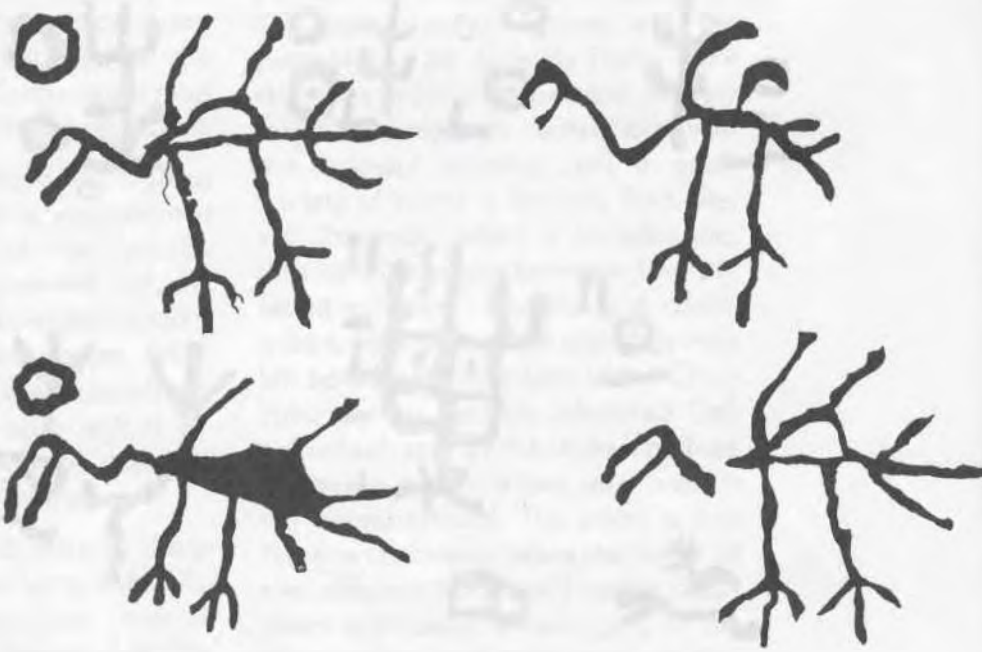


FIG. 100. *The image of a horse (Sulaiman-Too), (according to T. Nasirov)*

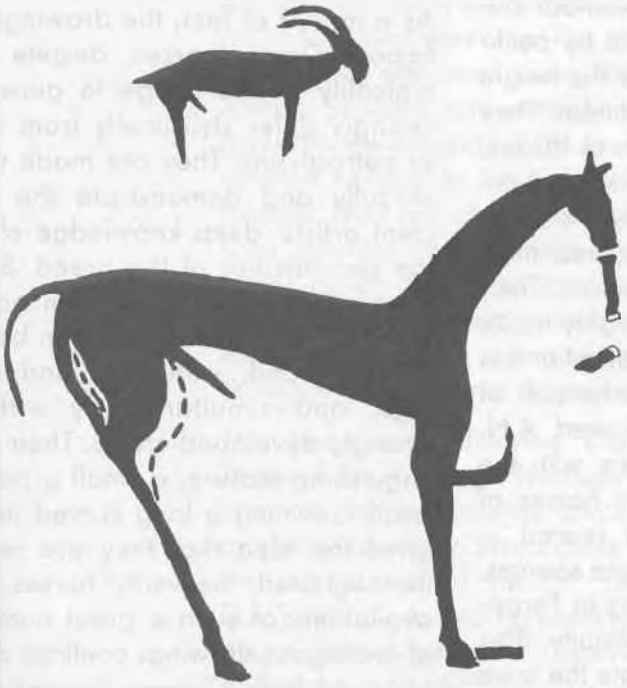
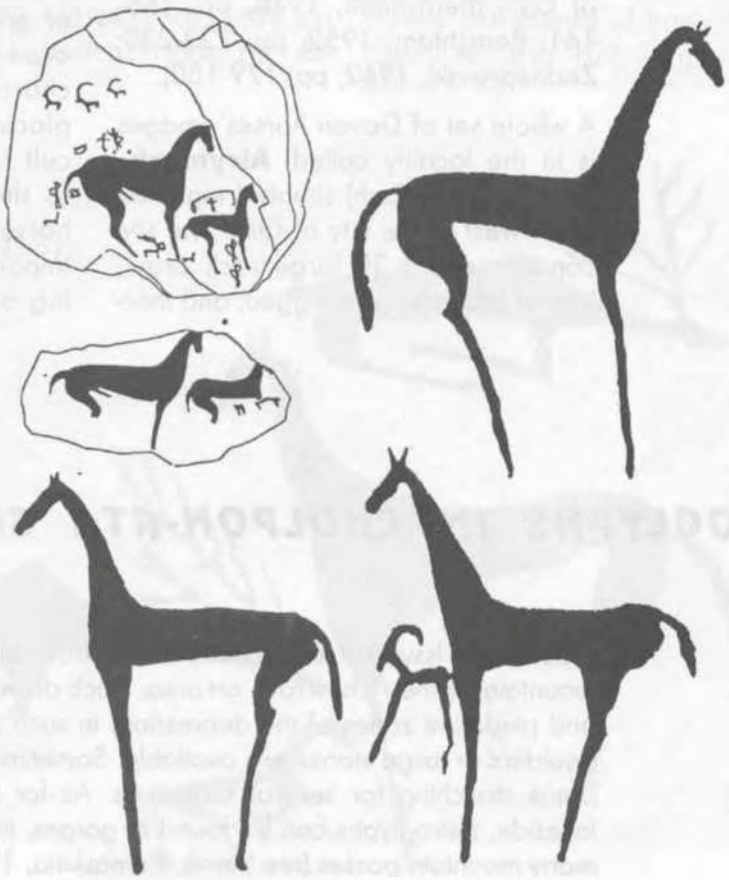


FIG. 101. *The images of horses. Aravan (1), Airymach-Too (2-4) (according to A.N. Bernshtam and Yu.A. Zadneprovski)*



Drawings of Aravan is located 20 km north-west of the city of Osh. It presents a not very high rock situated on the right bank of the Aravan-Sai River. The drawings are made by pecking on the rock surface, at the height of 15 or 16 m from the bottom. They depict such common motifs as ibexes, deer, human beings, and some symbols. What catches the eye is large images of two pairs of horses, most probably, stallions and mares. Their graceful figures are thoroughly made and look clear-cut. The peculiarities of the style and the technique of making the drawings allowed A.N. Bernshtam to connect them with the legend about *tyanma*, sky horses of pure breed, which were reared in Davan, according to Chinese sources. Davan was a state existing in Fergana Valley in times of antiquity. This fact gave occasion to locate the town of Ershi, the capital of Davan famous for breeding horses, namely here, and to consider the ruins of the ancient settlement of Markhamat the remains of Ershi (Bernshtam, 1948, pp. 155-161; Bernshtam, 1952, pp. 222-230; Zadneprovski, 1962, pp. 179-180).

A whole set of Davan horses' images is in the locality called **Airymach-Too** (or Surot-Tash) situated eight km north-west of the city of Osh. The site contains about 30 large rock drawings of beautiful, slim-legged, and thoroughbred horses standing one by one. Stylistically, they are analogous with the images of horses in Aravan.

As a matter of fact, the drawings of famous Davan horses, despite the typicality of the image in general, strongly differ stylistically from other petroglyphs. They are made very skillfully and demonstrate the ancient artists' deep knowledge of all the peculiarities of this breed. Such drawings are united with an equal style. All the horses are shown beautifully shaped, with long and slim legs, and simultaneously with a strongly developed croup. Their distinguishing feature, a small graceful head crowning a long curved neck, gives the idea that they are really thoroughbred, "heavenly" horses. The availability of such a great number of analogous drawings confirms data obtained from Chinese sources that Osh Oasis was famed for breeding horses in ancient times, and allows to state that the cult of the horse was developed in Davan to a rather great extent. Scenes with the images of horses are of manifestly cult character. These localities were the places of worship and performing cult rites. The scenes are devoted to the idea of the reproduction of horses, which was considered of state importance in Davan, Osh Oasis being one of its centers.

PETROGLYPHS IN CHOLPON-ATA SITE

Picturesque Issyk-Kul Basin surrounded from all sides with not less picturesque mountains,is the richest rock art area. Rock drawings are found in both lakeshore and piedmont zones of the depression, in such places where the assemblages of boulders or large stones are available. Sometimes rock drawings can be found in areas stretching for several kilometers. As for mountainous regions in Issyk-Kul lakeside, petroglyphs can be found in gorges, intermountain valley tracts, and on many mountain passes (see Vinnik, Pomaskina, 1975, pp. 94-101).

Most of the rock drawings are concentrated in the west outskirts of the town of Cholpon-Ata, at the north part of Issyk-Kul lakeside (Issyk-Kul Province), in a rather level piedmont area. This territory is dissected with small rivers, sais, and ravines. Boulders with petroglyphs begin within the precincts of the town and continue right up to the Kungei-Alatoo foothills. They are of various size and have different configurations. Unfortunately, during the construction of the Cholpon-Ata airport and municipal construction in this zone, a part of the rock drawings have become destroyed.

This huge rock drawing site well known from long ago because of its location and accessibility attracts the attention of many researchers since the second half of the 19th century. D.F. Vinnik, G.A. and Pomaskina, Kyrgyz archaeologists; A.V. Maryashev, a Kazakh archaeologist; Ye. Miklashevich, a worker of the Kemerovo University, and others started studying it in the second half of the 20th century (Vinnik, Pomaskina, 1975; Maryashev, 1970; Miklashevich, 1988, pp. 81-82; Miklashevich, 1995, pp. 63-68). Still, the whole complex hasn't yet been studied in a full volume, neither duly reflected in publications.

Cholpon-Ata rock drawings are made by pecking on granite and granitoid boulders with a coarse-grained structure, which are covered with a thick layer of patina. The technique of making the images in Cholpon-Ata site depended on the kind of a surface and varied from shallow and frequent cavities on smooth planes to large and rare ones on uneven coarse-grained surfaces. Carved figures are mainly of silhouette type, and some are made in a contour manner. Rather often dents, curls, and spirals fill the space inside the contours. There are also images made by means of grinding of grooved lines.

The motifs used in the petroglyphs of Cholpon-Ata are quite multifarious and include ibexes, argalis, horses, camels, and dogs; less often are deer, aurochses, wolves, snow leopards, etc. Apart from the images of animals, there are scenes of hunt, chase after prey, etc. (Fig. 103, 104).

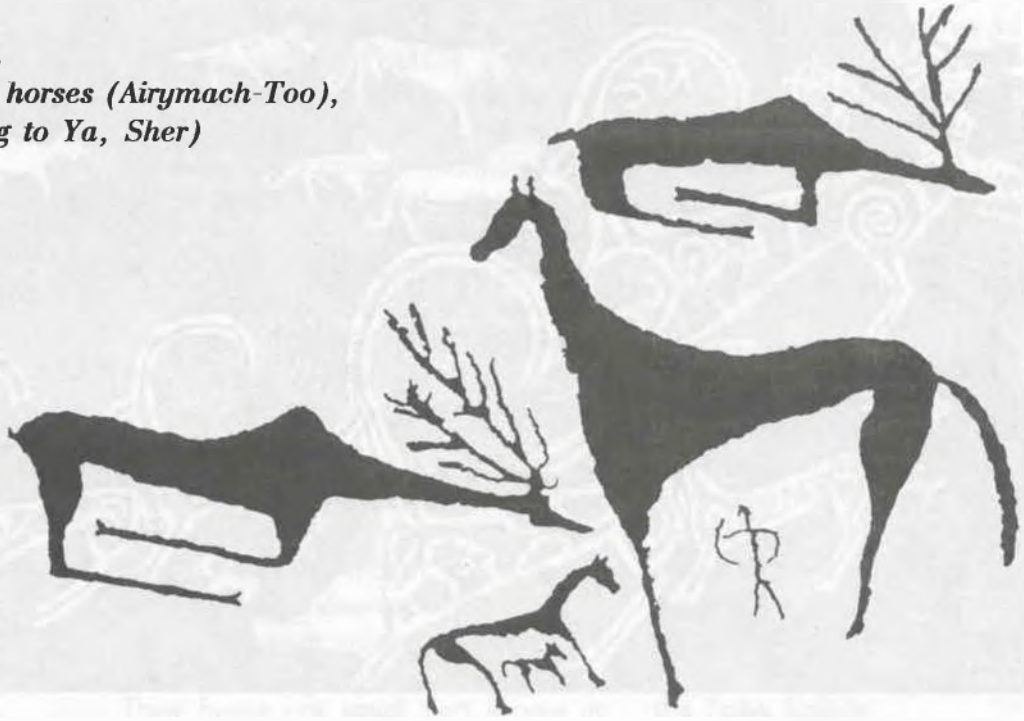
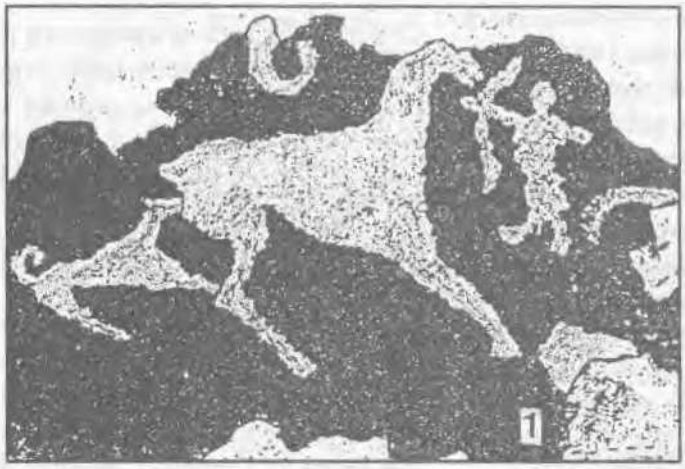
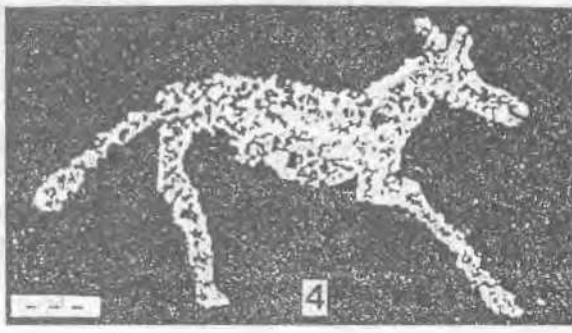


FIG. 102.
Deer and horses (Airymach-Too), (according to Ya, Sher)

FIG. 103. *Petroglyphs found in Cholpon-Ata site (according to Ye.Miklashevich)*





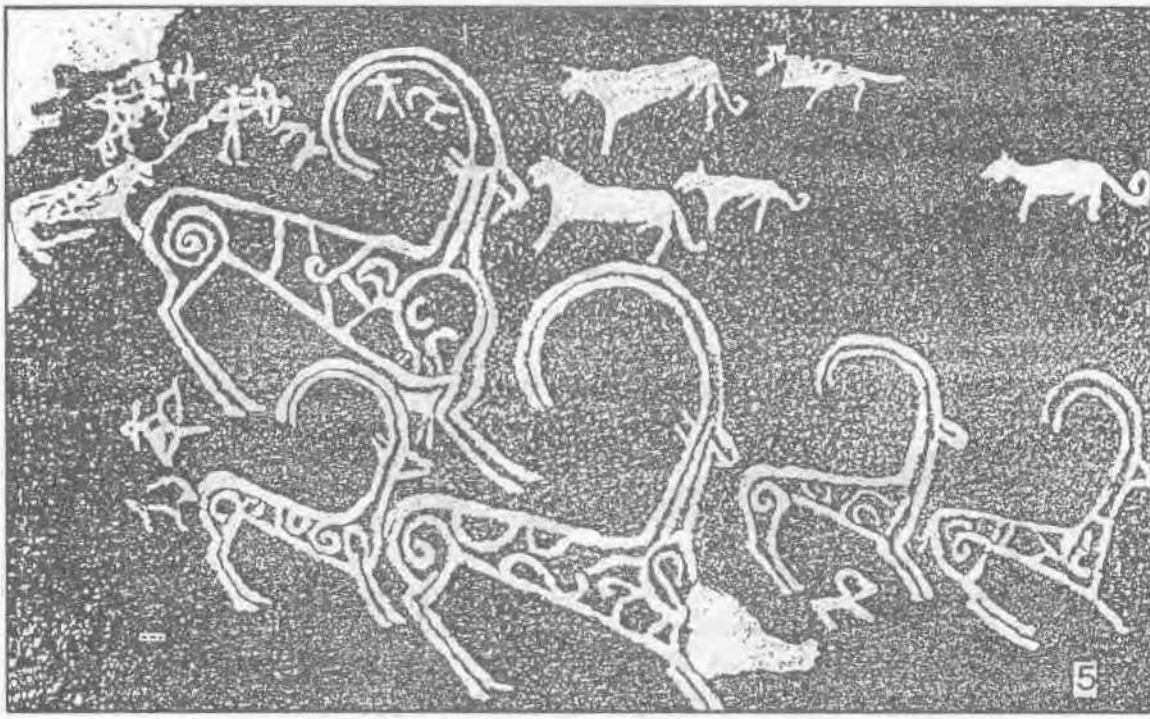


FIG. 104.
Petroglyphs found in Cholpon-Ata site (according to Ye. Miklashevich)

Most expressive is a big composition on a large boulder. It depicts a flock of running ibexes. Some bowers with dogs are around. Possibly, there are some beasts of prey among the images (Fig.103, 5). All ibexes are drawn large and in a contour manner. Their bodies are ornamented with various curls. The animals' horns are long, thrown back, and slightly curved. The images of the dogs and other animals are smaller and spaces inside the outlines of their bodies are all pecked. The figures of the bowers are quite small.

There are two large images of deer drawn nearly life-size on a huge boulder, in that same massif. The drawing shows the two deer standing side by side. The space inside the outlines of the animals' bodies is all pecked. Their horns are small and shown in the form of straight lines with extensions going in both directions. The other side of the same boulder is occupied with a large image of an aurochs, which, however, is less legible than the drawing of the deer.

A large image of a chariot (?) drawn on another boulder is also interesting. This is a sketchy drawing showing two wheels connected with a straight line. Nearby is the graceful figure of an ibex, possibly overlapping the image of the chariot.

The petroglyphs of Cholpon-Ata Tract are referred to the period from the 2nd millennium B.C. to the mid 1st millennium A.D. The most ancient drawings of the Cholpon-Ata site belong to the Bronze Age. They are few in number and discernible with difficulty, so, it is not easy to distinguish them from the whole assemblage of the drawings with certainty. The petroglyphs of this kind include some images of aurochses comparable, in terms of their style, with drawings dating from the Bronze Age and found at other petroglyph sites. A not very large series of the drawings of beasts of prey, aurochses, and ibexes made by means of grinding of carved lines and resembling the aforementioned bitriangular images of Saimaly-Tash, also belongs to this group.

A large portion of the drawings of Cholpon-Ata belongs to the 6th through the 1st centuries B.C.,i.e. the time when nomads of the Saka tribe union inhabited the territory of Issyk-Kul Basin. That is why images made in Scythian-Saka original style are presented widely enough here. They present large contour drawings of ibexes and deer with ornamented bodies, also silhouette drawings of ibexes, camels, dogs, deer, wild boars, some species of beasts of prey, and bowers. There is a unique image of an *akinak*, a short dagger typical of the Saka Epoch.

Like in many other monuments located in Issyk-Kul lakeside area, most of the petroglyphs of Cholpon-Ata, date back to the Usun Period. These are typical images of ibexes, which continue to preserve some traits of the Saka style, though became more sketchy. They often overlap the drawings of the Saka Period or are located on the same planes with them. The images of such ibexes, single or paired, can be found on many boulders. Compositions with many figures, such as ibexes walking in line, scenes of hunt for ibexes, or the figures of ibexes facing each other, can be also found among the Usun period petroglyphs.

A small group of images belongs to the Turkic Period and a more recent time. These are mainly geometrized figures of ibexes, the images of people riding on horses and camels, also caravans of walking camels, separate scenes of hunt, and the images of tamgas.

Like many other assemblages of rock drawings, the petroglyphs of Cholpon-Ata are of great historical and cultural significance. The value of th Cholpon-Ata site is in the availabilit of the following peculiarities, whic distinguish this site from other petro glyphic monuments prevalent: (1) th availability of a large number of rock with drawings located within the pre cincts of the town – nearly 400 rocks and even more than 3,000 stone are in the massif between the tow of Cholpon-Ata and the village o Dolinka; (2) the availability of very bi rocks with carved complex composi tions of different age on, which is ver important for relative age determina tion of the drawings. Sometimes suc huge rocks contain very large, near life-size drawings of animals; (3) direct link between this site with othe archaeological objects situated in tho same area, such as burial mounds o different age, fences, various construc tions made of stones, *tash-koroo*, etc

It is to be said in addition that th location and the topography of thi monument, along with its peculiarities make the site especially convenien for turning it into a museum under th open sky.

ABOUT THE SEMANTIC ASPECT OF SOME MOTIFS IN ROCK DRAWINGS

Rock art is a unique archaeological source, which, unlike other sources, make it possible to reveal many aspects of life and ideology of ancient societies. Tho is why we consider noteworthy the whole volume of information and th semantic load contained in rock drawings. The origin of petroglyphs i connected with people's religious conceptions, religious cults, and worship o their animal ancestors and protecting spirits. Rock drawings appeared th symbols of these religious notions, a kind of a system of signs, whic graphically reproduced ancient people's religious-mythological thinking.

As for Saimaly-Tash with its colossal number of rock drawings and the wealt of motifs, it appears a unique source of information not only about many lif aspects, but more particularly about the spiritual culture of ancient cattle-raiser and hunters, who inhabited the Tien Shan, and farmers, who lived in area close to Fergana Valley, also about their beliefs, and religious-cult an mythological conceptions.

All rock drawing sites contain an enormous number of the images of various animals, among which prevailing are the ibex, the aurochs, and then the deer. Sometimes the drawings of animals are carved very skillfully and extremely clear, but, apart from this, the beasts are sometimes imparted some specific features and elements unusual for them, for instance, hypertrophied horns arranged as complex spiral or labyrinth-like figures. It is possible that such images iconographically close to the images of labyrinths,bear the same semantic load as the latter, and, undoubtedly, reflected some mythological plots.

In their mytho-epic notions, different nations primarily fancied deities as zoomorphic creatures, as certain animals. Later such a fancy transferred into an antropomorphous image, and a corresponding animal started to serve as his or her temporary incarnation. In many cases the animal accompanied the deity and became the main animal offered in sacrifice to this deity. The survivals of such notions remain even in developed religions.

Worship of the ibex is among the most ancient cults. For example, the burial place with a Neanderthal boy found in Teshik-Tash Grotto and dating back to the Mousterian Epoch was laid round with an ibex's horns (Okladnikov, 1949, pp. 78-79), which is the evidence of beliefs connected with this animal. A number of interesting things containing the image of the ibex were found in different archaeological monuments belonging to later epochs, such as the Eneolithic, the Bronze Age, and Early Iron Age. The most remarkable among them, in our view, is a fragment of the statuette of a woman found in Namazga-Tepeh, Turkmenistan, which contained the picture of an ibex. The finding is referred to the beginning of the 3rd millennium B.C. (Masson, 1960, p. 395).

The ibex occupied a definite place in the ancient oriental mythology as well. In old Indian myths God Daksha had an ibex's head. In *Rigveda,* sacrificial pillars identified with the Wold Tree, were compared to ibexes' horns (Toporov, 1974, p.66). In *Avesta* Veratragna, the Thunderer, comes out as an ibex with sharp horns (Yasht XIV, 23). Rather often a female deity was compared to the image of the ibex or became its protector. Iranian-speaking nations connected the image of the ibex with the cult of mountains, "the tree cycle," and fertility, but simultaneously referred it to the chthonic world (Litvinski, 1972, pp. 144-148).

The image of the ibex is prevailing in rock drawings, and its share among all other images in petroglyphs reaches 50 to 60%, and sometimes 70%. All petroglyph assemblages contain numerous and multifarious drawings of ibexes. Sometimes they are carved very thoroughly and accurately, though with too large horns. Sometimes horns are twisted in a complex way and thrown far backward, thus making the animal look proud and independent. For example,Siberian nations consider the ibex the master of all beasts (Kyzlasov, 1986, p. 225; *Myths of the World's Nations,* vol. 1, pp.70-71).

Rock drawings are a visual proof that the cult of the ibex, or *kiyik,* was widely spread among the ancient population of the Tien Shan, beginning from the Eneolithic and Early Bronze Period, then during the Early Iron Age, up to the Middle Ages. Ethnographic material available evidences that later this cult was preserved by the Kyrgyz, who absorbed all the genetic and spiritual heritage of their predecessors. This

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* ***Kiyik is a general name for all wild animals with divided hoofs, such as an argali, a roe, etc. Kuran is a male roe or a male goitered gazelle (See K.K.Yudakhin, Kyrgyz-Russian Dictionary. Moscow, 1965).***

cult became reflected in the complex clan-and-tribal structure of the Kyrgyz. Some Kyrgyz tribes bore such names as Kiyik-Naiman and Kuran-Naiman* (Abramzon, 1946, p. 130). The folklore materials of minor epics reflect most vividly the totemistic concepts of the Kyrgyz concerning the ibex totem, the kiyik totem.

No less important was the cult of the aurochs relating to the idea of fertility, abundance, and well-being. The images of aurochses are also numerous among other rock drawings in Saimaly-Tash, Jaltyrak-Tash, and some other sites, which fact vividly testifies to a really significant role played by this animal in the production economy established by Central Asian tribes of earlier cattle-breeders during the Eneolithic and the Bronze Age. It was time when the aurochs became considered a sacred animal.

Very interesting are the drawings of the bulls in Saimaly-Tash, where it is depicted with a contour circle and a dot in center, on its head, instead of horns. Its tail ends in a bulge in the form of a sphere (Fig. 7 – 10). There are many such images there. Most probably, they also present a reverberation of myths connected with the aurochs. In Indo-Iranian beliefs, the aurochs was a participant of solar cycle myths and personified many gods, such as Indra, the god of thunder and victory; Surya, a sun deity; Ashvins, twin-gods personifying morning and evening twilight; Ushas, a daybreak goddess; Mitra, the god of the sun and agreement; Ahura Mazda, the highest god in Zoroastrianism, etc. (Ogibenin, 1973, pp. 323-327). The role of the aurochs in various rites devoted to fertility and cosmogony is widely known (Snesarev, 1969, p.165)

Among other drawings of aurochses especially noteworthy are several images found in Surottuu (Suraty) Tract. They are large, nearly one meter long, and made in an unusual manner – their bodies are shown by means of complete pecking, but some large spots are left nearly intact, with rare dotty cavities. They present the figures of aurochses standing calmly, and are depicted very thoroughly and accurately. The animals are shown with strong trunks, mighty heads, and small horns, which are slightly curved (Fig.17). These drawings made so thoroughly and skillfully seem to vividly demonstrate the role of these animals in the Bronze Age population's economy and spiritual life,in which the aurochs was assigned a very important role.

It is to be noted that formerly Surottuu site was probably an interesting and spacious monument. G.V. Parfenov, a student of local lore, stated in '60s that the site counted about 1,000 images. He noticed the availability of the images of ibexes, horses, bears, aurochses, bison, snow leopards, camels, leopards, wolves, dogs,

foxes, also hunt scenes, etc. in the repertory of the petroglyphs of Surottuu site (see M. Khujanazarov, 1995, p.11). To our deep regret, during the construction of a dam at that place, the site was destroyed. After the destruction of the complex, it was examined by M. Khujanazarov, a Uzbek archaeologist, who then amended both the documentation relating to separate images, including those of the aforementioned aurochses, and their interpretation. (Khujanazarov, 1995, p.11).

The numerous images of the deer undoubtedly have special magic meaning as well. Worship of the deer was also strongly developed among Central Asian nations and most probably was very close to the cult of the ibex or the argali.

Indo-European myths and legends glorified a golden cosmic deer. A.P. Okladnikov wrote, "as long ago as in the Stone Age the sun was fancied as a cosmic creature alive, as a deer with golden horns intolerably shining who ran through the whole sky, from

the east to the west, during a day. That is why Bronze Age artists carved such a deer with horns in the form of the sun disk, the Golden Horns Deer, not a simple one, on planes, in order to dispel all doubts about the essence of this animal." (Okladnikov, 1964, pp. 173-174, etc.).

It is believed that the deer's horns could symbolize the World Tree and its parallels, such as the Tribal Tree and the Tree of Life (A. Akishev, 1984, p. 39).

Later, the deer became one of ancient Turkic tribes' main totems and was considered one of their forefathers, about whom a lot of legends and myths have been preserved (see Abramzon, 1971, pp.281-284, etc.). Maybe this was the reason why in Issyk-Kul lakeside zone and in Talas, deer were often depicted nearly life-size (Fig. 78, 79).

The image of the elk found in the locality called Japyryk, in the Inner Tien Shan, is semantically almost identical with the images of the deer. This is a unique rock drawing. It is carved on a flat rock, in its upper section, and depicts a single elk walking to the right. The drawing is absolutely realistic and reproduces the animal's character and habits pretty well. The beast's proud head with typical branchy horns and its heavy muzzle with fleshy lips and a knobble under its lip, a so-called "ear-ring," are reproduced in a very expressive manner. The animal has a short tail. Its four legs are thoroughly drawn, its hoofs are emphasized (Fig. 35).

As is known, there are no images of elks among petroglyphs in the whole Central Asia, not only in Kyrgyzstan. As for the drawings of deer, they are rather numerous and can be found everywhere, unlike the images of elks, which are not available among Central Asian petroglyphs. This particular drawing is the only one found on the territory of Kyrgyzstan. Still, if compared with the known rock paintings of elks of Siberia and Altai or petroglyphs from other places, where these animals could be found, this particular image has direct analogies with neither of them. The whole manner of the reproduction of the animal in this case differs from that used in the petroglyphs of South Siberia. The bodies of South Siberian elks are somewhat shorter, while their legs are longer. Branchy horns are a rare case there. As for this case, the elk's legs are shorter, so, its body looks longer. The elk has branchy horns typical only of this species. In general, the drawing is made extremely realistically, and we can see the volumetric figure of the animal with its typical traits and merits.

Closer analogies can be found among the applied art articles of Scythian-Saka period, rather then among rock drawings. For example, an elk with similar typical horns and the proportions of the body and legs similar to our image was depicted on a superimposed plate on a scabbard found in Issyk burial mound, Kazakhstan (Akishev, 1978, p. 106, Table 25). The figures of elks cut out from leather and found in Pazyryk burial mounds are almost identical with our case (Rudenko, 1960, p. 265, Fig. 136, l, m). The image of the elk was especially significant in the complex system of Kyrgyz tribal structure, and the names of some clans were connected with the animal kingdom: *bugu kin* means "deer's kin", *boru kin* means "wolf's kin"; there were also tribes whose names contained the ethnonym *bagysh* (elk), such as *sary bagysh* – a yellow elk, *chon bagysh* –a large elk, etc.

In his time, S.M. Abramzon, a prominent expert in the Kyrgyz history and culture, when studying the Kyrgyz people' ethnogeny, paid attention to the meaning of the ethnonym *bagysh,* and supposed, following N.F. Aristov, that there might have been an ethnic component connected with Sayano-Altai among the ancestors of the Tien Shan Kyrgyz. The

Kyrgyz word *bagysh* is a phonetic variant of the Altaian word *pagych* (Abramzon, 1971, pp. 39-41).

As we can see, the inter-ethnic links of the ancient inhabitants of the Tien Shan are confirmed by means of rock drawings. Probably, these centuries-old relations go back well to the Early Iron Age or even to the Bronze Age.

Folk mythology has preserved a lot of legends and popular beliefs connected with the worship of a wolf and a dog. In some of them a wolf or a dog breast-fed human babies, thus becoming the man's ancestor, his forefather. In ancient religions the cult of the wolf was especially popular (see Gumilev, 1967; Zuyev, 1967; Kiyashtorny, 1964, 1965; Abramzon, 1971; Bayaliyeva, 1972, pp. 12-24).

So, the images of the ibex, the argali, the aurochs, the deer, and some other animals were semantically identical, probably this fact explains the availability of these images in large numbers among petroglyphs in Saimaly-Tash site and in other rock drawing assemblages.

In rock art widely presented are drawings reflecting worship of the sun. These are numerous signs, which stand for this heavenly body, such as crosses, swastikas, simple circles with a dot in the center or without it, circles with radiating rays, sometimes such rays can be enclosed in one more circle, also complete disks, and so-called "spectacles-like signs." Besides, in Saimaly-Tash there are more complex symbols of the sun, such as a sun-man, a sun-aurochs, a sun-ibex, etc. (Fig. 7, 10, 14, 27, 39, Foto 1). the evidence of a developed system of the solar cult efficacious in all times. Worship of the sun, the source of light, warmth, life, and the beginning of all beginnings, was one of the ancient population's leading religious directions. The cult of the sun was strongly developed in ancient societies, and this worship was expressed in both primitive and advanced forms. For instance, during Ekhnaton Epoch, in Inca's state and in Egypt the cult of the sun was raised to the rank of a state religion.

Worship of the sun by nations with prevailing totemism, where the sun appeared a totem, was of a specific character. Religious ceremonies devoted to the sun as a totem were performed similarly to totemistic rites devoted to totemic animals. Possibly, these are the scenes with the participation of the sun deity shown in a number of petroglyphs in Saimaly-Tash. From this point of view, the composition with several pairs of dancing people, their hands raised and their knees slightly bent, and the sun deity being above all of them, is most remarkable. All people on the picture have tails. A line, or better to say, a spectacles-like sign, runs under the dancers. One more sun deity is depicted below (Foto 1). Undoubtedly, here we have a scene of a ritual ceremony of worship of the sun deity in a graphic form, also its perpetual motion, change of light and dark, and most probably a vertical model of the world.

Researchers connect the drawings of chariots with the solar cult as well (Formozov, 1969, p. 240). At the same time the images of chariots are connected with a sophisticated complex of ritual-mythological conceptions. It was believed that all above-named highest gods, including Indra, the god of thunder and victory; Agni, the god of fire; Ushas, a daybreak goddess; Mitra; Ashvins; Ahura Mazda, etc. were riding in chariots upon the sky.

The cult of the chariot also existed for a long time and underwent some changes. Many researchers more than once wrote about chariots and their meaning (see Sher, 1978; Sher, 1980; Sher, Golendukhin, 1982; Samashev, 1992, pp. 195-196; Novozhenov, 1994; and others). Maybe, the researchers are right saying that "such images represent different symbols, and the emblem of a chariot is polyse-

mantic." Further, it was also said, that the famous compositions with chariots were "to be considered as mythological scenes, with a broader meaning. Probably, their main conception is the idea of a perpetual motion, of transition from one world to the other, or the idea of the Universe reproduced in the form of a wheel. It is not by chance, that the images of a chariot and a wheel stopped their existence, when riding on horseback, a quicker movement, became mastered." (Maryashev, Goryachev, 1998, p.51).

The cult of fertility and reproduction, as the pledge of well-being, was one of the most important worships. The cults and beliefs described above, in this or that way, are connected with the cult of fertility. It should be said that all ancient cults and beliefs are tightly interlaced with each other. Possibly this is the reason why the most of rock drawings are polysemantic.

Most of the animals and people in petroglyphs are shown in coitus positions. Emphasized genitals of human figures and of the most of animals show that the idea of fertility, reproduction, and rebirth was considered vitally important, if not the main. There are drawings of people in openly erotic scenes (Fig. 48-50, Foto 2) In mythoepic consciousness such situations symbolized the marriage of the Sky to the Earth, of the Sun to the Moon, also reflected such recurrent natural phenomena as rain and thunder, and the cosmogonical act of creation in general. The period of early farming witnessed the appearance of faith in "the sacred marriage" of the sky to the earth,the basis of the agricultural magic, which identified female fertility with the earth fertility. According to most nations' beliefs, the sky is a male and the earth is a female. Ancient agriculturists believed that the sky comes to his wife, the earth, in the image of a rain in order to impregnated her. Each sexual union is the repetition of the act of the creation of the universe, a minor reflection of this deed (Shakhnovich, 1971, pp. 193-197).

The idea of "the sacred marriage" is widely reflected in different nations' mythologies. Thus, in *Rigveda*, the marriage of the celestial bodies, the sun and the moon, was equated with the marriage of the sun deity Surya to the moon deity Soma. The sky and the earth here play the roles of their father and mother.

Petroglyphs in Saimaly-Tash contain many scenes of "the sacred marriage" sometimes shown in presence of an ibex or other animals as the symbols of fertility (Fig.50, Foto 2).

The cult of phallus is also connected with the idea of fertility. The images of phallus can be seen as often as the images of other solar signs. Most interesting, in this aspect, is the scene from Saimaly-Tash petroglyphs with an oval in the center and two dancing pairs of men in coitus condition, with raised hands, around the oval. Next to them is one more human figure with spread arms and spread fingers, as if bearing special mittens. A horizontal curve consisting of many dotty cavities runs from his hand, above all. Below is the figure of an ibex and some incomplete image (?). Most probably, the drawing depicts the performance of a ritual ceremony linked to the cult of phallus (Fig. 53).

In general, beliefs and cults reveal themselves through specific rites and magic scenes, and in this aspect rock drawings are a rich source of interesting materials worthy of note. A number of scenes reflected in rock drawings, especially those found in Saimaly-Tash, show the performance of some ceremonies, shaman's and ritual dances, hunter's magic actions, etc. (Fig. 40-45, 52, 53, Foto 1,9). In most cases these are large compositions, sometimes with the participation of the sun deity and people standing in pairs with raised hands and slightly bent knees. Sometimes

these can be round dance scenes and of course hunter's magic actions ranging from simple pictures of bowers shooting at an animal to many-figured scenes of animal sacrifices to the gods, which can be seen in all rock drawing sites, without exception.

So, the cult nature of a great number of rock drawings is evident. It is also evident that most of rock drawing sites were a kind of natural sanctuaries. These were the places where the population performed their tribal rites along with cult and magic actions in that early period of the mankind's history, when many natural and elemental phenomena were almost inexplicable and dominated over the man's consciousness, and when all the notions about the surroundings, the world, the Universe, and about the place of the man in the world were strange and full of special meaning, sometimes of fantastic conceptions, and of extremely interesting myths and legends.

In this aspect, Saimaly-Tash site occupies a special place, as an extraordinary monument, which reflects in the most vivid and trustworthy way the religious views and the world outlook of the tribes of hunters,cattle-breeders, and earlier farmers, who esteemed mountains, the nature, and solar-and-cosmic images, and worshiped their totems and ancestors. Saimaly-Tash is the most grandiose natural sanctuary, a place of worship and performance of ritual ceremonies by the population inhabiting the Tien Shan and territories close to Fergana Valley.

Besides, rock drawings reflect the development of fine art and the folk decoration creative work for a very long period of time,from the Eneolithic and Early Bronze Age up to the Middle Ages, or, better to say, to nowadays, i.e. during four or five thousand years. On the other hand, rock drawings present an extremely rich source of cognizing the way of life and thinking of the tribes of hunters, cattle-breeders, and the earliest farmers in Central Asia, along with their history and culture. Rock drawings are also interesting and valuable, as following them, we can clearly understand how the man's life and his activities were tightly connected with the environment, and what effect the environment produced on the man's whole world view.

The monuments described are the most widely known and important rock drawing sites in Kyrgyzstan. Still, this is by no means a full list of rock drawing sites available in our republic. In recent years large assemblages of rock drawings were discovered in Alai Valley, also in places adjoining it (see Tabaldiyev, Bozer, Moskalev, Soltobayev 2000), and in a number of regions in the Inner Tien Shan (see Tashbayeva 1988; Tashbayeva, 2001; Khudyakov Tabaldiyev, 1999). Not less significant monuments with rock drawings are in Chui, Ketmen-Tyube, and Jumgal Valleys, which unfortunately remain understudied in full volume and with the employment of modern equipment,and are not yet introduced into scientific circulation. This shall be the task of primary importance for contemporary and future researchers professionally involved in studying such very interesting and simultaneously extremely sophisticated archaeological objects and who are to exceed the limits of simple recording of rock drawings and to carry out a very complex task to develop strict principles of age determination and semantic interpretation of the rock art motifs.

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PETROGLYPHS OF UZBEKISTAN

As is known, Uzbekistan is situated on the territory of Central Asia and includes semi-desert, piedmont and mountain landscapes. Huge territories in the east and west parts of the republic are covered with massifs of the Alai, West Tien Shan, Zarafshan, and Nurata mountain ranges and Hissar Mountains. Even Kyzyl Kum, about which an erroneous opinion is still circulating beyond the country as of a boundless desert, abounds in mountains and canyons. One can see separate figures or even whole compositional scenes carved or painted everywhere in the mountains on smooth surfaces fit for drawing petroglyphs - on limestone, slate, granite, and sandstone rocks. Rock drawings can be also found in rock shelters and niches.

Proceeding from the above, we can conclude that Uzbekistan is the country of numerous petroglyphs, rich in the variety of subjects depicted. Practically, they are inferior in nothing to well-know monuments found in the Eurasian continent. These plentiful "picture galleries" were left under the open sky by

FIG. 1.
The map of prevalence of rock drawings in Uzbekistan

nations and tribes, who inhabited the country in the time of extreme antiquity. It is interesting to point out that petroglyphs, as a rule, were carved on cliffs in remote canyons or in picturesque out-of-the-way places. Very often, drawings dating from different epochs are found in the same places made on smooth rock surfaces.

At present, more than one hundred and forty-five rock art monuments, whose age ranges from the Mesolithic Period to late Middle Ages, have been discovered in mountain areas and foothills. Petroglyphs in Uzbekistan are mainly concentrated in its north-east, central, and north-west (central Kyzyl-Kum) parts. The petroglyphs of Zarautkamar, Sarmishsai, Yangiaryksai, Varzik, Khodjakent, Karakiasai, Saikhansai, Tusinsai, Burgansai, Aksakalatasai, Bukantau, and many others places present unique complexes of rock art.

HISTORY OF STUDYING PETROGLYPHS IN UZBEKISTAN

The study of rock paintings in Uzbekistan and territories bordering to it began in the middle of the 19th century. For the first time rock drawings were discovered by P.I. Demezon in Bukantau mountains, interior Kara Kum, in 1934 (Demezon, 1983, pp.17-83). He can be considered the pioneer in Central Asian petroglyphs research.

After Central Asia became conquered by Russia (the second half of the 19th century), military engineers and scientists came there. In 1878 N.A. Nasledov discovered rock drawings in Aravan (Masson, 1948, p. 131), which were later described by N.S. Lykoshin and D.M. Gramenitski, members of the Turkestan archeological study group. (Lykoshin, 1896, pp. 21-22; Gramenitski, 1898, pp.150-157). In his works, N.I. Veselovski also gave some brief information on rock drawings in West Tien Shan. During his archaeological reconnaissance in Ugam Valley he found some drawings of human beings and animals, in Susingyan area. Unfortunately, he didn't give a proper attention to them as he considered them recently drawn. (Veselovski, 1887, pp. 28, 29).

Later, rock drawings were found in Mogoltau mountains (Andreyev, 1896, pp. 6-8) and in Namangan District (Baumgart, 1897, pp. 8-9). There is some brief information about the inscriptions and rock drawings discovered in this period in works by N.S. Lykoshin (Lykoshin, 1906, pp. 165-167), I.A. Kastanye (Kastanye, 1915, pp. 40-41), V.I. Masalski (Masalski, 1913, p. 69), D.N. Logfet (Logfet, 1913), and others. In 1912 Fedorov, a military topographer, found rock paintings in Zarautsai, which appeared an exciting discovery for the world.

The works of the above-named authors contain only brief description of the drawings found. Issues relating to the chronology and semantics of the drawings were out of the researchers' range of interests. Drawing on location and special tracing of the petroglyphs were made only in rare cases. The meaning and the purpose of the petroglyphs were revealed only fragmentarily. Nevertheless, these researchers' contribution shall be regarded as their intrinsic merit. They made the very first step in the history of studying these unique monuments of the material and spiritual culture of the primitive man.

The '20s and '40s were notable for new archaeological finds of rock arts.

Thus, N.L. Korzhenevski discovered some drawings of various animals and uncertain symbols in Isfaramsai Canyon (Korzhenevski, 1922, p. 9). In summer of 1923, as they were traveling in West Tien Shan, D. Kashkarov and A. Korovin found many rocks with the images of human beings and ibexes. Proceeding from the fact that the drawings were covered with a dense layer of desert patina, they mistakenly referred them to the Magdalenian epoch of the Paleolithic period. (Kashkarov, Korovin, 1926, p. 21). In 1934 M.Ye. Masson found the image of an unmounted archer with a dog pursuing a running maral, in the Akhangaran River Valley, in Kyzatasai Canyon. (Masson, 1953, pp. 30-31).

In 1936, news spread about rock drawings found in the valleys of small mountain streams, in the area of the Agalyk mountain ridge,after the expedition headed by I.A. Sukharev visited this region. Here are the names of these sites in this mountain area: Buribui, Sunduk-Tash, Tamga-Tash, Sangi-Dariga, Katar-Tut, and Sai-i-Boichako. Mainly presented in the petroglyphs of Agalyk were the images of people, human hands, ibexes, argalis, deer, dogs, snakes, camels, a gun, and some unclear figures. I.A. Sukharev conjectured that the earliest of the paintings dated from the 1st millennium B.C. and the latest ones, from the 1st millennium A.D. (Sukharev, 1938, pp. 61 to 67).

In 1939 M.E. Voronets and T.V. Oboldueva reconnoitered the route Sary-Kurgan – Sokh – Khaidarkan – Shakhmardan, and in the course of the reconnaissance they discovered two points with rock drawings, Suratysai (Limbur) and Okhna.* M.E. Voronets paid attention to the chronology, the level of patination, and the technique of the drawings, and conditionally divided them into three main chronological groups, such as the petroglyphs of the Bronze Epoch, the petroglyphs belonging to the early-Iron Age (Saka-Scythian period),and those of recent time and dating from the 19th and 20th centuries. (Voronets, 1950, pp. 75-80). Unfortunately, while copying and describing the drawings the researcher made some mistakes.

This monument is referred to in scientific and popular newspaper articles by G.V. Parfenov. He wrote that more than 1,000 images had been found in Suratysai. The drawings embraced a wide range of topics, such as the images of ibexes, horses, bears, bisons, bulls, snow leopards, camels, panthers, wolves, dogs, and foxes.

There were also scenes of hunt for ibexes. That same author found the image of "a mammoth," which he referred to the Paleolithic time. However, it doesn't look persuasive. Being thoroughly examined, the drawing of "the mammoth" showed no noticeable differences from numerous drawings of horses found in the same locality. G.V. Parfenov referred the images of the bulls and bisons to the Paleolithic period (Parfenov, 1966, pp.5-7), since some authors thought that this kind of bisons, which became extinct long ago, inhabited the territory of Uzbekistan in late Paleolithic period. (Pugachenkova,Rempel,1965, p. 16). The author's thorough examination of these paintings showed that they had radical differences from ancient specimens, in terms of the manner of drawing and the degree of preservation and patination, but looked similar to numerous drawings left on the rocks by the natives and tourists. (Khujanazarov, 1985).

Several petroglyphs found by M.E. Voronets near the village of Okhna were later re-examined by G.V. Shatski (Shatski, 1973, pp.16-18), but, unlike M.E. Voronets, Shatski referred them

* ***It should be noted that for the first time these drawings were found by V.N. Veber during geological exploration of this region (Veber, 1914, p.130).***

not to the 19th and 20th centuries, but to the 1st millennium B.C. It may well be that when describing the above paintings, the two researchers meant different sites with drawings.

In 1939, while traveling in Kugitang mountains, in the area of south-west spurs of the Hissar Mountains, hunter I.F. Lomayev heard from the natives about a cave with paintings on the walls located in Zarautsai gorge. He visited the place and that same year took G.V. Parfenov, director of the Surkhandarya Museum, to Zaraut-kamar, as the natives call the shelter. In 1940, and in 1943 through 1945, G.V. Parfenov organized a number of expeditions there. As the result, more than 200 rock drawings painted with Indian ochre were discovered. (Parfenov, 1941, 1943, 1945). During this research, copies of Zaraut-kamar images were made and other shelters and niches in Zarautsai were thoroughly examined. In 1950 a book for children by A.Yu. Roginskaya, an artist who had participated in making copies of the paintings in Zaraut-kamar, was published. Practically, all murals of Zaraut-kamar and several drawings from other sites were reproduced in this book. (Roginskaya, 1950). Both in articles by G.V. Parfenov and in the book by A.Yu. Roginskaya, who followed the former in the way of the interpretation of the archaeological materials, most of these drawings were referred to as works of Paleolithic artists.

The rock paintings of Zarautsai also attracted the attention of A.A. Formozov (Formozov, 1951, pp.213-216; 1966, pp.60-78), A.P. Okladnikov (Okladnikov, 1966, pp. 69-75), and A. Kabirov (Kabirov, 1976, pp. 73-82). From their points of view, the most likely age of the ancient painting layers was the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods. More recent paintings were dated to the Middle Ages.

The rock paintings of Zarautsai are also mentioned in generalizing works by many primordial art researchers in works on history of the distant past of Central Asia, in encyclopedias, also in separate scientific articles, and notes. In autumn of 1996 an Uzbek-Polish expedition worked in that place studying the petroglyphs. Its members made new copies and took photos of the rock paintings in Zarautsai. (Khujanazarov, 1996).

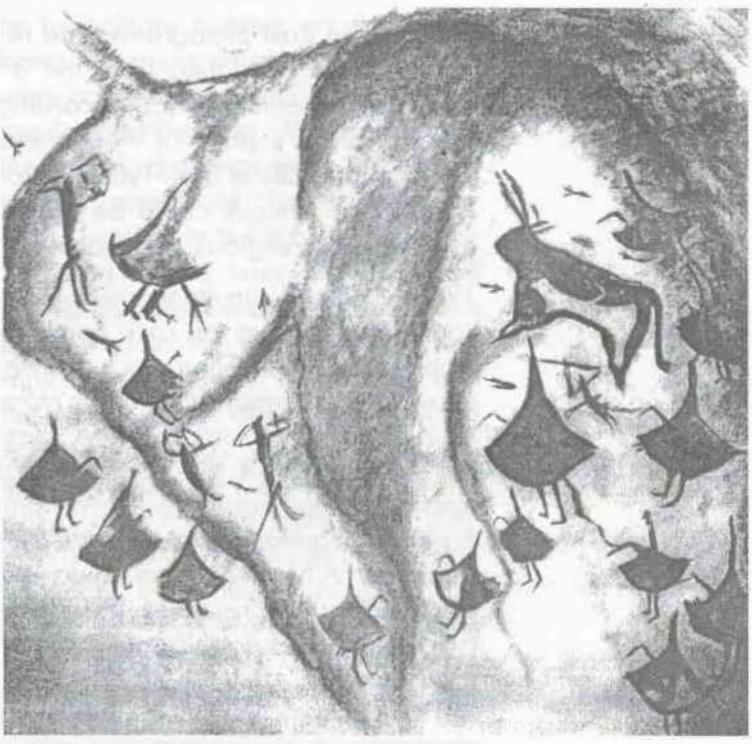


FIG. 2.
Zaraut-Kamar. The lower composition drawn on the north wall in the shelter (traced by A.Yu. Roginskaya). A scene of hunt for an aurochs

In 1940, during an archaeological reconnaissance on Turtkul-Nukus route, at the west spur of Sultanuaizdag, S.P. Tolstov examined the settlement of Chilpyk (Tolstov, 1948, pp.71-76). There is a rock in the center of the settlement, whose surface was completely covered with inscriptions and symbols of different age. The bulk of the drawings presented complex geometrical figures. More recent patterns of a similar kind were found on the adjoining height of Karatyube and on Besh-Tyube hills located approximately 20 km south of Nukus. According to their subject contents and the manner of drawing, the inscriptions and the symbols were divided by S.P. Tolstov into four groups. He considered them commensurable with the engravings on the Stone Grave

and Ancient East pictograms, and regarded them as dating from the 3rd to the 1st millennium B.C. According to S.P. Tolstov's point of view, these places at the cliffs of Besh-Tyube, Kara-Tyube, and Chilpyk could be places assigned for religious ceremonies.

1948 witnessed simultaneous publication of two articles on rock paintings found in the Tien Shan, such as *Antique Rock Drawings of Domestic Horses in South Kyrgyzstan* by M.Ye. Masson (Masson, 1948, pp. 129-134), and *Rock Drawings Found in Aravan and Ershi, the Capital of Davan State (Fergana)* by A.N. Bernshtam. Both authors similarly considered the paintings dating back to the end of the 1st millennium B.C. Besides, in his article, M.Ye. Masson described one more monument, a concentration of petroglyphs found in Surat-Tash Tract, which is located five kilometers from Osh city. Some time later these drawings were re-examined by Yu.A. Zadneprovski. After he compared the images of the horses in Aravan with those depicted on Chinese tiles, he referred the drawings to the 1st millennium B.C. In 1968 the rock drawings found in Aravan were studied by A. Kabirov, who considered them dating back to the 7th through the 2nd centuries B.C. (Kabirov, 1975, pp. 40-52).

In 1949 and 1950, during his recognaissance survey at the Chirchik upper river (the village of Khodjakent), Kh. Alpysbayev learned from the natives about the footprints of Dul-Dul's hoofs, a legendary horse which belonged to Caliph Ali. A thorough examination of the "footprints" has shown that it was nothing more than the drawings of argali involute horns. In addition, Kh. Alpysbayev discovered the images of ibexes, human beings and uncertain figures depicted on the rocks. The researcher registered 23 images found here. Kh. Alpysbayev referred the majority of the drawings to the 1st millennium B.C. (Alpysbayev, 1956, p. 188). Unfortunately, Kh. Alpysbayev's works begun so successfully in Khodjakent, remained unfinished, neither did his article provide enough information on this remarkable monument, which contained much more drawings than it was stated by the author.

In 1980 through 1983 this monument was thoroughly examined by M. Khujanazarov. As the result, more than 90 separate images and scenes were found and registered. The main topics of the drawings were ibexes, argalis, deer, horses, solitary bulls, dogs, and uncertain symbols. The images of people were repeatedly depicted on rocks in Khodjakent. The earliest drawings found in Khodjakent date back to the 4th millennium and the first half of the 3rd millennium B.C. (Khujanazarov, 1995, pp. 58-62).

In summer of 1957 schoolchildren, who came from the city of Tashkent, discovered a group of drawings depicted on the Chirchik riverside rocks, near the village of Khodjakent. The drawings consisted of the images of bulls and ibexes. G.V. Parfenov believed that, in terms of their age, they were close to the most ancient drawings of Zarautsai. (Parfenov, 1966, p. 201).

In 1950 and 1951 M.E. Voronets found rock drawings near the villages of Gava-Chadak, Cherkasar, Aktepe, and Baguzhoi situated in the northwest part of Namangan Oblast (Voronets, 1954, pp. 78-83). All of them date back to the period from the second half of 1st millennium B.C. to late Middle Ages. (Voronets, 1954, pp. 78-80, Fig. 25).

In 1958, in Bostanlyk District, Tashkent Oblast, a large concentration of petroglyphs was found by T. Agzamkhodzhayev. According to the information obtained by the author, there were more than 250 boulders with the drawings of argalis, ibexes, deer, dogs, beasts of prey, horses, and other figures found in the River Uzunsai head water, 18-20 km north of the village of Chimbailyk,

on the tops and south slopes of Kosmosla and Kurzhailyau mountains. Besides, there were scenes of hunt, penning the cattle, and the attack of a herd of artiodactyls by beasts of prey. The researcher traced and took photos of more than 30 boulders with the images. Considering their age, he wrote that "according to preliminary data, the described drawings could be dated to late Bronze Age nd early Saka period, that is the end of the 2nd millennium through the beginning of the 1st millennium B.C." (Agzamkhodzhayev, 1960, pp. 80-82, Fig. 1, 2). Still, the image of a hunter with a big bow and a sketchy manner, in which the drawings were made, refute this date. The Sakas had small bows, "not exceeding a man's height." These signs make the scene of hunt for a deer and other scenes considerably more recent.

In 1957, on the north slope of Morguzar mountain, in Saikhan Canyon (Djizak Oblast) A.R. Mukhamedjanov found a group of rock drawings depicting human beings, ibexes, argalis, bisons, and other figures. The author described, made copies and took photos of a small part of them. In his opinion, their semantic contents are totemistic (Mukhamedjanov, 1957, pp. 16-19). This monument was referred to in a review by G. Field (Field, 1966, pp. 149-154). Unfortunately,we find only brief conclusions, without sufficient reasoning, in both works. In this connection, in 1982 we re-examined the monument and discovered 638 images of animals of manifold species. Both solitary and group drawings were discovered. These were mainly ibexes, argalis, deer, horses, bulls, wild boars, goitered gazelles, saigas, dogs or wolves, and beasts of prey (snow leopard?). Human figures were shown with their arms and legs widely spread out, masculine genitals being emphasized. Among group scenes there were some pictures of hunt for ibexes, bulls and other animals by groups of archers or by solitary hunters provided with bows. The drawings on the rocks were confusedly carved. We witnessed overlapped images. While studying these rock drawings with ibexes and people, one could clearly see differences in style, in the manner of drawing, and in the hues of the desert patina. Separate images of deer were performed in the animal style. Their topics, style, manner of drawing and the intensity of the desert patina, along with the analogy with other monuments found in Central Asia and Kazakhstan make it possible to consider the ancient drawings in Saikhansai dating from the BronzeAge. Many of the drawings were carved during the 1st millennium B.C. (Khujanazarov, 1990, pp. 120-121).

Rather interesting, in terms of the objects selected for depicting and the contents of the scenes, are rock paintings found in Sarmishsai, which is located in the area of the Zarafshan River middle course, in the mountain area, north-east of Navoi city. The petroglyphs of Sarmishsai are widely known in special literature. The monument was discovered by archaeologist Kh. I. Mukhammedov in 1959. The first scientific publication of the drawings found in Sarmishsai belongs to N.Kh. Tashkenbayev (Tashkenbayev, 1966, pp. 38-39). Then,during several field seasons the monument in Sarmishsai was studied by A. Kabirov (Kabirov, 1972, pp. 50-55). As a result, copies were made and photos were taken of more than 3,000 drawings of people, animals, and various symbols (Kabirov, 1976, p.17). The majority of the presently existing assertions and hypotheses relating to the determination of the age of rock drawings and their semantics have been proposed and formulated by A. Kabirov. He estimated the importance of this monument at its true worth, as the first-rate source. Unfortunately, he failed to show the significance of the petroglyphs as a splendid key to age determination of rock paintings in

whole Central Asia. In our opinion, many drawings of this monument present a kind of archaeological standard, with which many Central Asian petroglyphs could be compared and associated. Since 1993, specialists from Adam Mitskevich University of Poznan (Poland) and the Institute of Archaeology under the Uzbekistan's Academy of Sciences have been working here. (Khujanazarov, 1999).

In '60s G.V. Shatski found and registered some more groups of rock drawings, in Kastash and Shakhimardan. There are two human figures found in Kastash and depicted facing right. Each figure holds a forked object. The bifurcated parts of these objects form obtuse angles with the handles. G.V. Shatski regarded these objects as mattocks, and interpreted the whole scene as the process of tilling (Shatski, 1973, p. 119). In our opinion, G.V. Shatski's point of view is ill-founded. As for their style, these two images seem very sketchy and look like pitchforks or rakes supposed for gathering straw and hay. Of this year's archaeological finds, the drawings found by G.V. Shatski on a separate rock in Shakhimardan and presenting scenes of the defense of domestic goats from an attacking snow leopard, are of the most serious interest (Shatski, 1973, pp.72-73, Fig. 30-31).

G.V. Shatski has published an article about rock paintings in Chadaksai, in which two groups of petroglyphs were found and registered. The basic topics of the drawings in Chadaksai were ibexes and scenes of hunt for them. (Shatski, 1961, pp. 76-91). The author found it possible to regard them as a theme of the domestication of goats.

In 1963-1964, the Charvak archaeological group registered numerous sites with rock paintings located in the Pskem, Koksu, Chatkal, and Chimgan river basins,in Karazau and Kungar mountains, in Akhangaran and Arshansai river valleys, and in other places in Tashkent Oblast (Buryakov, Kasymov, Rostovtsev, 1973).

A summary of the history of studying petroglyphs in Uzbekistan was presented in a work by B.V. Lunin (Lunin, 1958, pp. 134-140). The author widely used literature and archival materials. In particular, he attached great importance to the activity of the Turkestan archeological study group. However, it should be pointed out that this work was of a narrow historical nature. G.A. Pugachenkova and L.I. Rempel in their book *The History of Uzbekistan's Arts, from antiquity to mid 19th century* gave a brief characteristic of the rock drawings found in Saimaly-Tash, Khodjakent, Aksai, Takali-Tash, etc. The authors of the book considered these paintings in the light of the history of fine arts in Central Asia (Pugachenkova, Rempel, 1965, pp. 11-19).

In 1966 and 1967. A. Kabirov discovered a number of places with rock drawings located in Sokh River valley and on the territory of the Kirgiz SSR bordering to Uzbekistan. These places are located on the south slope of Katrantau, within Zarkor and Obishir mountains, near Sur, Bel, Taryk, and Bagishim settlements, and also in Shurbulaksai Canyon. Most widespread there were the drawings of ibexes, wild boars, deer, dogs, wolves, and dim figures. All the drawings found there were divided by the author into two chronological groups. The first group embraced the earliest drawings dating back to the period from the 7th to the 1st centuries B.C., while the second group included later drawings, which were believed to date from the 1st to the 8th centuries A.D. (Kabirov, 1975, p. 19).

In 1979 to 1982 the Katrantau petroglyphs were examined by the author of the present work. As a result, new concentrations of petroglyphs were discovered in Kumushkansai and Yangiaryksai, besides, drawings were found on the Uzbek territory bordering to

Kyrgyzstan, near Eshma village. More than 1,200 images were found in Yangiaryksai Canyon alone. These were drawings of human figures, ibexes, argalis, horses, bulls, camels, deer, wolves, and some unclear images made on the rocks. Repeatedly found were scenes with riders. There were some scenes of hunt and penning cattle (Khujanazarov, 1995, p. 14).

Petroglyphs found by O.M. Rostovtsev in 1963 in Akhangaran River valley were examined by A. Kabirov in 1966 and 1967 and by the author of the present work in 1979 through 1983. Prevailing were group drawings of ibexes, camels, dogs, foxes, horses, and people. Having studied the topics of the contents, the technique of drawing, and having compared these petroglyphs with other rock drawings, A. Kabirov and M. Khujanazarov dated them the 1st millennium A.D. (Kabirov, 1975, p.126; Khujanazarov, 1985, p. 9). The Akhangaran palaeolithic troop found and registered some more sites with petroglyphs, including those located on the banks of Karabagsai, Kuchailisai, and Engaklisai streams, right tributaries of the Akhangaran River. In terms of their subject contents, style, the technique of drawing, and the density of patina, these petroglyphs differed almost in nothing from the former ones. (Kasymov, Kabirov, Omanzhulov, 1977, p. 528).

In 1974 the Pskem archaeological troop also discovered rock drawings in the head water of the Chukursai and Karakiasai Rivers and in the locality called Kul (Tashkent Oblast). The altitude of these archaeological finds is nearly 2,500 m above sea level. There were drawings of people, ibexes, argalis, horses, dogs, beasts of prey, snakes and solar signs made on smooth dark-brown sandstone surfaces there. Often found were scenes of hunt for ibexes and goats. The style, the contents of scenes, and the objects selected for depicting testified to their different age ranging from the 1st millennium B.C. to late Middle Ages (Kabirov, 1975, p. 15). The petroglyphs of Karakiasai were re-examined and described by the author of the present work in 1982 (Khujanazarov, 1995, p.23).

In 1966 A. Kabirov examined the petroglyphs of Karazau, which had already been known since 1963. The basic topics there were scenes of hunt for wild animals, also separate and grouped images of wild and domestic animals,dance scenes,galloping riders, a man armed with a bow, and others. The researches were very careful in the determination of the age of these petroglyphs and considered the majority of the drawings dating from the 7th to 1st centuries B.C. The rest of the drawings were referred to a later period (Kabirov, Yesipova, 1972, pp. 151-153).

The Bashkyzylsai complex counting 400 images odd and opened as long ago as in 1934 by M. Mirmukhamedov and studied by A. Kabirov in 1970 through 1972, proved to be of a particular interest. There were images of people, ibexes, snow leopards, wolves, foxes, horses, dogs, along with the drawings of bows and arrows, and solar signs drawn on smooth surfaces of slate rocks. Besides, scenes of hunt for ibexes, penned horses, and dance scenes were found there. The majority of the drawings of the Bashkyzylsai complex were referred by A. Kabirov to the 7th through the 2nd centuries B.C. (Kabirov, 1975, pp.77-79).

In 1975, during an archaeological survey exercised at the north slope of Katrantau mountain, A. Kabirov examined petroglyphs found in Achiksai. There were many separate drawings of people and animals, such as argalis, ibexes, wolves, horses, dogs, domestic ibexes, and solar signs, carved on the rocks. Besides, there were scenes of hunt for ibexes. The author referred them to a period beginning from the middle of the 1st millennium A.D. (Kabirov, 1976, p. 528).

In 1971, in the area of the Chatkalo-Kuramin mountain ridge, the members of the Fergana archaeological troop explored earlier found petroglyphs, which were discovered in Kandagansai, Namangan Oblast, as long ago as in 1950 by M.E. Voronets. The troop was targeted at getting acquainted with the site in detail, mapping it, and determining the age of the drawings more accurately (Kabirov, 1976, pp. 1-2). Three groups of petroglyphs were registered in this area. The first group with more than 60 drawings of ibexes, beasts of prey, and uncertain figures, was near Chadak village. The second group of petroglyphs was located 14-15 km from Chadak village, in Taka-Tash Tract. About 20 images of ibexes were found there. The third group was discovered in the area called Kulaganzav, not far from the same village of Chadak. Drawings of people, ibexes, beasts of prey, and solar signs along with scenes of hunt for ibexes were found in this place. There were some differences in style, size, and the degree of the preservation of the drawings. Probably, these drawings were carved on the rocks gradually, during a number of centuries. Apparently, the earliest of them dated back to the Sakas' period, that is the 7th to the 1st centuries B.C., while the most recent ones dated from the second half of the 1st millennium A.D. (Kabirov, 1975, p.21).

In 1987, after a long break, we recommenced studying the rock drawings found in the area of the Nurata mountain ridge and its spurs, Aktau and Karatau. In 1966 to 1973 special research was conducted there by A. Kabirov. However, despite the fact that studying petroglyphs began and continued to be carried out since long ago, the rock art monuments found in Nurata mountains still remain far from being scrutinized.

When revealing and registering the petroglyphs found in Nurata mountains, we used the method of an "overall" and planned surveying of all rocks and large boulders, on which rock drawings could be found. This particular method was earlier applied by Siberian archaeologists in Gorny Altai. We have discovered more than 30 localities with rock drawings on the territory of Khatyrchi and Nurata Regions in Samarkand Oblast. In Aksakalatasai Canyon alone (Khatyrchi Region) we found and registered more than 500 drawings. In that same sai we found paintings made with red paint, on walls of a small shelter. Found here were the images of eight human hands with widely spread fingers, a circle with a spiral line, a sketchy human figure, and some uncertain images. It should be pointed out that among rock drawings found on the territory of Uzbekistan, these particular images present the second case (after Zarautsai), where paint was employed. At present it is difficult to judge the age and the purpose of these paintings. They need to be fundamentally analyzed (Khujanazarov, 1990, pp. 120-122).

The subjects, style and the manner of drawing of the petroglyphs at the Nurata mountain ridge and the hues of the desert patina are multifarious. Thus, according to the subjects of their contents, the petroglyphs in this region can be divided into two classes, such as images and symbols. Anthropomorphic and zoomorphic images along with the drawings of other things belong to the first class. The second class embraces legible drawings, which, however, fail to have clear prototypes either in the animal world, in real world with people and things, or among fantastical creatures. The drawings of human beings are found here rarer than those of animals. The images of ibexes prevail. Among the petroglyphs in Nurata mountains very often are found hunt scenes, images of different shape, trapeziums, triangles, and other geometrical figures.

So, during more than one hundred years, rock drawings in Uzbekistan were found and registered from time to time, and studied by numerous researchers. As a result, to date, vast information about ancient rock art monuments has been gathered. Unfortunately, they have failed to become the subject of a special scientific research. Some authors made a number of good descriptions of the monuments, determined the age of a small part of the drawings, proposed their methods of classification, made attempts to interpret some scenes, and proposed a number of hypotheses concerning the functionality of the petroglyphs. At the same time, one can't help noting that the majority of the works do not contain a detailed analysis of the petroglyphs and do not suggest well-grounded age determination. In order to convert the ancient rock drawings in Uzbekistan into historical sources of full value, it is necessary to have them systematically described,studied, and, fundamentally analyzed in the light of art criticism, as far as possible. All this, by no means, belittles the services and the contribution made by our predecessors, since the present research could have been impossible without their preliminary work.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF PLACES WITH PETROGLYPHS

Mountainous and submontane regions of Uzbekistan had all natural-geographic conditions sufficient for the existence of primitive gatherers, hunters, and cattle-breeders, which fact is confirmed with numerous archaeological monuments, among which rock drawings occupy a certain place.

Vast territories in the east and central parts of the republic are covered with the Alai and West Tien Shan massifs, the Hissar Mountains, and the Zarafshan, Turkestan, and Nurata mountain ridges. The mountains are composed of Devonian and carbonic limestone, various kinds of slate, sandstone, granite, and conglomerates. Local limestone is gray, with rough surfaces. In contrast, slate and sandstone rocks have level surfaces.

Among rocky ridges lye deep canyons and valleys with headlong and impetuous rivers and quiet sais. The climatic conditions in mountain massifs have specific peculiarities. Summer is usually cool here, and winter is severe, sometimes with profound snowfalls and frosts.

The amount of atmospheric precipitation differs in mountain areas. On slopes, depending on their altitude and orientation,the amount of annual precipitation differs a great deal. The mountain relief causes the intensification of atmospheric fronts and provokes heavy rains and snowfalls. The heaviest of them occur during autumn and spring seasons.

Vegetation in Uzbekistan is rich. The plant kingdom here can be divided into three vertical belts, including *adyry, tau,* and *yailau.* Luxuriant forests with good breeds, various types of shrubs,and herbs grow in abundance in these belts.

The animal world of Uzbekistan is rich and multifarious. More than 650 species of vertebrates inhabit the territory of the republic,including about 79 fish species, three types of amphibia, 57 species of reptiles, more than 410 species of birds, and 99 kinds of mammals (The Endangered Species Book, 1988, vol. 1, p. 8).

Ibexes (*teke*), argalis, snow leopards, Tien Shan bears, wild boars, foxes, deer, wolves, jackals, ermines, and a plenty of the types of birds inhabit the mountains in the republic.

The above brief physicogeographical characteristic and the author's personal field observation show that the Uzbek mountains and their outskirts, where rock drawings were concentrated, presented a climatically favorable area with the animal and vegetable world sufficiently multifarious and fit for the ancient tribes' existence.

ISSUES RELATING TO AGE DETERMINATION OF ROCK DRAWINGS

Issues relating to chronology and periodical classification are among the most complex and disputable questions in archaeology. V.N. Chernetsov, a researcher of the Urals rock paintings, wrote, "In order to determine the age of rock paintings one needs to look for such criteria, which could be available in the paintings themselves and might make it possible to compare and associate them with these or those facts, which can elucidate their age." (Chernetsov, 1964, p. 19).

A number of well-known researchers, such as V.I. Ravdonikas, N.N. Gurina, A.P. Okladnikov, A.N. Bernshtam, V.N. Chernetsov, A.A. Formozov, Ya.A. Sher, Yu.A. Savvateyev, M.A. Devlet, M. Kadyrbayev, and A.N. Maryashev, have made a significant contribution to working out approaches and methods of dating petroglyphs. In particular, they believe that when the age of any rock drawing is determined, it is very important to take into account the following factors: the results of analyzing the subject contents and some realties of the drawing under review, which are to be considered in association and comparison with ethnographic parallels; the style of the drawing in comparison with other arts monuments, whose age was reliably determined; a comparative analysis of the petroglyph with articles of arts found during archaeological dig; also the technique of drawing; the density of the desert patina; also the consideration of cases when rock drawings overlap each other, and study of archaeological monuments geographically close to the accumulation of rock drawings investigated.

The way how we determined the age of the monuments, which we were busy with, was mainly based on the analysis of their subject contents and style; on studying overlapped images, on the comparison of rock drawings under review with analogous specimens found in other monuments and with archaeological finds, in order to reveal ethnographic parallels; also on the manner of drawing; and the density of the desert patina.

Multiform rock drawings in Uzbekistan were divided by us into four chronological groups, such as: rock drawings dating back to the Stone Age (the Mesolithic, Neolithic, and Eneolithic periods); rock drawings dating from the Bronze Age; petroglyphs made by earlier nomads; and rock drawings of the Turkic period and the Middle Ages. The rock drawings and paintings found in Zarautsai, Aksakalatasai, Sarmishsai, Khodzhakent, and Suratysai belong to the first group.

The fewness of rock drawings dating from the Stone Age can be explained by: first, insufficient and irregular exploring of the territory of Uzbekistan and inadequate study of other types of archaeological monuments; second, even

when such monuments become known, there are no articles of arts available dating from the same early period and found in the same area, south Turkmenistan being an exception (Zadneprovski, 1966, pp. 35-38; Korobkova, 1969, pp. 127-141; Islamov, Timofeyev, 1977, pp. 5-12; Islamov, 1980, p. 120; Timofeyev, 1983, pp. 63-68; and others).

Archaeological finds, such as things or drawings of them belonging to those times, are of a great interest, as they can be used in a comparative study. From this point of view, interesting is A.D. Grach's opinion about the role of a comparative analysis while determining the age of some petroglyphs, "The coincidence of images shown on rock drawings with articles of arts made of metal, wood, and bone, whose age was reliably determined, may play a key role. In a number of cases the comparison between petroglyphs and subject series may be more important than that between synchronous groups of rock drawings (Grach, 1957, p. 402). That is why, when determining the age of rock drawings in Uzbekistan, we were based on the most familiar subjects and images directly analogous to either archaeological finds or to reliably dated petroglyphs discovered in other areas.

ZARAUTSAI

Paintings found in Zarautsai are most ancient among other rock drawings in Uzbekistan. They are located in Kukhitangtau mountains, 100-110 km northwest of the town of Termez, on the territory of Shirabad Region. Unlike other complexes of rock drawings in Central Asia, Zarautkamar, a shelter with paintings, was studied well enough and repeatedly published. A.A. Formozov, A.P. Okladnikov and other researchers refer the paintings in Zarautsai to the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods, and the Bronze Age (Formozov, 1951, pp. 213-216; 1966, pp. 60-78; Okladnikov, 1966, pp. 69-75; Kabirov, 1976, pp.73-82; Sher, 1980, pp.181-183).

Zarautsai is situated at the altitude of 2,000 m above sea level, in latitude 30°08′ North and in longitude 37°54′ East. The place is composed of limestone rocks of mid-Jurassic period. There is a brook running on the valley bottom, which flows into the Kyzylalmasai River. The gorge is rather picturesque. It has the form of a canyon with rocky slopes. There are many aeolian niches and shelters on its right slope, whose walls and ceilings are covered with numerous and extremely ancient rock paintings made with red paint. The bulk of the paintings are in Zarautkamar shelter, as the natives call it, which is situated at the altitude of 9.5 m above the stream and faces north-east. It is 3.30 m high near the entrance, 4.50 m wide, and 2.50 m deep. No cultural layers have been detected in Zarautkamar. It is not easy to climb up to the shelter upon a nearly vertical cliff. The walls of the shelter are rough and covered with lime and other kinds of leakage. More than 100 very ancient and expressive pictorial drawings and inscriptions have been concentrated here. These are images of people and animals, and some unclear figures. Also found here were inscriptions dating back to the Middle Ages and to a more recent period.

In Zarautsai we examined eight more shelters with rock paintings (according to G.V. Parfenov, their number is 27). More than 40 rock paintings and inscriptions in Arabic found in these shelters have become examined, described and traced. Some of them are well preserved. The others are

damaged to this or that degree because of various natural phenomena. The nature, however, seems to spare the paintings and lives in a relative concord with them. One can judge it studying the rock paintings, which survived. Special harm to these paintings was inflicted by the natives and tourists, who are not always informed about their historical and scientific value. They left their autographs just "for memory," wrote their first names, family names, dates of birth, and the names of the towns where they came from. Unfortunately such cases are registered not only here, one can witness them everywhere.

It should be noted that in the whole Zarautsai Valley there is not a single cave or a grotto suitable for living there, and not a single site dating back to the Stone Age was found during a number of years spent here in archaeological search. Apparently, as A.A. Formozov wrote, "Zarautsai was a hunting ground and a place for religious ceremonies, not a place of abode. (Formozov, 1969, p.64).

The book by A.Yu. Roginskaya gives a detailed description of the layout of the paintings in Zarautkamar shelter (Roginskaya, 1950, pp.25-28). The shelter has a north-east orientation, and the paintings occupy the east; south, the longest; and the west walls. They are painted on the level of a man's height, right on the curve between the ceiling and the walls.

Three compositions of the Zarautkamar paintings present a scene of hunt for wild bulls, goitered gazelles, and ibexes. A. Kabirov interpreted the scene as "a conflict between two groups of hunters over a prey" (Kabirov, 1976, p.74). Most of the people on the picture bear disguising costumes resembling a bird looking like an ostrich. The remaining figures are shown sketchy. On the compositions, the hunters are armed with bows, boomerangs, and darts. One can even discern a dart, which pierced the body of a left lower gazelle depicted on the second composition. The hunters hold bows expressed by one or two parallel arches, often with an arrow in the middle. The arrows are painted in the form of straight rods with two or three crotches at the end and sharp arrow-heads. It is interesting to point out that some figures of people and animals are depicted pierced with arrows.

So, the paintings in Zarautkamar show hunting for a bull, a big and strong beast, also for goitered gazelles, and ibexes. In this connection, it is appropriate to cite the opinion of Ya.A. Sher, a well-known expert, who said, "Even if the paintings in Zarautkamar represent a mythological scene or an attribute of some magic ritual, not a real hunt, anyhow they reflect either a real hunt or an action kept in the memory of generations, who came later." (Sher, 1980, p. 182).

We second the opinions of G.V. Parfenov and A.A. Formozov that these figures of human beings are "mummers, not regular people" (Formozov, 1960, p. 67). The figures of disguised people are known in the rock art of the Paleolithic Period in West Europe, from such archaeological monuments as Altamira, the Cave of Three Brothers, Gabiyu, Kombarell (Abramova, 1966, Tables XXVI-XXVII) and in petroglyphs found in other regions.

The study of the paintings in all the niches and shelters in Zarautsai shows that all of them can be divided into three groups belonging to different age, which supposition can be confirmed through the analysis of their subject contents and the hues of the colors of the paints, with which the drawings and the inscriptions were made. Time changed the colors. Now they are reddish-brown, brownish-gray, and vermilion. More ancient paintings look more dingy. Being moistened, they become deep-vinous, then turn brown. The inscriptions in Arabic are written with the paint of ruby color.

Many paintings in Zarautkamar are drawn as silhouettes, only three figures are expressed in a contour form. Sketchy drawings are also found here. Several drawings give the idea how it was done: first a contour was drawn and then it was filled in with a paint. There are cases when some images were drawn over others, earlier ones. It is evident that the compositions were drawn in compliance with the relief of the rock.

According to their subject contents, the paintings in Zarautkamar can be divided into four subject groups, such as: (1) an anthropomorphic group, which contains many images of human beings; (2) a zoomorphic group, the most numerous one, which contains the drawings of various kinds of animals, such as a bull, a koodoo, a goitered gazelle, a wild boar, a fox, and possibly a phalanx,an insect; (3)arms; (4)inscriptions in Arabic.

So, the topic of the scenes, the subjects, the style, the degree of preservation, the comparative analysis with other monuments, and osteologic and archaeological data, all these allow us to draw the conclusion that the lower time border of the most ancient layer of the paintings in Zarautsai is the Mesolithic Period, and the upper time border is the Bronze Age.

SARMISHSAI

Another example of an extremely ancient rock art is the concentration of petroglyphs found in Sarmishsai. Rock drawings in Sarmishsai are widely known and often referred to in special literature (Tashkenbayev, 1966, pp. 36-39; Kabirov, 1976, p.155; Sher, 1980; Khujanazarov, 1998, *Sztuka naskalna Uzbekistanu*, 1997, A. Lasota-Moskalewska, M.M. Khudjanazarov, 2000; and others).

Sarmishsai Canyon is situated on the south slope of the Karatau mountain ridge,which,along with the Nurata and Aktau mountain ridges,belong to the system of north-west spurs of the Zarafshan mountain range. These mountains are situated in the west part of Central Asia and considered not very high. The highest alp of the Karatau mountain ridge is at the altitude of 1,000-1,200 m above sea level.

Sarmishsai Canyon has plumb cliffy walls, the distance between them varying from 15 to 25 m, in some places it exceeds 200 m. The canyon is more than 50 m deep. A brook running on its floor flows into the Zarafshan River. The banks of the brook are composed of brown and dark-brown slate, red sandstone, gray limestone, and conglomerate. The cliffs have become strongly disintegrated because of natural phenomena. Rocks with drawings carved on are split into blocks of different size and have fractures of various depth and length. There are shallow gullies and wide valleys in the upper part of Sarmishsai Canyon. A road runs along the bank of the sai. The cliff surfaces are smooth,level,and covered with thick carbonate-ferriferous incrustation,a result of weathering,as carbonate-ferriferous cement became washed away. Some planes are covered with moss or with earth and rock fragments.

Petroglyphs in Sarmishsai were studied by A. Kabirov in 1966, 1967, and 1969. As the result, more than 3,500 drawings of people, animals, and various symbols were traced over and taken photos of (Kabirov, 1976, p. 17). At present Sarmishsai remains the only monument in Uzbekistan and the whole

Central Asia, whose small but rather rich in drawings area,presents a concentration of manifold compositions.

The uniqueness of the monument is beyond any doubt, still, it remained insufficiently studied for a long time. In this connection, in 1993 and 1994 specialists from Adam Mitskevich University of Poznan (Poland) together with the specialists of our institute jointly started another cycle of studying this monument. In essence, our work appeared the continuation of the earlier investigation. Special attention was paid to general characteristics of the locality; we were also targeted at a complete registration and all-round description of the drawings, along with the determination of the chronological frames of some types of them, their meaning and purposes. Apart from these, more purposeful archaeological reconnaissance and archaeological dig began in Sarmishsai and its outskirts. During two field seasons all the drawings were traced on polyethylene film, tracing-paper, and mica tape. As many as possible photos were taken of both whole scenes and separate drawings, with the purpose to create a full catalogue of the monument. The materials obtained have made it possible to elucidate in a new way a number of issues relating to studying the monument and its interpretation.

The bulk of the petroglyphs were carved in the middle course of the Sarmishsai, in the place, where the narrow stony canyon begins from, and from where it stretches for 2.0 to 2.5 kilometers. The drawings were made on vertical and sometimes horizontal rock surfaces. All the drawings in Sarmishsai were carved and drawn with stone or metallic tools, which left different traces – round,triangular,oblong, teardrop-shaped, and of uncertain form. The traces were 0.5 to 3.0 mm deep, their diameter varying from 1 to 4 mm. Sometimes combinations of several methods were found, such as carving + engraving + grinding.

The drawings were presented in the form of both single and multi-figure compositions. They were drawn on large and small planes mainly facing south-east, at the altitude of 0.50 cm to 20 m from the bottoms of rock exposures. In the course of work we managed to reveal several regularities, which our predecessors failed to notice. We learned that most of the ancient drawings were made on the rock planes not in random way, but in a definite order, which was maintained throughout the whole monument and was directly linked with its geomorphologic structure. To make the registration and description of the petroglyphs in Sarmishsai easier, we conditionally divided the monument into 20 sections. Each section had a specific form of relief and a particular layout of drawings typical of this or that place. The drawings differed from section to section in their size, mainly large, and in the manner of drawing. Images drawn in one conditional section of the monument were never repeated in others.

In total, we found and registered about 4,000 drawings in Sarmishsai. Prevailing were the images of ibexes, bulls, and human beings. Other subjects were in a comparatively less number. While studying the petroglyphs in Sarmishsai, we concluded that scenes there were numerous and multifarious. In terms of their subject contents, they could be divided into five groups, such as anthropomorphic, zoomorphic, arms, implements, also epigraphic and solar signs. One more group is to be mentioned here, "unclear drawings." What we mean is such figures, which cannot be interpreted because of their elementary nature or poor preservation. (Khujanazarov, 1998, p. 84). The analysis of the scenes and the topics of the drawings gives way to the conclusion that hunting played an important role in the life of the ancient authors of the drawings made in Sarmishsai. Among ancient drawings in Sarmishsai often found

were the figures of people and animals, such as an aurochs, a bison, a red deer, a dziggetai, a goitered gazelle, beasts of prey from the cat family (a tiger, a lion (?), a leopard, and cheetah) an ibex, a wild boar, a dog, and others (Fig. 4, 6, 7, 9, and 12).

The analysis of the petroglyphs in Sarmishsai showed that the drawings were of different age. There were many cases of palimpsest, and many figures had been renovated and imitated. Most of the rock drawings, however, are to be referred to more recent periods, such as the end of the Stone Age, the Bronze Age, and Saka period,and only few of them may be connected with the Middle Ages.

The petroglyphs in Sarmishsai became divided by A. Kabirov into three chronological groups. The most ancient drawings were referred by him to early-Bronze Age (the end of the 3rd millennium B.C.) proceeding from the results of a comparative analysis between them and the images depicted on south-Turkmenian ceramics. The age of the second group of petroglyphs was determined by him as the Saka period (early-Iron Age). As for the images that looked rougher and were drawn in a linear-sketchy manner, he associated them with a later period, the Turkic one. (Kabirov, 1976, p. 31).

In principle, we can agree with the chronology proposed by A. Kabirov. In our opinion, however, some carvings of bulls and others made in a triangular style are to be referred to a much earlier epoch. Another evidence in favor of this supposition is their dynamism, which is peculiar to the ancient hunters' culture, whose origin most possibly goes back to the upper Paleolithic Period (Sher,1980,p. 183). Similar drawings were discovered among petroglyphs found in Gobustan, Azerbaidjan, (Djafarzade, 1973, p. 243), and in the central part of Arabian Peninsular (Anati, 1970, p. 79).

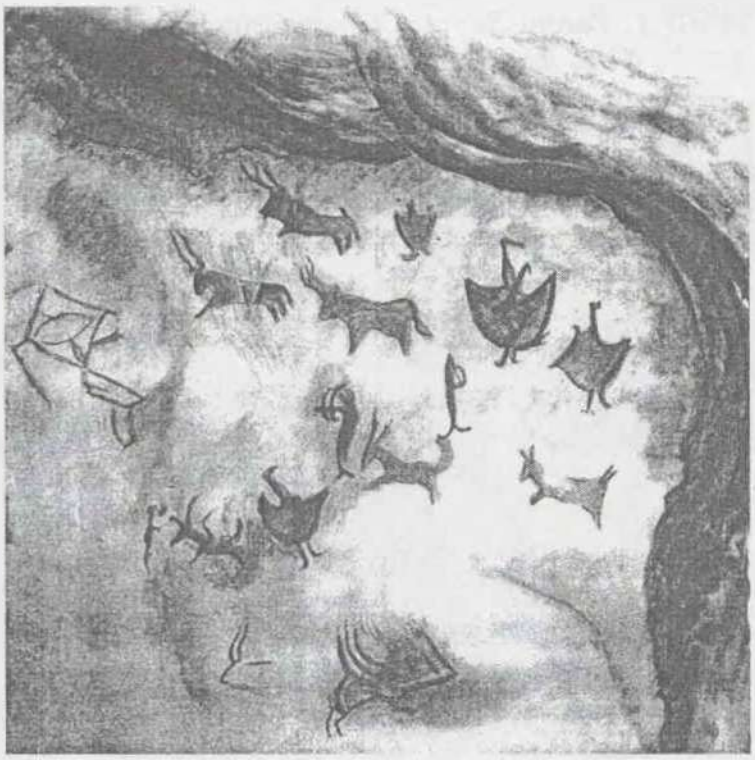


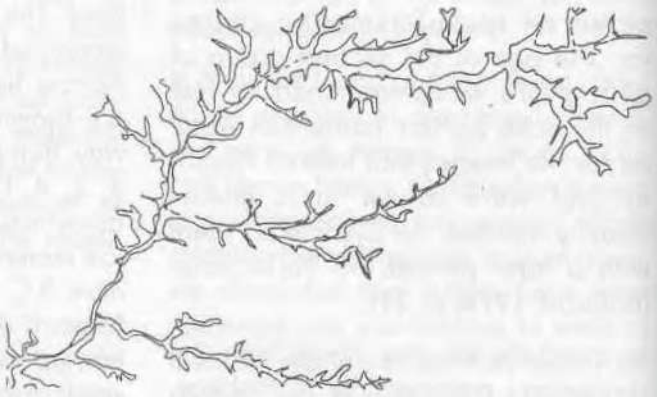
FIG. 3.
Zaraut-Kamar. A composition drawn on the west wall of the shelter (traced by A. Yu. Roginskaya). A scene of battue for bulls and goitered gazelles

The species of the aurochses depicted in Sarmishsai presents one more argument for the antiquity of these rock drawings. There are many images of aurochses carved in a peculiar style there. The animals are shown slim, with elongated bodies, lifted heads, their narrow horns bent up. Their forelegs are shown stretched forward in such a way, that their hoofs are seen well (Fig. 1, 2, 4, Foto 5, 9, 10). No bones of aurochses were found in the osteological material belonging to the 1st millennium B.C. and found during archaeological excavations of settlements carried out in Khorezm,Fergana,also in south and west parts of Uzbekistan. However, such bones were found in more ancient archaeological monuments dating back to the Paleolithic, Mesolithic (Batirov, 1969, p.20) and Neolithic (Lasota-Moskalewska, 1999, p. 90) periods and advanced Bronze Age (Askarov, 1973, pp. 130). Researchers suppose that these animals died out or were killed in the 1st millennium B.C. The latter supposition sounds reasonable, since transfer to nomadic cattle-breeding caused fight for pastures and, consequently,gave rise to mass hunt for these animals (Batirov, 1969, p. 20).

FIG. 4. *Zaraut-Kamar. A composition drawn on the west wall of the shelter (traced by A.Yu. Roginskaya)*

FIG. 5. *Sarmishsai. The general view of a part of the gorge.*

FIG. 6. *The map of Sarmishsai Valley*



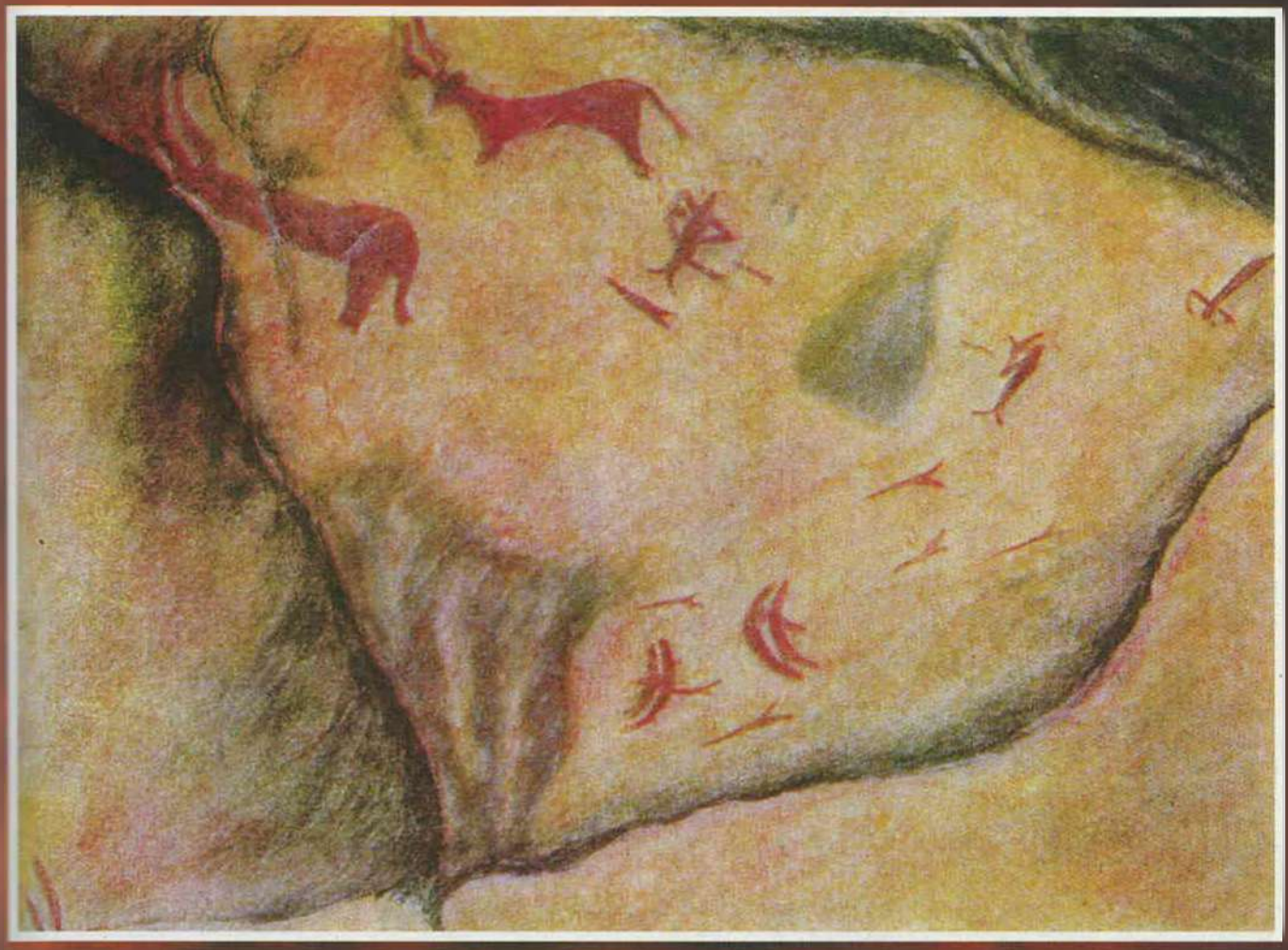


FOTO 5.
Zaraut-Kamar. A composition drawn on the west wall of the shelter (traced by A.Yu. Roginskaya)

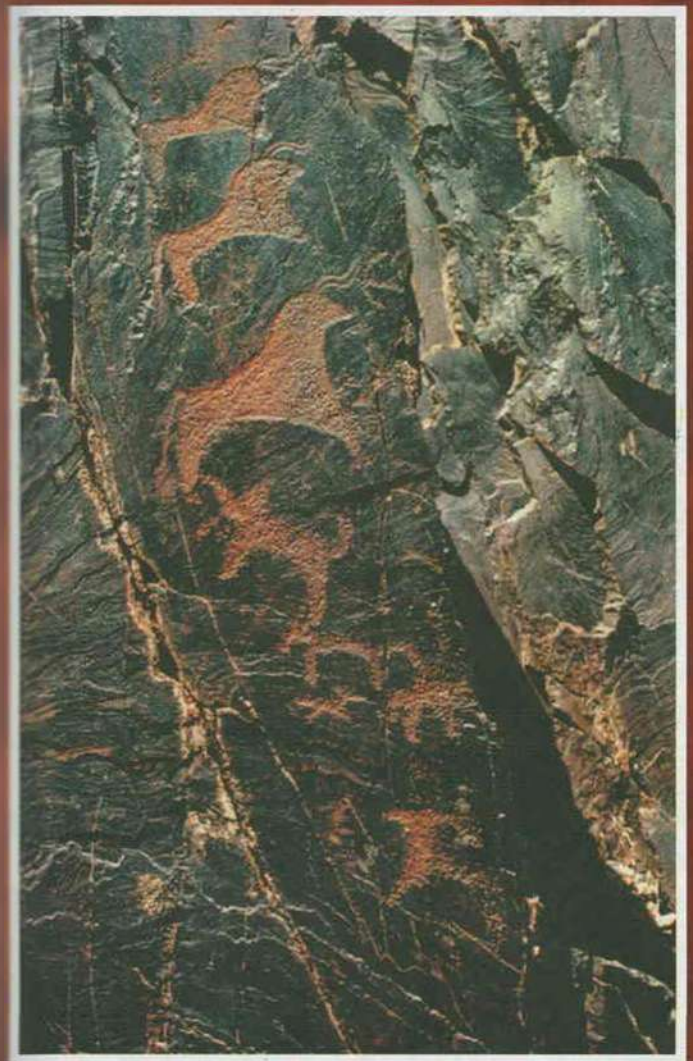


FOTO 6.
Sarmishsai. The general view of a part of the gorge.

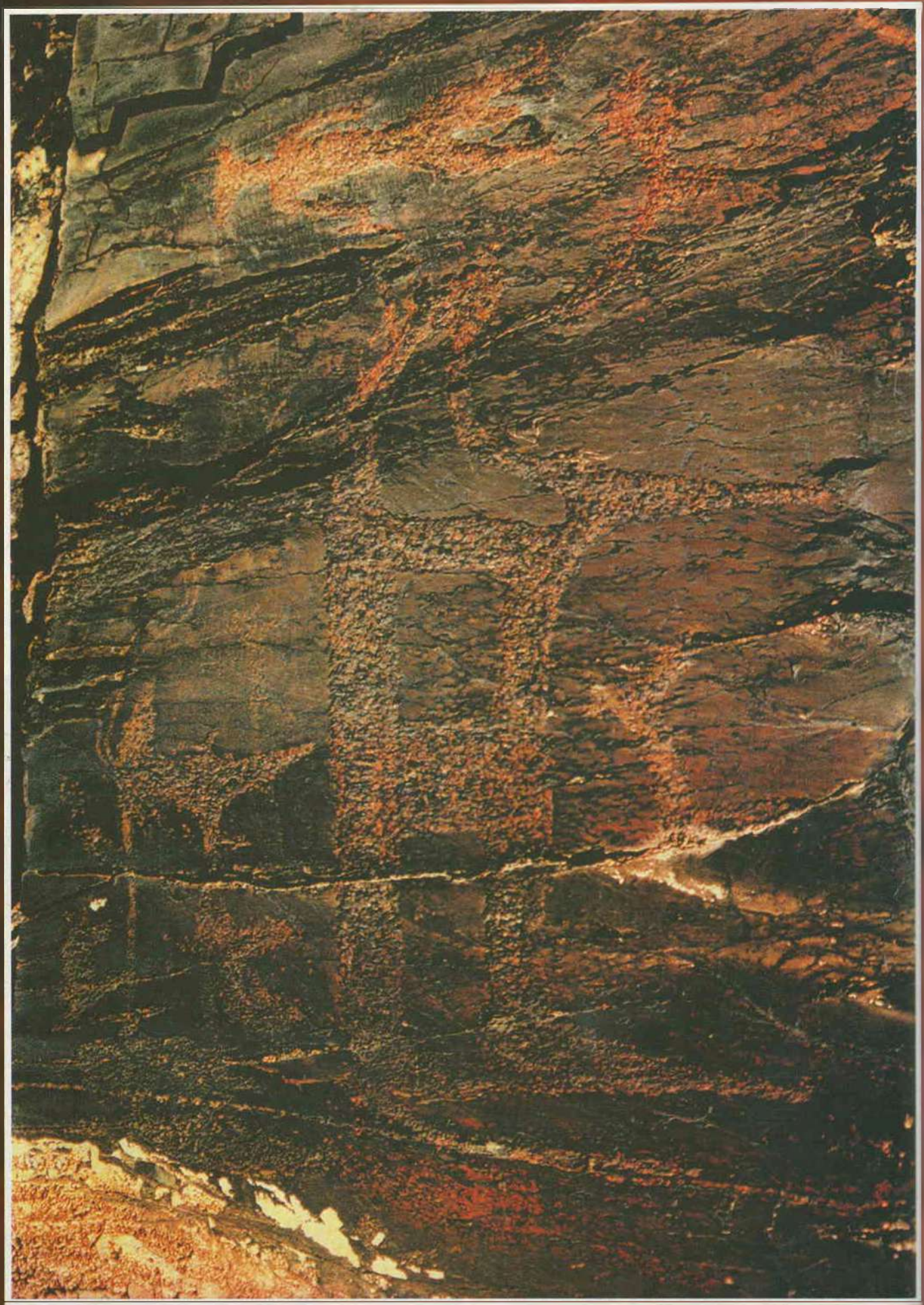


FOTO 7.
The map of Sarmishsai Valley

FIG. 7. *Sarmishsai. Scenes of hunt for various animals*

FIG. 8. *Sarmishsai. Compositions with many figures*

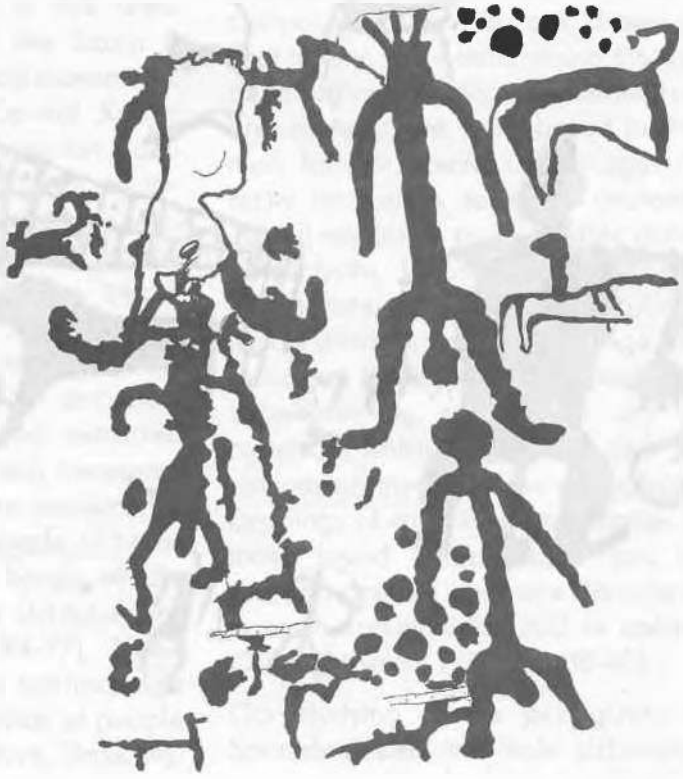


FIG. 9. *Sarmishsai. Scenes of hunt for aurochses with the help of a cheetah*

FIG. 10. *Compositions with many figures: a bull, a man, and a leopard*

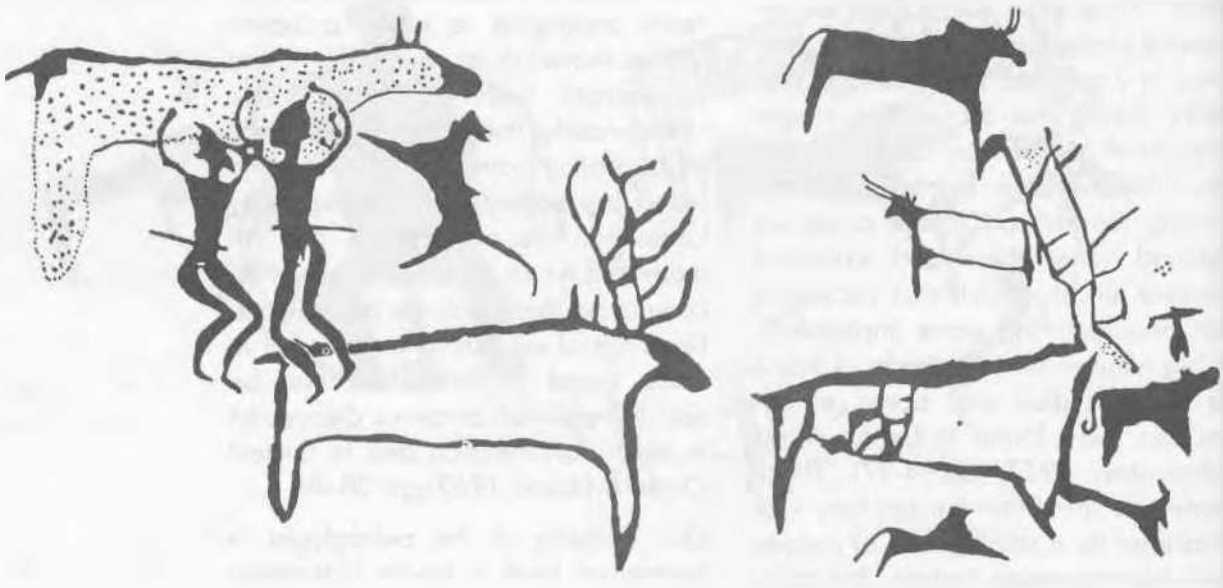
The most ancient drawings in Sarmishsai had been carved on blank and handy rock surfaces, while more recent ones occupied "second-rate" rock planes and differed from the former in the depth of the carving and the density of the desert patina. In the opinion of petroglyphists, such "a topographical lay-out" of the drawings within one plane plays a very important role in dating drawings of different age (Stolyar, Savvateyev, 1976, pp. 151-156). Such flat rocks can be often seen in Sarmishsai. According to Ya.A. Sher, in such cases it is evident and indubitable, that an upper petroglyph is "younger" than a lower one, but the question "how much younger?" can hardly be correctly answered without the attraction of additional or indirect observations (Sher, 1980, p. 171). The geomorphologic situation in Sarmishsai basin can serve a kind of an observation of such a kind. It doesn't exclude the possibility that this territory was inherited during Paleolithic period. According to archaeological data, the first traces of people's existence here date back to the Upper Paleolithic period. Silicic implements were found in this area. The southern part of the basin is notable for archaeological monuments, which are unique in Central Asia – Uchtut mines and a Mousterian workshop. These monuments were an important place, from where tribes, who lived in Zarafshan Oasis and its outskirts during the Stone Age, beginning from Mousterian Epoch till the Neolithic inclusive, extracted silicon. During the Neleolithic, our ancestors opened mines there and extracted nodular silicon, which was necessary for manufacturing stone implements. A big number of tools made of horns of bukhara deer and bones of aurochses were found in Uchtut mines (Mirsaatov, 1977, pp.94-97). These materials show that the territory was mastered by a small group of people with homogeneous culture. Basically, Sarmishsai became inhabited during Neolithic Age. We have all reasons to think, that those were hunters and fishers belonging to Celtminarian Culture, who gradually came to cattle-breeding. As is known, the Celtminarians settled on ancient sand-dunes, near ponds, which appeared due to the Amudarya and the Zarafshan floods. Apparently, this area abounded in bushes, where the Celtminarians obtained firewood, building materials, game, and fruits from wild trees. Similar natural-geographic conditions for the life of primordial gatherers, hunters, and cattle-breeders were also available in Sarmishsai, which is situated in the south-east part of Kyzyl Kum. Such well-known sites as Lyavlyakan, Ayakagetma, and others are situated not far from Sarmishsai. (Vinogradov, Mamedov, 1975, pp. 3-12; K. Szymczak, M. Khudzhanazarov, 1999). Proceeding from the above said, we can think that the ancient drawings of Sarmishsai appeared at the end of Stone Age.

Archaeological finds and drawings depicting such objects are of great interest, as they can be used in a comparative study of rock drawings. That is why, while determining the age of petroglyphs belonging to Stone and Bronze Ages, we were based on the most familiar scenes and images directly analogous to either archaeological materials or to reliably dated petroglyphs found in other areas. Unfortunately, the archaeological materials dating from the Stone Age and found on the territory of present-day Uzbekistan do not contain any art materials, which could be used for comparing them with the petroglyphs. Drawings of various animals similar to those found in Sarmishsai can be seen on painted ceramics discovered in south Turkmenistan and in ancient Orient (Masson, 1962, pp. 30-40).

Our studying of the petroglyphs in Sarmishsai (and in whole Uzbekistan

FIG. 11. *The images of a leopard, a bull, an aurochs, and a dog*

FIG. 12. *Sarmishsai. A composition with many figures. Palimpsest*



as well) and comparing them with analogous drawings found in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and south Siberia, make it possible to conclude that rock art monuments occupy vast areas in these regions, and petroglyphs there look similar in spite of their different location. Some types of scenes and separate drawings such as the images of bulls, horses, ibexes, and people can be found in many places. Especially well expressed are ibexes. They are depicted with rectangular bodies, the ends of their horns being almost adjacent to their backs. Bulls are shown with long twisted horns and knolls in the area of their shoulder-blades.

Among ancient drawings in Sarmishsai often found are the figures of aurochses, bisons (?), red deer, dziggetais, goitered gazelles, beasts of prey from the cat family (a tiger, a lion (?), a leopard, and cheetah) ibexes, wild boars, dogs, and others.

FIG. 13. ***Sarmishsai. The image of an aurochs and a scene of hunt for an ibex***

At present it is impossible to determine even an approximate date when the images of the above mentioned animals appeared among the petroglyphs of Uzbekistan. As is known, the red (bukhara) deer, the dziggetai, the goitered gazelle, the ibex, and the wild boar lived on the territory of Uzbekistan at least since the time of the Mammoth or the Upper Paleolithic Faunal Complex (Bazhanov, Kostenko, 1962, p.111).

The osseous remains of these animals were found on the territory of Uzbekistan during archaeological excavations carried out at monuments dating back to the Paleolithic, the Neolithic, and the Bronze Age. The bones of the red deer, the dziggetai, the goitered gazelle, the ibex, and the wild boar became known from such sites in Uzbekistan, as Sel-Ungur, Teshik-Tash, Khodjakent, Uchtut and others. (Islamov, 1980, p.109). At present, these animals live in reserves and in mountain gorges and are included in the Endangered Species Book.

The images of cheetahs can be often seen among the petroglyphs of Sarmishsai. Cheetahs are depicted standing, walking and attacking ibexes, argalis, and other animals. Similar drawings of these beasts of prey are often found on painted ceramics in Karadepe, Geoksyur, Sialk III, and Tali-Bakun, i.e. monuments dating back to the 3rd millennium B.C. (Masson, 1962, p. 30) (Fig. 9, 42).

The snow leopard, or *irbis*, as the natives call it, also can be seen among the petroglyphs in Sarmishsai. The surfaces of the drawings have become strongly damaged because of weathering, and are covered with a thick layer of desert patina, so, it is difficult to distinguish an image from

the dark-brown rock surface. As a result, some drawings have become hardly discernible. At present, snow leopards can be found in the Turkestan mountain ridge,in Hissar Mountains and their spurs. These beasts also live in Kuramin, Chatkal, Pskem and Ugam mountain ridges.

The image of the ibex is one of the most widespread drawings among others and covers nearly all chronological periods,so,it is rather hard to draw a strict time border between different groups of the drawings of ibexes. Now, ibexes live in cliffy Alpine areas. The ibex is valued as a game. One can hunt for ibexes only after receiving a special permission.

Drawings of camels and horses are also seen among petroglyphs of Sarmishsai. The images of these animals were drawn in the form of solid silhouettes, or sketchy, in rare cases. The animals have been shown with massive bodies, with one or two humps, and strong legs. Some of them have their feet depicted in a very expressive way. Now it has become indubitable that Central Asia was one of the most ancient regions where Bactrian camels were domesticated. The time when Bactrians were domesticated in northern parts of the steppe zone is identified as the middle of the 2nd millennium B.C., (Tsalkin, 1966, p.181), while in southern regions this time border is determined as the end of the 4th millennium B.C. At any rate, the end of the 3rd millennium B.C. witnessed the material evidences of the usage of the camel as a draft animal – terracotta models of carts driven by camels were found in layers dating back to later Namazga IV (Masson, 1964, p.47).

In some places drawings of horned cattle and mysterious objects decorated with a plenty of triangles have been found. In terms of the manner of carving applied and the degree of their preservation, they do not differ from ancient ones. Similar decorations can be often seen on ceramics and are typical of monuments found in Central Asia and belonging to Neolithic and Eneolithic periods and the Bronze Age. (Masson, Sarianidi, 1969, pp.86-99).

A number of other drawings can be also referred to high antiquity, as their age can be identified by comparing their subject contents with those of other drawings or objects whose age had been reliably determined. Proceeding from the abovesaid, we may assume that the images of aurochses, in their turn, can help determine the age of a large series of petroglyphs, scenes with different plots, among which especially interesting are drawings of people, animals and a number of unclear figures. Like the images of aurochses, they have very dark color and can hardly be distinguished from the rock background. As for the method of carving employed, there are no substantial differences between them. Judging from their location in comparison with other drawings,they occupy the most convenient rock surface, as it was with the images of aurochses, and in rare cases are overlapped with other drawings, which also testifies to their similar age. Besides, one of the common features of those times, which is present in these petroglyphs, was that nearly all people and animals were shown in movement.

So, the subject contents, the style, the degree of preservation, the results of a comparative analysis with other rock drawings and archaeological materials,the degree of the desert patina, the technique of making the drawings, and their location allow us to conceivably refer some images of aurochses, bisons, ibexes, beasts of prey from the cat family, people, etc. found in Sarmishsai to Neolithic period and the Bronze Age, that is to the 5th through the 2nd millennia B.C.

Among other rock drawings of Sarmishsai there is a large group of petroglyphs notable for some specific features. These are whole compositions and separate images with evident signs of the animal style, which can be easily and with confidence identified in any material. Main personages of the rock art belonging to early Iron Age, were figures of people, ibexes, deer, argalis, beasts of prey, horses, camels, dogs, goitered gazelles, and other animals. This time, drawings of horsemen, which are typical of Saka-Scythian period, begin to appear. The images of bows, quivers, swords, daggers, head gears, various symbols, and traps are often found on rocks and separate boulders. Most widely spread are scenes of hunt for ibexes, also scenes of penning cattle, and drawings of domestic animals. However, in contrast to images dating back to the previous periods, the figures of animals belonging to this time have become stylized, and only the most substantial details have been emphasized. Petroglyphs with such features are widely represented in monuments dating to early Iron Age and cover huge steppes and foothill territories in Eurasia once inhabited by tribes involved in cattle-bringing and cattle-bringing with simultaneous farming.

The observation of a large series of petroglyphs shows that, as a rule, the rock drawings of that time were placed some distance away from main compositions belonging to the earlier period. Apparently, Saka artists could use only second-rate rock sections, as main rock planes had been used already by their predecessors. In some cases these drawings were carved over ancient figures (Fig. 1, 6) and were later, in their turn, overlapped by more recent drawings.

The rock drawings of that time were made in silhouette, linear, and contour styles. Their surfaces, like it was with more ancient images, are often damaged and covered with desert patina. Some of them can be hardly distinguished from the rock or boulder background. A large series of drawings in Sarmishsai belong to this particular group.

The bulk of the drawings belonging to Saka-Scythian period were carved with the employment of technique of different kinds. At the same time, judging by their outline and how accurately they were made, we may think that the rock drawings were mainly carved with metallic tools.

Apart from the rock drawings described above, there is one more group of images, probably dating to Turkic and later periods. The main figures presented in this group are domesticated ibexes, dogs, horses, camels, etc. Most often seen here are the figures of riders with a scourge in the right hand, also scenes of hunt for ibexes with guns, etc. In some cases, such drawings were carved above ancient ones. As a rule, rock drawings like these are found in places where ancient petroglyphs were drawn.

Recent petroglyphs in Sarmishsai are presented with quite light drawings with faint patination. Sometimes they have no desert patina at all. These carvings are made roughly, with torn lines. These images are notable for primitivism. The depth of carving is big enough, 6 to 8 mm. The plots are simple, though multifarious. There are also inscriptions made in Arabic script, and unclear figures. Among numerous petroglyphs in Sarmishsai belonging to post-Saka and posterior periods, it seems difficult to distinguish any images peculiar to any of these periods (just like the images of chariots were typical of the Bronze Age or the drawings of deer were characteristic for the Scythian period). Consequently, dating of these drawings cannot be done very accurately. Still, it is possible to find some artistic traits peculiar to each group of these recent drawings (figures of horses or ibexes), which can

help detect their relatively recent origin. For example, the images of horses of that period lose specific body slenderness. Various curls, turns, acute angles once used to express such turns, which are so typical of horse figures of Saka period, have disappeared. Besides, the drawing of horses' bodies and necks begin to acquire a pure formal character: a straight line of the body acutely turns into a long neck. Muzzles are shown short, thick, and bent down. The legs of the animals (usually four legs are shown) have been drawn in unnatural for a horse way. Sometimes, the body, the forelegs and the hind legs are nearly on one line. Horses are shown as if galloping at full speed.

As a rule, riders are depicted waist-high. Sometimes a saddle with low arches is shown. Riders' legs are carved in comparatively rare cases. One hand composes a single whole with tightened reins, while the other, holding a scourge, is swung back. In general, different stylistic groups can be singled out from the figures of riders of that time, though, in terms of their subject contents, they have much in common. These are mainly images of riders galloping on horses and holding sticks (lasso?) or throwing them (sticks, spears?) in the direction of animals.

So, we can state that the whole manner of depicting horses, which we are analyzing, has features similar to the way how recent drawings of horses found in Karakiasai, Bashkyzylsai, and Akhangaran were made (86-87). Drawings of horses looking alike also were found in other places of Central Asia and Siberia. Researchers involved in studying such petroglyphs refer them to a wide period from the beginning of the 1st millennium B.C. to late Middle Ages.

Chronologically, the images of camels, which are found in less numbers than horses, can be also referred to the period under review. Unlike horses, the drawings of camels, though made in so recent time, were depicted much more expressively. Well seen are their humps, massive bodies, and long necks with lifted heads. Their legs are usually shown in a realistic manner. As for the riders on the camels, they look absolutely sketchy. Perhaps, figures of horses carved nearby are to be considered the date indication for the drawings of camels as they look alike in terms of patination, style, and the technique of carving.

Now, let's proceed to the consideration of the images of ibexes, which, as formerly, present the most widely spread object of depicting, among other petroglyphs. Having analyzed a large series of the images of ibexes, we have become convinced, that it is quite possible to single out some of their specific features, which may allow us to refer them to the Turkic and some posterior periods. The stylistic analysis of these drawings shows that a small group of them is similar

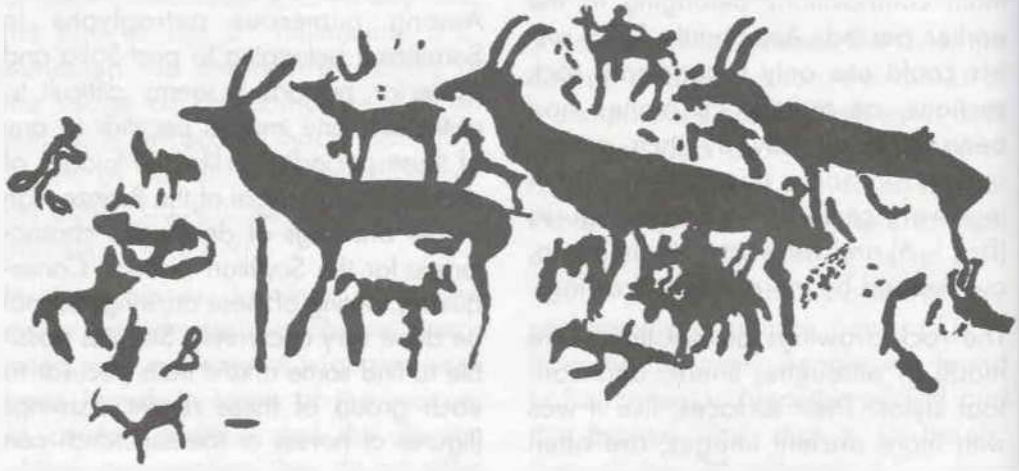


FIG. 14. ***Sarmishsai. The images of goitered gazelles and other figures***

n some features with the images of bexes described by A.D. Grach and belonging to ancient Turkic period. 88). It is interesting to point out that we have found inscriptions made in Arabic script on boulders in Sarmish-sai. In specialists' opinion, they date rom the 15th to 17th centuries. So, here are reasons to think that some igures of ibexes and a number of mages similar to these inscriptions n terms of the manner of carving and patina) belong to that same time.

So, the age determination of petro-glyphs belonging to the Turkic and osterior periods is mainly based on nalogies with drawings of the same ype found in other monuments. Of course, while identifying their age, such mportant factors as the style, the man-ner of drawing, and the degree of patination, to some extent, were taken nto consideration. It was nearly im-possible to employ the method of comparison of the petroglyphs with ocal art works belonging to post-Saka period, as such archaeological inds in Central Asia present only iso-lated cases. Unfortunately, there are no concrete or indisputable data at our disposal, which might allow us to trace historically more recent stages n the development of this kind of art. Nevertheless, separate finds of the rock drawings of animals found in burial mounds of that time – in Ket-men-Tyube (89)and in a burial ground near the village of Mindan (90), along with two groups of petroglyphs: in Aravan and Aiyrmachtau (Fergana), which have direct analogies with fig-ures painted on Chinese tiles dating to the last centuries B.C. (91-92)– are a material evidence of the fact that rock drawings occupied a certain place in the art of these cultures on the territory of Central Asia. It should be noted that petroglyphs of more recent periods, up to the ethnograph-ic present, can become an important cultural-historical and ethnographic source, if approached with special methods of analysis.

In conclusion, we'd like to say it again that the rich complexes of rock art galleries in Sarmishsai and other similar monuments present com-petent historical sources, a peculiar stone chronicle, which are very im-portant for studying the antique his-tory of nations, who once lived in Central Asia in general and in Uzbekistan, in particular.

FIG. 15. ***Sarmishsai. The images of aurochses***

FIG. 16. *Sarmishsai. The images of an aurochs and other animals. A scene of hunt.*

FIG. 17. *Sarmishsai. The images of aurochses*

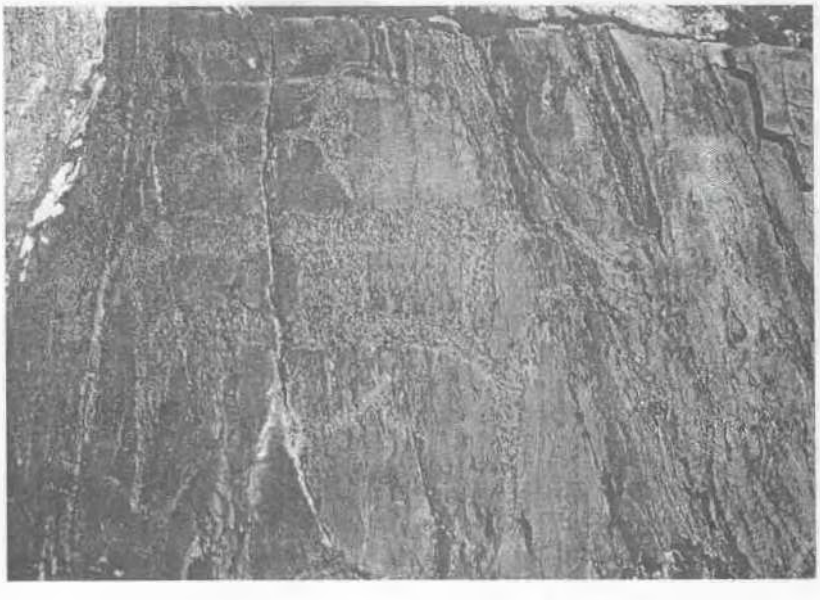


FIG. 19. *Sarmishsai. The images of men*

FIG. 18.
Sarmishsai.
The image of a man

FIG. 20.
The image of
a mysterious object

FIG. 21.
The image of
a mysterious object

FIG. 22. *The scene of hunt for ibexes; a man and a horse*

FIG. 23. *The images of horses and men*

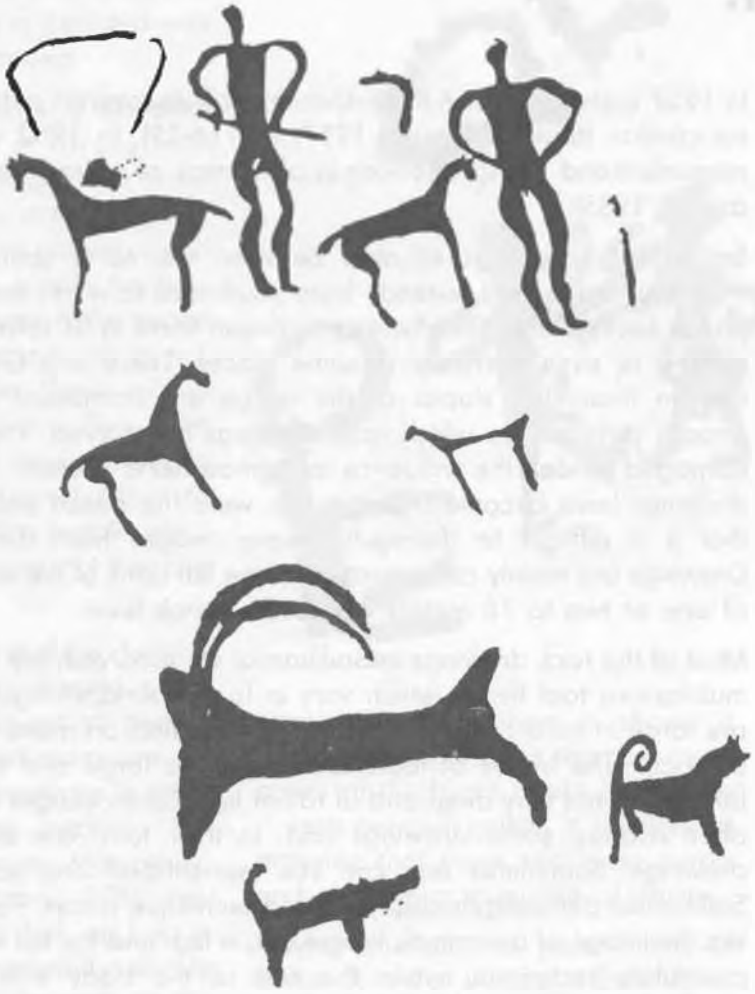
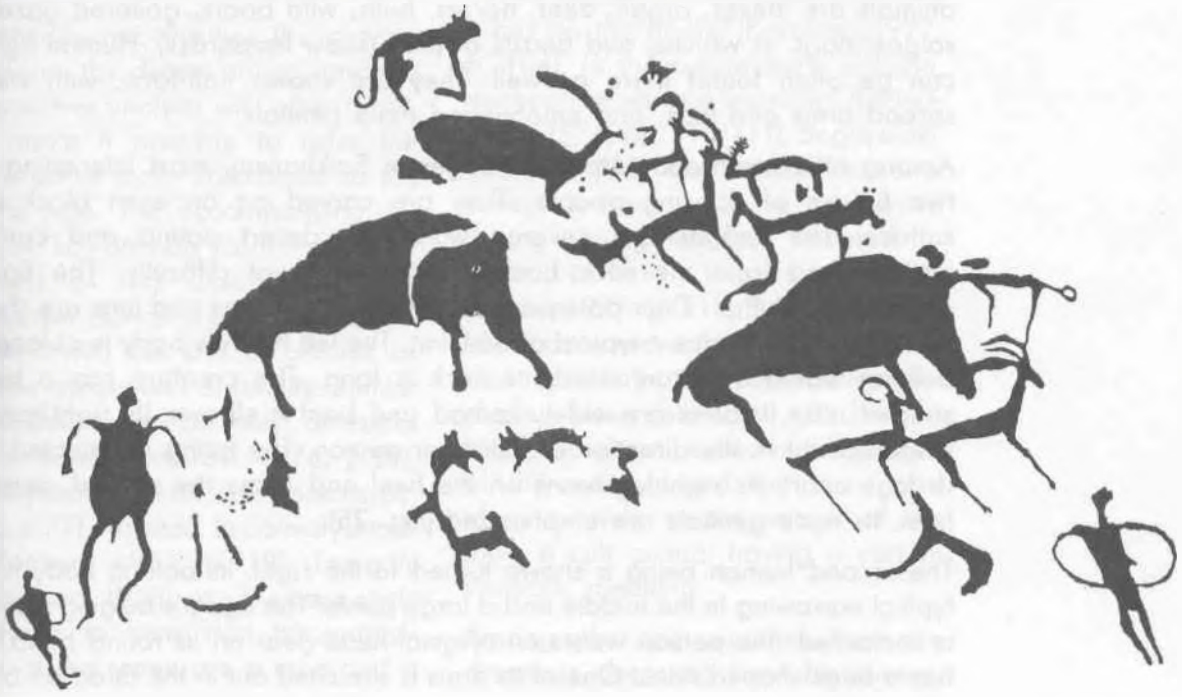


FIG. 24. *Sarnishsai. A composition with many figures*



SAIKHANSAI

In 1957 archaeologist A.R. Mukhamejanov discovered petroglyphs in Saikhansai canyon (Mukhamejanov, 1957, pp. 16-19). In 1982 we re-examined the monument and found 638 images of animals of various species there (Khujanazarov, 1985).

Saikhansai canyon is situated between the north spurs of the Morguzar mountain ridge and extends from south-east to north-west. The canyon has plumb rocky walls. The distance between them in its lower part is five to ten meters, or even narrower in some places. There is a brook running on the canyon floor. The slopes of the gorge are composed of black slate with smooth surfaces, on which rock drawings are carved. The rocks got strongly damaged under the influence of atmospheric factors. As the result, many drawings have become destroyed as well. The desert patina is so thick there that it is difficult to distinguish many images from the rock background. Drawings are mainly concentrated on the left bank of the stream, at the altitude of one or two to 15 meters above the brook level.

Most of the rock drawings in Saikhansai were carved, the evidence of which is multifarious tool traces, which vary in form (round, triangular, and square) and are large in most cases. The edges of tool dints on many drawings are rather clear-cut. The traces of tools are sometimes large and sometimes mid-sized but always not very deep and of rather light color. Images made in this manner often overlap some drawings and, in their turn, are overlapped by other drawings. Sometimes one can see tear-shaped and oblong traces. Many Saikhansai petroglyphs display mixed technique traces. For example, one can see the image of an animal, whose ear, a leg, and the tail were carved with the punctulate technique, while the rest of the body was depicted with the employment of large-dot carving.

There are both solitary and group drawings in Saikhansai. The most frequent animals are ibexes, argali, deer, horses, bulls, wild boars, goitered gazelles, saigas, dogs or wolves, and beasts of prey (snow leopards?). Human figures can be often found there as well. They are shown half-face, with widely spread arms and legs, and emphasized male genitals.

Among other anthropomorphous images in Saikhansai, most interesting are two figures of dancing people. They are carved on an even black rock surface. The images are covered with thick desert patina and can be distinguished from the rock background with great difficulty. The figures oppose each other. Their poses are expressive, their arms and legs are shown in a rhythmic movement typical of dancing. The left figure's body is oblong, its bulging stomach is contoured, its neck is long. The creature has a beak-shaped nose, its arms are widely spread and bent in elbows. Its right hand is stretched out in the direction of the other person. The being is depicted with its legs apart. Its right leg leans on the heel and faces the second person's heel. Its male genitals are emphasized (Fig. 25).

The second human being is shown turned to the right. Its oblong body has a typical narrowing in the middle and a large pelvis. The figure's bulging stomach is contoured. The person wears an original head-gear on its round head and has a beak-shaped nose. One of its arms is stretched out in the direction of the

first person, while its other arm, with its palm being turned inward, is bent in the elbow. The being is depicted with its legs apart, as if dancing.

Both figures are drawn in a silhouette style, with application of carving technique. Perceived tool traces look round and square, and are not very deep. The images' outlines are not very clear. There are tool traces outside the contours. Next to the figures is the image of an ibex, whose horns touch its tail, thus forming a circle. There is one more "sun-headed" creature there. Both are covered with thick desert patina. In terms of the manner of carving, they do not differ from the dancing people, which fact allows us to suppose that they are of a similar age.

Noteworthy is the fact that the dancing pair has specific beak-shaped noses (bird's heads). The figures of people with such beak-shaped noses are often found among petroglyphs in other concentrations dating back to the Bronze Age (Kadyrbayev, Maryashev, 1977, p. 182; Agafonova, 1981, Fig. 1,2,7; Sher, 1980, Fig. 108; etc.). As is known, dance scenes present a widely spread motif in rock drawings in the whole world (Formozov, 1969, p. 239; Koroleva, 1977, pp. 9-50; Chujoy, 1967).

The stylistic peculiarities, the carving technique, the desert patina, and the comparative analysis with other drawings make it possible to refer the dance scene from Saikhansai to the Bronze Age. The accompanying images of "sun-animals" confirm the correctness of this assumption. The Saikhansai dance scene can be associated with the cult of phallus or with the conception of fertility. Similar compositions can be seen on rocks in Sarmishsai (Kabirov, 1976, p.59), Karakiyasai, Varzik (Khujanazarov, 1995, p.77), Karatau, in Saimalyshtash (Agafonova, 1981, p.110), Tamgaly (Maksimova, 1958), etc. The case study allows us to think that the participants of the scene are a man and a

FIG. 25.
Saikhansai.
Dance scenes

woman. Next to them is shown a "sun-ibex." At the same time, the availability of the bird's beaks (semi-birds – semi-people) makes it possible to presume that these two wear masks and perform a magic ritual dance.

Having studied the peculiarities of earlier forms of various tribes' dances, E.A. Koroleva noted, that "hunting with masks and its reproduction by means of dances were known to many tribes on the globe" (Koroleva, 1977, p. 104). In the researchers' opinion, dances had various meanings (Okladnikov, 1974, pp. 110-111); Bogayevski, 1934, p. 110; and others). In some cases dances could be performed during spring holidays devoted to the cult of fertility (Kadyrbayev, Maryashev, 1977, p. 217). It is quite possible that some other notions could also coexist in this composition, including those connected with the fertility concept embodied in the images of the woman and the man, and ideas relating to the image of the ibex, a cult animal having a certain symbolic meaning.

Among other group scenes, there are drawings depicting hunt for ibexes,

FIG. 26.
Saikhansai. Scenes of hunt for aurochses and ibexes

bulls, and other animals by an archer or a group of hunters provided with bows. Scenes of battue hunt for aurochses present a typical motif in Saikhansai drawings. The images of aurochses, in terms of their bodies' shape and judging from other signs, resemble very ancient drawings found in Sarmishsai, Saimaly-Tash, Tamgaly, and Karatau. The aurochses have been drawn very realistically, and shown mostly in movement. It should be pointed out that there are no images of aurochses in other places of the gorge. These figures are found only on the rock called Takatash, which is six meters high and four meter wide. The rock is situated on the left bank of the stream. The rock is strongly damaged and covered with large fissures and cracks. The carvings on its surface were made for centuries. The evidence of this is a large number of palimpsests and difference in patina colors on the carvings. All 200 drawings are located on the same surface of Takatash rock. Consequently, all climatic factors exerted equal influence on the drawings. If only the drawings had been synchronous, the thickness of the patina could have been equal as well. Still, a thorough examination shows that the patina thickness is different on different drawings. For instance, the images of aurochses are most dark, irrespective of their location among other drawings. The images of people, beasts of prey, some images of ibexes, dogs, and a number of unclear animals look alike. Ensuing from aforesaid, we can presume that the aforesaid drawings were made simultaneously. Besides, because of numerous fissures, the images of aurochses, and the rest of the drawings, are strongly damaged. In a number of cases they can be identified only for a remaining part (of a horn). Sometimes aurochs' horns are carved separately, even on an intact section of the rock. In some places the drawings of aurochses are overlapped by other images. Data presented testify in favor of the primariness of the images of aurochses on Takatash rock. (Fig. 26, 27).

All the drawings of aurochses are made in the same manner. The animals have vigorous and neat trunks

with humps jutting out on their withers, obtuse and elongate muzzles, and long wavy horns. Their legs, two or four, reproduce movement typical of wild animals. There are two compositions, in which aurochses drawn in this manner, are the object of hunting.

The most close parallels with the images of aurochses from Takatash rock and scenes of hunt for them are known among drawings found in Sarmishsai (Kabirov, 1976, Fig. 2.2,3,6; 4.1,2,3,7), in Saimaly-Tash (Bernshtam, 1952, pp. 61, 65-67), in Tamgaly (Maksimova, 1958, pp. 108-110, Fig. 10, 16, 23, 35, 36), in Karatau (Kadyrbayev, Maryashev, 1977, Fig. 99), and in other places. All of them are believed to belong to the Bronze Age.

As is known, aurochses inhabited the territory of Central Asia since the Paleolithic. The osteal remains of these animals were discovered during excavations in an Upper Paleolithic site ficated near the city of Samarkand, also in Selungur, in Machai site belonging to Mesolithic Period (Batyrov, 1967, pp. 101-102), in Uchtut Paleolithic site (Mirsaatov, 1973, p.66, Fig. 6), in Obishir site (Islamov, 1980, p.34), and in the settlements of Sapalli-Tepeh dating back to Advanced Bronze Period (Askarov, 1973, p. 131; 1977, p. 96). Noteworthy is the fact that there were no aurochses' bone remains in osteal materials found in Uzbekistan and dating from the 1st millennium B.C. (Tsalkin, 1966, pp. 144-154, Tables 36-39). Paleontologist B.Kh. Batyrov conjectured that aurochses had dissappeared by the historical period (Batyrov, 1969, pp.20-23).

On other Eurasian region territories, aurochses' osteal remains were mainly found in monuments belonging to the Neolithic and the Bronze Age. Thus, in Kazakhstan, aurochses' bones are known to be located in Karaungur and Zelenaya Balka sites, also in Alekseyevskoye and Chaglinka settlements, etc. (Bazhanov, Kostenko, 1962, pp. 47-48). In Transcaucasia, aurochses' bones were discovered in burial places dating back to the 2nd millennium B.C. (Piotrovski, 1959, p. 148). In Moldova and the Ukraine, according to data obtained by V.I. Tsalkin, more than 75% of these animals' bone remains belong to the Neolithic and the Bronze Age (Tsalkin, 1970, p.27).

So, on basis of comparison between aurochses' images carved on Takatash rock and the drawings of these animals found in other com-

FIG. 27. ***Saikhansai. Scenes of hunt for ibexes***

plexes,and osteal materials detected in a number of monuments in neighboring and remote territories,we can conclude that the upper time border of the rock drawings of aurochses, is Late Bronze Period (Kadyrbayev, Maryashev, 1977, p. 172). In this connection, special importance shall be attached to some data obtained during comparison between the images of aurochses on Takatash rock and the images of aurochses in Suratysai (Khujanazarov, 1999, pp. 9-21). Apart from common attributes typical of all the images of aurochses, there are noticeable differences in size, style, and the manner of drawing.

The size of the drawings of aurochses in Suratysai is one meter odd, while in Takatash such images do not exceed 30 or 40 cm. In Suratysai aurochses are depicted in an "openwork-ornamental" style, while drawings in Takatash are carved in the form of complete silhouettes. The drawings in Suratysai show aurochses standing still, while in Takatash these animals are reproduced running headlong. In Takatash the figures of people carved next to aurochses are shown with bows in their hands, while on the drawings in Suratysai they are depicted without any weapons at all. In conclusion, we have to underline, that the manner of depicting aurochses on Takatash rock is more sketchy than that in Suratysai. So, the data presented show that it will be groundless to unite both groups of aurochses into a single one. Quite acceptable seems regarding aurochses as ancestors of domestic animals, though, possibly, they presented two independent evolutionary lines of one species.

As cattle-raising developed, the population of aurochses diminished a great deal. According to researchers, the number of wild hoofed animals, including aurochses, lessened as a consequence of competition between domestic and wild animals and because of hunting (Batyrov, 1973, pp. 194-195; Zimina, Panfilov, Turdekov, 1966, p. 285).

All above-mentioned facts along with the analysis of rock drawings depicting these animals, allow us to think that the aurochs' evolution line finished in the period of farming and cattle-breeding advancement, i.e. in the Bronze Age. One more proof is the absence of the images of aurochses among the petroglyphs of Sakas' period. In our view,the supposition that the drawings in Suratysai reproduced domestic bulls, and the images on Takatash rock showed wild aurochses sounds quite well-grounded.

We also found the images of aurochses at other monuments examined by us, such as Suratysai and Khojakent (Khujanazarov, 1995, p.66). In spite of general compositional similarity, they differ in details. For instance, the image of an aurochs in Suratysai lacks body slenderness so typical of carvings on Takatash rock; and the drawing of an aurochs of Khojakent doesn't show the animal in movement. Besides, the latter drawing depicts the animal's horns in an unusual way – in the form of a circle, which is not characteristic of drawings on Takatash rock. The availability of common stylistic features of the images analyzed allows to suppose their similar age.

The figures of people carved chiefly on Takatash, alongside of the images of aurochses, belong to the same period. According to their styles, they could have been divided into two groups, such as linear-sketchy drawings and silhouette ones. Still, a thorough analysis makes it clear that the division according to the styles might have been absolutely conditional and could hardly give anything substantially helpful for their age determination. The images of two archers present an illustrative example. They are different stylistically but similar in terms of their plotline, patina density, and the technique of carving. Besides, they

are carved close to the figures of aurochses on Takatash rock and constitute a single composition with the animals - a scene of hunt. Similar examples can be found in other places as well - in Saikhansai and Sarmishsai. Probably, the ancient artist thought of the composition in general and didn't attach special importance to styles. Thinking that he would be understood by onlookers, he used methods employed for depicting people in a silhouette manner. In this connection Ya.A. Sher notes that such examples demonstrate once more "a tight dialectic correlation between contents elements and style elements in drawings" (Sher, 1980, p.38). If so, then in cases, when there are human beings drawn in both silhouette and linear styles, such images shall be considered together, and most probably they are of a similar age.

Proceeding with studying, we have to state that in most cases people are shown in various compositions, such as scenes of hunt, cult scenes, and dance scenes. Solitary human figures are a rare case. In scenes of hunt they are armed with simple and complex bows or have some other things in their hands. Especially often they are depicted on rocks in Saikhansai, in scenes of hunt for ibexes and other animals.

The images of people with widely spread and raised hands or with their arms akimbo and emphasized phalluses, can be also referred to the Bronze Age. There are several cases, when people were shown in the scenes of adoration. Similar adoration scenes were depicted in petroglyphs found in Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan.

It is to be underlined, that the age of most of petroglyphs with the images of people still fail to be accurately determined. Probably, some of them can be referred to Early Iron Period.

FIG. 28. ***Saikhansai. A composition with many figures***

A number of other drawings, whose age can be outlined by method of subject contents cross-checking, can be referred to the Bronze Age (Fig. 28, 29).

Rock surfaces in Saikhansai contain numerous symbols. Some of them are round and divided into four parts, which, probably, was connected with solar symbolism. Solar signs from Saikhansai have numerous analogies among petroglyphs in Central Asia. As is known, there are special works devoted to scenes with solar images found in the area of Onega and the White Sea (Ravdonikas, 1936, p. 84). At the same time, issues relating to the cult of the sun in petroglyphs, were elucidated in works by A.A. Martirosyan for the Caucasus (Martirosyan, 1970, pp. 38-42), by V.M. Kotovich for Dagestan (Kotovich, 1974, pp. 41-43), by

A.P. Okladnikovfor Siberia (Okladnikov, 1964; Okladnikov, Zaporozhskaya, 1969, p.105 and others), and by E. Werth for the Near East regions (Werth, 1954, pp. 310-330). Such signs are rather frequent in Middle Asia, the Caucasus, Transcaucasia, and other places, especially on vessels belonging to the Bronze Age. By analogy, petroglyphs with the images of solar signs are referred to the Bronze Age and early Iron Age, i.e. the peak of worshiping the cultof the sun by tribes involved in farming (Fig. 30).

Some images of ibexes can be dated to the Bronze Age. In this connection, it shall be pointed out that the image of the ibex is dominant among other motifs and covers nearly all chronological periods. That is why it is difficult to strictly define time border between various groups of the images of ibexes. The figures of ibexes drawn next to the images of aurochses and looking alike, in terms of style, patina density, and the plotline, are considered dating back to the Bronze Age. Then, some other figures of ibexes found on other rocks, ensuing from their stylistic peculiarities,are also considered bearing the same date. Usually such figures have oblong trunks, two or four legs, and two or three long horns strongly bent to their backs. The proportions of their bodies seem to have not been observed. Thus, the horns of an ibex can exceed its body by half. Similar drawings were also found in other Central Asian monuments referred by researchers to the Bronze Age.

A number of the images of ibexes in Saikhansai display a close resemblance to the images of ibexes on painted ceramics produced by ancient agricultural tribes from south Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan (Askarov, 1977, p.78; Masson, 1956, Table 5, Fig. 5, 6, 7; Table 28, Fig. 2; Masson, 1962,pp. 167, 169, Fig. 9; Sarianidi, 1965, Table 14, Fig. 22, 24).

Now let's consider the images of wild boars, which are somehow connected either with the scenes of hunt or with the figures of ibexes, or are sometimes shown separately. There is a scene on Takatash rock with the carved figure of an aurochs. Next to it is depicted a wild boar chased by archers with a dog. Judging from the common semantic contents of the images, this composition can be referred to the Bronze Age. A similar scene was registered by A. Kabirov in Sarmishsai (Kabirov, 1976, p. 11, Fig. 3; 27.8, 9; Kadyrbayev, Maryashev, 1977, Fig. 107). A similar wild boar figure was drawn on one side of a pendant found in the burial place No. 82 during excavations at Sapalli-Tepeh (Askarov, 1977, p.78, Table 44).

Summing up the aforementioned materials,we can point out that the prevailing motifs of Bronze Age petroglyphs in Saikhansai were aurochses, ibexes, wild boars,various symbols,archers,scenes of hunt, and dance scenes. Unlike previous

FIG. 29. ***Saikhansai. A composition with many figures***

periods, the range of images depicted in petroglyphs becomes more manifold. The initial period of the Bronze Age witnessed some tendency towards the generalization, sketchiness, and geometrization of rock art images (Sher, 1980, p. 256.). Later artists became inclined to observe the proportions of objects depicted. In the images of animals and people, they strove for showing their bodies realistically and tried to reproduce their typical poses and movements (Sher, 1980, p. 256; Devlet, 1982, p.30; Okladnikova, 1984, p. 54). At the next stage, in Saka-Scythian period, the aforesaid features peculiar to animals and human beings' figures nearly ceased. Still, we cannot draw an acute distinction between the art of the Bronze Age and that of the Iron Age. Apparently, the Saka-Scythian animal style originated from the Bronze Age art (Devlet, 1982, p. 63).

At the end of the Bronze Age, substantial changes in the way of the reproduction of some animals began to show. The incipient drawings of this period differed from former ones on style, though they displayed the continuity of technique. Ties between the Sakas' period rock art and that of the previous epoch can be traced in petroglyphs from Saikhansai and other places.

Among Saikhansai petroglyphs there are drawings belonging to an early stage of the animal style. Such drawings are made with thin lines carved on rock surfaces. They have been studied not well enough yet, however. What is presented in Saikhansai perfectly well is the rock art of the Sakas' period. Petroglyphs belonging to this period are more multifarious: apart from ibexes and deer, one can often see the images of argali, horses, camels, beasts of prey, and human beings drawn in the animal style.

Namely at this time, such ancient motif as the man's hunt for wild animals, fades somewhat into the background. Added become scenes of chase and attacking of some animals by others. It seems that the compositional lay-out of separate images acquires importance.

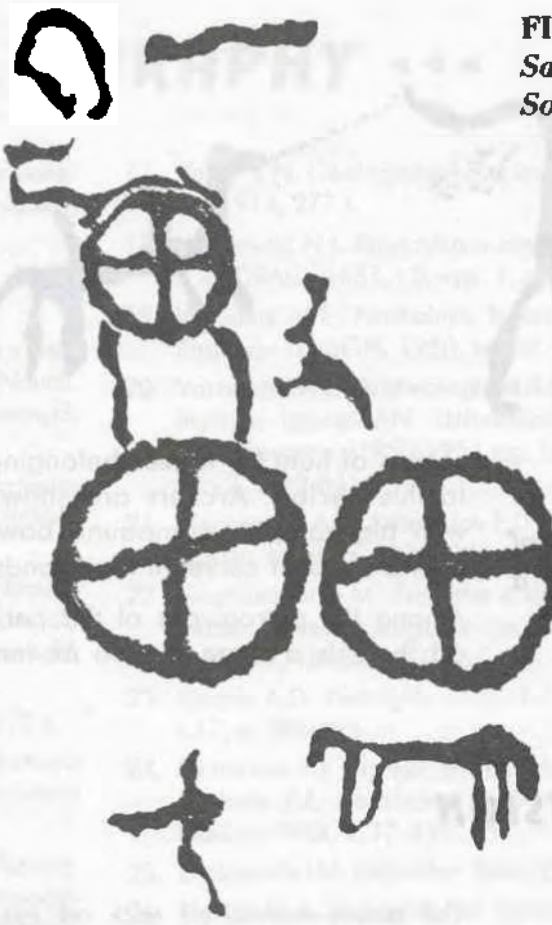


FIG. 30.
Saikhansai. Solar symbols

The drawings of horses are made especially accurate. They are mainly depicted in movement. The size and the shape of their bodies vary.

The drawings of this period were carved in a rambling fashion. The orientation of the drawings and their disposition on rock surfaces seem unsystematic. Styles and the technique of making drawing are manifold, the evidence of which are petroglyphs with the images of ibexes and people.

As for the rock drawings of Early Middle Ages (Turkic time), they cannot be pronouncedly identified either by any specific style or carving technique, or by the degree of patination. There are separate

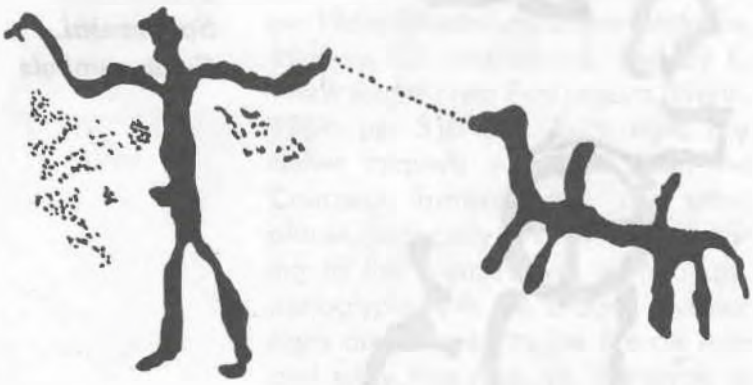


FIG. 31. ***Saikhansai. The images of a man and a camel***

scenes of hunt for ibexes belonging to this period. Archers are shown with big complex compound bows with a peculiar curve, in their hands.

Among the petroglyphs of this period there is a large portion of very light, nearly patina-free, and rough images, which sometimes overlap other drawings. This group of more recent carvings includes the figures of one- or two-humped camels, riders on horses, people with guns on bipods, battle scenes, and many unclear drawings. There are several inscriptions in Arabic. Such drawings can be found nearly in all regions in Central Asia. The researchers of these petroglyphs refer them to a broad period, from early 1st millennium A.D. right up to the 20th century.

So, different motifs and even separate images have helped outline several stages in drawing petroglyphs in Saikhansai.

CONCLUSION

The above-mentioned rock art monuments are considered most famous in Uzbekistan to date. Newly obtained materials on rock art allow to elucidated, on a broad source study basis, issues relating to the world outlook and ideology of tribes, which once inhabited mountainous and piedmont regions in Uzbekistan.

The analysis of numerous rock art monuments found on the large territory of the republic confirms the general principles of the continuous development, in time and space, of conceptual-ideological fundamentals in creative rock art works.

The semantic analysis of the prevailing motifs shows that most of the drawings dating from earlier periods were of cult-and-magic character, and sometimes of a mythological one. In the outlook of the primitive man, who was tightly connected with the environment, preference was given to the images of a mother-woman, the sun, big hoofed animals, aurochses, horses, camels, ibexes, beasts of prey, and snakes, as they played key roles in his consciousness. Apparently, all rites, festivities, and myths were focused on and related to these creatures, as they presented the essence of life of ancient farmers, cattle-breeders, shepherd, or nomads, who once inhabited these territories.

Further systematical study of rock drawings in various regions of Uzbekistan can contribute to studying the most ancient history of culture in general and the most ancient rock art monuments in entire Central Asia, in particular.

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PETROGLYPHS OF TADJIKISTAN

ROCK DRAWINGS FOUND IN THE PAMIRS: THEIR LOCATION, STYLISTIC PECULIARITIES, THEMATICS, AND CHRONOLOGY

GEOGRAPHIC PECULIARITIES

The Pamirs geographic notion embraces two regions, which strongly differ in terms of their natural conditions. These are the Pamirs high-altitude plateau (Eastern Pamirs) and Badakhshan (Western Pamirs), a mountainous country with a deeply rugged relief. A system of submeridional upheavals serves as a border between them, which line appears a natural boundary separating these two subcontinents. Eastern Pamirs is a part of Central Asia, while the natural features of Western Pamirs reveal its similarity to Front Asia (Sidorov, 1964).

The Pamirs upland is a high-altitude desert, one of the most severe ones in the world. Plants, animals and people exist in extremal conditions there, as plain intermontane valleys are lifted here at the altitude of 3,600 to 4,300 meters above sea level. The face of the plateau covered with rare semidesertic vegetation is interspersed with small short-grass meadows. Among the present-day fauna most frequent are the Central Asian argali (Ovis ammon L.) and the Alpine ibex (Capra sibirica Meyer). Bears, red wolves, snow leopards, and hares are also found here. There is a numerous population of marmots in this area.

Apart from this, Eastern Pamirs keeps many traces of its former life. Widely spread are sites dating to Epi-Palaeolithic Markansuiskaya culture, Sakas' burial places, and medieval miners' settlements. Less common are the traces of the Turkic period and the antiquity found by archaeologists (Ranov, 1984).

Western Pamirs (Badakhshan) is notable for its strongly rugged relief. Narrow plots of land suitable for life extend along rivers,and the amplitude of the valley altitudes and mountain ridges heights reaches 3,500 to 4,000 meters. Flora in Badakhshan can be divided into four altitudinal belts, in

which wood vegetation is presented with introduced trees and rare tugai and shrubby communities growing in valley floors. As for the fauna, its most frequently found animal is the Alpine ibex (Capra sibirica P.) Among others are the Tien Shan bear, lyrix, snow leopard, and porcupine. Zoologists have recorded comings of the tugai deer (Servus elaphus bactrianus L.)

There are no prehistorical monuments in Western Pamirs, and the protohistoric period is presented very poorly either. Rare traces of Saka tribes' movement towards East have been found right up to Namatgut *kishlak* (a village in Central Asia). Since the Kushan period, widely spread became fortress fortification, which later resulted in the construction of a considerable number of early-medieval fortresses, while late Middle Ages are presented with less rich material (Babayev, 1973; Bubnova, 1985).

HISTORY OF STUDYING PETROGLYPHS

In general, we can single out three stages in studying petroglyphs. The first stage covers the period when initial information was obtained (1876 through 1946) and includes brief records of unprofessional character (Bobrinski, 1908). A.N. Bernshtam's traveling to the Pamirs (in 1946 through 1956) appeared the first involvement of archaeologists in this subject, and can be regarded as the second stage. Bernshtam found a considerable number of new places with accumulated petroglyphs (Bernshtam, 1952). This work made it possible for A.N. Dalski to register 18 places with the finds of petroglyphs in the Pamirs in 1949 (Dalski, 1949).

During Bernshtam's last travel to the Pamirs in 1956, I conducted a brief, three days' examination of several rocks at the Shakhdarinski mountain ridge, just near Lyangar kishlak. The resulting material has been used for the first detailed publication of petroglyphs found in the Pamirs (Ranov, 1960). By this, the third period of studying Pamirs petroglyphs opened. Unfortunately, in 1991 this activity ceased because of the-then political events.

In 1958, for the first time, drawings belonging to the Stone Age were found in Shakhty grotto, Tadjikistan, and studied (Ranov. 1961). Here we must mention with appreciation the activity of botanists. A.V. Gurski published an article about several areas located to the east of Khorog, and O.Ye. Agakhanyants' article was dedicated to areas next to Yazgulem (Gurski, 1952; Agakhanyants, 1957).

Practically, the only special research of petroglyphs appeared work executed in 1972, with broad-scale documentation and description of two main concentrations, including those found in Vybist-Dara and Lyangar (Ranov, 1976). A year earlier V.A. Zhukov made observation of remarkable drawings located in the area of the Ak-Jilga River (Zhukov, Ranov, 1972).

After the above work no more or less substantial studies on this subject-matter have been conducted. The total number of published works dedicated to this thematics is twenty odd.

RECORDING OF PETROGLYPHS FOUND IN THE PAMIRS

The recording technique used at that time didn't exceed the bounds of traditional and primitive, from the today's point of view, approaches far from modern methods of photographing in infrared rays, with the usage of a laser photo-machine, or with the application of various plastics, studying patina on drawings with an electronic microscope or by means of eco-morphological and geo-microbiological observation (Francfort et ali, 1993; Dubal, 1995). This is why all documentation available has come, at best, to a detailed description in diaries of style, level of patinisation, technique applied and statistical data, and to the registration of palimpsest cases, if any. Photos taken then were hardly good enough for being published. A main method used at that time was tracing. In some cases the archaeologists had to outline drawings in chalk.

Nobody worried about the preservation of the drawings in the Pamirs, a matter of the scientific community's deep concern at present. So, today the above areas with the assemblages of petroglyphs bear pressure from two main factors, the natural and the anthropogenic ones (Bednarik, 1992).

LOCATION OF PETROGLYPHS IN THE PAMIRS

Of course, we cannot exclude that new sites with concentrations of petroglyphs may be found, but 51 such places discovered so far, contain the bulk of objects of this kind (Ranov, Gurski, 1966). The discovered assemblages are different in size, varying from very large ones, such as those found in Lyangar-Kisht (nearly 6,000 drawings) and Vybist-Dara (1,200); or middle-sized collections counting one hundred or several hundreds drawings (Sally-Mullah, Ak-Jilga, etc.) to small concentrations with tens of petroglyphs or even isolated drawings (Namatgut, Kukhi-Lal, Tamdy, etc.). (Fig. 1).

The main portion of petroglyphs is located along the Pyanj River and its tributaries contouring this narrow tillage zone with west Pamirs-type kishlaks situated on it. Other sites with accumulated petroglyphs, such as Vybist-Dara, for instance, were connected with the-then summer pastures for cattle. A certain number of drawings are located in upper rivers being associated with mountain passes (Abdukagor, Jamak, Koitezek, and Aktash). Others are situated at the confluence of rivers (Darshai). Very often large boulders (Namatgut) or separate cliffs with vertical and smooth, as if polished, surfaces (Jamak) attracted people who used to peck out drawings. Sites located on caravan paths and in generally noteworthy places (Lyangar-Kisht) were attractive for them as well. Many drawings are found on separate stones not far from water, on recent terraces situated above flood lands, near ancient roads, burial places, fortresses, ancient settlements, and at lakesides. There were a plenty of them in the-then traditional hunting grounds (Lyagar-Kisht and Vybist-Dara), and present-day hunters' shelters located in such areas witness this. No strict accumulation of drawings near present-day holy places, springs or passes has been noted.

FIG. 1.
Main sites with accumulated petroglyphs in the Pamirs mentioned in this work, such as (1) the area where paintings dating from the Stone Age were found; (2) Ak-Jilga; (3) Vybist-Dara; (4) Lyangar.

Less strictly can be outlined the location of petroglyphs in Eastern Pamirs, still, we can state with assurance that in most cases they were near nomadic population's burial places (Kokuibel, Tamdy, etc.). Drawings belonging to the Stone Age were associated with rock shelters, such as grottoes, overhangs, and small rock niches. In Western Pamirs drawings have been found right up to summer snowfields at the altitude of 3,500 meters above sea level, and in Eastern Pamirs, up to the altitude of 4,200 meters above sea level.

ROCK ART TECHNIQUES, PATINISATION, SIZE, AND PERIODICITY

In all three sites dated back to the Stone Age, pictures were painted with mineral paints mixed with adipose. These are paintings, not petroglyphs.

As for petroglyphs, the main method of producing them was the technique of pecking out dots with a stone or a metallic object, which method was described more than once. In separate cases the surface of a drawing was ground down then. The number of carved (engraved) drawings is very small. Dots are usually one or two mm deep only, and their diameters are three to five mm. Sometimes drawings made by means of pecked out deep dots with strict and even edges are found, but in most cases rock drawings are notable for rough, uneven or as if torn edges of the dots. We can conjecture that in the first case such rock drawings were produced with metallic objects, and in the second case, with a stone (Sher, 1980, p. 76). Published works devoted to petroglyphs in Central Asia contain some attempts to differentiate between earlier and later rock drawings resting on the character of the dots pecked out (Voronets, 1950, p.79). A.N. Bernshtam infers that dots on more ancient pecked out drawings found in Saimaly-Tash are smaller than those of a later period. In petroglyphs dating back to the first millennium B.C. the dots were

tear-shaped, and pecking-out was done with a knife, while thoroughly pecked out drawings were made with a tooth (Bernshtam, 1952a, p. 56). An interesting experimental observation was made by Uzbek archaeologists, but their inference that only few drawings in Sarmishsai were made by pecking with stone tools, can hardly be applied to the petroglyphs found in the Pamirs (Mirsaatov, Kabirov, 1974, p. 94). Of course, the local particular qualities of each group of petroglyphs shall be also taken into account. Thus, in the Pamirs, rock drawings found in Vybist-Dara look rougher than those in Lyangar, though both of them are commensurable in terms of their age. True, we have to take into consideration the initial material on which the drawings were pecked out. In the first case it was the coarse-grained granite of the Rushanski mountain ridge, which was less consolidated, in comparison with exclusively homegeneous granite at Shakhdarinski mountain range, in the second case.

An absolutely different technique, a line-and-stroke method, was found on Ak-Jilga site, where it preveiled, which appeared unique for the Pamirs: first the contour of a drawing was carved with a sharp object (a knife?), then its inner side became shaded with engraved lines, and then sometimes was ground down, in addition. So, the lines of such drawings were not deepened considerably into the body of the stone, and their color didn't differ from that of the surface.

Unfortunately, as far as I know, in the Pamirs, and in Central Asia in general, there are no satisfactorily detailed statistical data concerning the ratio of methods used in different time groups, at least, at one separate site with a concentration of petroglyphs, though isolated observations of this type have been stated in all published works.

The peculiarities of the patinisation of the surfaces of rock drawings, so-called rock lacquer, are considered in a rather traditional manner in published works available.

To grade patina, it was subdivided into three categories evaluated by sight. Patina is considered most intensive (P-1), if a rock drawing is well seen only at a certain visual angle or while certainly alight. In this case the lines of a drawing are almost invisible as they merge with the surface of the stone. The second, intermediate, group (P-2) is specified by red or brown color on the surface of a drawing. The patinisation of the next level (P-3) is the faintest one. Normally, these are fresh rock drawings, whose pecked out surfaces look white. In such a case, the structure of the stone on which such picture was pecked out can be seen perfectly well. Such drawings are visible from afar.

The significance of patina for determining the age of a petroglyph was considered more than once. As was pointed out, this factor is of a rather relative character (Agakhanyants, 1957; Sher, 1980; Maksimova, Yermolayeva, and Mariyashev, 1985). Indeed, rock lacquer can be caused by different simultaneous reasons, such as the texture of the stone on which a drawing was made, temperature conditions, humidity, the conditions of the development of lichens and other microorganisms, also by the rate of calcination, the level of exposure of the surface to the sun rays, etc. One cannot properly take all of them into account. Here is an illustrative example: a large boulder was found in

[1] ***In my opinion, two geographic notions should be distinguished: Middle Asia (four south republics of the former USSR, including Kirgizia, Tadjikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan) and Central Asia, a huge territory with arid countries, extending from the Caspian Sea to Mongolia and Gansu.***

Vybist Dara with a drawing depicting an ibex in a primitive manner (skeleton style) made on the bend of two planes. The animal's body line lies exactly on the face of these two planes. The upper section of the drawing has an intensive patina, and nearly merges with the color of the rock depending on the light angle. Unlike, the other part of the picture looks considerably lighter and can be specified as P-3. A similar example with a petroglyph found in Sayanski Canyon on the Yenisey River has also been described (Devlet, 1982, p. 19).

Isolated images (figures) on Pamirs petroglyphs vary in size, most frequantly found are ten to 12 cm long. The number of such figures is twice as big as the number of images measuring between 30 and 40 cm. Equally rare are small images (ten cm long and less) and large ones (exceeding 50 cm). The smallest animal figure is six cm long, while the biggest one is 80 cm. Unique is the picture depicting a man with a bow - 1.8 m high.

With the aim to describe and classify rock drawings according to their style, the classification proposed by A.N. Bernshtam as long ago as in 1952 (though with small changes) has been applied, which classification remains applicable by most of the researchers involved in studying Central Asian petroglyphs. Based on three main variants of drawings made with different types of technique (shady, contoured, and skeletal), four stylistic groups have become singled out, such as a geometrical-shady group of drawings termed by the author as pre-Sakas'; a realistic-shady one presenting Saka-Usun animal style; an ornamental-realistic style contemporary with the Hunnic period; and a geometrized or a linear style widely used in the sixth through eighth centuries A.D. and later (Bernshtam, 19526, pp. 57-60).

According to all factors applied for studying petroglyphs, the rock drawings of the Pamirs have been systematized in the following way:

1. Paintings belonging to the Stone Age found in rock shelters in Eastern Pamirs.
2. The most ancient, archaic group (the Bronze Age?). This group may include large figures found on the first field in Lyangar, some large images of fantastic animals or of unusually painted oxen, deer, and ibexes. Possibly, some drawings of chariots shall be also dated to this period.
3. Drawings notable for vividly expressed "animal style" depicting Saka tribes' staying in the Pamirs, which corresponds to the 1st millennium B.C.
4. A group of drawings which is difficult to be definitely identified. It covers the period from the beginning of the first millennium A.D. right up to the appearance of Mohameddanism in the Pamirs. According to realistic attributes depicted, we can distinguish archers with "Sasanian bows," Kushan *tamgas*, *tamga*-shaped figurines of ibexes dated to the Turkic period,and riders without stirrups, which is the evidence of the fact that those rock drawings date from the period preceding the appearance of stirrups in Central Asia (fifth to sixth centuries A.D.)
5. A group belonging to the Middle Ages (the ninth to sixteenth centuries). It is very difficult to differentiate the paintings inside this period. Depicted fire-arms can be helpful here, as they came into being in the Pamirs in the seventeenth century; *rubobs,* musical instruments; inscriptions the most ancient of which date to the 12th century; a human hand with spread fingers, the Ismailites' symbol; and possibly some "solar symbols."

6. Drawings of later periods and present-day ones. They can be distinguished due to their very fresh surfaces and game-shooting motifs, warriors with sabers, also extremely primitive drawings of ibexes,and inscriptions including those written in the Cyrillic alphabet (Ranov, 1960).

It should be also noted that a number of motifs and the stylistic peculiarities of rock drawings go throughout all time stages, and it is hard to associate such drawings with any concrete period. These are linear pictures of ibexes, scenes of hunt with a simple bow and sometimes with a dog, circles with a dot in the center, and some others.

In conclusion we have to note that there have been no serious attempts to semantically interpret rock drawings (except those belonging to the Stone Age).

THE STONE AGE PAINTINGS

Shakhty grotto. This monument has been published (Ranov, 1961). The grotto is located 40 km south-east of Murgab village, the center of Eastern Pamirs, in the Kurtekesai River mouth. The absolute altitude of the grotto is about 4,200 m above sea level, which makes it the world's most highly located Stone Age arts monument. Paintings are made on the south wall of the grotto. Formerly, the area of not less than 20 to 25 square meters was covered with such paintings, isolated lines and spots of paint testify to this. Fortunately, a kind of "frieze" going from east to west at the height of 1.6 to two meters above the floor has remained (Fig. 2).

All the images are more or less visible (there are seven of them) but well preserved are only four figures painted with mineral paint having two colors, a light color (brick-red) and a dark one (vinous). The latter was used only for making details more vivid.

The figure painted just near the exit presents a shady picture of a man disguised as a bird, 23 cm in height. Such details of the figure as its long neck, large body, beak, and a knobble placed on the head of "the bird" are quite discernible. The figure has well preserved long and straight legs with human feet. Most possible, this picture presents a hunter with a cudgel in his hand drawn aside for a throw.

Next two figures stand for a wild boar and a bear. Only half a body 40 cm long has remained of the left figure. The figure has no legs. Instead, there are rhythmically repeated lines in the form of crosses thick in the middle. They

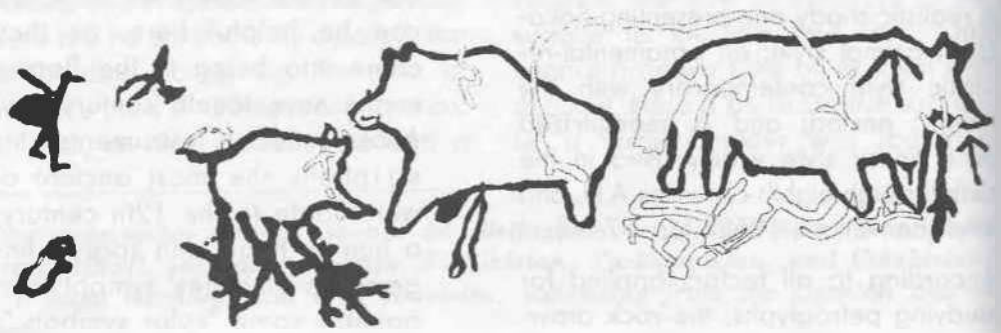

FIG. 2.
A painting found in Shakhty grotto and traced clearly with the following indication: shading with Indian ink stands for brick-red color and a dotted line indicates vinous color. The dimensions are given in the text.

can indicate details of a trap or stand for strongly stylized figures of human beings surrounding the animal. It might be reasonable here to recollect mysterious "claviaforms" of the paleolithic art. One more thing should be mentioned – a poorly preserved image of an arrow near the ears of the left figure.

Opposite is another animal 60 cm long. It is a massive beast shown in the moment of its jumping. In zoologists' opinion, it might be a bear. Clearly visible are its fang over its lip and the mouth painted by means of some strokes. Before its forelegs there is a cutting edge (a bear-spear?) painted dark. The beast seems to have cut itself on it.

The following figure is the largest one, 85 cm long. At first sight, this animal belongs to the group of bovids, but its protruded muzzle and small ears make zoologists identify it as a bear. The depicted arrows are of a particular interest. One of them is beneath the animal's nape, the second one is at its muzzle, the third one is flying from below to the beast's head. The arrows are flying from different sides, which possibly reflects a battue.

Of three animals drawn on the wall of the Shakhty grotto, as the most possible variant, two figures can stand for ostriches (?) and the third one is a wild boar, such animals being not found in Eastern Pamirs at present. However, the pronouncedly expressed hunt magic as if testifies to the reality of the depicted animals, which once lived in this area.

Judging by their motifs and the technique applied, the paintings found in Shakhty grotto stay closer to the Paleolithic art specimens than to monuments of Mesolithic and Neolithic periods. Still, it would hardly be correct to attribute the above pictures to a too early period, because the paintings in Shakhty grotto present "semi-realism," which, in G. Kuhn's opinion, stays between the Paleolithic art realism and stylization typical for the following epoch. This is "stylization evolvement within former linear forms" (Kuhn, 1952, p. 55).

That is why, emphasizing the archaism of these painting, we can assume that they are most likely to be of the period when, after glaciation, the very first people appeared on Eastern Pamirs, which corresponds to the eighth through fifth centuries B.C. (Ranov, 1972).

Naizatash rocky shelter. This shelter is located in the area of a mountain pass (4,137 m above sea level) bearing the same name, on Osh-Khorog motor road. I myself didn't see these paintings and have described them by a color slide presented to me by zoologist V.F. Seleznev, who died a tragic death shortly afterwards. He told me that these paintings had been found drawn on the ceiling of a small shelter attached to a huge block of Jurassic limestone at Mamanazar mountain ridge (Ranov, 1995).

There is no scale on Fig. 3. Most possible, the figure of a larger ibex does not exceed 12 or 15 cm. Judging by the paintings on the slide, the drawings were painted with a red mineral paint. The images present six discernible figures and some lines and spots, whose origin cannot be

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It has already been written about the mild mountain climate in the Pamirs in early Holocene epoch (Ranov, Sidorov, 1974), but, despite it, there was no ecological niche for the wild boar, an inhabitant of deciduous forests, even at that time. Most probably, the above drawings reflected events kept in the memory of a tribe, which came to the area of Shakhty grotto from some other Central Asian region (where, by the way, ostriches could be found in the time of the Pleistocene epoch (Lowe, 1931, p. 30). We can also suppose it to be the result of a tribal artistic tradition preserved and handed down since long ago.

identified. The figures of two Alpine ibexes are placed in the center of the composition. The animal placed on the right is depicted in a vivid manner, its figure looking dynamic, its head being slightly turned away, its ears pricked up, which usually happens when an animal carefully looks around in a new place, beware of an invisible enemy. The second figure is a little bit more static. One can guess elements of dynamism in these paintings, which began to appear following a change from realistic drawings of the Paleolithic epoch to stylized paintings dating from the Mesolithic and partly Neolithic periods. At that time animals became depicted more conditionally. The details of their bodies are rather guessed than seen. Figures begin to move more freely and with more assurance, in comparison with static poses of the Paleolithic realism (Marimanov, 1973, p. 158). We can see an irregular circle in the left part of the composition. Such signs are often considered to be a symbol of the sun (Anati, 1964, Fig.95; Okladnikov, 1981, p. 73), but several remaining red spots around can be the traces of a more complex picture, which included this circle.

Three other figures painted above the images of the ibexes are difficult to interpret. The left figure is very likely to be a man with a big stick (the stem of a tree?) in his hands, but it is quite possible that this likeness is casual, and the painting presents nothing more but three crossed lines with or without a certain symbolic meaning.

Unfortunately, we cannot see on the photo attached that "the comb" and "the pitchfork" unite in their upper parts. I do not know any analogies to these symbols, except very recent ones (Okladnikov, Mazin, 1979, Tables 14, 24). It seems also difficult to give a satisfactory explanation for the above composition, but, taking into consideration that these are paintings, not petroglyphs, and conforming to the stylistic peculiarities of the picture and its not completely understandable contents, we can conditionally and with precaution refer this find from Naizatash rock shelter to the Neolithic epoch, though it differs a great deal from paintings of this epoch found in Central Asia – in Ak-Chunkura (Okladnikov, Ratsek, 1954) and in Kurteke (Ranov, 1964).

FIG. 3
A painting found in Naizatash rock shelter. No scale.

FIG. 4.
A painting found in Kurteke grotto.

Traces of paintings discovered in Kurteke hangover. Kurteke hangover is located about two kilometers from Shakhty grotto, near the debouchement of Kurteke gorge to Karauldyndala stow. The hangover is situated at the altitude of 4,020 m above sea level and connected with a separate Jurassic limestone rock. The archaeological dig has revealed two cultural horizons. The first level is of late Bronze epoch, while the second one dates from the end of the Neolithic-Eneolithic periods (Ranov, 1962). The traces of paintings were found on two walls (Fig.4). Seemingly, only a small portion of drawings has remained. The paintings were done with a mineral paint of brownish-vinous color. On the left, apart from isolated spots and a poorly preserved drawing, there are two strongly stylized human figures. The right one, which looks better preserved, shows a man upside down, with his hands lifted and his feet widely planted apart. Stylized human images painted in this manner are known from many monuments (including those dated back to early periods) and are sometimes regarded as the images of the deceased (Chernysh, 1959, p. 45). The next figure worse expressed is close in its meaning to the first one. We can note certain expressiveness in both figures' movements and dynamism.

On the right some obscure drawings are seen, in the form of a combination of straight and wavy lines. Such line combinations are often found on the drawings of later time (Mesolithic-Neolithic periods)(Rudinski,1961,p. 32).

Paintings in Kurteke hangover, with their well expressed stylization, differ from more realistic pictures in Shakhty grotto. Evidently,their age varies within the Neolithic period and the beginning of the Bronze Age, i.e. the period when the stylization in rock paintings reached its climax. Very likely, paintings in Kurteke hangover correspond to one of two periods when this rock shelter became inhabited.

ARCHAIC (PRE-SAKA) GROUP OF PETROGLYPHS

Traditionally,drawings of chariots along with two- and four-wheeled carts are referred to that particular group, which chronologically embraces chiefly the Bronze Age,the difference between the first two categories of drawings being conditional enough. Usually, images accompanying the drawings of chariots are also dated to that same period, as they look similar, in terms of their compositional disposition, the level of patinisation, and the manner of drawing, to a less degree. For example, E.A. Novgorodova refers deer with straight fur-tree-shaped horns, axe-men wearing tall hats, archers, fantastic sun-like headed hoofed animals, etc. to the Bronze Age (Novgorodova, 1989, pp. 165-172). So do M.K. Kadyrbayev and A.N. Mariyashev with the image of a wild ox,

spectacles-shaped symbols, men with cudgels, scenes of hunt with bows or with bringing animals to bay with the help of hounds,etc. (Kadyrbayev,Mariyashev, 1977, pp. 170-183). In other words, the range of these drawings is wide enough, but it should be emphasized that similar motifs can be found in later groups of petroglyphs as well, thus, their belonging to the Bronze Age requires convincing proofs.

Due to numerous works published, the peculiarities and types of the chariots have been exhaustively analyzed (Kozhin, 1987; Novgorodova, 1989; Mariyashev,Potapov,1992). In his recently published fundamental work, V.A. Novozhenov has presented the most complete summary of Central Asian chariots (Novozhenov, 1994). This work makes it unnecessary to give information on all details while describing the Pamirs chariot images found in Lyangar (2), Vybist-Dara (2), and Ak-Jilga (5). Taking into consideration the fact that roads suitable for wheeled transport appeared in the Pamirs only in the twentieth century, this scene is likely to be connected with religious or mythological conceptions, and does not reflect the ancient population's every day life in the Pamirs. This consideration is also applicable to petroglyphs found in other mountain regions, eg. in Samaly-Tash (Novgorodova, 1989, p. 164) or in so-called Yenisei pipe (Devlet, 1982, pp. 28-29).

Of several thousand rock drawings found in Lyangar, there are only two with unfinished images of chariots (if to regard all pictures of carts on wheels with spokes as chariots) (Novozhenov, 1944, III). On the drawing, which is better preserved, the petroglyph can hardly be seen on the granite plate, and there is only one horse, whose image can be only guessed, depicted standing with its back to the shaft. The shaft is shown with a long and relatively thick line. The basket is disproportionately small in comparison with the wheels provided with six spokes. Two petroglyphs depicting two-wheeled carts have been found in Vybist-Dara (the diameter of the wheels of one of them nearly equals the length of the shaft, and even exceeds it on the second picture). Maybe this is the picture of a kind of a bullock-cart common in Central Asia at that time. In the first case the basket is indicated by means of a straight thick line, while on the second picture the basket is drawn diamond-shaped and placed far backwards. There is no analogy to this in drawings known to me so far. In both cases spokes have not been drawn but there are big dots right in the center of the cart described last. One petroglyph shows a shady silhouette of a horse drawn in a non-traditional manner.

Ak-Jilga. The accumulation of petroglyphs discovered by V.P. Bulin, a geologist, in early '70s is situated on the right bank of the Severnaya Ak-Jilga River, at the distance of approximately ten km from the mountain pass of the same name over the Severno-Alichurski mountain ridge. The true altitude of the place with the archaeological finds is 3,800 m, so, the petroglyphs found in Ak-Jilga may be considered the most high-altitude petroglyphs in the world. It also should be noted that this site with the collection of petroglyphs is hardly accessible in general. In the south, where wide Alichur Valley lies with Osh-Khorog modern motor road running upon it, there is a path leading to the Severnaya Ak-Jilga. The path goes along a difficult and never snow-free pass about 5,000 m high. In the north, one can get to the petroglyphs only having passed the ravines of the Murgab River, or by a similarly difficult way, from the direction of Lake Sarez, that is, having overcome one of the most complex plexuses of mountains in the Pamirs (Bubnova, 1993).

In 1971 the petroglyphs of Ak-Jilga were examined by V.A. Zhukov, on whose materials this part is based (unfortunately, there are no tracings or photos of the petroglyphs). Only preliminary information about this monument has been available so far (Zhukov, Ranov, 1972; Zhukov, Ranov, 1974).

The petroglyphs have been drawn on the surface of a dressed (sheep-back) rock, on the area of 23 x 19 m. The breed of the rock is dark slate covered with "rock lacquer" incrustation, so, some drawings can be distinguished only with difficulty (Fig.5).

The total number of drawings is about one hundred. Of this number 53 petroglyphs have been treated, which, apart from isolated drawings, constitute two groups of accumulated petroglyphs, including a south-east group (embracing 28 pictures) and a north-west one (with 16 pictures). Between these two groups are several compositions. The drawings differ in size varying from 42 to 5 cm. The disposition of figures on the drawings shown here is not always similar to that in reality on the rock surface, because, except the images of four chariots and figures surrounding them, the remaining pictures are presented in the order they were recorded, not drawn.

The manner in which these particular petroglyphs were produced differs a great deal from the method of pecking which dominates in the Pamirs. In Ak-Jilga, drawings were chiefly made with a line-and-stroke method. First, the contour of a drawing was carved and then its inner part became stroked with carved lines, and then sometimes ground down in addition.

Most of the petroglyphs are covered with thick patina, whose color coincides with that of the rock surface. So, taking photos and tracing became possible only after covering the drawings with chalk, which has distorted their true lines a little bit, as usually happens in such cases.

FIG. 5.
A general sight of a stone with petroglyphs on the Severnaya Ak-Jilga River

The first (south-east) group contains isolated figures of ibexes drawn both in Scythian-Sarmatian style and in the linear manner, also large images of horses, and schematized riders. The archers depicted are of a particular interest. In one case, what attracts the attention is a triangular bow. If it is not occasional, this shape of the bow resembles bows prevalent in Central Asia during the Akhemenid period. On another picture an archer with a nose in the form of a beak wears a peaked hat, which gives the idea that it is a Saka *tigrakhauda* (Kuzmina, 1986, p. 212), if it was not a mask resembling a bird (Fig.6).

The central place in the second (north-west) group is occupied by the composition "four chariots (one chariot is not finished yet) and people following them" consisting of the largest petroglyphs in Ak-Jilga. The fifth chariot staying aside is not finished either. People following the baskets are drawn half face, with their feet turned to the right (in one case feet are not shown). Obviously, their arms are stretched forward, but because of a limited possibility to express the movement of the arms,

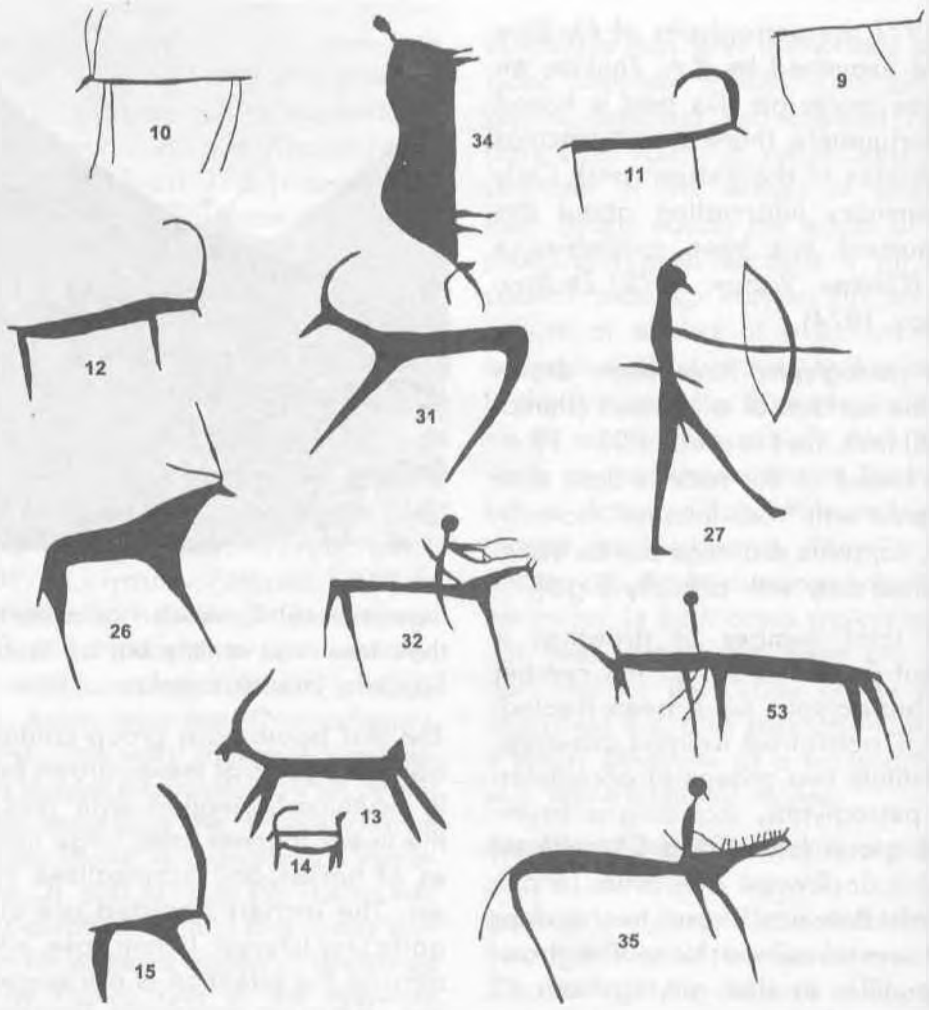


FIG. 6.
Ak-Jilga. An archer wearing a peaked hat, an ox, ibexes, and riders. The latter are drawn in the manner peculiar to this monument alone.

they look lifted, as if in the pose of adoration, though originally such pose is quite possible as well. On two pictures where harness is shown we can see that the human beings are coachmen, as they hold reins in their hands. It is interesting to note that this was the only case when genitals in the man and animals pulling the chariot were emphasized. The fact that all persons depicted on the drawing have round heads also attracts attention (Fig.7 and 8).

There are no analogies between these people of Ak-Jilga, including the coachmen, the people in the baskets and those following the chariots,and petroglyphs found in Central and Middle Asia (there are no such records in above works on this subject). Evidently, analogies with the Ak-Jilga petroglyphs shall be looked for in the west, or maybe in ancient east world. For example,there is certain similarity of the above drawings with the image of a man walking behind a two-axle cart with oxen harnessed, which was found in Ukhtasar, Armenia. (Karakhanyan, Safyan, 1970, Table 2). No assemblage of petroglyphs in Central Asia can boast of such "a parade of chariots" standing in one line. As for the chariots and the motif itself,they have a remote likeness to Central Asian petroglyphs, which is a very rare case (Sher, 1980, p. 212; Novozhenov, 1994, Fig. 7, 2, 36). Thus, absolutely correct was P.M. Kozhin as he said that the chariots found in Ak-Jilga were unique (Kozhin, 1987, p. 115).

The details of the reviewed chariots are visible well enough: their wheels are big, and the number of spokes varies from six to 11. By the way,in all chariots the number of spokes in wheels is different. The baskets have

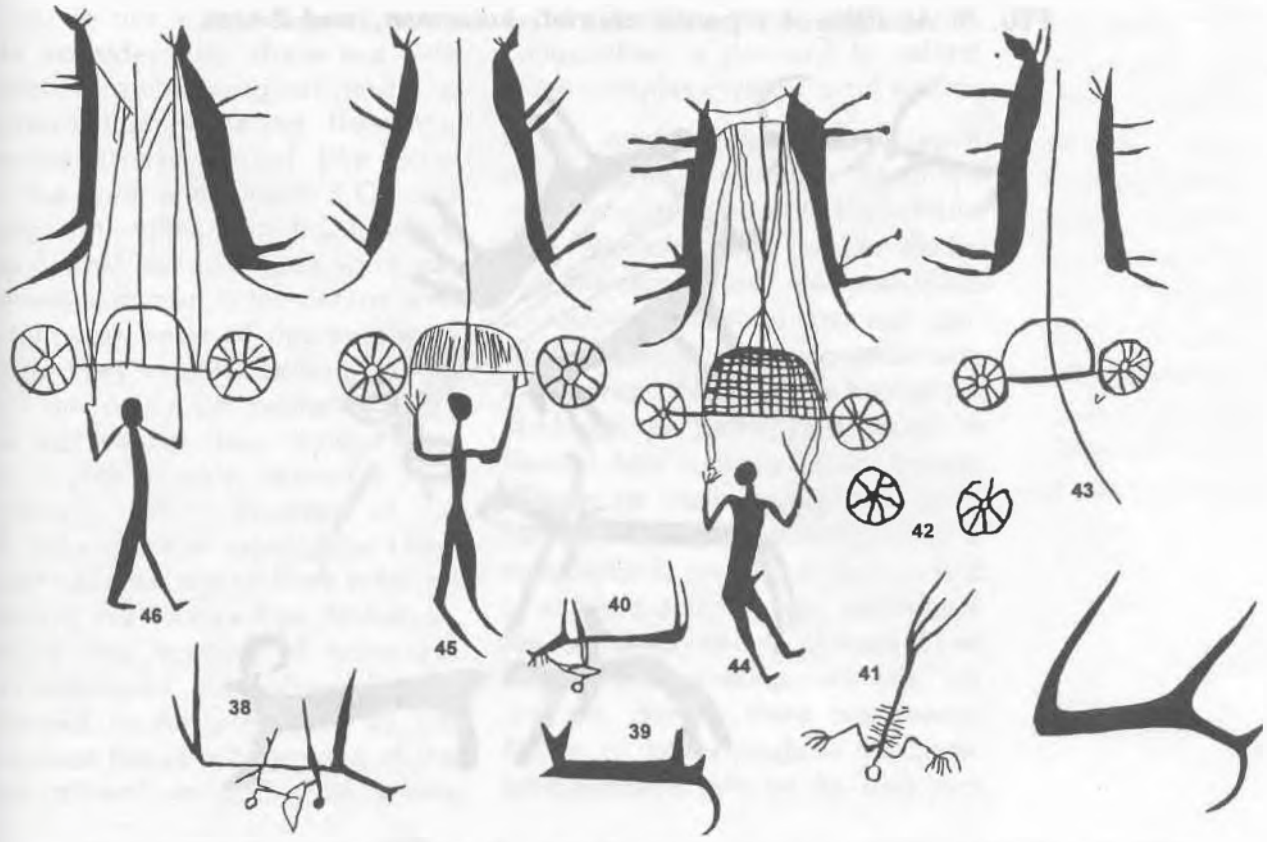


FIG. 7.
Ak-Jilga. The procession of chariots, a skeleton man, horsemen, and ibexes.

a belt floor, which is shown especially well on the picture of the third chariot to the left. The baskets are shaped similarly, in the form of a semicircle, and rest on chariot axles passing at their bases. In three cases of five, harness is clearly seen, including yokes at two chariots depicted in different ways and a shaft in one case. which looks composite, while two convergent bundles of traces are yet to be explained. The driving force is horses, without doubt, which are shown standing with their backs to the shaft. E.A. Novgorodova regards this sign as a main difference between Central Asian chariots and European and Caucasian ones (Novgorodova, 1984, p.64). The image of the right animal attached to the third chariot on the left seems strange. The being looks like a horse, except its too broad and nearly triangle-shaped sternum,which doesn't look equine. As for the oxen harnessed to the carts, they can be easily identified because of their horns. One more thing should be added: at the utmost left chariot the horses are tied with the shaft by means of a system of belts, not with a yoke. The chariots of Ak-Jilga allow us to get acquainted also with the system of reins (an isolated chariot is shown having a rein on each side).

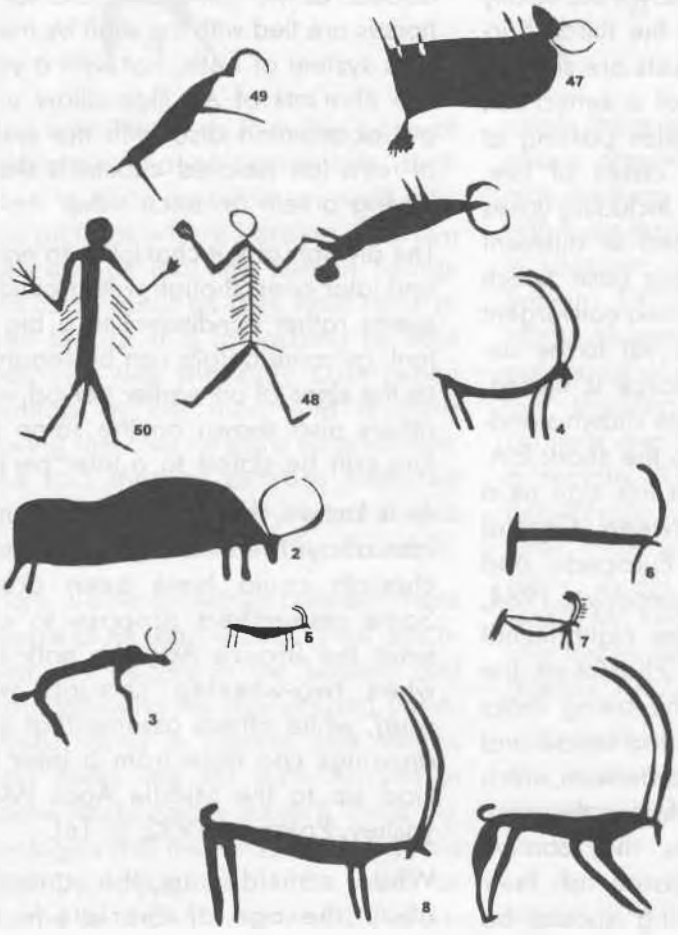
The division of the chariots into earlier and later ones, though well-grounded, seems rather conditional to a big extent, as some details can be regarded as the signs of an earlier period,while others also shown on the same picture can be dated to a later period.

As is known, there are different opinions about the time when pictures of chariots could have been drawn. Some researchers propose to consider the Bronze Age the only time when two-wheeled chariots were used, while others assume that such drawings can date from a later period up to the Middle Ages (Mariyashev, Potapov, 1992, p. 16).

While considering the question about the age of chariots in Ak-

FIG. 8. *Ak-Jilga. A separate chariot, horsemen, and ibexes.*

FIG. 9. *Ak-Jilga. Skeleton men, oxen, ibexes, including those of recent make.*



Jilga, we are to take two moments into consideration: there are only isolated archaeological finds in Eastern Pamirs dating from the Steppe Bronze period (the close of the 2nd millennium B.C. and early 1st millennium B.C.), while the Sakas' burial places were extremely common in the central and south-west parts of this mountain land. They mainly belong to the fifth through third centuries B.C., the earliest of them dating from the eighth to sixth centuries B.C. (Litvinski, 1972). Because of the Ak-Jilga chariots' typological characteristics,we are to have referred them to the Bronze Age. However, taking into account all historical circumstances, these drawings are deemed to be produced by the Sakas at the very beginning of the first millennium B.C. This seems quite possible, especially as this composition is deemed to reflect some complex mythological theme.

In this article I cannot dwell upon other figures surrounding the chariots or staying adjacent to them. Probably, "skeleton people" staying not far from the chariots and well seen,stand for defeated enemies and can constitute a part of the composition with the chariots. Not a single known assemblage of petroglyphs found in Central Asia contains similar images of oxen (or maybe yaks), in terms of such a manner of drawing when a massive body presents a contrast to a small head and thin legs, which testifies to a deep antiquity of these drawings maybe contemporary with the chariots. Besides, there are several figures of ibexes made in the Scythian-Sarmatian style on Ak-Jilga rock

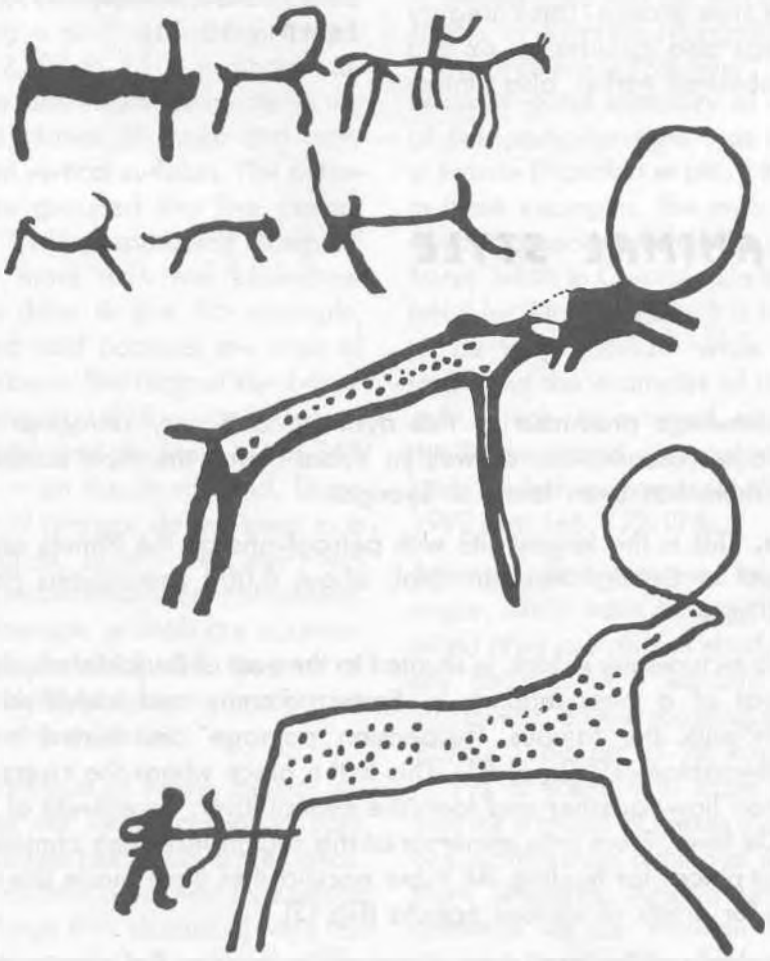


FIG. 10.
Lyangar. Fantastic animals, an archer with a curved bow, ibexes dating from the Sakas period, and a group of the latest drawings.

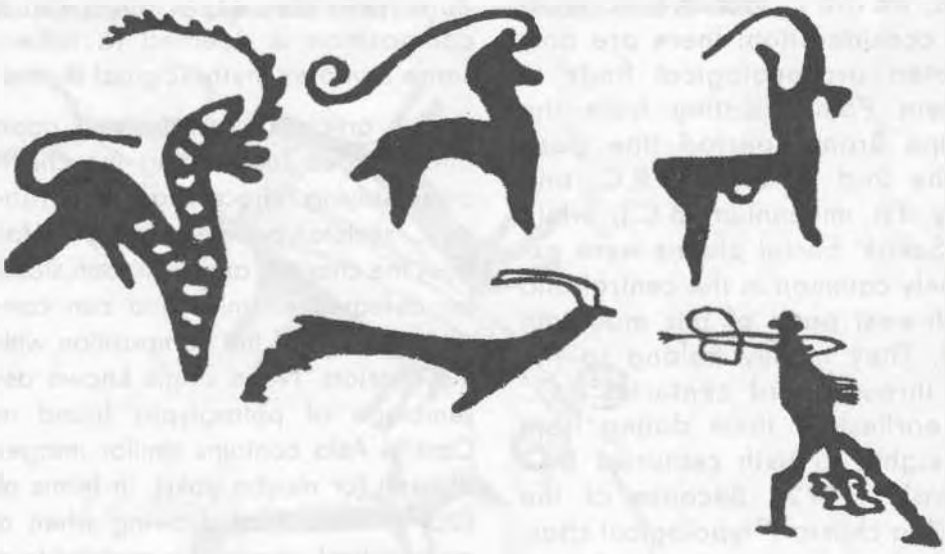


FIG. 11. ***Lyangar. The monument's largest scene. The human figure is 1.8 m high. Pre-Saka period (?) Images of fantastic animals resembling present-day sherbozi drawings. Saka period (?)***

and a group of riders which are to be dated to a later period (Fig.9).

It is difficult to say whether or not can drawings found in Lyangar belong to the Bronze Age, as they are absolutely unusual, large in size, and fall out of the style groups. This category of drawings also includes an ox and a deer published earlier, also fantastic animals with sun-like horns ("a sun-animal?"), and the drawing of a man shooting at an ibex, almost bitriangular, all these images being very large. For instance, the picture of a man is 1.8 m high (Ranov, 1960, pp. 21-23,32-33; Ranov, 1977, pp. 165-166) (Fig. 10, 11).

DRAWINGS OF ANIMAL STYLE THE SAKAS

Though drawings produced in this dynamic and very attractive style are found in other associations as well (in Vybist-Dara), the most sizable assemblage of them has been found in Lyangar.

Lyangar. This is the largest site with petroglyphs on the Pamirs and one of the biggest in Central Asia. In total, about 6,000 petroglyphs have been recorded here.

Lyangar, a picturesque kishlak, is situated to the east of Badakhshan, the Pamirs, at the foot of a pass leading to Eastern Pamirs and identified by A.N. Bernshtam with the famous "suspension passage" mentioned in Chinese sources (Bernshtam, 1952a, p. 81). This is the place where the rivers of Pamir and Vakhan flow together and form the Pyandj River, an effluent of the great antique Ox River. From time immemorial, this region has been considered one of the best places for hunting. All these peculiarities have made this area very attractive for artists of various epochs (Fig.12).

The petroglyphs of Lyangar were drawn on bulging or flat granite plates with strongly smoothed surfaces, at the Shakhdarinski mountain ridge. They begin

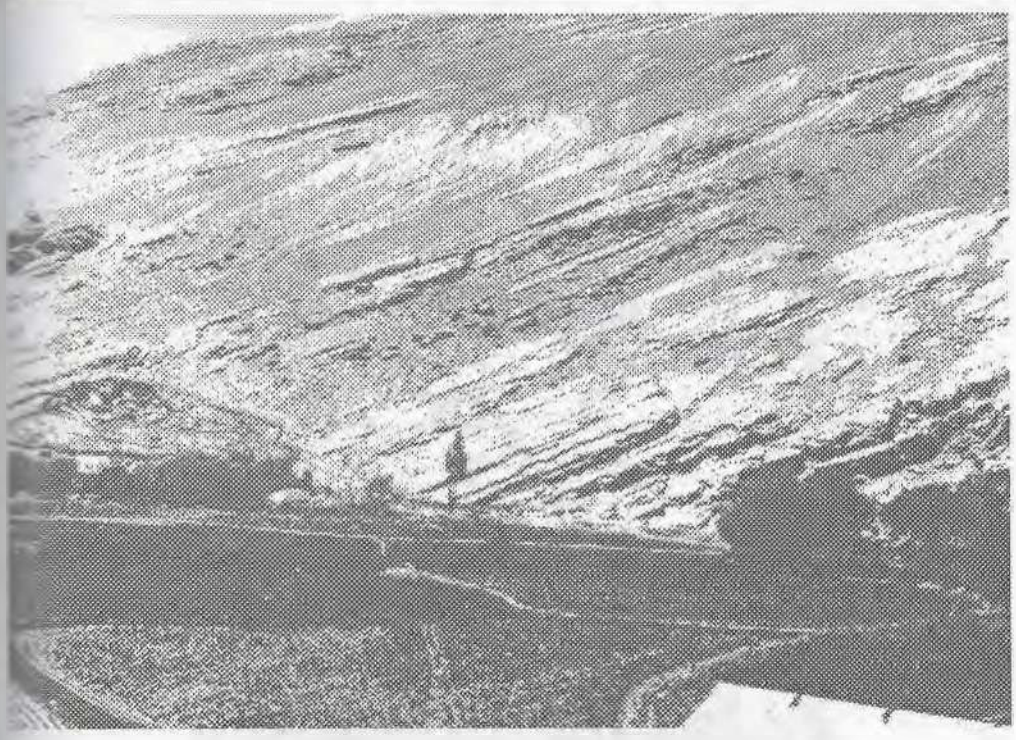


FIG. 12. ***Lyangar. Flat and smoothed granite rocks on which drawings were made.***

rom the last houses in Lyangar and se upward the rocks 700 m high,thus, e altitude of the petroglyphs in Lyangar having a south exposition, ranges etween 2,700 to 3,500 m above sea evel. As a rule, they were made on the orizontal planes of rocks and very seldom, on vertical surfaces. The petroglyphs are grouped into five assemblages or "fields," spreading along the idge for more then two kilometers. The fields differ in size. For example, he second field occupies the area of 720 sq. meters. The biggest number of he drawings – 1,819 – was found on he first field, and the least one – 353 drawings – on the fourth field. These ive fields in Lyangar do not keep to a chronological order. We can find drawings made at different times there. True, all fantastic animals are accumulated on the first field, while the most of the animal style specimens can be found on the third field.

Of 3,511 images of Alpine ibexes, *nakhchirs,* as the local population calls them, drawings belonging to the Sakas' or rather Scythian-Sarmatian style (which covers a large time diapason) were not counted purposely, but they seem to be relatively small in numbers.

Much has been written about the animal style. It is presented perfectly well in petroglyphs and on so-called deer stones in Siberian-Mongolian region (Novgorodova, 1989; Sher, 1994). Recently a good summary of examples of this particular style was published in France (Francfort et alii., 1990). True, in these examples, the main image is always associated with the deer and horse, while in Central Asia it is substituted for Alpine ibexes. It is impossible to be very accurate while trying to single out the examples of the animal style, which are referred, as a rule, to the Sakas period,except several absolutely evident specimens (eg. Samashev, 1992, pp. 165, 172-173).

Among Sakas' drawings found in Lyangar, which have already been published (they are always shady), we can see an ibex in a watchful pose, a hunter with a bow shooting at an ibex (Ranov, 1960, pp. 27-28; Ranov, 1976, p. 19), a scene with snow leopards' hunt for a group of ibexes (Fig.13), and one more hunter aiming at one of the snow leopards. Among unpublished drawings we can mention a flock of ibexes (15 animals) running one after another in three rows (Fig. 14), sepa-

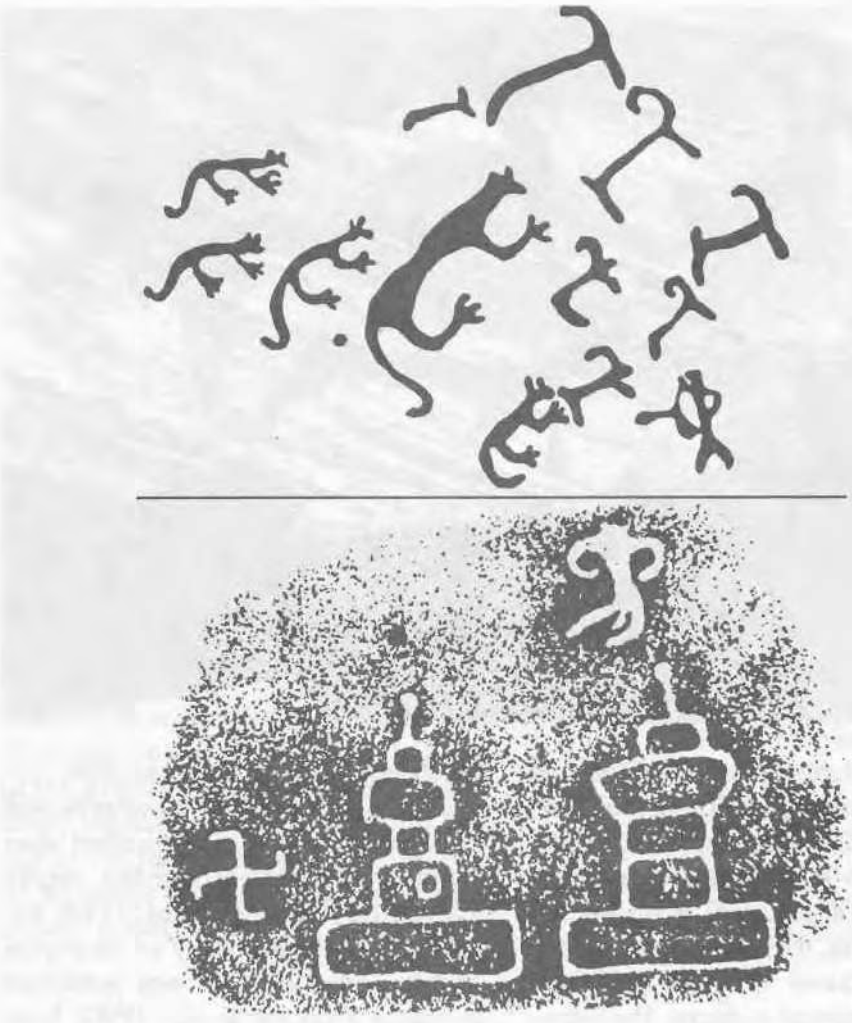


FIG. 13.
Lyangar. The attack of snow leopards at ibexes. A hunter with a bow. Sakas period. Lamaistic chortons. The basement of the left erection is 40 cm. It is 60 cm high. The figure of a flying demon, a swastika. The latest period.

rate figures of snow leopards and ibexes, and an ibex crowning a pomme, a well-known theme in Scythian-Siberian world (Kubarev, 1987).

Many other drawings, which, according to such criteria as partly the manner of their production, partly their attributes, can also be referred to this particular time, need a detailed analysis, which, regretfully, hasn't been done yet. Thus, very elegant and dynamic are the images of ibex kids with very long horns turned into knout-shaped ends in some cases (Fig. 11, 15). Similar drawings have also been found on the other side of the Pyandj, in Afgan Badakhshan (Gratzl, 1978). Still, there is just one snag to specifying the age of these effective drawings – they look very close to present-day Tadjik toys, *sherbozi,* so, they can also be of today's make (Mitlyanski, 1970, pp. 70-71). On the other hand, the idea and the image of these toys can have been derived by a contemporary master from a deep antiquity.

Some bows in the hands of shooting hunters can be of the Sakas' origin as well, especially those with the curve typical for that time (Ranov, 1960, p. 29). If to follow N.A. Bokovenko, who proposed to date the images of Yenisei horsemen, as he analysed them, to the Scythian-Sarmatian period, then a number of horsemen from Lyangar could be re-dated (Bokovenko, 1987, pp. 76, 78).

In conclusion, we can say that the Sakas' group of drawings is undoubtedly much larger than their volume discovered in Lyangar so far. It is difficult to say if we have any opportunities to continue these activities.

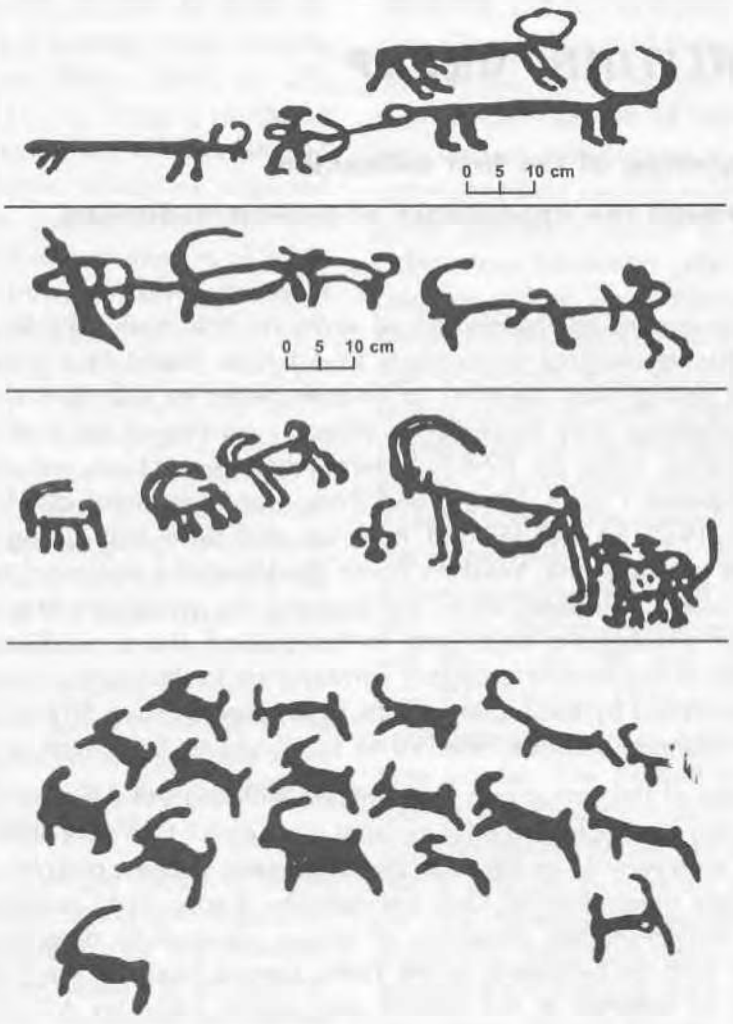


FIG. 14.
Lyangar. A flock of running ibexes. Sakas period. Ibexes, a woman and a man with a saber. The Middle Ages or the latest time. Oxen and a scene of hunt for them. The Kushano-Ephtalitian period.

FIG. 15.
Lyangar. The picture of **Sherbozi** *(compare Drawing II on the left)*

KUSHANO-EPHTALITIAN GROUP

(the beginning of the first millennium A.D. through the appearance of Mohammedanism)

This group embraces the period of antiquity and early Middle Ages in the Pamirs. Archaeological monuments found here testify to the availability of fortresses dating from the third to seventh centuries A.D. In the early period of their existence they presented a strategic bastion of the Kushan dynasty's Empire (Ranov, 1984, pp. 82-84). Several religious erections, including the Kafir-Kala complexes I to IV, Vrang, and Zong were examined by M.A. Bubnova. (Bubnova, 1985, pp. 35-36), and now we can state that during this period, unlike the previous one, Western Pamir (Badakhshan) was inhabited by population involved in farming, which fact explains the availability of a considerable number of petroglyphs belonging to this period. If we conditionally assume that patina of the second category corresponds to that particular period, which fact is confirmed by some petroglyphs from Lyangar, then 50% of all drawings of this monument shall be referred to the Kushano-Ephtalitian group.

Petroglyphs of this group can be identified with a great difficulty. Stylistic signs cannot be a key factor here (or at least are helpful to a very small degree). In this case such realties as depicted arms, harness, clothes, people's occupation, etc., appear determinative. Only petroglyphs of so-called Churuktug-Kyrlanian style or *tamga*-shaped drawings of ibexes successfully determined by A.D. Grach in Tuva as belonging to the Turkic period, found in the Pamirs as well, can also be referred to the seventh and eighth centuries A.D. (Grach, 1957)

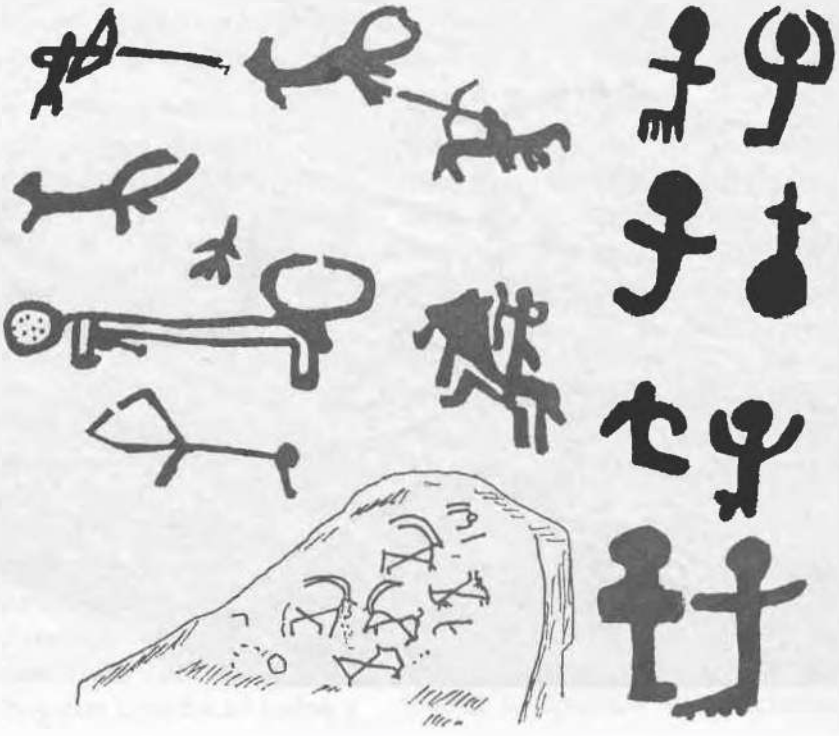


FIG. 16.
A horseman galloping uphill and shooting from a bow. Types of oxen (yaks). The Kushano-Ephtalitian period. Rubobs dating from the Middle Ages. Hunt for wild yaks. Pre-Saka period (?). Bitriangular fugurines of ibexes. The latest period.

(Fig.22). Various shapes of bows on the drawings of Lyangar have already been analyzed (Ranov, 1960, pp. 27-31) (Fig. 10,13,14). There is no doubt about the availability of complex and composite bows, which are depicted with complex and curved profiles and resemble well-known images of Sasanian bows drawn on silver dishes of Iranian origin (Lukonin, 1977). There is an interesting article by J. Auboyer dedicated to the images of bows and arrows in iconography in India, in which similar bows are referred to Group C (arc reflexe a double courbe), the most advanced group, which, however, presents a difficulty for the determination of the bows' age, as the earliest specimens of this type appeared in the second century A.D. and continued being in usage till the sixth century. Later, in the Middle Ages they gave place to semi-bent bows (Auboyer, 1956, p. 175).

Arrow-heads, whose shape is sometimes indicated on the drawings, also play an important role. For instance, furcular arrow-heads, in archaeologists' opinion, appeared not earlier than in the seventh century A.D., though I managed to find a similar one in the antique layer at a cave-site in Ak-Tanga (Ranov, 1960, p. 30). Such arrow-heads are often depicted on the drawings found in Lyangar. In general, archers present a widespread motif. In Lyangar their number totals 229 (of counted 3,149 drawings, or 7.2%). In addition, there is a large number of people provided with bows shown in such compositions as "men and archers" totally numbering 565. The problem is, however, that firearms came into being in Central Asia only in late sixteenth century (Belenitski, 1949) and became spread very slowly in "remote regions," so, simple bows were in wide use for a long time after that, and a picture of a man with a simple bow cannot be necessarily referred to earlier drawings.

There are 130 (4.1%) figures of horsemen. Of course, not of them date from the period under review, but some part of them devoid of later sketchiness and primitivism, are of the Kushano-Ephtalitian period, indeed. Especially impressive looks a group of riders: four horsemen ride one after another, aslant, as if ascending the mountain. Well expressed is the exertion of people who shoot while galloping. Only in one case we can guess a stirrup, as the man's foot is shown in horizontal position. The images of some horses seem original – the upper parts of their bodies are drawn separately from the lower ones (Fig. 16). Stirrups appeared in Central Asia in the fifth and sixth centuries A.D. (Litvinski, 1976, p. 114). Thus, such drawings have at least the lower time border. The trouble is that stirrups are exclusively seldom depicted on petroglyphs (Madji, 1957, p. 81), this is why the availability of stirrups on rock drawings is deemed postulative rather than concretely seen. Unfortunately, dropped toes so typical for riding without stirrups cannot be seen on petroglyphs (Pazarykski carpet: Artamonov, 1973, p. 61; murals in Pendjikent: Diyakonov, 1954, p. 116).

As was stated earlier, some part of compositions showing hunting scenes (86,3%) can be dated to the period under review (the second stage of patinisation) (Fig.14), as well as the pictures of oxen mostly presenting wild yaks (Bos mutus Przew) (Fig. 14, 16). It is interesting to point out that the manner of expression of oxen used in South Siberia, Mongolia and even in Kazakhstan differs from that in Lyangar (in particular, the depicted animals have no long horns protruded forward (Kadyrbayev, Mariyashev, 1977, p. 180; Semashev, 1992, Fig.242). A different type of depicting oxen was also presented by D. Konig in her generalizing work (Konig, 1994).

MEDIEVAL GROUP

(the ninth through sixteenth centuries A.D.)

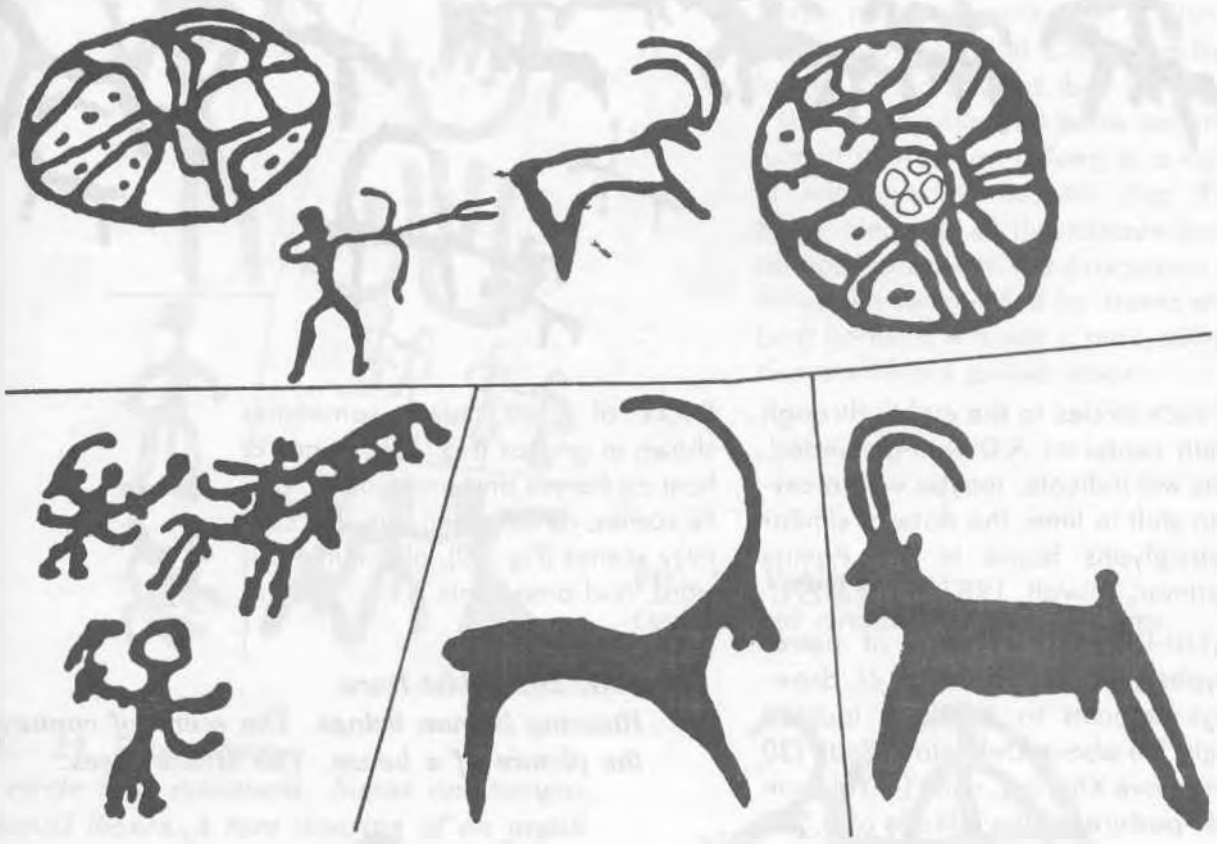
These are drawings mainly with the patina of the third category. They can also be distinguished judging by their thematics and style. In particular, the sign system on such drawings becomes more diverse and rich, an inclination for ornaments becomes stronger, the number of battle scenes rises, and we begin to see sabers, a typically medieval weapon. We are going to touch upon only three categories of scenes on the drawings of Lyangar, though they vary to a much greater extent. (Ranov, 1960, pp. 33-38).

The first sub-group presents a scene of ploughing. This is the only drawing of such a type found in the Pamirs. Patina-3, but the surface of the drawing has darkened and looks notably different from other drawings united with this feature. The man on the picture has well-drawn feet and a beak-shaped face. He holds traces in one hand, while his other hand rests upon the upper part of a wooden plough, *omach.* Emphasized is the manner of fixing the plough to the yoke. Judging by the general habitus of the draft-animal, it might be a horse (Fig. 17).

The second sub-group embraces numerous images of the *rubob,* a string musical instrument, which inheres only in the Lyangar petroglyphs, of the whole Pamirs. The total number of *rubobs* on the drawings amounts to 316 (10%) (Vyzgo, 1980, pp. 87-88) (Fig.16). Other pictures of *rubobs* looking similar but less diverse can be found in Gilgit (Jettmar, 1989).

FIG. 17. ***Ploughing with a horse. The Middle Ages.***

FIG. 18. *Lyangar.*
Shady images of ibexes. The Kushano-Ephtalitian period. An armed horseman and unmounted warriors. The latest period. Ornamented circles and a hunter with a curved bow. The Middle Ages.



The third sub-group shows two Buddhistic (Lamaistic) chortons. In the opinion of A.N. Kochetov, a prominent Russian buddhologist, these are duplicates of late-medieval constructions (as was said during a personal communication) (Fig. 13). Possibly, these drawings are the result of Tibetan influence, because there are no similar chortons among numerous Buddhistic *stupas*, which are so common on cliffs in the area of Kara-Korum motor-road.

One more motif is worthy of attention: ornamented circles or wheels found in Lyangar and numbering 20 (0.6%) (Fig. 18). It should be noted that in comparison with the circles alike found in Talpan Bridja, the former are drawn more thoroughly and neatly, ornaments inside such circles are more diverse and made more accurately (Jettmar, Thiwalt, 1987). This may testify to the fact that this image is namely of mountain Pakistan origin, and possibly it came to the Pamirs in a later period. Its religious meaning remains obscure to a great extent. If we leave out of account these images' possible though not obligatory destination, - the Buddhistic wheel as the Dharma-chakra (Dani, 1983, p. 142), then K. Jettmar's interpretation that during the epoch of anti-Buddhist beliefs such circles stood for solar signs and were widely spread, will make the dating

FIG. 19. ***Vybist-Dara.***
The procession of riders and running ibexes.
The Kushano-Ephtalitian period.

of such circles to the eighth through tenth centuries A.D well-grounded. This will indicate, maybe with a certain shift in time, the date of similar petroglyphs found in the Pamirs (Jettmar, Thiwalt, 1987, pp. 26-27).

Vybist-Dara. This group of petroglyphs (the total number of drawings amounts to 1,203) is located eight km above Debasta kishlak (30 km above Khorog), near Tir-Yol summer pasture, at the altitude of 3,500 m above sea level. There is the Rushanski mountain ridge there formed of a large hillside from granite fragments and situated on the second terrace located above flood lands at a small river head. The slope faces west. All the petroglyphs in Vybist-Dara have been pecked out. In some isolated cases the lines of the drawing are ground down. The drawings, except separate images, are of the size typical for petroglyphs in the Pamirs.

Unlike most of petroglyphs in Central Asia, the motif of hunt for the Alpine ibex with bows and dogs doesn't occupy an important place among petroglyphs of Vybist-Dara, though it can be found there. The themes of the drawings mainly include solitary ibexes, *nakhchirs,* small flocks of them, riders sometimes shown in groups (Fig. 19), scenes of hunt on horses and unmounted, battle scenes, running men (Fig. 20), captivity scenes (Fig. 20), also numerous signs, and ornaments.

FIG. 20. ***Vybist Dara.***
Running human beings. The scene of capture, the picture of a house. The Middle Ages.

FIG. 21. *Vybist-Dara.*
Isolated figures of people. A composition with a woman. The Sakas period. The Kushano-Ephtalitian period. The image of a hand with spread fingers. The latest period.

Some part of petroglyphs in Vybist-Dara can date from the first millennium B.C. Thus, the scene of a horseman and an unmounted archer's hunt for wild yaks (Fig. 16) looks very archaic. A group of petroglyphs displays similarity with the Scythian-Sarmatian style and Churuktug-Kyrlanian tamga-shaped ibex kids (Fig. 22). It is possible that some isolated human figures can belong to a rather early period as well (Fig. 21). Some elements of the antique period can be seen in the procession of horsemen surrounded by ibexes with long horns, if it is not a pure coincidence with the patina color.

FIG. 22. *Vybist-Dara.*
A circle with ornament, Sakas and tamga-shaped ibexes. A rare drawing of an argali "en face"

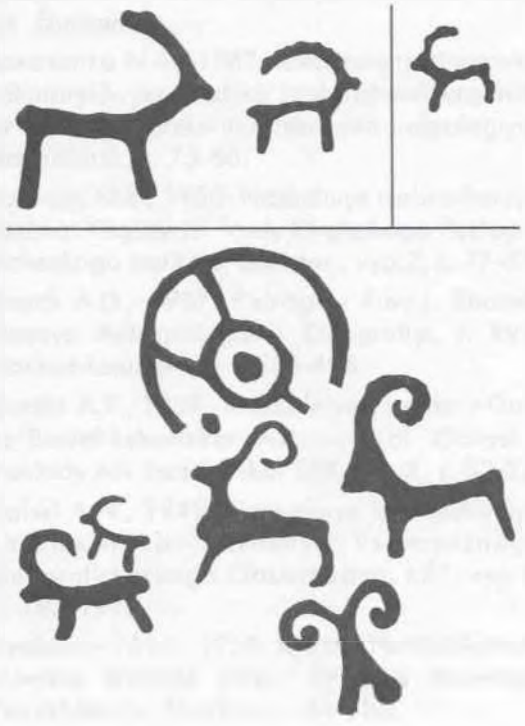
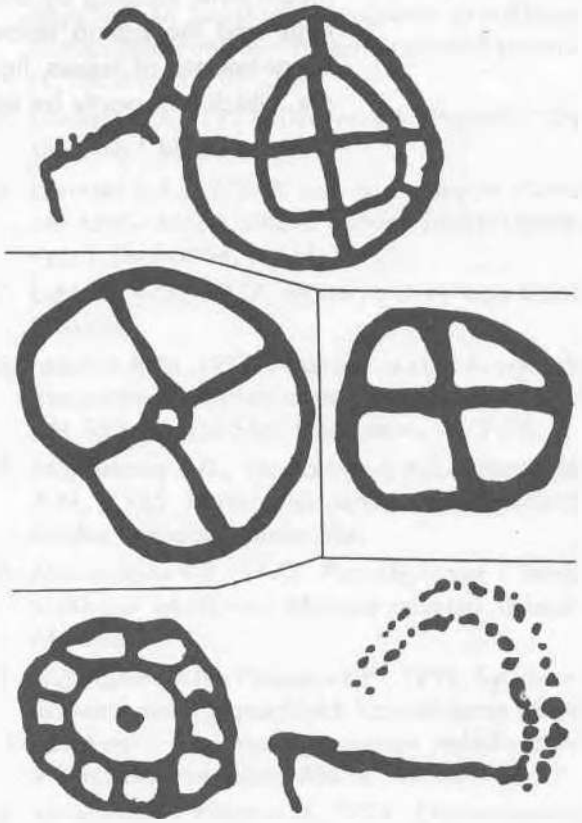


FIG. 23. *Vybist-Dara.*
Ornamented circles. The Middle Ages.



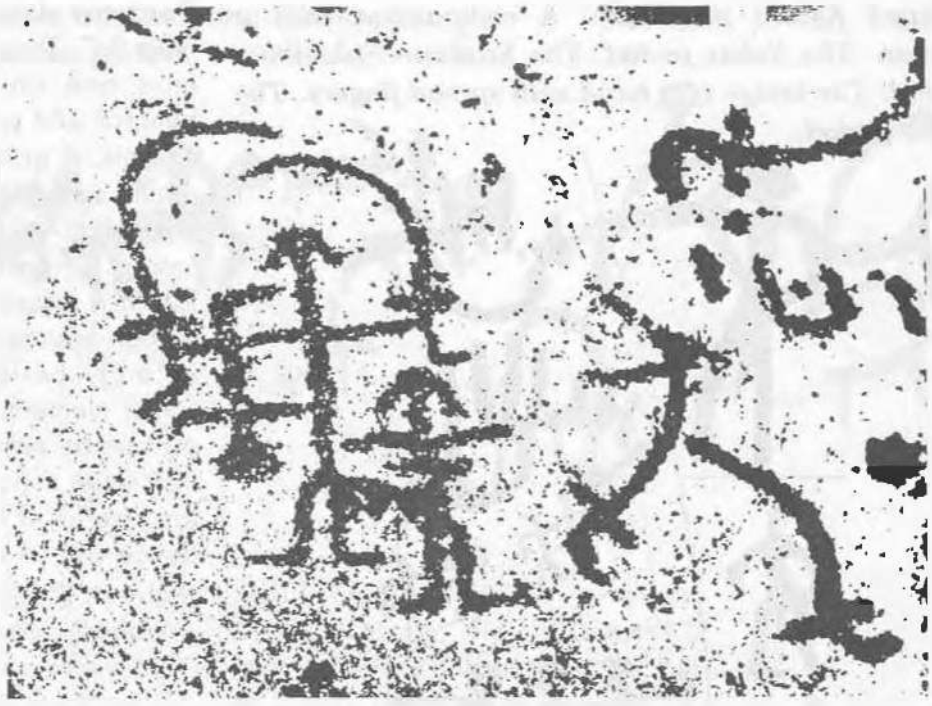


FIG. 24. ***Lyangar. The image of a warrior with two sabers, a rubob and a woman.***

As for the main motifs presented in the rock drawings of Vybist-Dara, they can be dated to the Middle Ages and recent time, judging by both their contents and the patina color. These are linear images of ibexes, figures of people, which can partly be interpreted as the images of a man and a woman. Sometimes such images are framed (Fig. 20) in above-mentioned circles ornamented in a rather simple manner. There are also numerous pictures of a human hand with spread fingers, the Ismailites' symbol (Fig. 21, 23).

►►► BIBLIOGRAPHY ◄◄◄

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PETROGLYPHS OF KAZAKHSTAN

Kazakh petroglyphs – carved (engraved or rubbed through) and painted with red ochre – present a part of Central Asian vast rock art province rich in works made by the creative genius of many generations of painters, monumentalists, and muralists. Chronologically, the petroglyphs embrace the period from the Neolithic-Eneolithic to late Middle Ages, according to the present-day conception. Kazakh ethnographic rock drawings present a special category. They prevail in north-east Caspian coastal area because of the availability of limestone there, a treatable material, which fact promoted the process.

Petroglyphs have been found and registered practically in all regions on Kazakhstan's huge territory, but in different places they remain studied to different extent.

METHODS OF STUDY

Simultaneously with the process of the formation of petroglyphology, methods of field studying and tracing were empirically worked out, and now there are a lot of books about the advantages and disadvantages of these methods (see bibliography: Samashev Z.S., 1992; Devlet M.A., 1993, and others). In 1993 through 1996, in the framework of the program organized by UNESCO and aimed at the establishment of the Corps of petroglyphs in Central Asia, Kazakh petroglyphists in common with French specialists worked through and perfected some new methods of studying petroglyphs at such concentrations as Tamgaly, Ters, Karasai, and Yeshkiolmes, which are situated in Semirechye and in south Kazakhstan. As is known, contact methods, and primarily the method of mica tape tracing with the employment of paint, which causes lengthy chemical processes provoking structural changes inside patina (the natural rock protective layer) produce a negative effect on the rock surfaces. So, the recording of the ancient rock drawings was done with a photographic camera and captured on videotape (sometimes with highlight and artificial light). Then the information obtained was introduced into electronic computer memory, so that we could make reproductions fit for publishing, statistical processing, classification, and typology, and create a data base. Geochemical, geomicrobiological, and other analyses show that patina, which had been formed on the surfaces of rocks and rock drawings during thousands of years, consists

of stratified microorganisms, colonies of various bacteria, and other elements. Besides, it contains multifarious information about the paleoclimate: its damp and arid periods, global and local changes, the-then organic world, microflora, etc. During our research work done jointly with our French counterparts, we mainly focused on studying patina formation mechanisms, on correlating the results of geochemical rock surfaces investigation aimed at age determination with the results obtained by classic methods of chronological attribution of petroglyphs, and on their synchronization (if possible) with reliably (by means of C^{14} and EPR) dated monuments found nearby, including burial, housing-economic, religious, and other ones. Another direction in our work was connected with the problem of conservation and restoration of the primordial rock art monuments and turning such territories into museums. As is known, jumping temperatures during a year, the environmental and rock hydrometric conditions, tectonic processes, main wind directions, the conditions of the bedrock exposure, and the dip angles of shadows upon a surface in day-time, etc. cause the destruction of rocks together with petroglyphs. In 1993, in Tamgaly tract thermo- and hydrometric measurements were taken with a view to work out recommendations how to protect the rock drawings from disintegration, taking into account the experience of drawing up isometric maps for caves with Paleolithic paintings located in south France. The expected result was a universal thermo- and hydrogradient map fit for open space conditions. Unfortunately, this intention has remained unrealized.

It is a common knowledge, that each archaeological period is characterized (in the aspect of petroglyph production) by its peculiar stylistic and technical methods conditioned by the-then general cultural and technological level. Different generations of artistic masters used different (special-purpose and multifunctional) tools made of stone and metal and meant for carving or engraving petroglyphs; and, depending on this or that historical moment and on the peculiarities of the-then ecological environment, artistic preference was given to this of that species of animals, anthropomorphous personages, objects, symbols, mythological or battle scenes, etc. Turn of eras and, consequently, change in ethnic-cultural situations, brought about the alteration of both the subject contents of rock drawings and the technique of making them. This is why macro- and microscopic analyses of carved dents on the drawings, their comparison with the traces of known tool types dating to concrete historical periods; studying the micro-morphological condition of rock surfaces (with and without rock drawings) supposed for the clarification of their natural deformation degree, study of homogenization mechanisms, etc. caused by environmental factors, done with the purpose of obtaining additional natural-science arguments necessary for chronological and historical attribution of petroglyphs, – all these present the essence of traceological investigations carried out by the Kazakh specialists in common with their French colleagues at various monuments in Kazakhstan. The cases of palimpsest are very helpful for determining the relative chronology of rock drawings and the order of their production, especially if their belonging to certain technological traditions becomes detected. Simultaneously, macro- and stereoscopic photography was made along with experiments reproducing the technique of drawing the petroglyphs.

DIVISION OF KAZAKH PETROGLYPHS INTO PERIODS AND THEIR CHRONOLOGY

Speaking of the division of Kazakh petroglyphs into periods and their chronology, we are to state that to date no trustworthy monuments belonging to the old Stone Age have been found, which fact can be explained rather by the methodical fallibility of principles used for the identification of the most ancient rock art layers than by their absence. It is believed that the figures of aurochses found in the area of Balkhash lakeside are the most ancient Neolithic drawings ever found in Kazakhstan, still, it is self-evident that the statement about their belonging to this epoch is groundless. Even more doubtful seems the age of uncertain drawings of "bisons" (Fig. 1) found in Karaungur and Tesiktas situated in north Balkhash lakeside and referred by A.G. Medoyev to the Paleolithic (Medoyev A.G., 1979). Similar drawings, which are typical of the Bronze Age, especially for its closing period, can be found among petroglyphs dating from the early-Saka period as well. It doesn't mean, however, that there are no drawings belonging to the Stone Age in Kazakhstan at all. On the contrary, the availability of tens of sites, where people of the Stone Age lived, found in a number of Kazakh regions allow us to presume the existence of such monuments.

Some portion of paintings found in Akbaur grotto, East Kazakhstan, are believed, with more likelihood, to date from the Eneolithic. (Samashev Z.S., 1992). This monument is of special importance, so, let's consider it in full.

AKBAUR GROTTO

Akbaur Grotto is situated on the south slope of the cognominal coniform hill, approximately three kilometers above its bottom, one kilometer from the right bank of the Urankhai River, and not far from the village of Besterek, Ulan Region. (Fig. 2, 3, 4).

Akbaur coniform hill is rather high and steep, composed from gray granite, and looks like a pyramid. There is a round opening in the vaulted ceiling of the grotto. The floor is slanting, without any signs of a cultural layer. The grotto is about nine meters long, its maximal width in the middle is four meters, and its maximal height near the entrance is two meters. The total number of preserved drawings is 80 odd, and they are painted with dark-brown ochre. The paintings are mainly made on the wall opposite the entrance and partly on the ceiling. The left part of the composition looks considerably damaged due to water leakage and wind action.

The bulk of the paintings are concentrated in the lower part of the wall. There is an inverted image of an ibex and a picture of a cart painted approximately in the middle of the composition. Its lower part, located nearer to the floor, depicts cone-shaped dwellings, a kind of huts, with the ends of poles jutting out in different directions. One of the images drawn in the right lower corner differs substantially from the others in details: it looks like a

FIG. 1.
North Balkhash lakeside area (according to A.G. Medoyev)

crotch with short extensions on both sides and with three or four dots inside. Next to it is a man, with his legs apart, his feet being turned to different directions. His short arms are lowered. Two more anthropomorphous figures stand nearby, to the left; one of them with its arms and legs widely spread; the other one has been poorly preserved, and its contour is indistinct.

Cruciform symbols occupy a substantial area in the composition. These are mainly simple and oblique crosses, some of them have forked ends. One of the crosses is inscribed in a square. Apart from these drawings, there are three broken lines, two of which form a system of triangles; and two oblique crosses are traversed with strips. There is a poorly preserved lattice near the image of a man. Several triangles, straight lines, and other geometrical signs are seen to the left of the cart. One of the figures is of subrectangular configuration and divided with two transversal lines into four sectors. Each sector has a dot inside. Two lines run from the upper right corner of the figure: the first one is short with a slightly bent end and faces right; while the second line forms some angles, then runs to the left, and joins an uncertain, though accurately drawn, figure. The third line consists of three elements, such as two ramifications placed one above another and four dots in the lower part. According to some of its morphological signs, it resembles both an anthropomorphous image and a hut.

An anthropomorphous figure is placed at the left of the above-mentioned rectangle with four dots. There are also some crosses forked at the ends, one short strip, and a trapezoid figure - all of them at one place. The whole composition is crowned with a figure with a vertical strip inside (Fig.3).

Apart from the above-mentioned inverted image of an ibex, there is a series of oblique crosses, an abode, some chains of triangles and rhombs, some dots forming a triangular figure, and an anthropomorphous image resembling a dwelling. The last image is analogous to the above-mentioned one, depicted on the grotto ceiling.

In general, the composition contains one image of an animal and several anthropomorphous figures, along with the drawings of abodes and a cart. The rest of the paintings present various symbols.

Akbaur coniform hill, which is pyramid-shaped and has a rectangular basis, all corners of which are oriented to the cardinal points of the world, and which dominates a relatively level area around, could have been associated

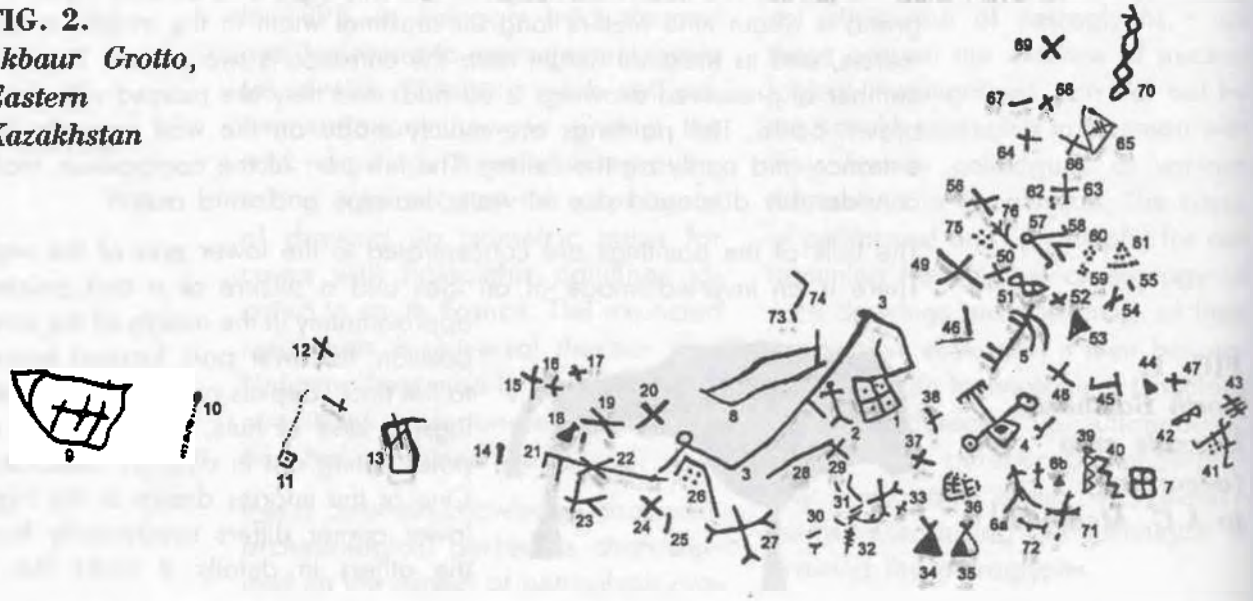


FIG. 2.
Akbaur Grotto, Eastern Kazakhstan

in the primitive man's mythological consciousness with the center of the well-ordered world,with the primordial hill, and the world's mountain; and, in compliance with the principles of binary symbolic classification typical of archaic societies, could have been contrasted with the "periphery," the remaining "foreign" world.

The grotto is situated nearly in the coniform hill basis, on its south side. In order to enter it, one needs to descend five to six meters upward along its step granite folds. Probably, the step folds leading to the grotto were also associated with the cosmological symbols, with the idea of "the ascending upwards, to the sky" and with "the world tree" symbol. For example, the images of ladders on the Siberian shamans' tambourines are interpreted as a device, by which a shaman rises to the upper world while performing shamanist rituals.

It seems as if the nature itself intended the grotto for being a kind of a temple or a sanctuary, where people could perform ceremonial actions connected with their festivities. Undoubtedly, the yurta-like (or, better to say, cone-shaped) form of the grotto provided with a round aperture on its vaulted ceiling was attractive for the primitive man. The natural cave in the rock was associated in the primitive man's perception with the well-arranged space inside a dwelling shaped as a yurta (a hut or a tepee), and correspondingly was taken as "the model of the world," as a macro- and microcosm. This "sanctuary" looking like a real dwelling of a stationary (or a mobile) type and being organized in the space in compliance with the primitive man's conception about the cosmic order (with its vertical and horizontal structures), was recognized as the center, and the remaining world seemed to be on its periphery. Being assumed in this quality, the grotto could play a sacral role. Probably, its north wall

FIG. 3. *A fragment of a painting found in Akbaur Grotto*

opposing the entrance and presenting a kind of iconostasis, with symbolic ideograms painted with red ochre, was esteemed most of all. The right and the left parts of the grotto were likely to correlate with the cardinal points of the world and played a significant role in the system of contrasting. The round aperture in

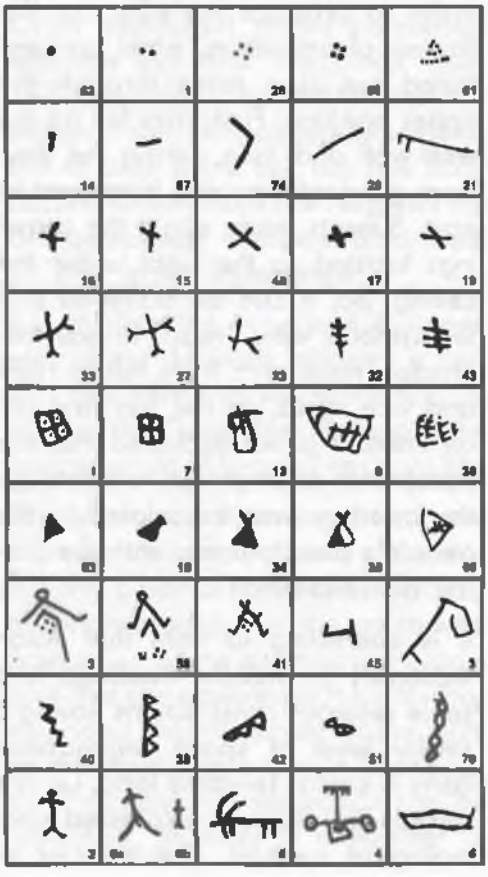


FIG. 4. *Akbaur. A summary table of signs*

FIG. 5.
A disguised man

the vault could be associated with the world's Sky-Mountain, and most possibly also had a sacral meaning. The sun rays passed through it and fluently slipped upon the rock surface with the paintings on. It is very likely, that the symbols on the north wall (and partly right under the ceiling) were drawn in a special way in order to produce the effect or the illusion of animation, when concentrated sun rays came through the upper opening. First, rays fell on the west wall and then, during the day, were gradually moving from west to east. Sunsets made alight the drawings located to the right, under the ceiling. So, it can be admitted that the symbols were "read" in boustrophedon manner – from left to right and vice versa, as the sun rays fell on them. It is not excluded that the penetration of bright sun rays through the aperture was associated in the people's consciousness with the cosmic act of creation.

It is interesting to note that Asian stationary or mobile dwellings and some religious constructions having a similar level of space organization carry a similar semantic load, i.e. are based on distinctly expressed cosmological symbols. The exterior of Turkic and Mongolian nations' yurtas presented a domical or conical monolith. Vertically they could be divided into a cupola (a roof), a cylinder (main space), and an upper circle fixed with crossed arches, that is, they correlated with the world's vertically organized three-part structure, or the world tree, which connected three spheres of the mythological universe.

The structure of the yurta vault (the circle with a cross inscribed) was perceived as both vertical and horizontal (tetrad) model of the cosmos. The inner yurta planning, apart from its functionary division, has one more division, a symbolic one,- into the right (women's) and the left (men's) sections, and its sacral central part, the place opposite the entrance, where cult objects were put. The fireplace, whose vitally important function was equated to the ritual-magic function of the sacred fire, occupied the geometric center of an abode.

Siberian nations' conic tepees are also based on the cosmological symbols and are strictly divided into a woman's and man's parts and a fireplace in the center, which was a symbol the community's unanimity, its spirit, well-being, life, and birth.

The shape of Akbaur grotto could be taken by the primitive man's perception also as a cosmic model with combined vertical and horizontal structures.

Possibly, some ceremonial actions connected with seasonal or other kinds of festivities were performed right in the grotto or on the horseshoe-like ground near it. At present, such actions and their motives can be reconstructed only theoretically, but, in our opinion, the analysis of the grotto form in the cosmogonic light and the deciphering of the meaning of the paintings can serve as the key for the comprehension of the essence of these rites. At present these drawings have been classified, and the main regularities of their lay-out have been revealed.

It is possible that the grotto was utilized both for ritual purposes and as a firmly fixed point for astronomic observation. Astronomical data about the position of the Sun, the Moon, and the Stars at sacral and significant dates (in such crucial moments as spring and autumn equinoxes, summer and winter solstices, etc.) were always very important for the primitive man.

The round aperture in the grotto ceiling, with the diameter of about one meter, was a stationary point for watching the sun and the sky at night. There is a subtriangular sight jut on the east side of the opening (possibly rectified by a man). Probably, the aperture with the sight jut was used for the registration of main constellations movement in the night sky, soon after the sunset.

To make analyzing easier, all the drawings have been numbered.

The importance of the central point No. 1, i.e. the square and the cross, was emphasized by means of placing the image of a man nearby. If a today's observer, just like it was with an ancient one, lies down on his back on the grotto floor near point No. 1 and looks upward, then the image of the ibex, which formerly looked upside down, will seem normal, with its legs down.

From the depth of the grotto one can see the south-west part of the horizon, the place, where the sun sets in autumn and winter periods. Astronomically, this spell is mainly connected with the Capricorn constellation on the sky. Probably, this is why an ibex, the only animal here, was depicted with red paint on the wall of the grotto.

Ancient observers used to associate astronomically important moments of rise and recess of the heavenly bodies with constant reference points in the environment,primarily with the most conspicuous alps. The same regularities were observed in Akbaur grotto.

It should be noted, that there is Sorokina mountain, one of the highest and notable ones, in this area, which is situated south-west of Akbaur grotto. Astronomic calculations show that the sun sets right behind this mountain in the period between spring and autumn equinox days and during summer solstice. Spring, summer, and early autumn present the most favorable periods for astronomical observation in mountains.

FIG. 6.
A disguised person

Other significant points connected with the sun and the moon rises and sets "fall" on other tops or slopes of the surrounding mountains, but to date there are too few data accumulated about the neighboring archaeological monuments to insist on their great importance.

It is possible that, in general, this complex of the drawings mirrored a certain real sector of the starry sky, including the Great Bear ("scoop"), the long asterism of Draco,Capricorn,etc.

The drawings in Akbaur grotto do not represent the whole picture of the sky, but only a part of it, the one which was important namely for the south-west orientation of the sanctuary. It is possible that compositionally the drawings embodied the movement of the stars on the sky during a certain night period. Probably, this assumption can be confirmed, as there is a number of

figures repeatedly drawn and looking very similar there. For instance, Fig. 3, "dragon's ring" and some dots below it look like Fig. 58-59 and 41.

What has been depicted on the grotto wall is not "motionless" real constellations. Most probably, this was their graphic-visual perception expressed by means of a geometrical lay-out, a kind of unification of mathematical and astronomic principles into a single whole.

Let's proceed with the consideration of issues relating to the semantic interpretation of Kazakh petroglyphs taking other concentrations as examples.

THE IMAGES OF THE DISGUISED

Several images of disguised personages (Fig. 7-18, 22, 32, 37, 41) wearing specific dresses, unusual head-gears, and masks can serve to elucidate some aspects of ritual practice and the world view of people, who lived on the territory of present-day Kazakhstan during the Bronze Age. (Samashev Z., 1998, pp.197-208).

FIG. 7.
Personages wearing solar masks and head-dresses (1-8 – Saimaly-Tash; 9-10 – Yeshkiolmes, Semirechye; 11-18 – Tamgaly, Semirechye; 19 – Eastern Kazakhstan; 20-24 – Baikonur, Saryarka; 25 – a Kazakh ethnographic drawing made on kulpytas of the 19th century, Karagashty Aulie necropolis (Mankystau)

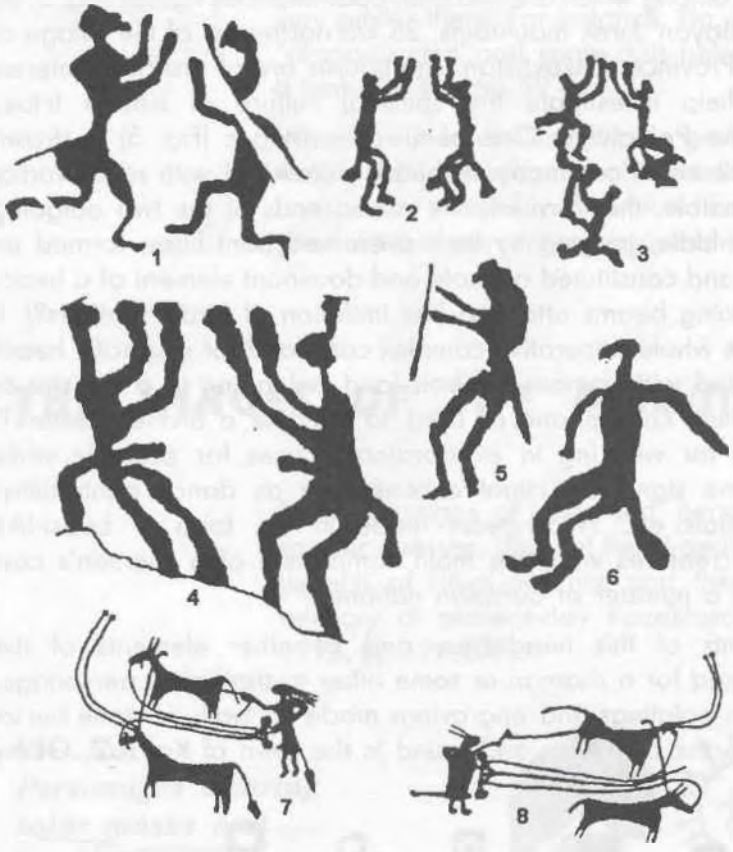
BAYAN JUREK

Rock drawings, among which are two anthropomorphous figures (Fig. 5, 6), were found in Bayan Jurek mountains, 25 km north-east of the village of Kapal, Almaty Province, Kazakhstan. The figures are of profound interest as they can help investigate the spiritual culture of steppe tribes belonging to the Paleolithic. One of the personages (Fig. 5) is drawn performing some ritual ceremony. Its head is crowned with seven radial beams. It is possible, that formerly the ruined ends of the two outgoing beams in the middle, judging by their preserved bent lines, formed an arch-type joint and constituted a whole and dominant element of a head-gear with outgoing beams attached (the imitation of birds' feathers?). If so admitted, the whole decorative complex can stand for a specific head-dress complicated with various symbols (and belonging to a minister of religion, a spiritual chosen one, or used to indicate a divine creature?) and supposed for wearing in extraordinary cases, for example, while performing some significant ritual actions, such as dance, pantomime, shamanistic rituals, etc. Head-gears made in the form of beast-like polymorphous creatures were the main component of a shaman's costume typical of a number of Eurasian nations.

Different variants of this head-dress and of other elements of the costume supposed for a shaman or some other mythological personage, are known from paintings and engravings made on walls of stone burial boxes dating to the Eneolithic and found in the town of Karakol, Gorny

FIG. 8.
Personages wearing animal costumes (6, 11 – Karasai, Kirgizski Mountain Ridge; the remaining images are found in Tamgaly Tract, Semirechye)

FIG. 9. ***The disguised. Saimaly-Tash, Tamgaly***



Altai, and in various monuments of Okunevskaya, Samuskaya, and other cultures,in Siberia and Altai (Fig. 11).

An important component of the Bayan Jurek personage's costume is "fringe," short strips, drawn in the area of his hip joint and a knee.

An ibex and two unclear amorphous figures are depicted on the same plane. One of the figures placed below the man's elbow joint was drawn recently, judging by its patina (though repeated intentional renovation cannot be excluded either, in the light of mythical and ritual complexes).

One can clearly see two pairs of parallel beams radiating from the head of the second personage (Fig. 6). A wide vertical band joins the right pair of beams from above. Two more straight horizontal outgoing beams are drawn on each side of the head, on the level of the figure's occiput. The total number of outgoing beams is seven. Five of them touch with the arch round the head of the personage. The bent ends of the arch join with the elbow joints of the figure by means of short lines. The top of this complex construction is crowned with a vertical rod having two discs – one disk on each side. The resulting sight presents a closed irregular circle with the personage's head and seven beams inside. The above-mentioned object (symbol), a two-horned ibex (most probably, its exterior horn was attached later), and an unclear zoomorphic figure flank to this circle. On the right,opposite the man's hand,there is an illegible image resembling the silhouette of a bird of prey. One more detail of "the shaman's costume" is six fringe strips hanging by three from his knee and hip.

At present a great number of anthropomorphous personages wearing specific head-dresses with beams, with zoo- and ornitomorphic masks on, wearing costumes made of animal's skins, and finished with various accessories (such as animals' tails,various symbols,and material attributes), have become known in Central and Middle Asia, and in adjoining regions (Fig. 7-18, 37-41). Despite their cultural-chronological difference and geographic remoteness, the petroglyphs of Bayan Jurek also belong to this group of drawings, as they are isofunctional, and display similar iconography and semantics.

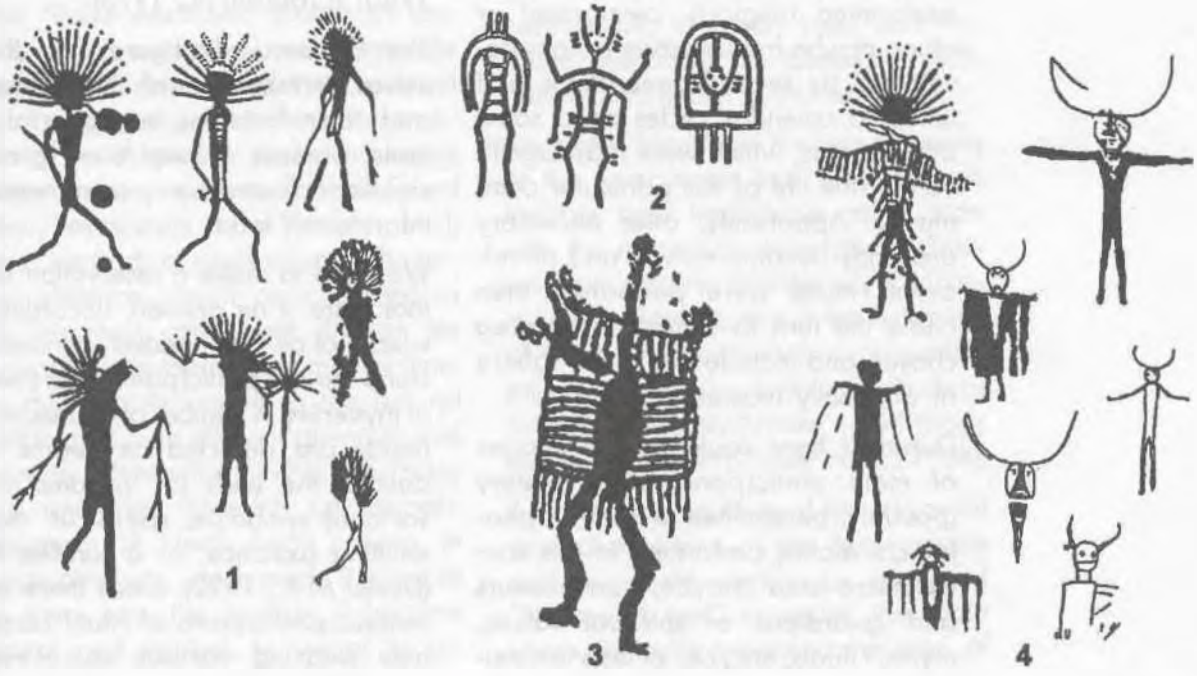
The chronological frame of most of the images of the disguised found in the above-mentioned regions embraces the period from the beginning of the 3rd millennium B.C. through the middle and the end of the 2nd millennium B.C. (though some of them may date back to the Neolithic). Undoubtedly, these images belonged to different cultures, such as Afanasyevskaya, Okunevskaya, and others synchronous with them, which dated back to the Paleo-Metal period, and also pertained to some other cultures existing in steppe zones, in North and Central

Asia, which came later and replaced the former (such as Andronovskaya, Karasukskaya, etc.). Till now, the drawings of "the sun-headed" and the disguised from Tamgaly Tract, most known in Kazakhstan, were believed to date from mid through late 2nd millennium B.C. on basis of their synchronization with the materials found in necropolises situated nearby. Some of their objects had several non-calibrated radiocarbon and one EPR age dates not earlier than 3200 years ago. The disguised figures from Bayan Jurek can be preliminarily referred to a period not earlier than the end of the 3rd millennium B.C. and not later than mid 2nd millennium B.C., as they have more archaic features than "the sun-headed" of Tamgaly.

In terms of chronology and iconography, the petroglyphs of Bayan Jurek and Xinjian, which look alike (Fig. 10) are close to the paintings and engravings of Karakol and Gorny Altai (Fig. 11).

FIG. 10. ***Bardakul (XUAR, the CPR)***

FIG. 11. ***A disguised personage in Central Asian rock art: 1,3, 4 — the Altai (according to V.D. Kubarev); 2 — Images drawn on ceramics found in Samus settlement (according to V.I. Matyushchenko)***



As we determined the approximate age of the personages in Bayan Jurek, let's consider some questions concerning the interpretation of their semantic load. Both figures were depicted by means of deep carving on patinated horizontal (slightly slanting)planes,which are located on the tops of two neighboring coniform hills. Evidently, the choice of the hills dominating in this area and surrounded by free space (though uneven) was not accidental, as the drawings made on the horizontal plane were visible from every quarter in day-time. Due to the optical effect, one could see the moments of the personages' "revival" and disappearance; it was convenient to perform ritual ceremonies and sacrifice actions there, round a sacral object, with the participation of a great number of people. Besides, one could observe from the dominating height the peripheral territories with petroglyphs on and the outskirts, where analogous mysteries could take place. At the same time, the selection of this particular place could be connected with the cult of the sacred hill.

So, the conditions in this area not only met the requirements of an ideal locus (associated with axis mundy) but also complied with the schedule for performing religious, ceremonial or other, maybe frequentative actions developed by several generations and timed to calendar cycles or to some other events, which were most significant in the life of this particular community. Apparently, after necessary drawings became carved and all relevant rituals were performed, then came the turn to semiotize the area chosen and include it into the sphere of artificially mastered space.

Depicted here could be the images of main participants of a mystery (possibly, personified in some mythological motifs) performed in this sacral micro-area (maybe, connoisseurs and guardians of spiritual values, myths, rituals, etc., i.e. priests or deified shamans?); or their isomorphic doubles and graphic substitutes; or possibly symbolic signs, which were considered functioning simultaneously with the above ministers of religion, when climax was reached. The meaning and the purpose of such symbols could become efficient to different degrees depending on the purpose and the time of a ceremony. Speaking of time, we mean not only cosmic or seasonal cycles, or winter and summer solstices, but also day and night peaks, such as noon and midnight, when apart from the verbal code, an optical one became included in the context of a ceremony. The latter is associated with so-called "dynamics of an optical position," i. e. the effect of the revival (or "insubstantial dynamics") of a drawing on the plane (caused by changing a point of sight, also by alteration of a sunlight angle, and evoked by specific functioning of the vestibular apparatus during intensive ecstatic-convulsive body movements when a mystery is performed) and is also connected with some pragmatic aspects of the psychology of visual perception of petroglyphs in a two-dimensional perceptual space,including also the peculiarities of the perception of color (Nikolayenko N.N., 1983; 1986; Ivanov Vyach.Vs., 1983; Tarabukin N., 1973).

The Bayan Jurek figures, by themselves, irrespective of their location and their functions in mysterial actions, possess a heightened graphic significance and carry a tremendous information load.

We need to make a reservation here, that there is an opinion, according to which not all "sun-headed" personages stand for the participants of primordial mysteries. A number of figures,whose heads are depicted as beams with dots at the ends (or in some other variants) symbolize spirits or deities emitting radiance, or a sun-like face (Devlet M.A., 1992). Once there were realistic participants of ritual ceremonies wearing various sacral-magic

"sun-like" masks on their faces (quite often in combination with head-dresses in the form of zoo- ornithomorphous or solar symbols) produced by the creative imagination of ancient artists and equivalent to "the radiant face" of a deity anthropomorphized by the people's mythopoetic consciousness, - so, they were the ones, who could serve as prototypes of the subjects of such scenes, i.e. texts expressed by means of drawing. Apparently, the multivariance of the personages' sun-like masks (and their head-gears as well) mirrored a multilevel hierarchical structure of the pantheon, the diversity of the divinities' functions, and their hypostases in mythoritual complexes; it also reflected ethnic, regional, and other differences.

Now, let's analyze the seven-beam head construction (Fig. 5). It is a common knowledge that numerical symbols belong to universal notions common to all mankind. In the researchers' opinion, the number 7 "stands for the general idea of the universe and equates the constant in the description of the world tree." According to B.A. Frolov, septenary structures were present in the fine art and mythology and went back well into the Paleolithic. Frolov assumes that "there were two groups of factors, which evoked a special attitude towards number 7 and then boosted its strengthening. First, these were objective and purely optic analogies (lunar phases, seven stars in the Great Bear, seven stars in the Pleiades, etc.); and, second, a psychological factor. For instance, seven days proved to be the most convenient division for orientation in lengthy periods of time, as they corresponded to the natural ambit of human efficient attention and memory." (Frolov B.A., 1976). B.A. Frolov has analyzed materials on the ethnography of North Asian nations, in large amounts, which made it possible to trace how the number 7 became sacral and sainted, to reveal its ties with astral myths (primarily with those relating to the moon and the sun), with the people's comprehension of Time and Cosmos, with natural phenomena, with the social structure of a society, with economical activity, etc.

Many other authors also wrote about the relationship of the number 7 with the periodicity in lunar phases,with the cult and the idea of fertility, and with relevant rituals. Similar conceptions expressed in different ways were developed by both cattle-breeding peoples and settled nations involved in agriculture, and by the ancestors of both.

It seems reasonable to mention here one Kazakh astral-cosmogonical myth, according to which Temir-Kyzyk (the Pole Star), the equivalent of the world's pillar, is used as a tethering post, to which two horses (the symbols of two stars near it) named Akbozat and Kokbozat are hitched. The horses are continuously pursued by seven predatory wolves (seven stars of the Great Bear). There are also numerous constructions based on septenary calculation in mythological-ritual complexes and in the traditional culture connected with the universe spheres (seven heavens, seven sections of the Hades). The area of blood relationship employs this figure as well (way back to the seventh generation). We can also find this figure mentioned in connection with natural and social phenomena, etc.

So, seven beams on the head-dresses of the personages from Bayan Jurek indicate their indubitable association with the numerical description of the symbolic universe and the world's (cosmic) tree. Besides, this is the evidence of links with the Eurasian shamanism mythology, which is typologically close to ancient Indo-Aryans' mythology shown in Rigveda (Ogibenin B.L., 1968).

As is known,the idea of the trinomial vertical structure of the outer space and its interconnection by means of "the world tree" occupies the main place in mythological complexes of

shamanism. As for the shaman, he metaphorically personifies the world tree, on the one hand, and fulfills a communicative function in the mythological space, on the other hand. In this aspect, shamanism of Kazakh and Central Asian nations is not an exception. So, apart from the numerical and solar- (lunar-) cosmic symbolism expressed by means of the above-mentioned head-dresses, the figures of people, which undoubtedly possess their own semantics, indicate the vertical structure of the universe.

The head-dress construction of the second personage from Bayan Jurek (Fig. 6) calls up the association with the most popular personage of the Vedic Pantheon, Indra the Thunderer, whose numerous feats are often associated with the cosmogonical act of creation. In particular, his victory over dragon Vritra is qualified as a new Year ritual and as the sacralized reflection of the approach of spring and the defeat of winter. This is how one of Rigveda hymns says about Indra, "Because of (his) greatness he put the sky on his head." (Rigveda, 1989, II. 17.2). This is a direct evidence of the new world order creation process and Indra's solar hypostasis (the sun becomes often personified in the image of Indra). Some elements of the verbal description of his iconographic image are quite commensurable with the garments of the second Bayan Jurek personage's costume (the astral circle with beams inside – on the head or instead the head). Needless to say, that the anthropomorphous images from Bayan Jurek cannot serve as a direct illustration of ancient myths or feats and deeds performed by various mythological personages, especially Indo-Aryan ones. Such motifs depicted in the petroglyphs found in Kazakhstan and in neighboring territories can only reflect similar ideas and world views, which are universal for the whole mankind and have deep historical roots (Proto-Indo-European, Paleo-Asiatic, Paleo-Siberian strata, etc.). Historical memory, like a mythological one, can accumulate and retransmit the spiritual culture phenomena and cultural models of various ethnic and linguistic communities for thousands of years. As a result of intensive migration processes, cultural diffusion, and conquering, those of them, which were most universal and easily convertible (archetypes), have become paradigms open to general use or turned into receptions understandable to most of people, if not to all (a kind of koine), except some purely ethnographic elements. Here it would be appropriate to cite K. Levi-Stros' words, who said, "Myths become altered. The processes, which transform one variant of a myth into another variant of the same myth, also one myth into another myth, and transfer some myths or different ones from one society to another, exert influence sometimes upon the scheme of the myth, sometimes upon its code, and sometimes upon the information itself; but for all that, the myth, as such, doesn't stop existing." (Levi-Stros K., 1985).

There are various mechanisms of transmitting, understanding, and the perception of an idea (mythology) by means of its text (Muskhelishvili N.A., Shneider Yu.A., 1989), which can be realized in different manifestations, such as real (objective), verbal, etc. (Tolstoi N.I., 1982). Thus, the attraction of materials on mythology, say, of Indo-Iranians, with the purpose of interpreting the semantics of some images in the petroglyphs dating back to the Bronze Age and found in Central and Middle Asia, doesn't require any prior proof that the bearers of the myths belong to the Andronovskaya culture (i.e. to suppositional Indo-Iranians).

The anthropomorphous figures are accompanied by other images. Both personages from Bayan Jurek are attended by the drawings of ibexes.

The ibex played a substantial role as a sacrificial animal in various religions and different mythologies. The main myth of the Indo-European mythological tradition shows it as the Thunderer's attribute. V.N. Toporov mentioned that ancient Indo-Europeans had the archaic rite of partition and tearing a sacrificed ibex in sacral moments and in sacral places (which ritual continues to be exercised by many Central Asian nations in different variants till now; in particular, the Kazakhs preserve the ritual in the form of kokpar) (Toporov V.N., 1983).This is how Rigveda says about it, "When a sacrifice is offered in a due time, let the gods unite in the center of the earth on three fire hills (Ogibenin B.L., 1968). So, it is possible that images depicted close to the personages under consideration stand for ibexes (embodying fertility), which were sacrificed during some festivities (maybe timed to such annual cycles as the approach of a new year, vernal equinox, summer equinox, or devoted to some personified phenomena, to the cult of the ancestors, etc.). The ibex was given a key role in Dionysia cults, in orgiastical festivals, and in bacchanalias (Avdeyev A.D., 1959). Offering an ibex in sacrifice substituted former human sacrifice exercised by means of partition and mainly timed to the approach of New Year, a basic solemnity, during which priests wore ibex's skins and masks (Toporov V.N., 1983). The partition of a human body, which was considered the equivalent of the vertically organized mythological cosmos and their social structure, was a kind of cosmogonical action. The ritual of purushamedkh, that is offering Purusha in sacrifice, in Old Indian mythology is a striking example of this. Elements of cosmos and natural phenomena appeared from his disintegrated body (Frank-Kamenetski I., 1938). The partition and tearing of a sacrificial ibex, which substituted former human sacrifice, adequately reflected this ritual. Numerous "ibex-based" rituals, such as disguising (for instance, ancient Greek stage satyrs headed by Silenus, Bulgarian kukers, Byzantine brumali, Roman Saturnalia, and Jewish absolution) and others characterize various stages and variants of the development and transformation of the cult of the ibex worshipped by Indo-European, Turko-Mongolian and other nations. The remaining zoomorphic figures drawn next to the anthropomorphous personages probably symbolize sacrificial portions assigned to some divinities. The explanation that some of them present sculptural pictures of the receptacles of spirits, shaman's assistants, suspended from their head-dresses is admissible, though unlikely.

It is more difficult to interpret the figure drawn in the form of a vertical rod with two discs placed by one on each side, which crowns the second anthropomorphous personage's head-gear. They can be symbols of two disk-shaped metal hangers (mirrors?) fixed to a vertical rod, a semiotic equivalent of the sacrificial pillar, the shaman's world tree. Crowns or head-dresses on the heads of idolized and noble persons (performing priest's functions)topped with the models of sacred trees with suspended disks, were found in the vast zone extending from Middle East (Till-Tepe in Afghanistan) to South-East Asia (Pokche and Silla cultures in Korea). Such decoration of the shaman's costume with complex symbols and heightened symbol representativeness are widely known. We'll mention a legend, as a wordy parallel, according to which round metal mirrors grew on the branches of the shaman tree, instead of leaves (Smolyak A.V., 1991). Some other interpretations seem also possible, such as: the disks present two spheres of the mythological universe (though this idea is present in any interpretation variant); or these are the sun and

the moon; or the discs stand for daily movement of the sun – its rise and set. In Rigveda, according B.L. Ogibenin's assumption, the sun and the moon are sometimes personified in two birds, and the world tree is shown as a woman, who is, "young and decorated with splendid adornments, her hair tightly plaited into four braids, her face covered with glossy grease, she becomes clothed in oblations. Two birds possessing fertilizing ability have alighted on her. As for the gods, they accepted their portions of oblation from people there." According to the researcher, this composition symbolizes the fertile universe (Ogibenin B.L., 1968).

This figure, except its "vertical axis," is commensurable with spectacles-shaped signs widely spread in Central Asian petroglyphs, which most of the researches regard as symbols indicating the way of the sun (and the moon) on the sky, or as two points in the mythological space, between which mediator-deities' ways run.

DOLANALY

In this light, a two-part multi-figured composition found in Dolanaly canyon, east Kazakhstan, seems interesting. It is drawn on a horizontal plane and has a specific "architectonics" (Fig. 12). The semantic center of the composition is a large circle, or, better to say, a disk, as inside it is fully covered with carved small dots. There is one more disk,less in size,which is placed right in the center of the major disk. A horizontal axis runs across them and divides both figures into two spheres (it should be noted that the motif of dividing the sun half-and-half by the Thunderer is present in the Indo-European mythology). Eight beams radiate from the minor disk (three upward and five downward; but if the "horizontal axis" is considered two short rays, their number will total ten). They are made in the form of deep furrows over the carved small dots. Both disks present semantic

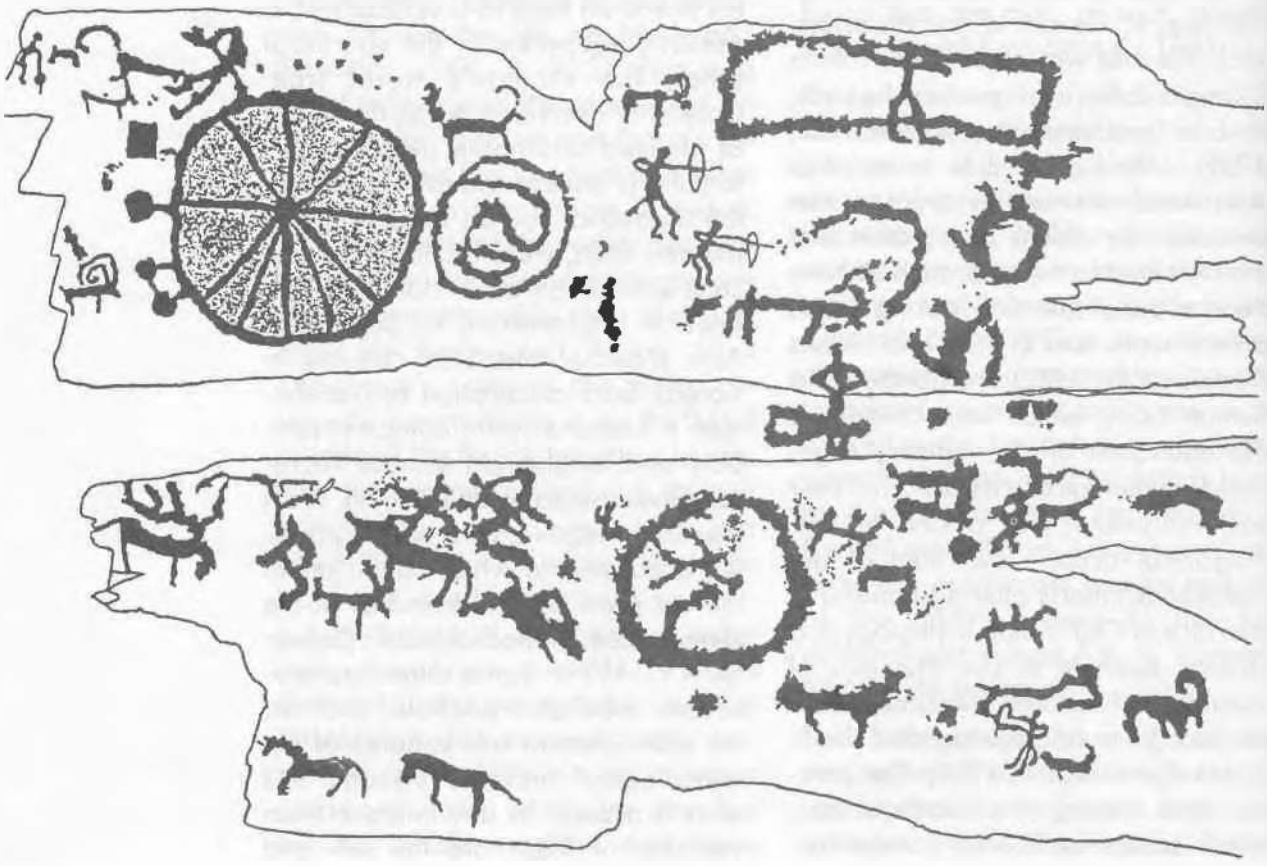


FIG. 12. ***Dolanaly. Eastern Kazakhstan***

equivalents of the sun, the moon, and the sky (in terms of their semantic load and iconography, they are quite commensurable with some images found in Saimaly-Tash). So, the two disks; a spectacles-shaped sign drawn next to them; a cup-shaped hollow and a square one (an astral body and the manned earth?); a circle with "a serpent" inscribed (a symbol of separation of the earth from the sky and their joining; also of fight between the Hero and the World Serpent trying to swallow the sun; in time cycle – day and night; or such oppositions as death and revival, light and darkness, etc.); also some holes laid out like the Great Bear; the figures of ibexes; the anthropomorphous image (the Thunderer?); some archers with tails (mediators while sacrificing?); and others, in aggregate, can be interpreted as symbols classifying the elements of the well-ordered universe. It is supposed that by means of these symbols some archaic astral-cosmogonical myths (lunar, solar, etc.) along with some global, annual, daily, and other processes and cycles connected with them, and the mythological time-and-space continuum were encoded. We employed a fragment of this graphic text from east Kazakhstan in the context of the analysis of the spectacles-shaped element of the second Bayan Jurek personage's head-dress.

Apart from head-dresses used to emphasize a special status of personages, there is one more substantial attribute fulfilling heightened significance function. It is fringe consisting of some tapes. If we consider a shaman's ritual costume of Siberian and Altai nations (the 19th century through early 20th century), we can find (despite individual, ethnic-social, and other differences) not only typological and semantic replications, but direct correspondence with its several elements as well. Fringes of different colors and length, tapes, and wisps of various materials (leather, fur, fabrics, etc.) were fixed to various zones of shaman's ritual sacerdotal robes (indicating macro- and microcosm) and, correspondingly, performed different functions: some of them stood for birds' wings and feathers (i.e. encoded the idea of the shaman's mediating role and was connected with his personality and his function), others symbolized the shaman's magic healing properties, etc.

Finally, we need to note that probably during ritual ceremonies, in which disguised personages depicted in petro-

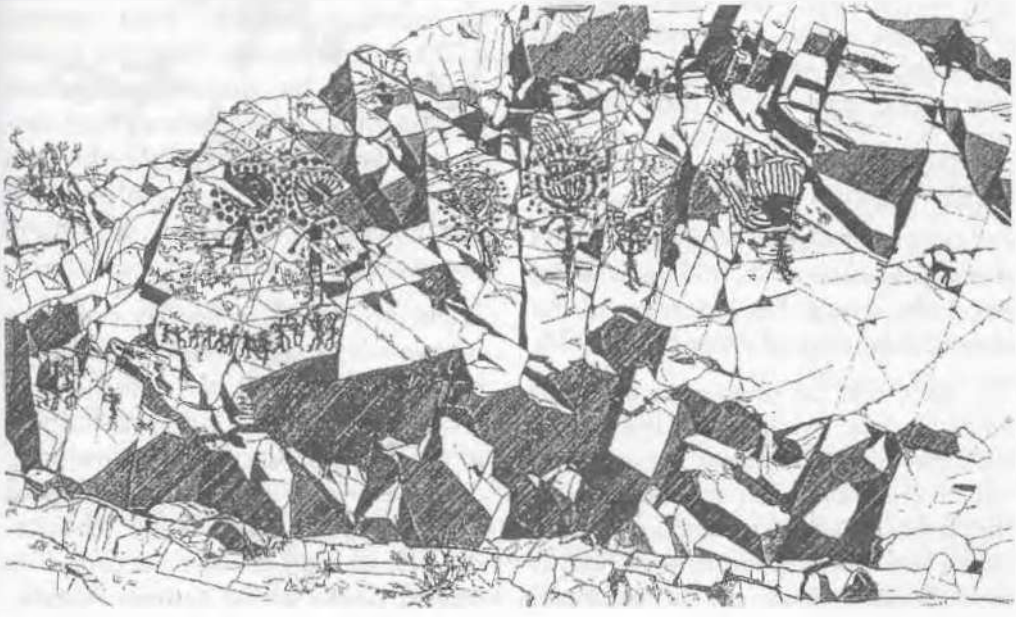


FIG. 13. ***Sun-headed personages (according to A. Rogozhinski)***

FIG. 14. ***Tamgaly.***
A sun-headed personage

FIG. 15. ***Tamgaly.***
A sun-headed creature

glyphs took part, their gestures, poses, rhythms (maybe mimicry as well), plasticity (i.e. motor-locomotory patterns), along with the semantics and kinetic features of the text, which were clear to the contemporaries, seemed to be of rather great importance. N.Ya. Marr emphasized that "the body language and the gesture speech are connected with the cosmic ideology about three heavens." For instance, the pose of smiling Oranta meant the sun, warmth, and life; if he did not smile, it was the indication of the moon, cold, and grief (Marr N.Ya., 1934).

So, we made an attempt to consider some issues relating to the world outlook of the ancient population, which once lived on the territory of the present-day Kazakhstan, having taken two anthropomorphous figures from Bayan Jurek as an example; and to outline some search directions in future substantial studies.

Most popular are sun-headed images found in Tamgaly tract located 170 km from Almaty. They are shown surrounded by dancing disguised people, who perform some ritual ceremony (Fig. 13-15, 17). Probably, the ceremony relates to worshiping the sun deity, the circulation of natural phenomena, or some nature cycle.

Quite probably, numerous drawings of two-horse war chariots are connected with the cult of the sun. In mid 2nd millennium B.C., tribes belonging to the Bronze Age had a developed cult of war-chariots, and there was a whole caste of privileged chariot-drivers, which fact was recorded in sacred books of the ancient Aryans.

THE HORSE AND THE WORLD TREE

The Horse and the World Tree. One of the most important elements of all ancient ritual-mythological systems, which later developed into these or those religions, was sacrifice, which was regarded as a special donation to deities in order to win their favor. Human sacrifice was considered a supreme and ultimate oblation. Still, in the course of time, wild or domestic animals became sacrificial oblations, instead of human sacrifice.

FIG. 16. *Kurchum. Eastern Kazakhstan*

Nearly each ritual-mythological system had its sacrifice ceremony strictly regulated. Sacrificial animals were ranked in a rigid hierarchy. Thus, Old Indian Brahminic texts, when describing sacrifice rituals,showed how a strict hierarchy in the types of oblations was observed in those times: man – horse – bull – sheep – ibex.

The sacrifice ritual regulated not only the ranks of sacrificial animals, but other pertinent details as well, in particular,the place for offering. The altar is a notion known to each culture as a place where a deity is offered a sacrifice. One of the most spread mythological images of such a place is a so-called world tree. The mythological image of the world tree presents a kind of a world axis, which vertically runs through the world and sets a certain reference frame. It consists of a lower part, a middle, and an upper part, or, to be more strict, the lower world (the world of chthonian or evil gods), the middle world (the world of all existing, i.e. human beings, fauna, and flora), and the upper world (the world of gods, who personified good). This is why a tree, a pillar, or any other vertical axis can serve as a symbol of the world tree, its visual embodiment, a sign, or a metaphor.

In the light of the aforesaid, a two-ply multi-figured composition found in Kurchum, East-Kazakhstan Province, seems to be of a profound interest. It depicts four horses fastened in pairs to two hitching posts (Fig. 16). Most probably, the horses and the hitching posts became drawn on the plane later than the images of people, camels, a bull (?), a solar sign, and others, but the horses seem to have been

organically associated with the context of the mythologema about a horse sacrifice near the world tree.

Indo-Aryans had a complex horse sacrifice ritual performed near the world tree and called ashvamedha, which was recorded in Rigveda, Yajurveda, etc. and in more recent texts.

A year before ashvamedha, a white stallion was set free from the herd and let go escorted by the host, princes, and others. During the tour, festivities were held, and sacrifices were offered to the sun deity. After coming home, exactly a year later, on the day of equinox or solstice, the stallion became matched unto a mare and offered in sacrifice, which was performed in a special entourage, near the fire altar and at a pillar topped with a wheel, a symbol of the sun. Prior to doing so, three king's wives bathed, embellished and rubbed the horse with incenses. Then the stallion fastened to the pillar became solemnly stifled. After this, the king's first wife was symbolically paired with the stallion. Then came the turn of the next part of the ceremony: the horse was divided into three. These parts became buried, and then a dog, some bulls and a lot of horses were offered in sacrifice, their number being symbolic and significant. The ceremony finished in sprinkling the fire altar with the blood of the sacrificial animal and ended in the general feast. So, offering a white stallion, twashtra (i.e. the world's horse, according to Rigveda), in sacrifice to the sky deity, the inflaming of sacred fire near the pillar, a symbol of the world axis or the world tree, along with other ritual actions, emphasized the cosmological character of the ceremony. The stallion's matching prior to offering and its symbolic pairing with the king's first wife was associated with the cult of fertility.

FIG. 17. ***Tamgaly***

Archaeological sources confirm the existence of a similar ritual in Scythia and other territories. In Ulski and Ulyapski burial mounds, Adygei Region, were found pentagonal earth platforms with vaults resting on pillars erected prior to the whole construction. A great number of horse skeletons were discovered under the vault. A joint burial of a horse and a man along with the traces of a combined offering of a child, a horse, and a bull were also found there. A ritual burial place with five dogs, their tails being cut off, and with foal extremities was found in the void of a burial mound (Balonov, 1984; Leskov, 1985). These are the evidence of a complex ritual offering of horses, dogs, people (?), etc. similar to Old Indian ashvamedha.

Now, let's return to the drawings found in Kurchum. Proceeding on the assumption that this composition reflects a sacrifice ritual similar to Indo-Aryan and Scythian ones, we'll analyze all its components and compare them with the semantic elements of an ashvamedha ritual complex. Let's begin with the hitching post. In mythological comprehension, a vertical pillar, a hitching post, was associated with the main conception of the world tree – the idea of the triplicate vertical struc-

FIG. 18.
Tamgaly.
A bull and
a man

ture of the universe. On the other hand, the hitching post, being the allo-element of the three-part world tree, correlated with the sacrificial horse, whose triplicity was emphasized through cutting off its head, body and tail during ashvamedha (that is such parts, which symbolized concrete cosmological notions) by three king's wives (who, in their turn, were associated with three spheres of the universe). During ashvamedha, according to Rigveda hymns, a sacrificial horse became fastened to a pillar set on a pentagonal ground. An oblation offered in a sacral space became passed to the sun deity by means of a hitching post, which was considered a way connecting the sky and the earth. Such communicative function of the sacrificial pillar (and a sacrificial animal, its semiotic equivalent) in Vedic cosmogony was shown perfectly well in Rigveda hymns, "Oh, tree bound with the tether,lead (the sacrificial animal) under the protection of the gods!" (RV. X, 70, 10).

The images of hitching posts found in Kurchum seem to have a similar meaning. Taking into account old links between Indo-Europeans and Central and Middle Asian nations and the coincidence in a number of their mythological and ritual actions connected with the horse at the world tree (Ivanov, 1980), we can consider some ethnographic sources. According to a Kazakh astral-cosmogonical myth, Temir Kazyk (the Pole Star) is an iron picket, an equivalent of the world column, to which two horses, Akbozat and Kokbozat, are fastened. The horses are constantly pursued by seven wolves (the Great Bear). The disappearance of these horses, who personified stability in cosmos, could lead to disharmony, chaos, and, finally, to the ruin of the world. The Khakasses are also known to recognize the idea of a golden picket driven in the sky during the creation of the world, to which a horse was fastened. In Altai shamanism, the heavenly deity Ulgen accepted oblations (a three-year-old mare of light color) near a golden hitching post associated with the fifth celestial sphere, which ceremony was performed in his honor once in three years. The mentioning of one more source, a widely known Scandinavian poem about Iggdracil, is quite appropriate here. Iggdracil is the world tree, an ash-tree, tightly connected with the image of the horse (literally: the horse of Igg).

In the composition found in Kurchum, a wheel-like circle with six spokes is

FIG. 19. ***Arpauzen. South Kazakhstan***

depicted near the horses. Usually, during ashvamedha the sacrificial pillar was topped with a wheel, a symbol of the sun, which strengthened the sacral link between the ritual construction, the ceremony and the deity. Probably, the numerical symbolism of the wheel carried some complex semantic load. Judging from the decoded proto-Indian inscriptions made on bronze axes used during offering ceremonies, this set of symbols (consisting of a doubled wheel with six spokes) meant a two-wheeled cart, on the one hand, and a calendar holiday (solstice) of sacrifice, on the other hand (Gurov, 1975). Here we must underline that Indo-Aryans inherited proto-Indian calendar (Volchok, 1975). So, we can assume that the image of the wheel provided with six spokes symbolized the sun and a chariot, and, at the same time, it indicated the seasonal nature of a sacrificial ritual.

Noteworthy are the figures of two opposing dogs drawn in the lower part of the Kurchum composition. A dog played a significant role in the ritual of ashvamedha. Indo-Iranians and Indo-Aryans associated the image of the dog with chthonian creatures. During ashvamedha some representatives of three lower castes killed, as a preliminary oblation, "a four-eyed" dog (possibly of black color), which symbolized evil power. In contrast, Avesta associated the dog with positive features. Judging by the materials found in Ulski burial mound 10, a definite number of dogs (five) were offered in sacrifice during ashvamedha. The procedure included cutting their tails off and then burying them together with the extremities (or the skin and the extremities) of other animals (Balonov, 1984). The burial of a dog was also found in Sintashta burial ground.

If our supposition that the composition in Kurchum reflected some ancient ritual of ashvamedha type is correct (though, we need to make a reserve that this was a king's ceremony), then the figures of the two dogs depicted in its lower part must be interpreted as the images (symbols) of a preliminary sacrifice, as was stated above.

Probably, the composition under consideration is connected with certain numerical symbolism: it includes some elements of the numerical code associated with macro- and microcosmic characteristics. Researchers have learned long ago that triads were often used as the main principle of the universe structure, vertically dividing it into three cosmic zones. In ashvamedha after the horse became slaughtered, three of king's wives walked round it, first, three times from left to right, then three times from right

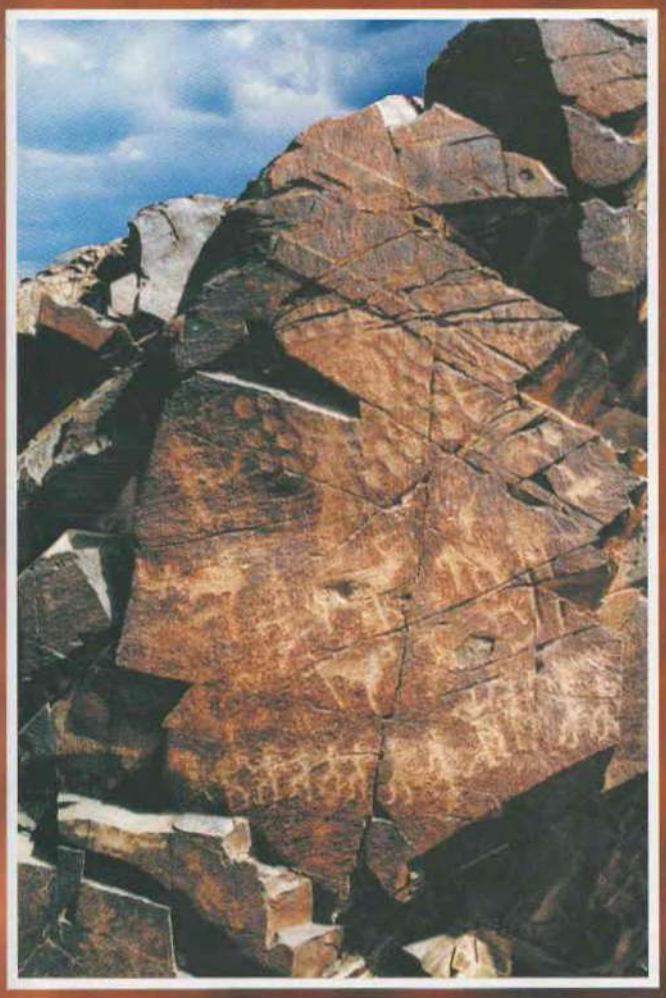


FOTO 1.
Tamgaly

FOTO 3.
Yeshkiolmes

FOTO 2.
Tamgaly. A bull and a man

FOTO 4.
Yeshkiolmes

FOTO 5.
Bayan Jurek

to left, and then again three times from left to right. This triad repeated three times results in the symbolic number 9. The composition in Kurchum displays the rhythm 4, which was formed through the twofold repetition of rhythm 2 (2 + 2): four horses were fastened in pairs to two hitching posts. During ashvamedha four pillars were erected on a pentagonal ground. Four cardinal points corresponded to four main priests.

So, the summing up of the numbers 3 and 4 gives the symbolic number 7, which characterizes the general idea of the universe and the constant in the description of the world tree (Toporov, 1982). Rhythms 3 and 4 (and the availability of numerical symbolism in their myths and rituals in general) were typical of Sakas. Turkic nations associated their astral-cosmogonical conceptions mentioned above with the symbolism of the number 7, as the image of the world tree and the horse, its equivalent.

Probably, the paired images of horses, people, and dogs in the composition were connected with the binary principles of semantic contrasting, dual-cosmogonical notions, and the cult of twins. Old Indian divine twins, the Ashvins, ("possessing a horse" or "born from a horse"), who sometimes appeared in the images of two horses, were tightly connected with the world tree, ashvattha. Their images present a trace of old Indo-European cult of twins.

As we finish analyzing this composition, we are to state that the interpretation of its other images seems rather difficult. The images of ibexes, a bull (?), camels, and a deer can be interpreted as oblations offered preliminary to or simultaneous with the horse sacrifice. In particular, an ibex, in ashvamedha ritual, presented a sacrificial portion meant for Pushan, a mediator-deity (a son of the Ashvins, tightly connected with the image of an ibex). Playing the role of a mediator-deity, Pushan led a sacrificial horse to the altar.

There are four anthropomorphous figures in the composition. Two of them are paired and have long noses. The third figure's nose is also protruded. This figure has a long straight object (a goad?) in its hand. Taking into consideration the above-mentioned details and peculiarities, it seems tempting to equate the first two images with the Ashvins, who are described as Nasatya, i.e. big-nosed; and to identify the third human figure with Pushan, as a goad was one of his attributes. (RV. VI, 58.2).

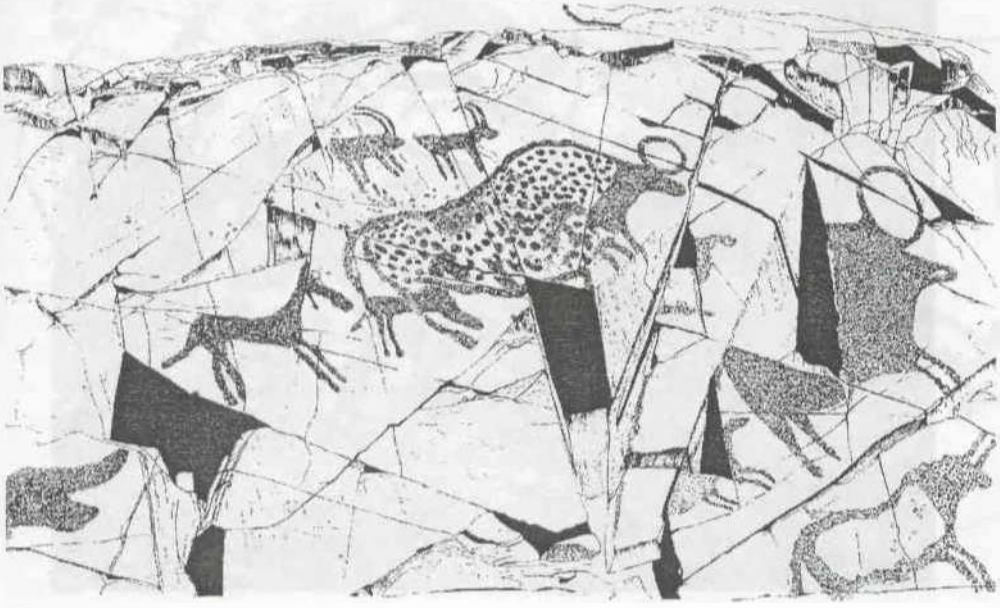


FIG. 20.
Tamgaly. Bulls

FIG. 21.
Khantau. Terekty

The availability of depicted phalluses can be considered an indirect evidence testifying in favor of this identification: in myth both the Ashvins and Pushan have incest links, their images are associated with fertility, and they personify enormous sexual strength. The fourth figure drawn in the lower part of the composition, judging from its pose (spread arms and legs, without feet) can be regarded as a human sacrifice (if to admit that this was possible, apart from animal sacrifices,in late Bronze Age, to which time this composition belongs, in our opinion).

In conclusion of this study, we'll note that motifs connected with the conception of the world tree (and its zoo-anthropomorphous equivalents) along with sacrifices (both human and animal) offered near the world tree, were chronologically and geographically widely spread in the Indo-European and non-Indo-European nations' arts and their mythologies. In particular, icons and scenes similar to drawings from Kurchum are known to have been found in Minusinsk Depression and in North China monuments, which date back to the Bronze Age. Iconographic parallels can be seen in the drawings on shaman's tambourines.

FIG. 22.
Tamgaly. Bulls and people

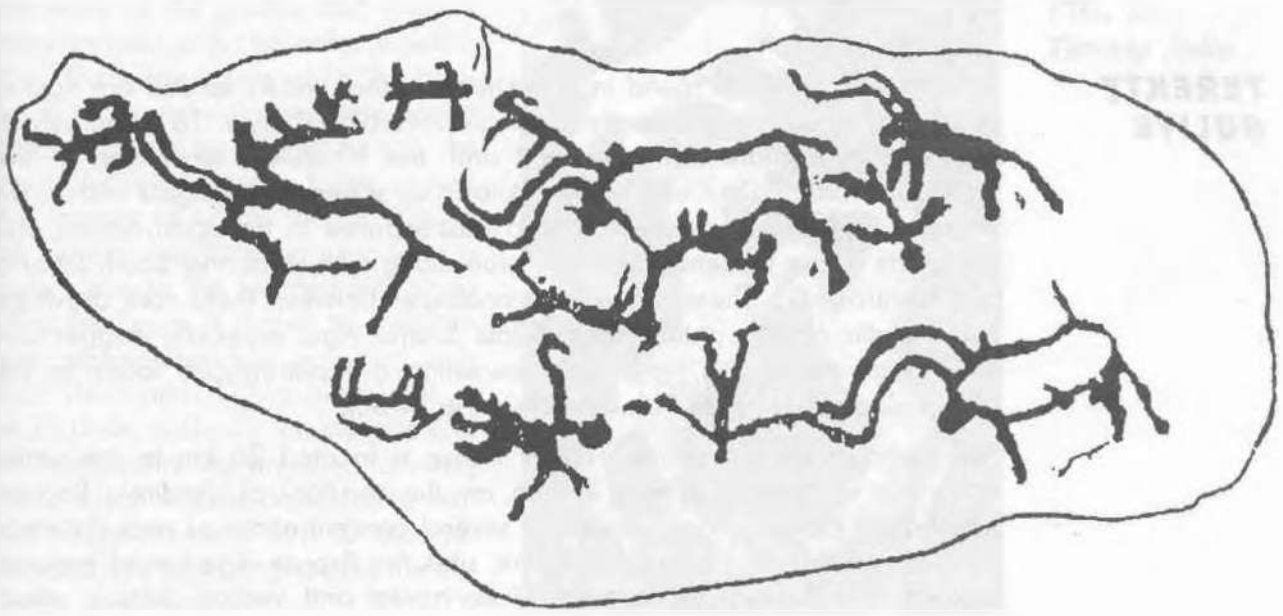
BULL SACRIFICE

We have already got acquainted with the hierarchy of sacrificial animals, which existed in the mythology of ancient Indo-Europeans. The bull occupied the second place in it, following the horse.

The image of the bull was one of the most popular in petroglyphs found in the whole Eurasia. The profile images of bulls drawn with mastership, expressed with laconic lines, and depicted with a sure hand can be found everywhere, from Franco-Cantabria and Levant in the west to Baikal costal area and Mongolia in the east. In the framework of the area we are focusing on, that is in Kazakhstan, Central Asia, and Sayano-Altai, there are several groups of the images of bulls, which can be distinguished on basis of their common stylistic features and the technique of drawing (Fig. 18-23).

There are also images of bulls painted with mineral red ochre, though these are rare cases. In Central Asia, a composition with bulls was found in Zaraut-Sai canyon located in south-west spurs of the Hissar mountains. In the locality called Zevakino we found and studied a unique composition, which probably depicted one of the stages of the bull sacrifice complex ritual (Fig. 23). The scene shows four bulls with long wavy horns. Two of them are trampling down prostrate people with their forelegs (as is known, laying on one's back meant death, while a man's horizontal position, probably, meant in a number of cases that he was wounded). The third bull has lifted a man on its horns, while the fourth bull has already flung its victim on the earth. The inverted figure of an ibex and a wounded man are shown in the lower part of the composition. There is a detail, which attracts the attention: short vertical lines have been shown by the ancient artist in the area of the shoulder-blade and the croup of one of the bulls. Most probably they stand for fragments of spears. According to M.P. Gryaznov, since Upper Paleolithic nearly up to the ethnographic present, hunters for bulls used to perform one smart trick: having pierced a beast's shoulder-blade, they disabled it from fleeing or defending itself (Gryaznov, 1977; Abramova, 1979). In the case under consideration, possibly, the artist captured one of tragic episodes of the sacrificial bulls catch. Analogues extremely close to these drawings, in terms of their iconography and subject contents, have been found in the monuments belonging to Crete-Micken

FIG. 23. ***Zevakino. The Kazakh Altai***



culture (the second millennium B.C.), in murals of the Knossos Palace, toreutics, etc. Especially similar looks a painting on a vessel from Agia Triad, which depicts an analogous episode of an unfortunate fight with a bull. Studying such compositions evokes in an archaeologist a whole chain of associations, which can hardly be explained by pure coincidence. Scenes of fight or single combat between the man and the bull were reflected in the earliest fine art monuments dating back to the Upper Paleolithic. Thus, on one of frescoes found in the famous Lasco grotto, France, we can see a scene, which nearly "literary" repeats the contents of the above-mentioned scenes. Undoubtedly, the combination of the images of the bull and the man in the above compositions was not groundless.

Some archaeological finds discovered in Siberia present interesting data connected with single combat between the man and the bull. Hunt for a bull was always very dangerous, not only in times of the Upper Paleolithic but in later periods as well. It required not only a full mobilization of the hunter's physical strength, his dexterity, and flash-like reaction, but the employment of a thoroughly developed "technology." An archaeological find discovered by Z.A. Abramova during excavations in Kokorevo I settlement (the Upper Paleolithic) located on the left bank of the Yenisei River, appeared an archaeological evidence of perfectly developed methods of hunt for a bull. Here, the left shoulder-blade of a large, 6-7 year-old bison was found in the cultural layer. The horn head of a dart or a spear pierced it and got stuck there. The point passed through the shoulder-blade and went out on its inner side nearly at four cm. After such a strike, any movement with the left foreleg, even the slightest one, intolerably pained the animal, as the point cut the lower muscles of the shoulder and the thorax. This wound alone disabled the beast from fleeing or defending itself.

At that time every bull was a wild animal. The domestication of horned cattle occurred much later. That is why a hunter's victory over a bull, apart from being a trophy, embodied his strength, courage, dexterity, and hunting skills. It could be so that each youth had to pass such a test before entering the community of the adult hunters. If so, the procedure could turn into an initiation ceremony, and, as any ritual, it might include various symbolic actions.

TEREKTY AULIYE

Among rock drawings found in Kazakhstan, rather widely spread are figures of animals drawn in a so-called "seiminsko-turbinski" style. To some extent, such drawings mark the movement and the inhabited territories of the "seiminsko-turbinski" tribes, who were known as skilled metallurgists and brave warriors, and whose cultures covered vast expanse in the north, central, and east parts of the present-day Kazakhstan, along with West and South Siberia and Central Asia. There are striking analogies between these rock drawings and metallic objects dating back to late Bronze Age, especially dagger and knife pommels. In this light, very interesting are petroglyphs found in the archaeological complex Terekty Auliye (Fig.24-30).

The archaeological complex Terekty Auliye is located 20 km to the north-north-east of Terekty railway station, on the territory of Jezdinski Region, Karaganda Province, and consists of several concentrations of rock drawings (its main component), also of Neolithic sites, the Bronze Age burial grounds located near springs, the remains of horizontal and vertical adits, in which

ores and semiprecious minerals were once extracted, also of early Iron Age burial mounds, etc.

Discovered here have been two main and several intermediate concentrations of rock drawings made on the planes of equal-sized folds of residual hills caused by weathering, which form a small mountain ridge surrounded with a level steppe zone abundant in springs and rich in thick and diverse fauna, in comparison with the semi-desert, which comes next.

The elements of the inhabitable natural landscape complex became also accommodated by the ancient people to the performance of religious and ritual ceremonies of a calendar character or of some other nature, connected with the community's religious-mythological conceptions. This is how multi-component and multifunctional sanctuaries under the open sky were established. The earliest of the rock drawings in Terekty Auliye were made with the employment of a combined technique: prior to drawing, a gray coarse-grained granite surface was cleared from moss, and the entire roughness became removed. Then the grooves of the drawing became thoroughly polished, and its surface was smoothed. Sometimes the surfaces of the drawings carved on the walls of the grottos and shelters were painted with red ochre in addition. There are cases when the bodies of zoomorphic figures were drawn with a contour technique. Among the petroglyphs in Terekty Auliye prevail the images of horses (about 90% of all zoomorphic drawings) made in a style close to the seiminsko-turbinski one: the figure is drawn in a silhouette manner (seldom provided with four short and slightly bent legs), a static pose, and only the massive and arched (sometimes stretched forward) neck, which widens downwards, with the mane turning into a wedge-shaped fore-lock, emphasizes the animal's inner tension.

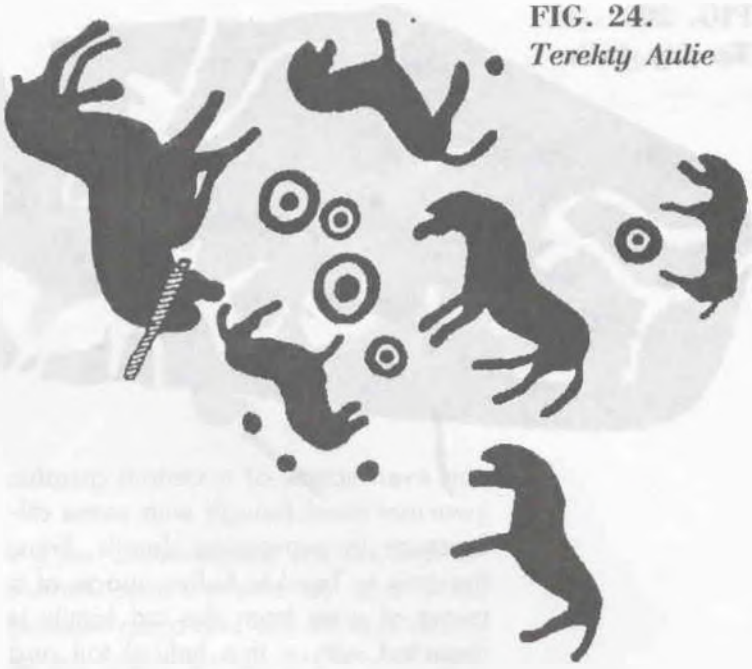


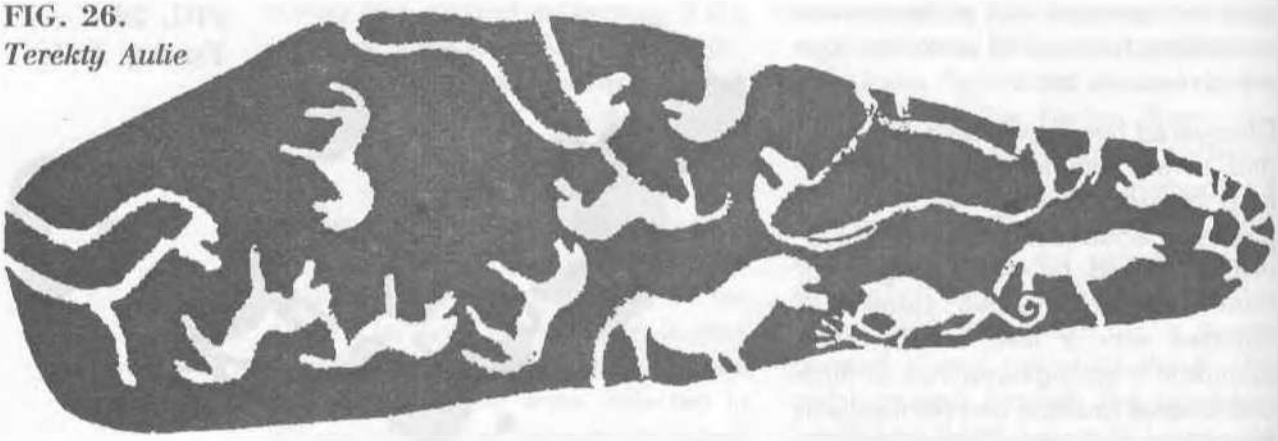
FIG. 24.
Terekty Aulie

The shape of the neck varies, but, except few cases, its lower line remains straight. Especially expressive are horses' muzzles drawn as a stretched forward (or dropped) line with a rounded or sometimes slightly turned in end. The chin line is fluently curved. The lower jaw forms an acute angle with the throat, which makes the head of the animal look especially graceful.

Other animals (Bactrians and bulls) are depicted in a similar manner (we

FIG. 25.
Terekty Aulie

FIG. 26.
Terekty Aulie



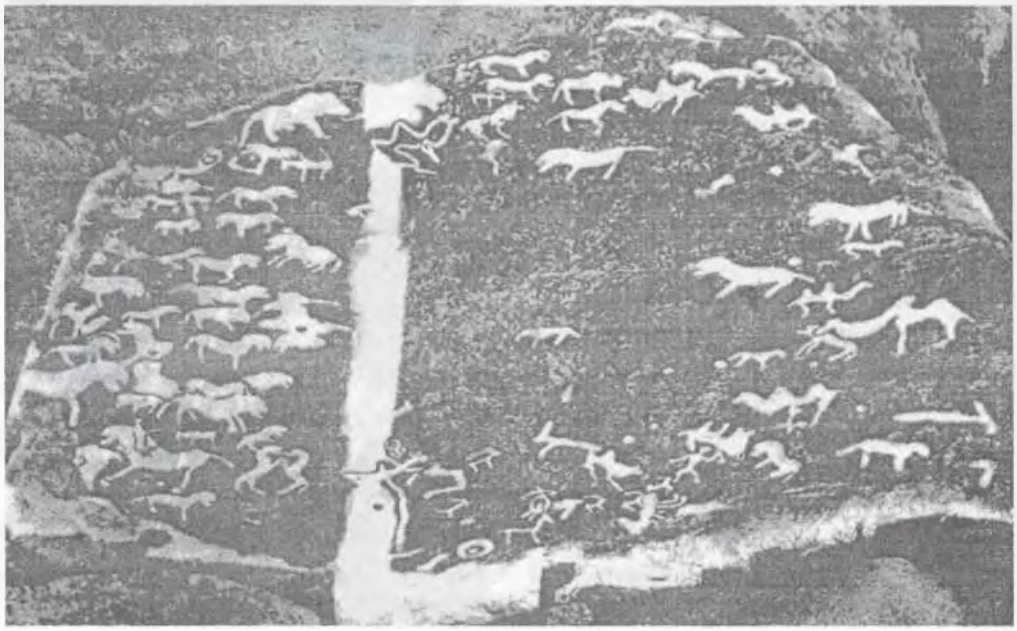
can even speak of a certain graphic invariant here), though with some differences in expressing details. Thus, the only in Terekty Auliye image of a beast of prey from the cat family is depicted with a thin helical tail and three-fingered forelegs. The remaining parts of its body do not differ from those of the horse (Fig. 26).

Two images of deer stylistically differ acutely from the drawings described above as they have proto- and early Scythian elements typical of figures depicted on reindeer stones (Fig. 28, 29).

The figure of the three-fingered beast of prey from Terekty Auliye also has analogies among images depicted on reindeer stones found in the Altai and Mongolia. The image of the man is not popular here – anthropomorphous figures are a rare case. The drawings of snakes and pair-horse chariots are sometimes found here.

Signs and symbols in Terekty Auliye can be singled out into a special category. These are sockets of various size, sometimes they are inscribed into simple or concentric circles; large-size cup-shaped cavities; lattice-shaped geometric figures; zigzags; the imprints of horse hoofs; human footprints, etc. There are many myths and legends connected with the latter. Al Biruni (the 11th century) cited one of them, which narrated a story of Khazret Ali and his horse Duldul, which entered Moslem hagiology.

FIG. 27.
Terekty Aulie



The way how the plot of a scene is shown, or, the principle of composing multi-figured scenes can be called circular: the images of animals follow each other or oppose each other, and are drawn along the edge of the rock plane (expositions here are slanting or horizontal). The center is sometimes occupied with circles with inscribed cup-shaped cavities and small sockets.

Ensuing from the analysis of the landscape conditions and taking into account the number and the contents of scenes depicted in the petroglyphs, we are to single out (from a lot of existing variants) such petroglyphs, which confirm the indubitable connection between the appearing of a great number of drawings on the rock surfaces, the functioning of Terekty Auliye sanctuary and worshiping the horse and the complex multistage horse sacrifice ritual, while interpreting their semantic aspect.

Some scenes reflect the ancient artists' keen knowledge of the ethologic peculiarities of horses as herd animals (specifically, the hierarchic behavior of stallions). Some of the drawings show their very aggressive manifestations, such as a duel between two reared up animals, the arched neck of an a stallion (or stretched forward, or bent down, when it leads a herd), scenes of attentions, etc.

If to admit that the ancient artist drew, directly from nature, the scenes of horses and other hoofed animals' copulation in spring, when on heat, which mirrored the cult of fertility, then possibly the procedure of drawing such scenes and creating circular compositions might have been included into a seasonal (festive) ritual.

While interpreting the semantic load of such scenes, especially binary ones, one must take into consideration that they reflected some archaic mythpoetical traditions, which existed during the cosmological period, and included such notions as opposition between good and evil, life and death, spring and winter, darkness and light, etc., and consequently, the triumph of victory in these ritual duels expressed as the awakening and renovation of the nature and the world, the approach of the general cycle of harmony and order, and balance in cosmogonical phenomena circulation.

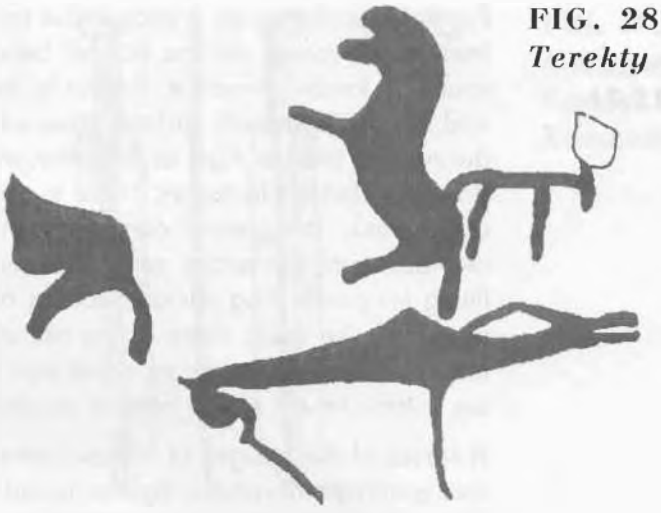


FIG. 28.
Terekty Aulie

The images of human footprints (and horse's hoof imprints) present a specific graphic text, which describes an element of the mythological microcosm by means of isomorphic biological code: foot (hoof) - leg – bottom (the chthonical world and the creatures living there). Absolutely obvious is the connection between the images of a human footprint (and a horse's hoof imprint) and the cult of fertility (in a broad sense – with mythologema about cosmos origin). You may remember myths about personages conceived after the sperm of lame chthonian deities or heroes got into somebody's footprints or traces; conception through stepping on one's footprint, etc. The images of a human footprint and a horse's hoof imprint can mark the ways of traveling of some anthropomorphous deity, a human soul, and a sacrificial share in the mythological space.

TERS AND KARASAI

Petroglyphs drawn on a rock in the area of the Ters River are located 50-70 m from its left bank, on the border between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, in the south of Jambyl Province. Probably, because of its uncommonness, apartness, and due to its smooth surface covered with jet-black patina, this rock was used during the Bronze Age as an altar, where ritual ceremonies were held in the days of calendar festivities. There is a level semicircular ground near the bottom of the rock. The natural conditions and the landscape in Karasai canyon (the availability of numerous springs round the coniform hill, a convenient ground fitting for performing various actions of worship, the availability of wide vertical planes on the south slope of the hill, at the end of the canyon, the apartness of the area, the opportunity to watch sunrises and sunsets, etc.) must have stipulated the establishment of this natural sanctuary and its functioning for centuries.

A series of the images of horses, camels, deer, ibexes, bulls, birds, beasts of prey, and anthropomorphous figures found in this area display absolutely identical legs, though they belong to different biological species. The availability of such graphic invariants allows to speak about the existence of a certain artistic school with steady methods and standard blocks employed for drawing the figures of animals and human beings. During systematical studying, cases like this make it possible to detect zones of dissemination of concrete graphic styles, their centers and periphery. Such cases are helpful in determining absolute and relative chronology of the drawings, in the long run, especially if other dating factors, such as palimpsest, the technique of drawing, subjects of everyday life, arms, etc. are also taken into consideration (FIG. 31-35).

The images of two knives (Fig. 31) have striking material analogies found in closed settlement complexes and necropolises on the territory of Semirechye, central Kazakhstan, north Kazakhstan, west Siberia, etc. These finds date back to late Bronze Age, which fact allows us to determine the age of other drawings synchronous with them, which were found on the rock in the area of

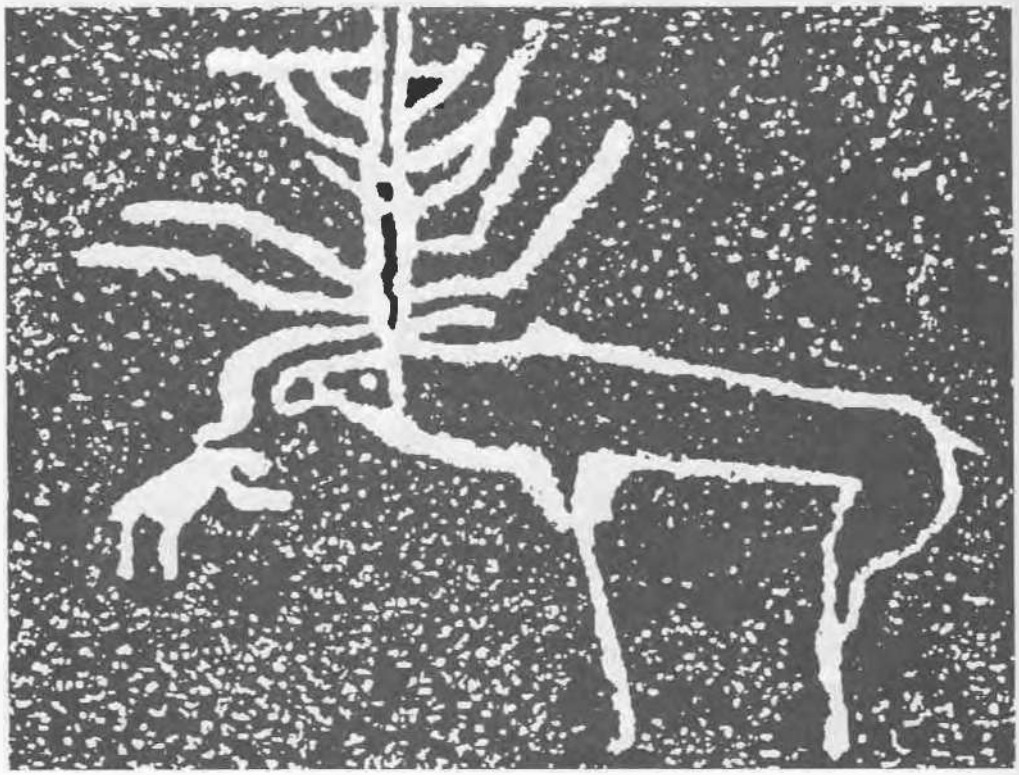


FIG. 29.
Terekty Aulie

the Ters River. This layer with the petroglyphs, in its turn, became overlapped with the figures of deer, wild boars, and other animals having corresponding parallels with the Arzhan type images from Central and Middle Asia. This means that their age can be determined with maximal accuracy (the 8th century B.C.).

The prevalence of drawings close to each other, in terms of their style and subject contents, in neighboring regions of Semirechye, south Kazakhstan, and north Central Asia, is the evidence of tight ethnic-cultural contacts existing during the Bronze Age. It also confirms the existence of the peoples' single basis for the their spiritual development. During the Bronze Age there was a specific variant (so-called "Semirechenski") of the Andronovskasya culture, with the usage of utensils of a peculiar shape, which fact also testifies to their cultural and historical commonness.

At present we can make a supposition that some Central Asian tribes migrated across the east Kazakhstan, Semirechye, and south Kazakhstan to more south and more west regions at the turn of the 2nd and 1st millennia B.C. or maybe a little bit earlier. What is meant is the appearance of rock drawings depicting deer with beak-shaped muzzles identical to the figures on reindeer stones in Mongolia and Sayano-Altai. In Kazakhstan they are known to be found not only in the east part of the country, but also in Sary Arka (Fig. 28), in Semirechye (Fig. 33), and in the south regions, such as Karatau (Fig. 34, 35) and Aksu-Jabagly (Fig. 36). The images of deer with beak-shaped muzzles can be quite easily identified in the whole area. As the rocks with the drawings of such deer cannot be imported, we can admit that they mark the ways of migration of certain ethnic-cultural massifs, the bearers of this particular graphic tradition.

The second wave of migration from that same area occurred in the very first centuries of the 1st millennium B.C., and, judging from the prevalence of the Arzhan type rock drawings, it ran along the foothills

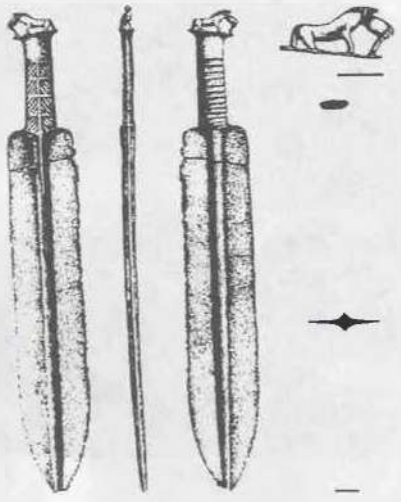


FIG. 30. ***A dagger. Eastern Kazakhstan***

FIG. 31. ***Ters***

FIG. 32. ***Ters***

FIG. 33.
Bayan Jurek

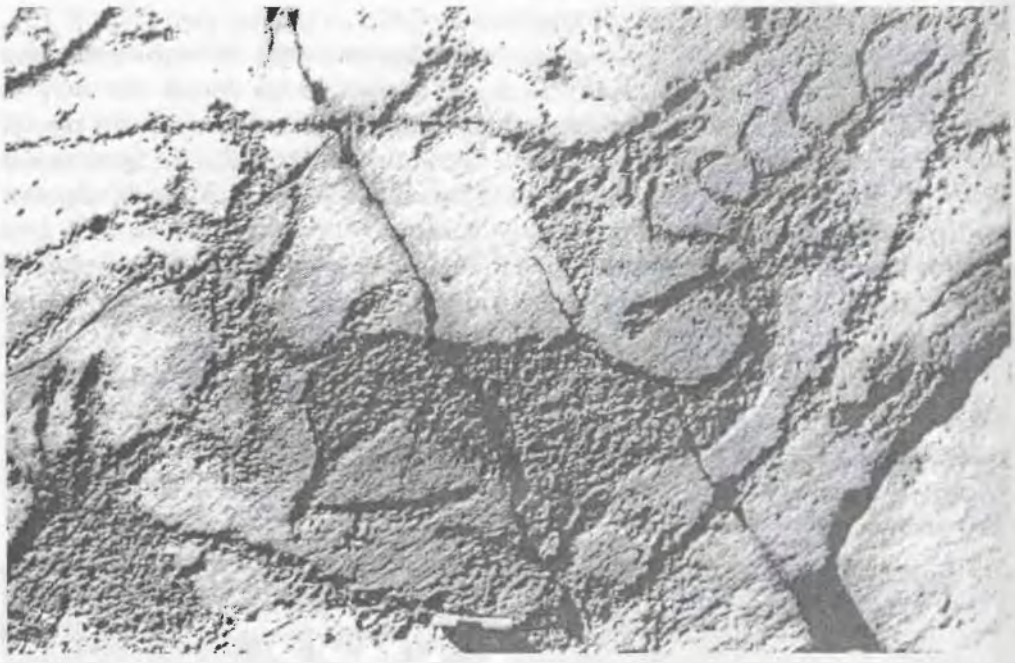


FIG. 34.
Arpauzen

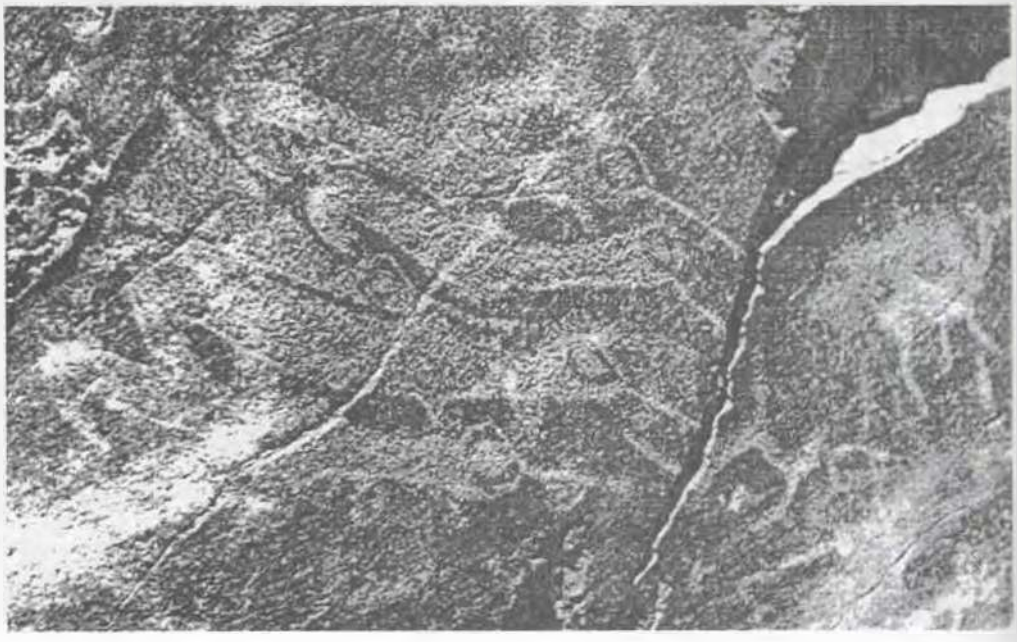


FIG. 35.
Jingilchak. Karatau

FIG. 36. ***Aksu-Jabagly***

FIG. 37. ***Yeshkiolmes***

of the Altai, Tarbagatai, Jungarski, Zayilyiski, and Talasski Ala Tau mountain ridges and covered a wide zone with intermountain troughs, including the Talas and other rivers basins.

Most of the anthropomorphous figures have been depicted wearing masks with exaggeratedly long noses. All of them are shown in various compositional situations and, undoubtedly, are polysemantic. One of such disguised figures is depicted with a tail and holding some object with a spiral end (like the question-mark) in one hand and a bustard in the other. Similar scenes are known to have been found in Tamgaly Tract, in Yeshkiolmes, etc. The difference is that here they are shown in combination with sun-like deities and as participants of round-dances. Some authors associate them with Mithraistic mysteries and the cult of Mithra. If so, the above-mentioned object can be qualified as a sacral-magic attribute of this cult priest.

One can see numerous images of opposing horses in Karasai canyon. Most probably, they are connected with the cult of the twins Ashvins.

FIG. 38. *Yeshkiolmes*

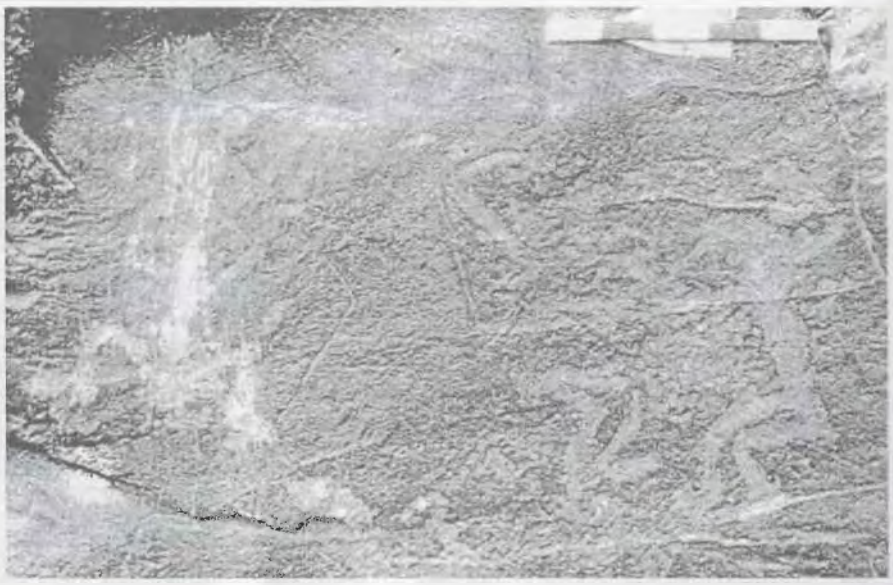


FIG. 39. *Yeshkiolmes*

FIG. 40. *Tangaly*

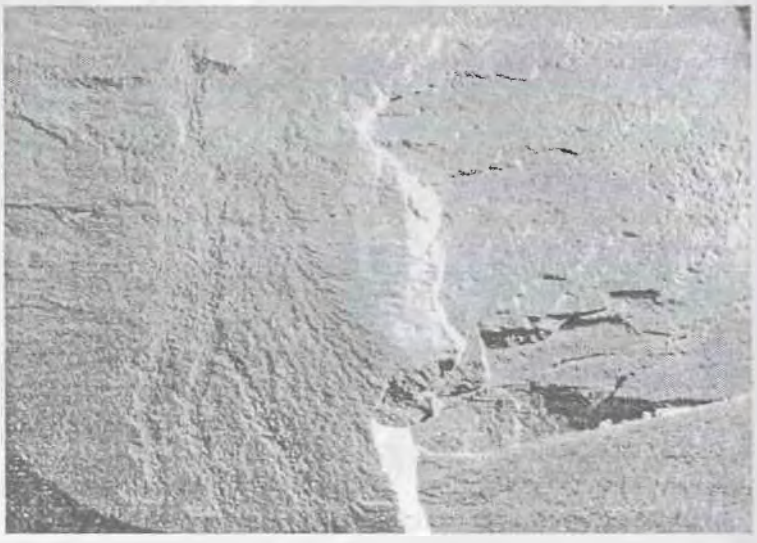
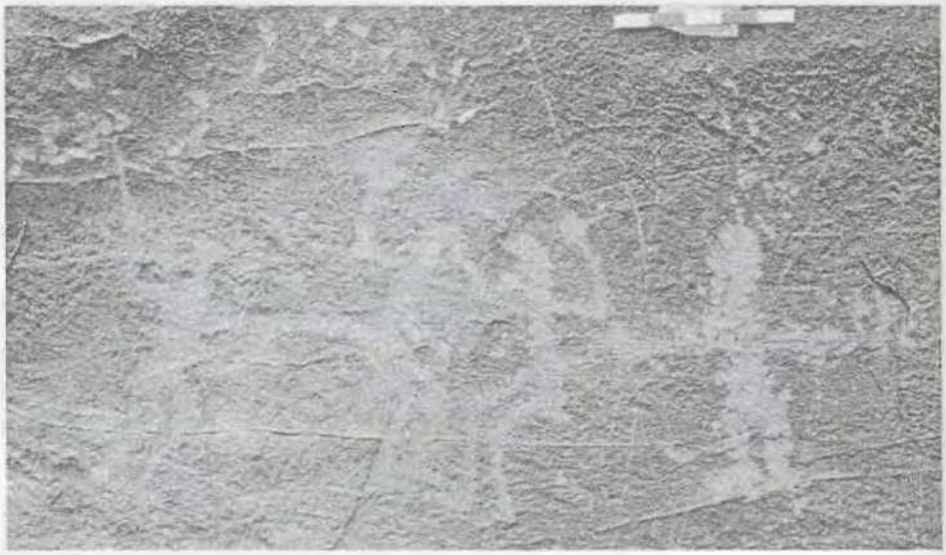


FIG. 41. *Yeshkiolmes*



MEDIEVAL ENGRAVINGS

Engraving on metal, bone, wood, stone, etc. became the dominating direction in the fine art of the nations, who inhabited vast areas of the Great Steppe in Middle Ages. At least, this art noticeably predominated in Eurasian continent, on the area with nomadic state formations, where material traces of their existence were registered. The phenomenon of this art manifests itself especially vividly in the petroglyphical art of the nations with similar economic and cultural types and with the analogous way of life and world outlook. The medieval graphic art preserved some features (in terms of form and subject contents) of the earlier nomadic art, such as extreme expressiveness, etc., but then it developed a very laconic style and graphic method, i.e. a kind of a canon, how to depict animals (Fig. 41-66).

FIG. 42.
Yeshkiolmes

Materials on the fine art produced by nations, who lived in medieval steppe Eurasia, and which are known from multiple published works, vary in topics, in the manner of drawing, and theirmotifs. Among them are rock engravings, bone engravings, works of toreutics, murals, etc. These monuments were produced by nomadic peoples, who got in touch with each other in a varying degree, had different approaches to vital values and exercised different orientation in religious and moral issues. As for settled nations involved in agriculture, they manufactured such works to a lesser degree. Nevertheless, in a number of cases we deal with works of art of a multi-profile character, which present the result of cultural, historical, ethnical and other kinds of synthesis, a symbiosis of various cultures.

We are not going to consider problems relating to the division of medieval petroglyphs and other attracted graphic texts into periods. We'll use commonly accepted or commonly recognized time borders termed "the Middle Ages," but in a number of cases we'll involve materials of late antiquity, also Hunnish-Sarmatian materials, and even Kazakh materials on fine art dating from the 19th through the beginning of the 20th centuries, which are genetically linked to medieval and mythological traditions. Still, we have to point out that the notion "the Middle Ages" and its chronological borders, in regard to cultural-historical phenomena in Eurasia, especially in its extreme points, are differently understood by different researchers. To analyze issues relating to the topic selected we find it quite acceptable to consider so-called Hunnish-Sarmatian period the beginning of the steppe Middle Ages.

FIG. 43.
Bayan Jurek

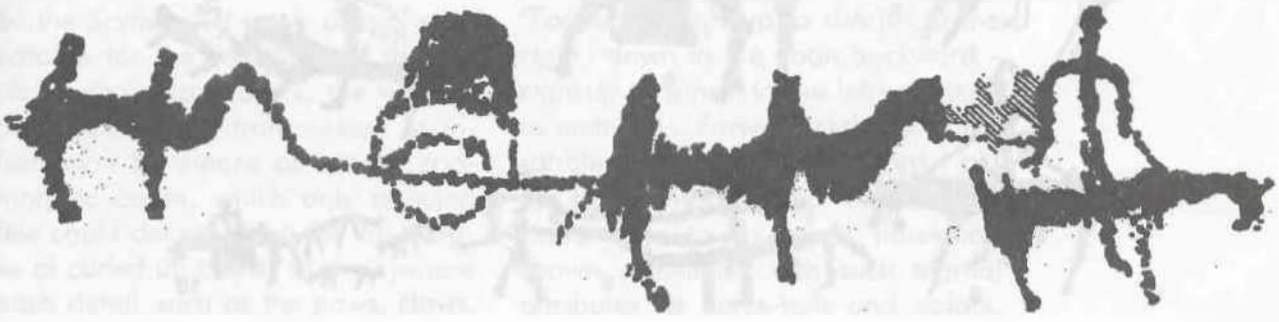


FIG. 44. *Bayan Jurek*

FIG. 45. *Bayan Jurek*

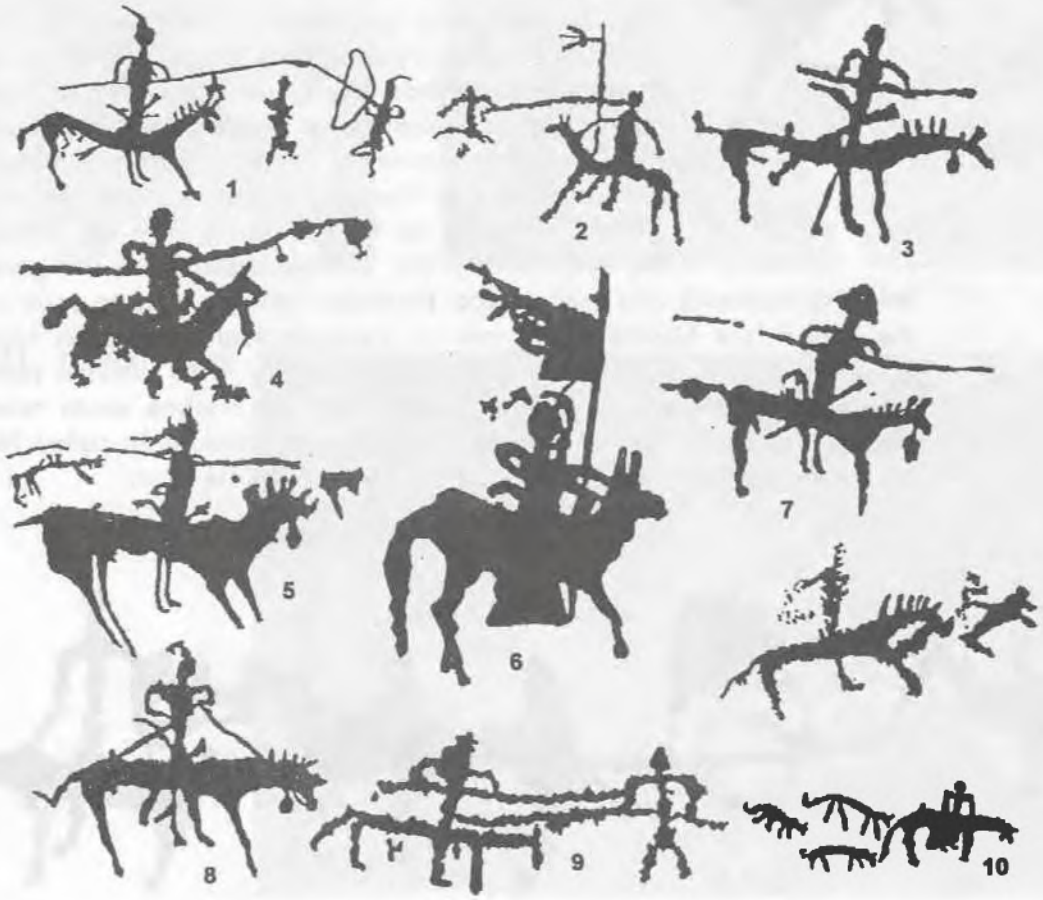
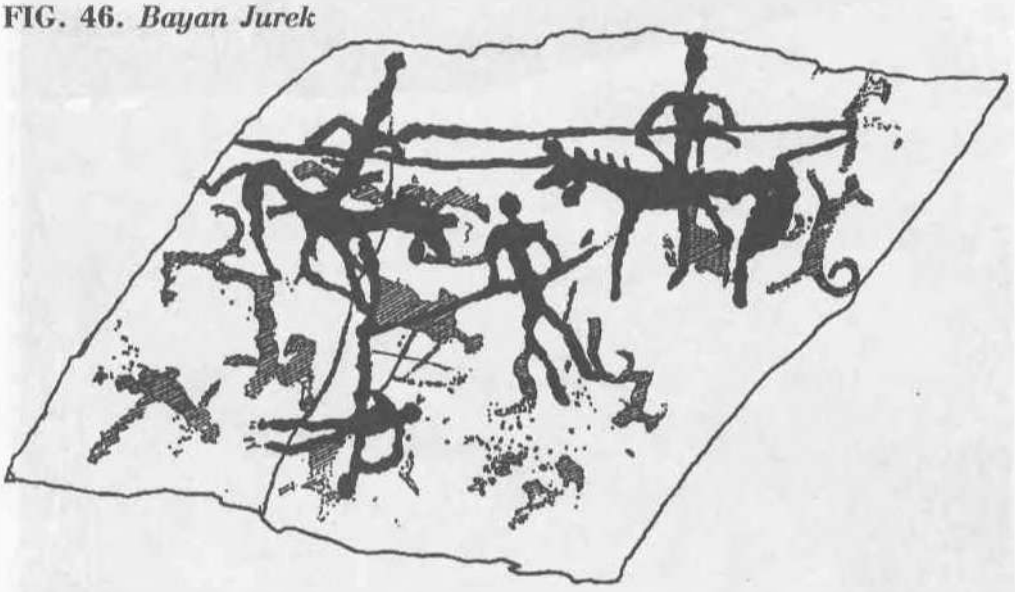


FIG. 46. *Bayan Jurek*



During the closing centuries of the 1st millennium B.C. the images of animals and beasts galloping at full speed, their two or four legs being spread forward and backward, become dominating in the Asian steppe nomads' fine art. The drawings were made in a laconic but rather expressive manner. The contours of the images were carved on rocks and on the surfaces of transportable objects, not very large in size and made of various materials. Probably, this was the time, when the main elements of the medieval animal style were being formed. By this time, the canons of this style had already been established in Tashtyk art, South Siberia. In the west and south-west, monuments synchronous with the ones described above or having a similar style and topics were represented by Parthian graffiti from Doura Europus and Kangyu-type engravings from Orlat in Central Asia.

So, the Scythian-Siberian animal style notable for the selectivity of its motifs; mythological topics; the way of preservation and transmission of information by means of special zoomorphic codes, which only selected few could decode; also for the images of curled up beasts of prey (where each detail, such as the paws, claws, eyes, ears, tail, etc. and their arrangement, were semantically meaningful); for the images of a herbivorous animals with their backs dislocated (though medieval masters sometimes used this manner of drawing as well, for instance, see the drawing of a saddle arch, from Kudyrgeh), etc., so, this style became replaced with a new art understandable to all and extremely mobile, an art which was not alien to mythology, most accurately mirroring the existing socio-political situation in the society, in which everything was in a permanent movement - in the condition of attacking or defensive warfare; the art, whose key figure (but not the only one) became a steppe knight armed to the teeth, galloping on his horse at full speed forward-backward, to the right - to the left (these spatial characteristics had lexical parallels in the texts found near the Orkhon River and dating from the 8th century A.D., which read, "Forward - right up to sunrise, to the right - down to the noon, backward - right up to sunset, to the left - right up to midnight... Forward, right up to the rabble in Kadyrkan; backward, right up to the Iron Gate..." The many-sided epic image of a horseman shown sometimes with such martial attributes as horse-tails and colors,

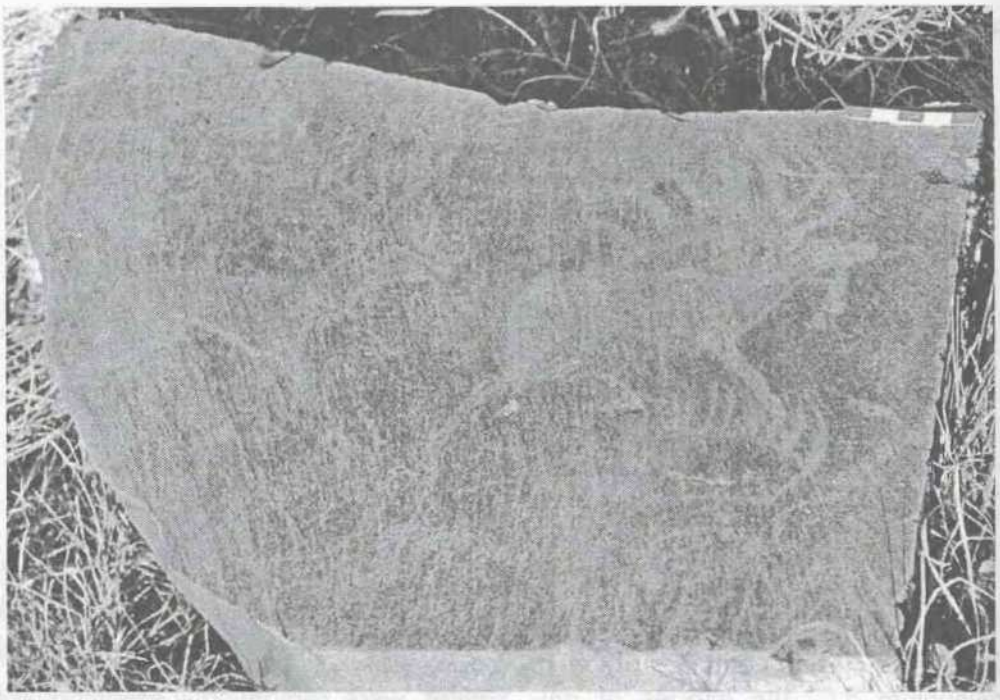


FIG. 47.
Bayan Jurek

personified all propitious phenomena and cataclysms of the-then society and nature. The proclaiming topics of this art, being organized into certain genre compositions, in compliance with the linearly developing narration principle, were mainly devoted to feats of arms and other deeds by Turkic warriors, herculeses, beys, rich knights, and divine chagans, who, according to sources in writing, by the grace of heavens, carried war for the glory of the Turkic nation. "They didn't sleep at night (and) didn't sit (idle) in the daytime for the sake of the Turkic people." As the result of their near and far military marches, the Turkic people became well-clothed, rich, and numerous; while the nations of the four cardinal points were conquered, and "those having heads were forced to bend their necks, those having knees were forced to kneel down." These verbal canonical formulations in early and classical Turkic poetry (KTB, 133-136; MK, 1, 19) can be successfully illustrated with two graphical monuments (Fig. 52, 53). These are scenes drawn on a miniature sculpture of a man found in Kudyrgeh (Gavrilova, 1965) and drawings made on a slab found in the locality called Khul-Asgat, Mongolia (Yevtyukhova, 1952). Much has been written about the monument in Kudyrgeh. Its informational value, however, seems depreciated to some extent because of some controversial points, such as the uncertainty of the origin and the primary function of the sculpture, the vagueness of its belonging to a concrete burial or memorial complex, the impossibility to identify the succession (or simultaneity) of the image of "the person wearing a head-dress" and the scene of "kneeling and bending the neck" on the reverse side, and, finally, because of the uncertainty if any details could have been lost while tracing the drawings. However, in the light of the above-mentioned canonic formulas, it may be quite enough to consider the contents of the scene depicted on the boulder. It seems to us, that depicted here is the climax of a complex and multistage court ceremony of "kneeling and neck bending" with the members of the superior tribal or dynastic aristocracy (the main sign of that is the triplex head-gear); the military (the lower figure seems to wear a helmet and iron-clad armors); and the clerical elite (the supreme shaman (?) in a mask of some con-

quered people (the horse's mane trident haircut is also an index of a high social rank of its owner) staying before the paramount divine person of the winner-state, who is sitting in a oriental manner, wearing ceremonial clothes (with a special meaning) and accompanied by another important person. "Empty" quivers along with cases for carrying big reflexive bows with relaxed bow-strings (similar drawings are known from the paintings found in Afrasiab, Penjakent, East Turkestan, also from engravings in Jaltyrak-Tash) are maybe an indirect evidence of a kind of "capitulation acceptance ceremony."

The slab from Khul-Asgat depicts three "feasting men." One of them, who is shown sitting in the oriental pose, his legs crossed, judging from the shape and decoration of his head-gear, occupies a higher position in the social stratification system of the Old Turkic society, than his "commensals." The latter sitting on their heels, with their heads bent, seem "to listen to his speech" (KTM 1.3). A high status of the persons depicted on the slab is emphasized with the availability of so-called chagan's tamga. The scene is provided with a Runic inscription. One can see a plenty of such examples there. L.R. Kyzlasov, ensuing from S. Maslov's translation of the inscription, made the assumption that here depicted was a certain Tekesh (Kyul-Tudun's younger brother), holding the title of Altun-Tamgan tarkhan, and his two sons, who then died:

The medieval animal style and a specific technique of graffito became quickly disseminated in the culture of not only ancient Turkis but also of other nations, who were in close contacts with the former. These style and technique became a kind of koine understandable and acceptable to all. Nomads' leading motives and themes in their fine art became, in a number of cases, imitation patterns for professional artists, when they created works of a syncretical form and contents or were busy with finishing the interiors of main halls in temples and palaces in oasis towns inhabited by settled population involved in agriculture, especially in places, where the Turkic dynasties' power was unconditionally legitimate. The medieval art, particularly, in the way of depicting human images, promoted individualization, striving to accurately draw all accessories, details, and other iconic signs, i. e. it tried to achieve the canonic condition. On the other hand, the-then artists rather often freely interpreted motifs, which they liked most of all, or expressed them in their own way, and assimilated them to their national style and spirit. Even China, which was under the influence of the buddhistic culture, admired the Turkic warriors' valor, and encouraged Sogdians' move-

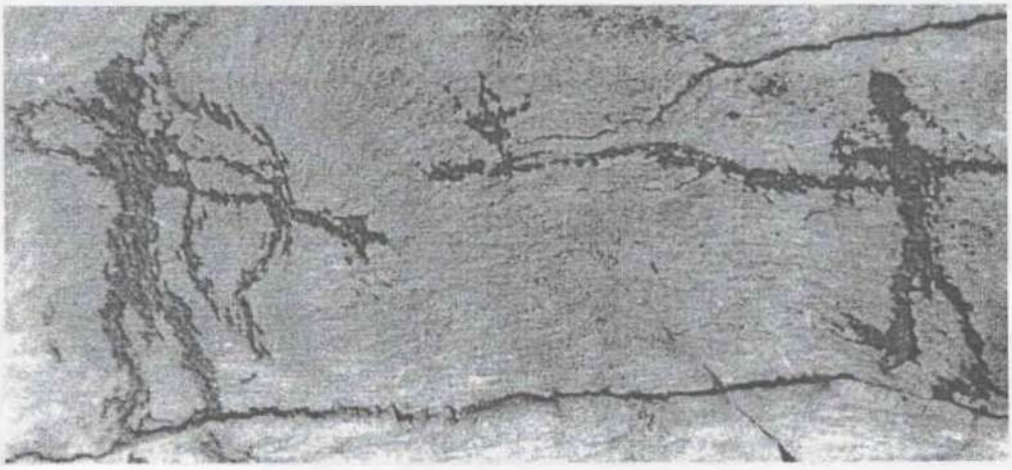


FIG. 48.
Bayan Jurek

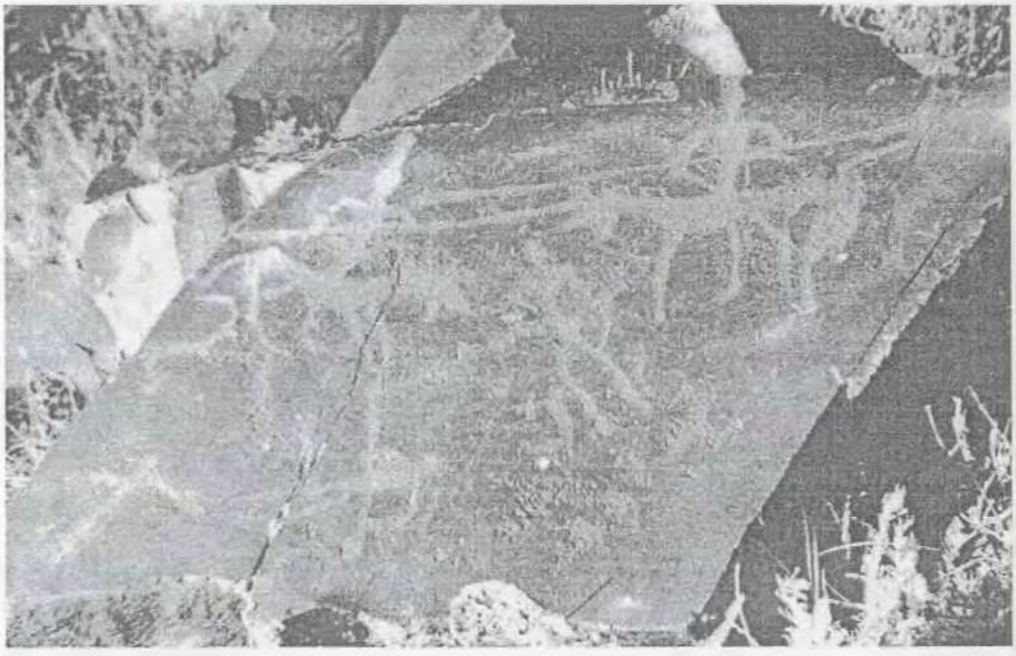


FIG. 49.
Bayan Jurek

ment within the bounds of Tan Empire, couldn't resist this tendency. At that time original mythological, epic, and other Asian steppe motifs, having become saturated with various interpolations genetically different and belonging to different periods of time, penetrated into the European nations' culture; and the luster of the noble riding hero became inherited by the European knightly codex. According to F. Kardini, "one can hear the wind of steppes in the branches of the medieval knighthood tree. The black earth of steppes has reared deep and ancient roots." All this makes search, recognition, and comprehension of the migratory elements not only interesting but instructive as well, as regularities making cultures international are always edifying.

In conclusion of this study, it should be pointed out that though the armed warrior, either on a horse or unmounted, was one of the key figures in social stratification of the

FIG. 50.
Bayan Jurek

medieval nomadic society and an object of glorifying in various genres of epic literature, fine art, etc., still, his military valor was not the only possible plot-making motif in the fine art. There were other images as well, such as domestic and wild animals, numerous scenes of hunt, everyday life themes, household goods, various signs, symbols, polymorphous fantastical creatures, etc. Among others, we'll also mention the drawings of vehicles found in Bayan Jurek (Fig. 43, 44, 50).

CLOTHES AND HAIRCUTS

Medieval engravings, together with murals, sculptures, written and ethnographic materials, present a source of information on the history of the-then costumes. Petroglyphs found in the region we are speaking about, mainly display clothes worn on shoulders, head-gears, and hair-cuts; less often are depicted trousers and footwear (Fig. 53-64).

Nomads' shoulder clothes, which were popular in Central Asia during the Middle Ages, presented a caftan (or an oriental robe), which was tunic-like and unbuttoned (the term "tunic-like" was introduced by B.A. Kuftin. Ensuing from general construction principles of the clothes, V.D. Sychev marks out three large zones of their dissemination. According to him, tunic-like clothes were spread between the south and the north zones, on a vast space stretching from the Pacific coast to the Mediterranean Sea shore (Sychev V.L., 1977).

The caftan (simple, quilted, with lining, etc.) being fit perfectly well for severe steppe conditions, was popular among Asian nomadic people well before the ancient Turkis appeared on the historical arena. Caftans were widely spread among Sakas, Yueh-chih, and Huns; later, as a result of intensive ethno-cultural cooperation, the caftan and its various modifications became accepted by the Chinese, Kushanians, Sogdians, and other Asian nations.

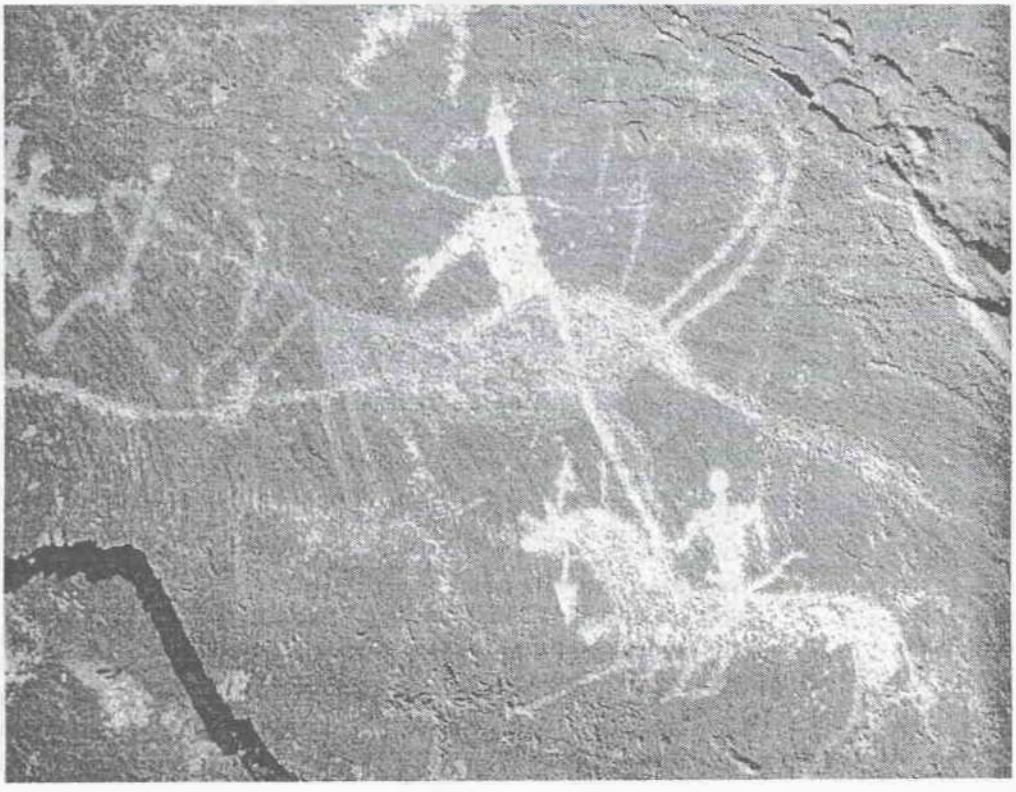


FIG. 51. ***Tamgaly***

FIG. 52.
Khul-Asgat (according to L.A. Yevtyukhova)

A rock drawing found in Jaltyrak Tash, in the area of the Talas upper river, shows an archer wearing a long-skirted caftan closely fitting the upper part of the archer's body and tightly girded with a narrow belt. The caftan breasts are decorated with narrow stripes typical of clothes with deep wrap-over. At the same time, a part of the left skirt is slightly marked with a triangle, which can be taken for a turn-down collar. Costumes of a similar cut were found in Hunnish burial mounds, Noinula. (Rudenko S.I., 1962). Medieval clothes spread in Central Asia rather often included caftans (both man's and woman's) with a one-sided lapel.

Similar caftans are known from paintings in Balalyk Tepeh, Bamiana, and Dilbirjina (Maitdinova G.M., 1986).

Judging from the drawing, the caftan was wrapped over from right to left, which means that the right skirt appeared in the upper position. This manner of wrapping over, an important ethno-cultural indicator, was also depicted at Old-Turkic stone sculptured figures found in the area of the Irtysh upper river, in Semirechye, and in Central Asian paintings and toreutics. L.N. Gumilev (with reference to N.Ya. Bichurin) believes that Turkis, unlike the Chinese, wore a left skirt over a right one. S.I. Vainshtein and M.V. Kryukovthink that N.Ya. Bichurin's translation was erroneous and are inclined to share a reverse point of view (Vainshtein S.I., Kryukov M.V., 1966).

The authors have taken into consideration Lyu Mau Tsai's opinion, that, unlike Turkis, the Chinese used to wrap over to the right. The Chinese researcher presented a drawing of a Turkic sculpture from Ulyasutai, Mongolia, on which plaited hair and left-side wrap-over were shown.

Other researchers also speak of a left-side wrap-over (Dyakonova N.V., 1980; Bentovich I.V., 1980; Lobacheva N.P., 1979). L.R. Kyzlasov, as he analyzed the warriors' clothes on sculptures, wrote that, "usually clothes were of a right-side wrap-over type, but left-side garments were also sometimes found. Probably, there was no strictly accepted kind of cut, and wrapping over to different sides could be used to distinguish summer clothes from winter ones (Kyzlasov L.R., 1969). Recently B.B. Ovchinnikova voiced a similar opinion, though she emphasized the prevalence of a left-side wrap-over fashion (Ovchinnikova B.B., 1990).

Warriors shown on cliffs in Yeshkiolmes (Fig. 55) and personages depicted on a boulder from Kudyrgeh and Kara-Oyuk wore tunic-like caftans (Fig. 53, 56). The caftan of another unmounted archer from Jaltyrak Tash is interesting for its details: it closely fits the upper part of the archer's body and abruptly widens below his waist; it is knee-long, and is tightly girded with a belt (two folds are shown be-

neath the belt); the lower edge of the caftan is trimmed with a stripe decorated with netlike ornament; the sleeves are narrow, with cuffs on the wrests. In N.P. Lobacheva's opinion, the latter garment appeared on Central Asian Turkic clothes under the influence of the Sogdian costume (Lobacheva N.P., 1979). The images of cuffs on caftan sleeves can be also seen on ancient Turkic sculptures found in Semirechye and South Kazakhstan. On some Polovtsian sculptured figures sleeves are underlined with one line, at the level of wrests (Pletneva S.A., 1974). It is not clear whether the caftan was worn open or fastened. The absence of the lapel lines, the availability of specific folds below the belt, and an uninterrupted bottom edge seem to speak in favor of a fastened type of the clothes, but another detail, a decorative stripe, which slips down obliquely from the shoulder, evidences an unbuttoned type. A loop-like line beneath the archer's beard creates the illusion of a wide and highly bent turn-down collar of underclothes, over which the caftan is put on. This kind of collar doesn't seem likely to be known to medieval Central Asian nomads.

One of archers from Jaltyrak Tash wears a caftan of a classical unfastened type, with low V-neck, formed by two-sided lapels (Fig. 57). This caftan is knee-long and girded with a belt at the waist. Another archer standing next to him has a short caftan on, with a belt around. Some researchers consider the availability of two-sided lapels a sign of a special social rank (Darkevitch V.P., 1976).

Depicted baggy trousers are a rare case. We know only one scene, from Bayan Jurek, with some people wearing baggy trousers, who stood round a horsed cart (Fig. 44).

Head-dresses shown on medieval petroglyphs are multifarious. The main type of medieval nomads' head-gears – a peaked kulakh - goes back to very ancient models used by Sakas. Scythians and then Tashtykians, Huns, and others also wore head-gears of this type. Some pictures from Chinese sources show Huns with peaked hats on. Ammian Martsellin,as he described the Huns' appearance and their way of life, mentioned them wearing wry hats (Martsellin Ammian, 1908). We can see a similar head-gear on a personage of some religious scene depicted on a rock in Jaltyrak Tash (Fig. 58, 2). The second personage (a woman?) wears a head-gear, which has no direct analogies with head-dresses in earlier medieval monuments. We can only point out one depicted head-gear with a diamond-shaped brim and a rounded upper part,found in east Turkestan (Fig. 58, 3). It is quite possible, that in our case we deal with a hat alike shown foreshortened. The

FIG. 53. ***The Altai. Kudyrge (according to A.A. Gavrilova)***

FIG. 54.
Jaltyrak-Tash.
Kazakhstan

objects, with which the members of the scene deal, such as teeth and utensils bearing a slight resemblance of Huns' cauldrons with handles; a head-gear corresponding to descriptions given in written sources and having some graphic parallels; the images of polymorphous fantastic creatures, such as dragons and winged dog-(wolf-)dragons (or senmurvs), that is motifs connected mainly with a range of religious-mythological ideas, which had penetrated into Semirechye and north Central Asia probably with Huns' expansion, – all these objects allow us to refer the drawings under consideration approximately to a period not later than mid 1st millennium A.D. and presumably consider them to be of Hunnish origin (though their belonging to a later period is also possible).

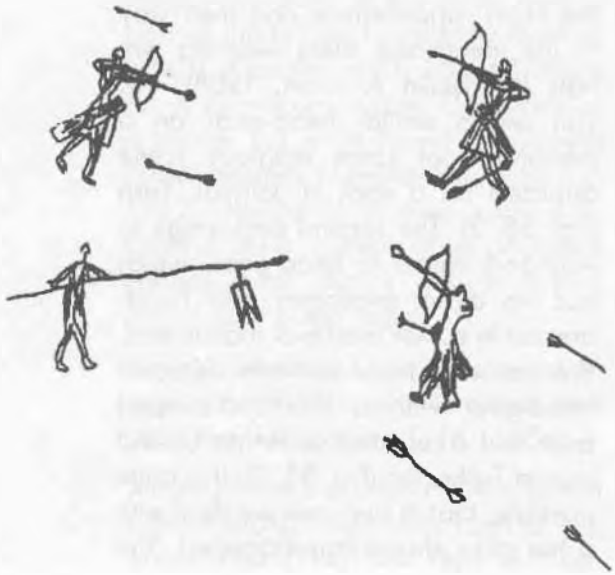


FIG. 55.
Yeshkiolmes

An ancient Turkic mounted standard bearer and unmounted archers shown in a battle scene found in Jaltyrak Tash, also wore peaked hats (Fig. 59). Similar hats are depicted on many Tashtykian warriors (Fig. 60) from south Siberia. G.M. Maitdinova believes that putou, a Chinese head-gear, has originated from the pointed nomadic bashlyk (hood). The Oguz also wore pointed head-dresses (Agajanov S.T., 1971). The images of high and peaked headgears and their modifications are found on Old Turkic sculptures in Mongolia, Tuva, East Kazakhstan, and Semirechye, also in Central Asian paintings and sculptures.

In O.A. Sukhareva's opinion, Central Asian dervishes' spherocon headgears, kulokhs, whose form resembles that of the hats under consideration, together with their clothes, go back to shaman's ancient ritual robes, which, in their turn, had much in common with Altai Turkic shaman's robes. (Sukhareva O.A., 1954). A head-gear of bashlyk-type is depicted on a rock in Jaltyrak Tash (Fig. 54, 1). Old Turkic bashlyks closely enveloping the head are genetically connected with the Hunnish ones, similar to those found in Noinula burial grounds. During later historical periods they were very popular with many Turkic and Mongolian nations: Kazakhs called them kulyapara, Tuvinians called them budzelgeh, and Mongols, yuban, etc.

Small rounded hats with stripes resemble tyubeteika, a skull-cap (other names are kepesh and takia). The etymology of the word tyubeteika proposed by L. Budogov seems correct: tubeh, tupeh (top, hill), and tubetai, tupi, which have the meaning of "a hat worn on the top of the head" (Sukhareva O.A., 1954). Such hats on

FIG. 56.
Kara-Oyuk. The Altai (according to Ye.A. Okladnikova, 1988)

the heads of unmounted hunters with bows, depicted on the rock in Jaltyrak Tash (Fig. 57), are analogous with the head-dresses on men embodied in Old Turkic sculptured figures and in ethnography.

A net shown on the head of a personage from Jaltyrak Tash petroglyphs (Fig. 61, 1), by analogy with archaeological finds from Mug mountain, can be regarded as a wicker head-gear. Here, similar to head-gears from Mug mountain, the lower part of the "net" is divided into two and fells on the shoulders. The purpose of the head-gear is not clear enough: most probably "the net" served as a cover for hair flowing on the nape of the neck. Maybe, it was a specific hairdo, when a part of the hair was bunched up in a bun, and the other part remained loose. A similar hairdo is more vividly shown (without a net) on a person standing nearby (on the same plane) and shown strictly half-face, with a protruding bosom and buttocks (Fig. 61, 3). It seems, this type of hairdo was not very popular with the ancient Turkis. Information from Beishi, Suishu, and Tanshu narrates (with some discrepancy in details) that the wife of owner Kan descending from the Kangyu House branch was a daughter of Da Du, a Tukyue khan, and that she wore her hair in a bun and covered her head with a black shawl with golden flowers (Bichurin N.Ya., 1950). It is quite possible that women from the Turkic aristocracy could (under the influence of foreign ethnic impulses or in imitation) wear their hair in a bun on the crown of the head and falling onto the nape of the neck. At the same time, we cannot exclude that

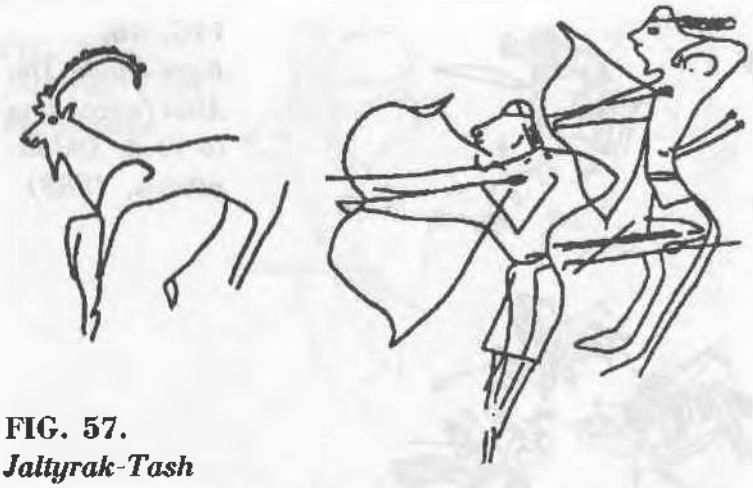


FIG. 57.
Jaltyrak-Tash

the depicted female personage was not ethnic Turki. In the 7th and 8th centuries, during the period of Turkic rule in Central Asia in general, and in Sogdiana and Semirechye, in particular, interethnic marriages, probably because of political expectations and by other reasons, were a widespread phenomena, which fact was recorded in a Sogdian document found in Mug mountain. According to V.A. Livshits, the Mug marriage contract, which attested to the marriage between noble Turki Ut-Tegin closely connected with Devashtich's Court and Dugdgonchei, a Sogdian girl, who was under the wardship of Chir, a Navaket governor, is "the evidence of close links between Sogdian settlements in Semirechye and Sagdiana in Samarkand. These links were broken neither by violent events, which occurred in late 7th to early 8th centuries, nor by administrative subjecting of Sogdians in Semirechye to East Turkic chagans" (Sogdian documents..., 1962). As for the vogue to wear one's hair in a bun on the crown of the head, probably, it is to be connected (in a wide historical and cultural aspect) with such part of the population, who practiced Buddhism.

Turkis in Semirechye suffered a strong buddhistic influence, especially from Sogdian buddhistic colonists, and in a less degree – from Chinese missionaries. Nevertheless, they managed to preserve their customs, clothes, haircuts, etc. This was a Chinese habit - to wear one's hair in a bun on the crown of the head (Vainshtein S.I., Kryukov M.V., 1966): in particular, bodhisattvas were shown namely with such hairdos.

Many sculptured terracotta heads in the Hermitage collection brought from Khotan Oasis are with similar buns on the tops of their heads. Several horseman statuettes from east Turkestan are also known to wear similar

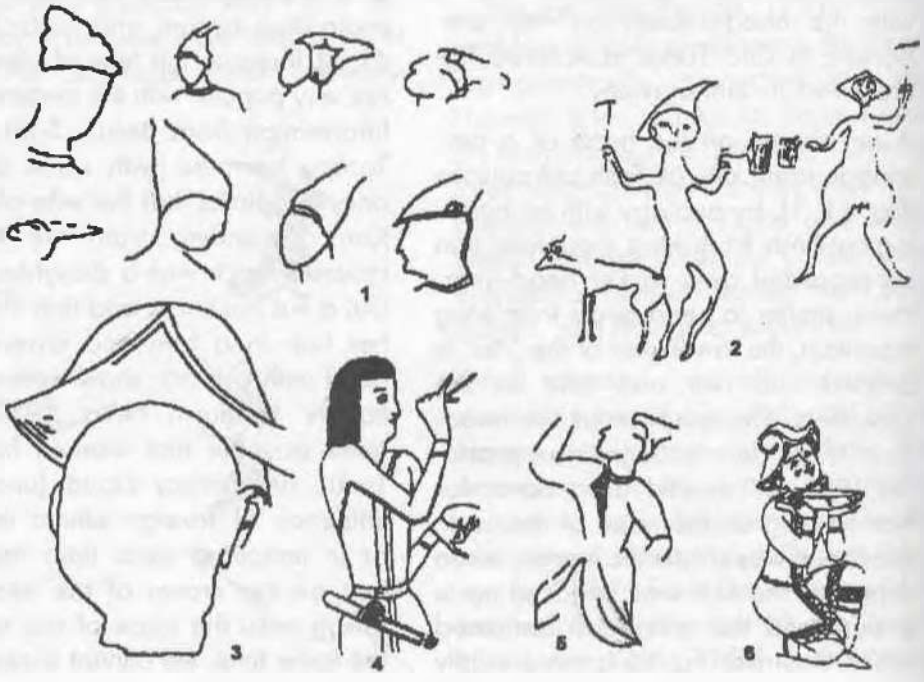


FIG. 58.
Personages wearing head-dresses:
1 – paintings found in Penjikent (I.B.Bentovich, 1980);
2 – petroglyphs from Jaltyrak-Tash site;
3, 4, 6 – paintings from Eastern Turkestan (Lekok, 1925);
5 – a painting from Central Asia

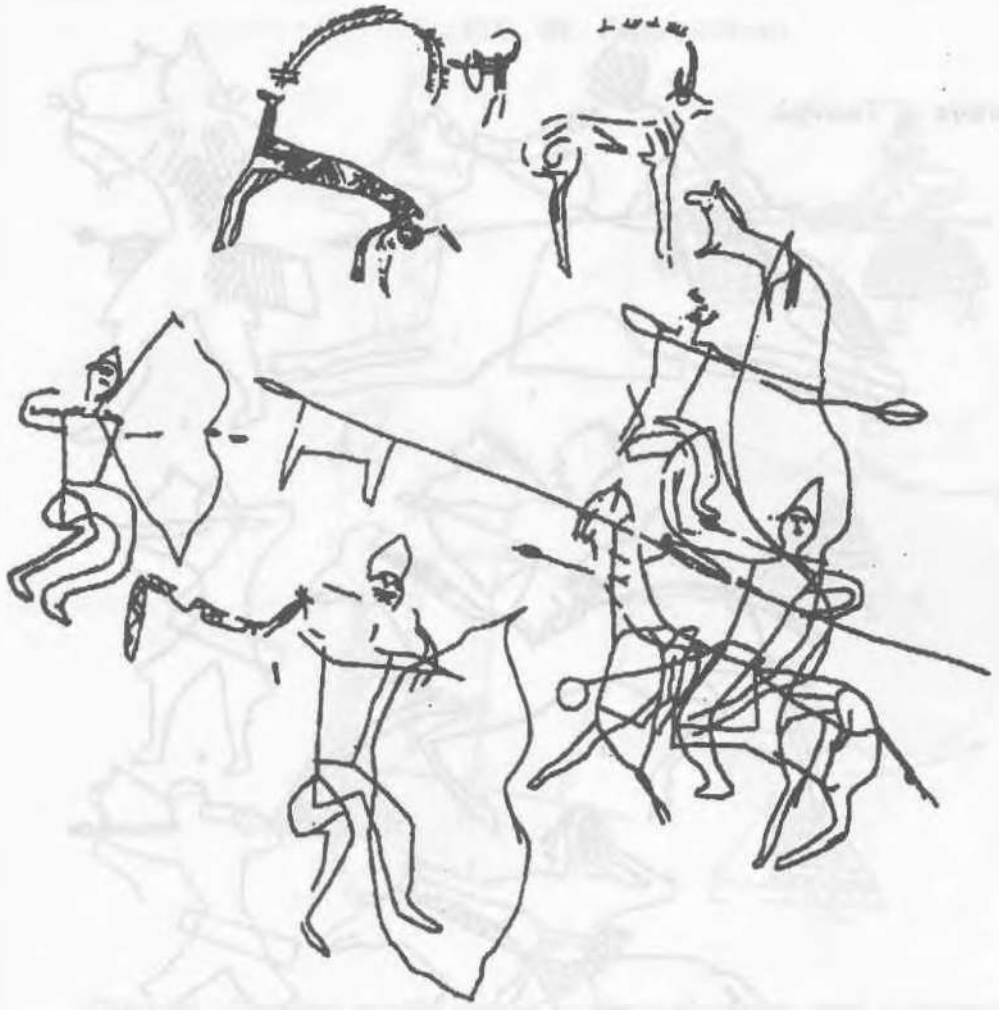
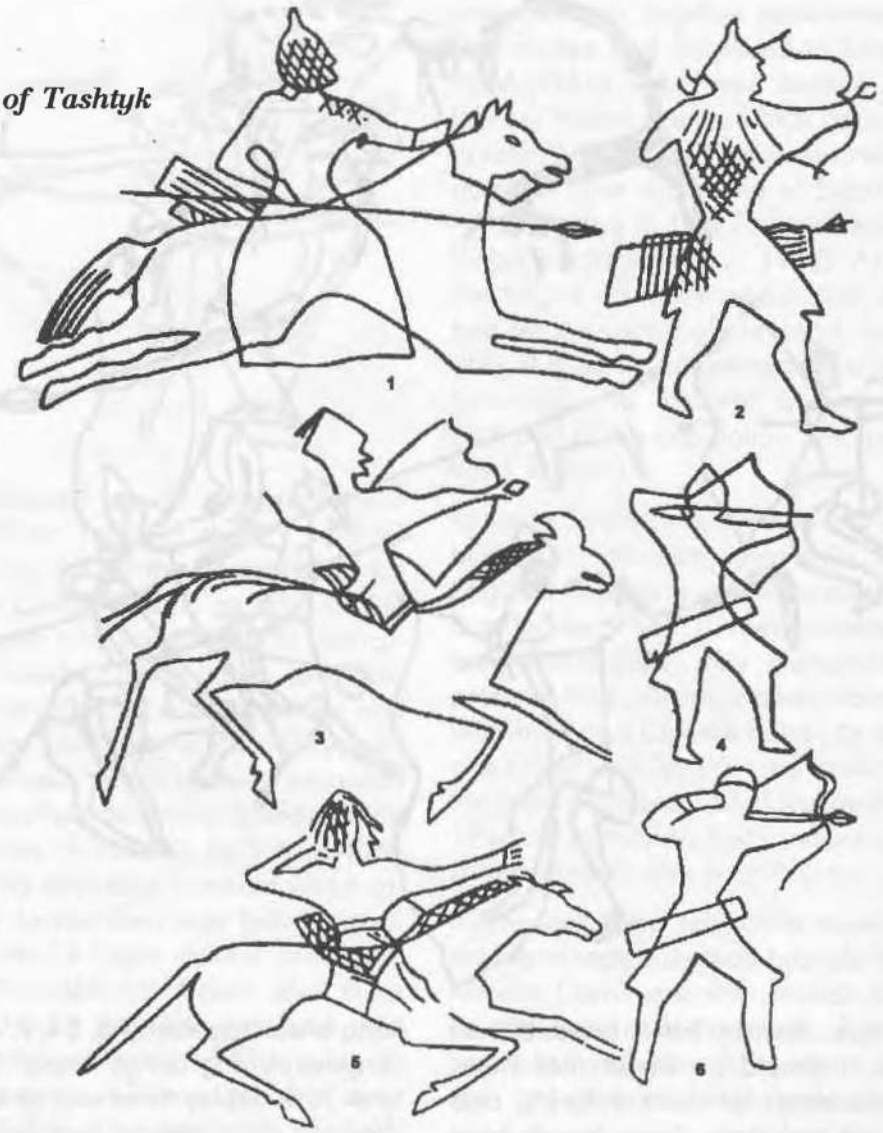


FIG. 59.
A scene of a single combat, a rock drawing found in Jaltyrak-Tash

hairdos. Ancient Turkis braided their hair. It should be noted that Huns, predecessors of ancient Turkis, also plaited their hair. Some braids have been found in a Hunnish burial ground, in Noinula, in Tashtykian crypts (before the 3rd and the 4th centuries A.D.). The fact that Turkis wore braids was confirmed with written sources, numerous stone sculptured figures, and murals in Central Asia. A series of rock engravings in south Siberia display mounted and unmounted warriors with hairdos in the form of braids (Kyzlasov I.L., 1990).

The images of men wearing braids were found in the Altai (Fig. 56) and in east Semirechye. There are many of them in the Talas upper river as well. In a scene of hunt found in the Talas upper river, braids are shown fly-away; and in one case, there is a sketchy image outlining special decorations for fixing braids together (Fig. 54, 2, 4; 57). In general, engravings found in Jaltyrak Tash display three and six braids. Wearing plaits was not pure following the vogue – it was the index of one's social status, age, and rank in the military and political hierarchy; and presented a part of a special sign system. Evidently, the number of plaits was also regulated. Thus, Turkis from Samarkand tsar Varkhuman's retinue shown on the west wall of Afrasiab house, wore three to five plaits; the number of braids depicted on stone sculptured figures found in Semirechye, according to information provided by Ya.A. Sher, varied from six to eight, put prevailing were seven braids (Sher Ya.A., 1966). In the 7th century the members of Magyar and Turko-Bulgarian aristocracy wore three braids, while the ordinary members of the society had their scalps closely cropped (Yukhas Peter, 1985). Agafi, an author, who lived in the 6th

FIG. 60.
South Siberia.
The images of warriors of Tashtyk



century A.D., said that Turkis and Avars wore loose or braided hair; that the members of the Frank royal family wore specific hairdos, a symbol of their superior prerogative; and their subjects had their hair cut in a circle (Agafi, 1953).

Depicted moustaches and beards were a rare case. There is only one rock drawing found in Jaltyrak Tash and showing an unmounted archer half-face, with a beard and slightly outlined moustaches (Fig. 54, 4). Though the anthropological type of this person is not clear, the way how his lips and beard were shown, evokes some association with the image of a man's head drawn on a silver tankard from Afanasyevski treasure dating to the 7th or 8th centuries. Researchers associate this treasure with eastern regions in Central Asia, in particular, with Semirechye. At that time local masters (of Sogdian and Turkic origin) created works of art there with syncretic contents, which was stipulated by interaction of different cultural traditions (nomadic and settled-agricultural ones) in this region, and caused by functioning of large commercial, handicraft, and cultural centers, which located at the focal points of the transcontinental caravan road connecting the Occident and the Orient. Some petroglyphs show belts, but the generalization of the images and lack of any garniture elements make it impossible to use them as a source equivalent to the images on the sculptured figures.

FIG. 61. *Jaltyrak-Tash*

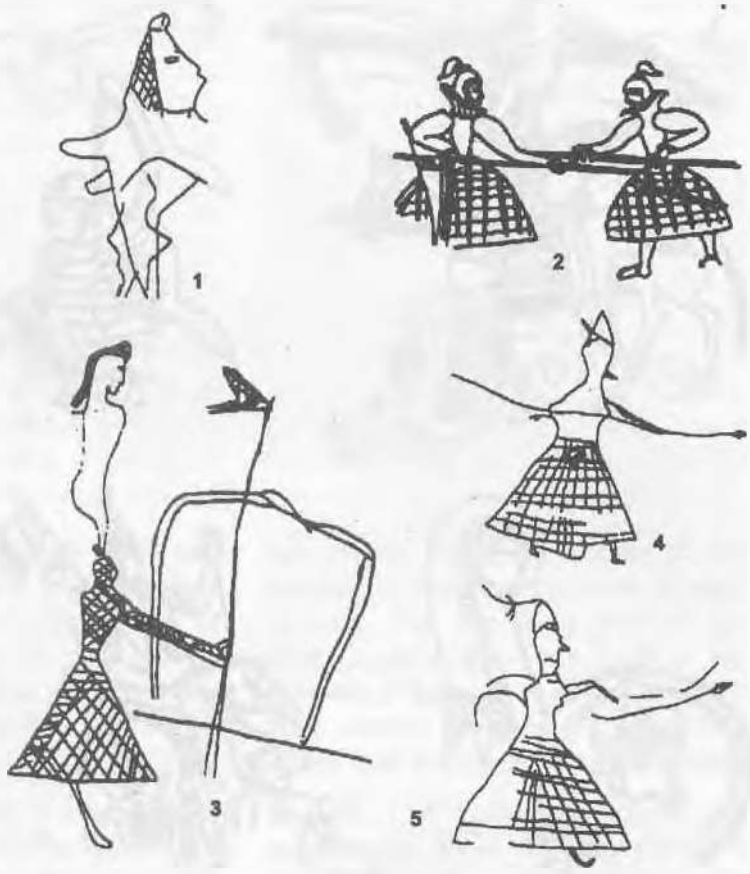


FIG. 62. *Parthian graffiti found in Dura-Europos, and a horseman of Orlat*

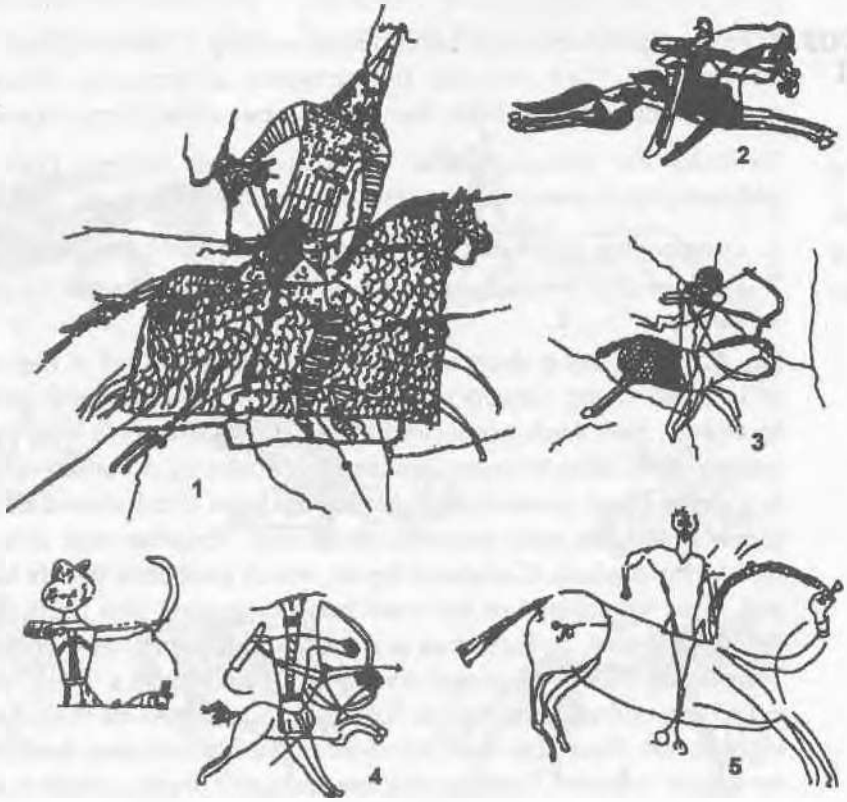


FIG. 63. *The images of standards. Orlat, Eastern Turkmenistan*

POLYMORPHOUS PERSONAGES

So-called polymorphous personages occupy a certain place among medieval petroglyphs. We'll consider this category of drawings taking as an example graffiti from Jaltyrak Tash, the Talas upper river, Kyrgyzstan (Fig. 64, 65).

To make the analysis easier, we'll divide all Jaltyrak Tash graffiti depicting polymorphous personages into two conditional groups, including:

1. Dragon-like creatures with snake-like parts of the body;
2. Dog-/wolf-like creatures and similar to them beasts of prey from the cat family.

Fig. 65,2 depicts a dragon with an open mouth and a big round eye, the tip of its nose being curved upward. There are two parallel vertical horns on its forehead, their ends are turned forward. The dragon's long neck, typical of the iconography of such creatures and accepted by a number of artistic traditions, is sharply lifted upward from its base. There is a forward curl attached to the place where the neck turns into the head. Together with one of the horns, the curl forms a whole C-shaped figure, which probably stands for the mane or an ear. Four semicircles at the neck base designate skin folds. The dragon has a rounded breast, its forepaws are stretched forward, its feet are of a beast type. There are forward-curved wings on the dragon's back consisting of four adjoining curl-shaped figures following each other as their size increases, from right to left. Four spur-like juts most probably imitating feathers adjoin the last curl from outside. Then comes the dragon's trunk, which is twisted two times

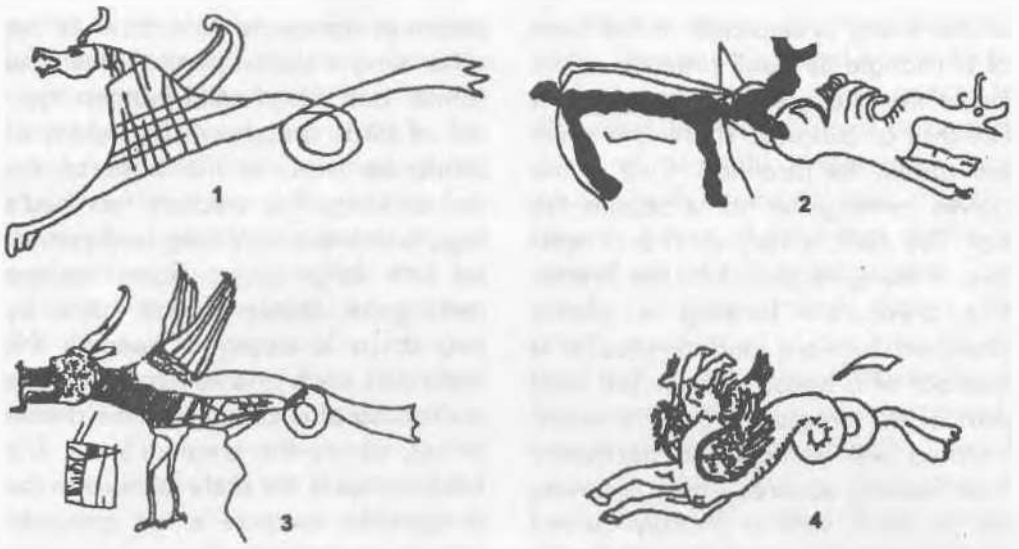


FIG. 64. ***Jaltyrak-Tash, Afrasiab***

and then turns into a long snake tail, whose tip, in the form of a thin line, hangs down abruptly. The image of the dragon drawn in the graffito manner is overlapped with the engraved image of an ibex.

Fig. 65, 3. The creature's head resembles that of both a bear and a mouse, its somewhat pointed nose ends in a little circle. Its mouth is open. No tongue or teeth are shown, like in the previous case. Its eye is too big and round, half of it exceeds the line of the forehead. An oval ear adjoins the eye on an angle. A foreleg of the creature is stretched forward. Its neck is short. The remaining part of the body is depicted in the form of the tongues of flame so that we can catch their remote likeness with a mane, wings and a snake-like twisted trunk.

Fig. 64, 1. A fantastic creature with an oblong head. The forehead is contoured with a straight line. The bridge of the nose is strongly expressed, the creature's teeth are bared. Especially emphasized are two front fangs. The teeth are sharp. The eye

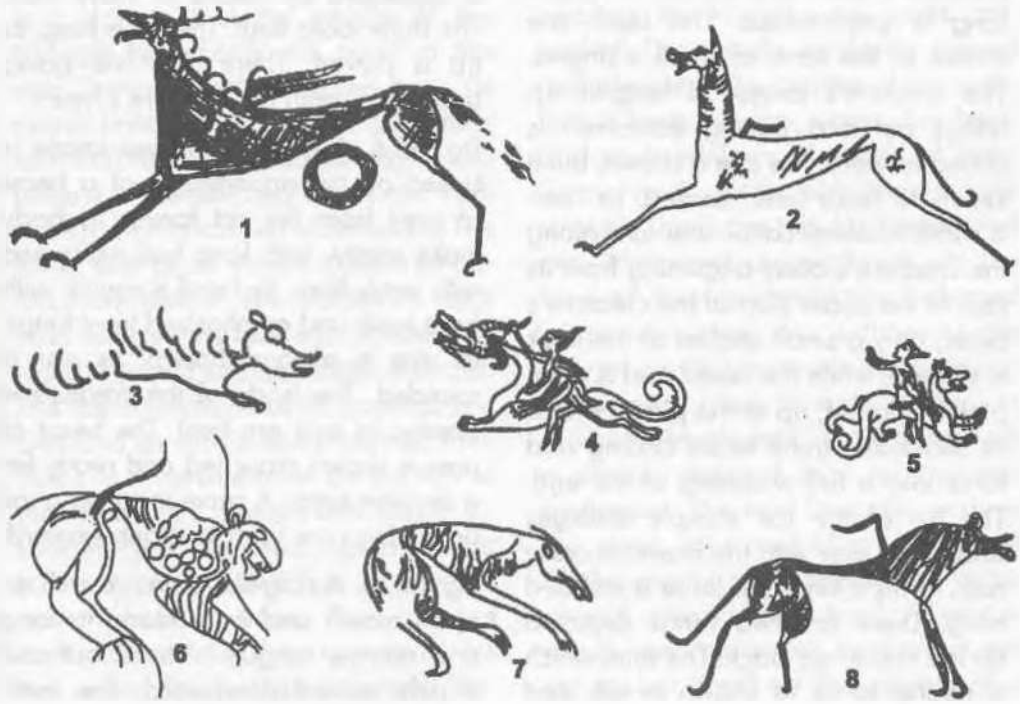


FIG. 65. ***Jaltyrak-Tash, Kargaly (Semirechye)***

of the being is depicted in the form of a triangle, its pupil presents a dot inside the triangle. The lower jaw is like that of a horse. There is a small ear above the forehead. One of the curves forming the horns adjoins the ear. The neck is very short and massive. It abruptly turns into the breast. The creature's foreleg is shown stretched forward and finishes in a forefoot of a beast of prey. The front part of the creature's body is cross-hatched with vertical and horizontal lines forming squares. There is a wing on its back with a sharply curved end. The rear part of the creature's body gets narrow, then becomes twisted, and turns into a snake body, but the difference is that its end enlarges again and finishes in three sharp juts, probably, imitating a fish fin or webbed wings-feet.

Fig. 64, 3. A dragon-like creature with a massive head provided with two horns ending in tips curved forward. An oval ear adjoins the lower part of the horns, from the rear. The creature's muzzle is separated from its head and is somewhat protruded and hatched with thin lines. The tip of its nose is sharply curved upward. The creature's teeth are bared, its upper fang is emphasized. The teeth are shown in the form of small triangles. The creature's tongue is long, its tip hangs out and getting narrower, is aimed forward. No eye is shown, but it seems to have been erased. Its neck is short. A demarcation line runs along the creature's body beginning from its jaw. In the upper part of the creature's body, only a small section of the neck is stroked, while the lower part is completely shaded, up to the place, where its snake-like trunk twists circling and turns into a tail widening at the end. The tip of the tail sharply enlarges and, like it was with the previous creature, forms a kind of a fin or a webbed wing. There are two wings depicted on the creature's back. The one, which is nearer to us, is shown in full, and becomes narrow to its end; while the other wing is shown partly, behind the former one. Short solid feathers typical of birds are shown by means of semicircle lines, at the base of the nearer wing. The creature has bird's legs, which are very long and provided with large claws. Some unclear rectangular object divided inside by two strips is depicted beneath the creature's neck and its head. There is a drawing of a caftan with the details of cut, above the creature's tail. The latter image is not likely to concern the dragon-like creature either compositionally or semantically.

The second group of the images of fantastic creatures shows imaginary creatures based on dog-, wolf-, and cat-like beasts of prey (not snakes, like it was in the former case) provided with the parts of other animals' bodies and some symbols.

Fig. 65, 7. A dog-like creature with a dropped horse-like head, its upper lip hanging down. Its eye is oval, its neck is short. The fantastic being is shown when taking a leap – its foreleg is stretched forward, its hind leg is bent in the knee-joint. Its claws and its hair under the neck are also depicted. The body hair is expressed by means of wavy lines. The trunk looks lean. The tail is long, its tip is curved. There is a line going backward, from the creature's head.

Fig. 65,6. A creature, whose image is based on the appearance of a beast of prey from the cat family. Its body looks spotty, with long hair expressed with wavy lines. Its head is round, with bare teeth and emphasized front fangs. Its eye is almond-shaped, its ear is rounded. The body of the creature is sinewy, its legs are bent. The beast of prey is shown crouched and ready for a decisive jump. A curve imitating a tail or a wing runs from its croup upward.

Fig. 65, 8. A dog-like creature with an open mouth and bare teeth. Its long and narrow tongue is thrust out and slightly curved downward. The teeth

on the upper jaw are small and shown by means of short thin lines. Emphasized is one lower fang drawn in the form of an acute-angled triangle. The creature's head looks pointed at the top, on which a round ear is fixed. The creature's neck is too massive: its upper part is shown arch-like, and an oblique line stands for its lower part. The creature's whole body, including its head, torso, legs, and tail, is stroked with oblique lines and cross-hatched. The body looks very lean with a too narrow waist, while the muscles of the hind legs are shown voluminous and expressed with roundish lines. A narrow Γ-shaped and shaded figure on the creature's back probably stands for a wing. The being has a long tail with its tip curved upward. The forelegs are absolutely straight without any curves for joints, while the hind legs are depicted with curves. The tips of the legs are turned backward, and one can see claws on one of them.

Fig. 65, 1. A fantastic polymorphous being with a graceful lean trunk. Its head is oblong. Its forehead with a strongly shaped frontal bone is drawn with a straight line. Above the frontal bone is an eye in the form of a triangle with an angle on top. There is a dot right in the middle of the triangle to indicate the pupil of the eye. The creature's teeth are bare. Its upper teeth are expressed by means of small acute-angled triangles. Its tongue is narrow and thrust out, with the tip slightly curved downward. The lower part of its labium looks triangular, from below. The creature's neck rises sharply; its forelegs, narrow and without joints, are stretched forward. The lower sections of its forelegs are depicted as bird's sharp-clawed feet. There is a cervine horn on the top of the creature's head, with three C-shaped juts directed upward and forward. A pointed ear is placed near the horn base. Four shaded curls directed to the right stand for the nape. Two wings originally designed are shown on the creature's back. They are depicted in the form of triangles, whose inner space is also filled in with triangles arranged in seven or eight rows, which are divided with horizontal lines. The triangular bases of the wings adjoin a vertical stripe with a curved end. The creature's torso sharply tapers, its croup is rounded. Only one of its hind legs is shown in silhouette, and the curve of its joint is emphasized. The leg finishes in strongly curved claws of a bird of prey. The creature has a bushy tail, which looks consisting of several buns tied together. Its body (the mane, the back, a part of the hind leg, and the stomach) is contoured with an additional binary narrow line vertically stroked. A circle consisting of spiral lines is drawn below the stomach of the being.

Fig. 65, 2. A fantastic creature looking in general like a dog. Its small and graceful head crowns a sharply lifted long neck. Its mouth is open, and only one fang in the middle of the lower jaw is emphasized. The creature's eye, as it was in the previous case, is expressed by means of a triangle with an angle on top and a dot in the center. Its forehead is retreating, the frontal bone looks protruded. The muzzle is slightly curved and elevated. The foreleg of the creature is long, narrow, somewhat bent, and ends in claws of a bird of prey. Some neck folds are shown with strokes. There are two M-shaped and one H-shaped signs drawn at the level of its shoulder-blade. Γ-shaped wings depicted as rudiments are placed on the creature's back, nearer to the neck base. Its belly is lean, its croup looks elegant, its hind leg with a slightly outlined joint is stretched backward. The hind foot also ends in the claws of a bird of prey. The tail of the creature is narrow, with a tip curved upward like a hook. One can see a very interesting symbol on the croup, but it will be the subject of a

further talk. There are several oblique strokes on the creature's torso.

One more unique image of a zooanthropomorphous being, whose upper part of the body looks human, while the lower one and the neck seem to belong to a cloven-hoofed animal, can also be referred to imaginary creatures of polymorphous type. The availability of hoofs, the absence of a tail, the shape of the torso, thin legs, and not too wide croup allow us to suppose that the lower, zoomorphic part of the creature is that of a deer. The anthropomorphous part of the being presents a man shown half-face, with moustaches and loose hair falling on his back. In his hands he holds a bow with a strained bow-string and a strictly drawn handle. The horns of the bow are long and straight. The long horns of the bow in combination with the handle (decorated with bone cover plates) make it possible to determine the lower time border of this creature's origin – not earlier than the Hunnish-Sarmatian period.

This time, we'll not go beyond a general characteristic of this series of engravings, and leave their detailed analysis for future. At the same time, we cannot help but note that some researchers have paid attention to some scenes on the engravings found in Jaltyrak Tash. For example, L.R. Kyzlasov perceives the images of the Manichee Satan in some of them (Kyzlasov L.R., 2000).

KAZAKH ETHNOGRAPHIC DRAWINGS

In 1990 through 2000 I together with J. Jetibayev were studying Kazakh monumental art works found in the north-east Caspian coastal area, such as rock and wall graffiti and paintings dating back to the 14th through 20th centuries, along with zooanthropomorphous sculptured figures, koitases and kulpytases, which are interrelated with the former and present the essential part of burial and memorial constructions. These monuments are of interest for studying issues relating to culture continuity, traditions, innovations, etc.

Rock drawings produced by the Kazakhs inhabiting the Ustyurt plateau and Mankystau were found in Akmai and Airakty cretaceous mountains, and in the caves on Jygylgan cape located on the north-east coast of the Caspian Sea. The key image of these rock art works is a horseman with such martial attributes and realties as, primarily, his horse engraved extremely thoroughly and with love; then the martial harness of the horse (yer-turman, yer-tokym), including a saddle (yer) with high arches (more often, with a curved front arch - yerdin kasy - made with the employment of a zoomorphic motif); a saddle-cloth (tuyrlyk) and saddle skirts; saddle-bags (korjyn); a bridle (jugen) with reins (tizgin); a halter (shylbyr) with triangular amulet (tumar) and fringe (shashak); a breastplate, and a crupper (omildirik and kuiyskan); also arms for near and distant fight and the rider's martial outfit, including a saber (kylysh) in sheath (kynab) fixed to the waist-belt; a dagger (kanzhar); a battle-ax (aibalta) with various forms of its head; a spear (naiza) sometimes with diamond-shaped heads on both ends of the shaft, loops, horse-tails; a cudgel (shokpar); a pole (soiyl); a bow (sadak); arrows (jebe); a matchlock gun on a bipod (shiti myltyk) – since the 16th or 17th centuries; a quiver (koramsa); a powder-flask (okshantai); a whip (kamshy); a pike (sungi), etc. There are no pictures of defensive armors (kireuke, beren, sauyt), and the warriors are seldom shown

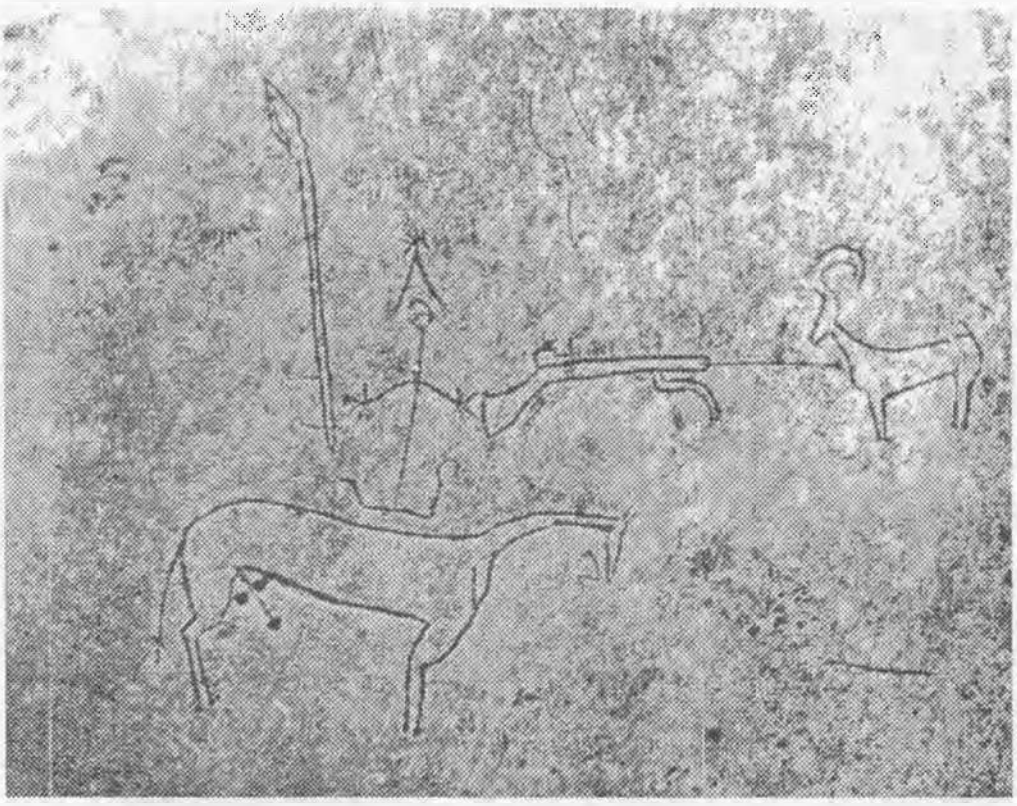


FIG. 66.
Mankystau.
A scene of hunt

wearing peaked head-gears (kulakshyn, malakhai, tymak) or spherocon helmets (duylga) decorated with plume. The riders are depicted in action, as the participants of duels or mass battle scenes, also in scenes of hunt for ibexes, argali, etc. (Fig. 66-80).

The engravings made on the walls of sagana-tams (cupola-free mausoleums) and domical mausoleums (mazars) are most numerous and multifarious in terms of both their types and subject contents. The burden of the mural topics is feats performed by batyrs, mounted horsemen "armed to teeth." As for the martial attributes depicted, all their elements are drawn very thoroughly. People, in contrast, are shown featureless, in a very conditional manner: their bodies are expressed by means of simple lines, rectangles, or are sometimes depicted as images similar to Kazakh stylized anthropomorphous sculptured figures; their feet are shown as hypertrophied images of top-boots (saptama yetik) on high heels, with widened bootlegs and felt stockings (baipak).

The images of various animals (horses, camels, ibexes, argali, birds, beasts of prey, etc.) are amalgamated into semantic compositions and present scenes of hunt, drawings of nomadic roaming, nomadic caravan processions, copulation, wolves' attack on a herd, etc., that is pictures mirroring

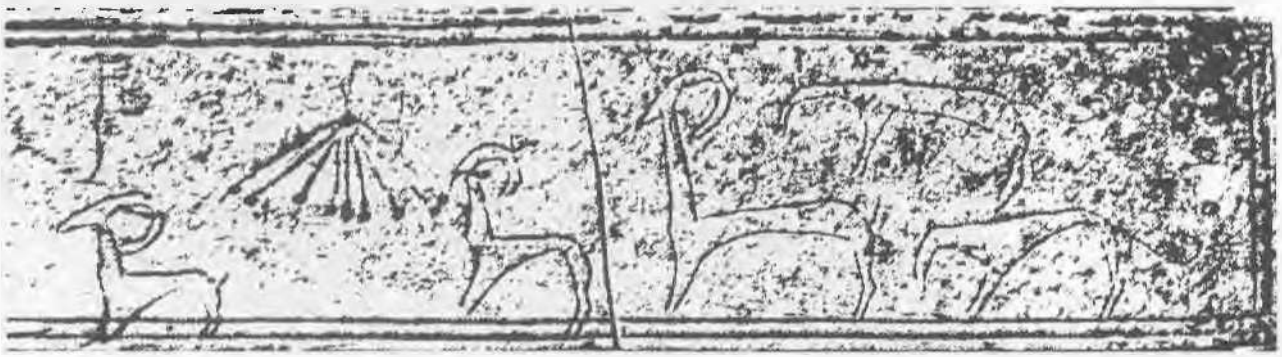


FIG. 67.
Mankystau. Ibexes, dogs, and signs

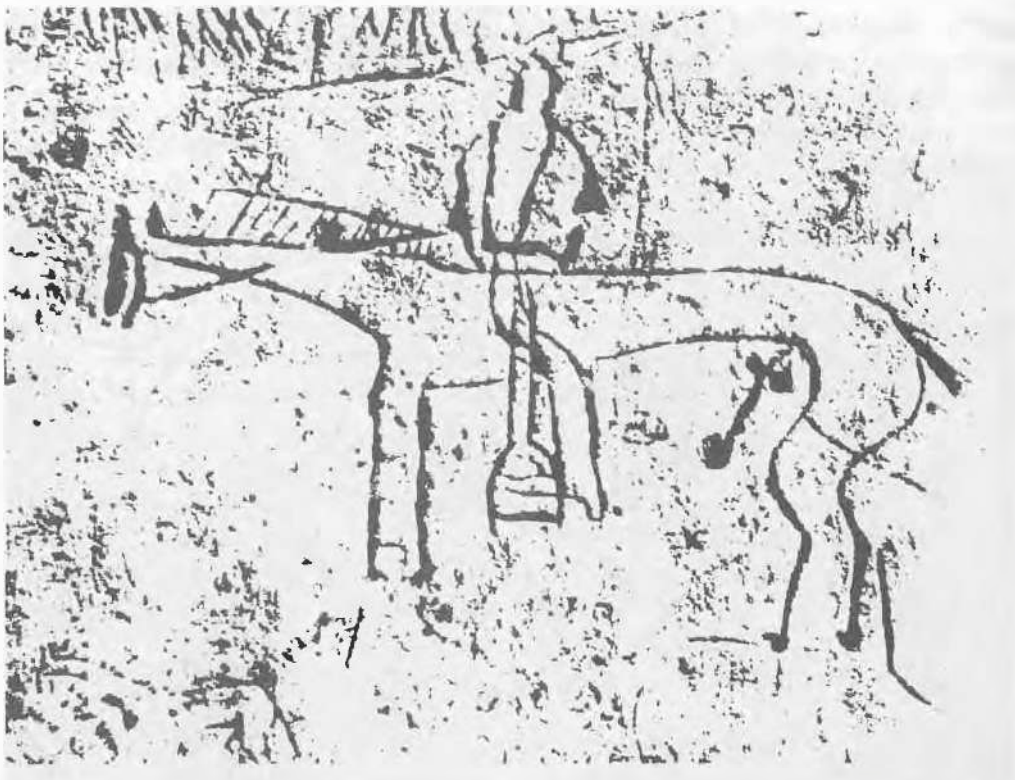


FIG. 68. ***Mankystau. A horseman***

nomadic cattle-breeders' everyday life. As for the drawings of arms and household goods, such as tools, samovars, slings, shoes with lifted toes, bags, whips, kuryks (poles with running noose used for catching horses, cattle, etc), top-boots, holes for toguz kumalak (a folk sport game), utensils, etc. they occupy some parts of interior and exterior walls, roofs, eaves, and mausoleum drums and cupolas, without being arranged into scenes.

There is a picture of a one-horse two-wheeled cart with shafts and a lattice basket shown on a wall of a mazar in Karagashty Auliye necropo-

FIG. 69. ***Mankystau. Horsemen and a horse***

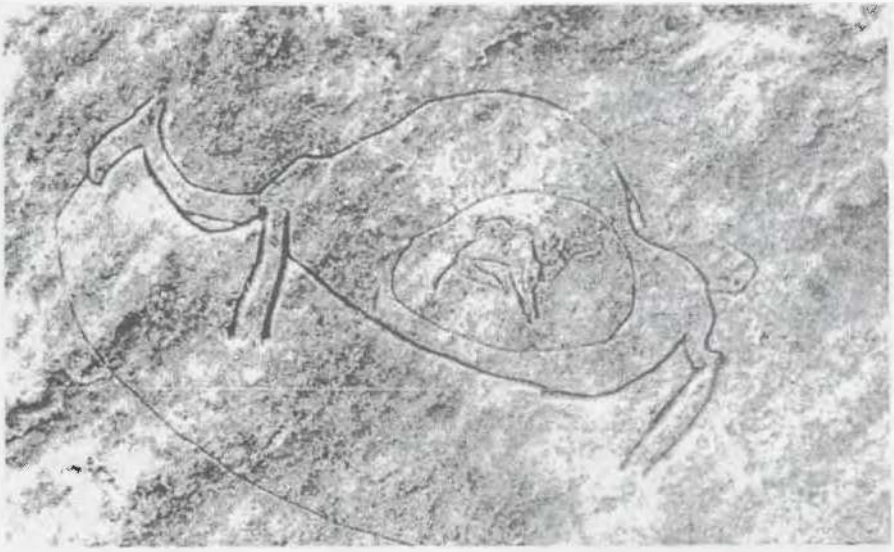


FIG. 70.
Airakty.
A female camel with a fetus in her womb

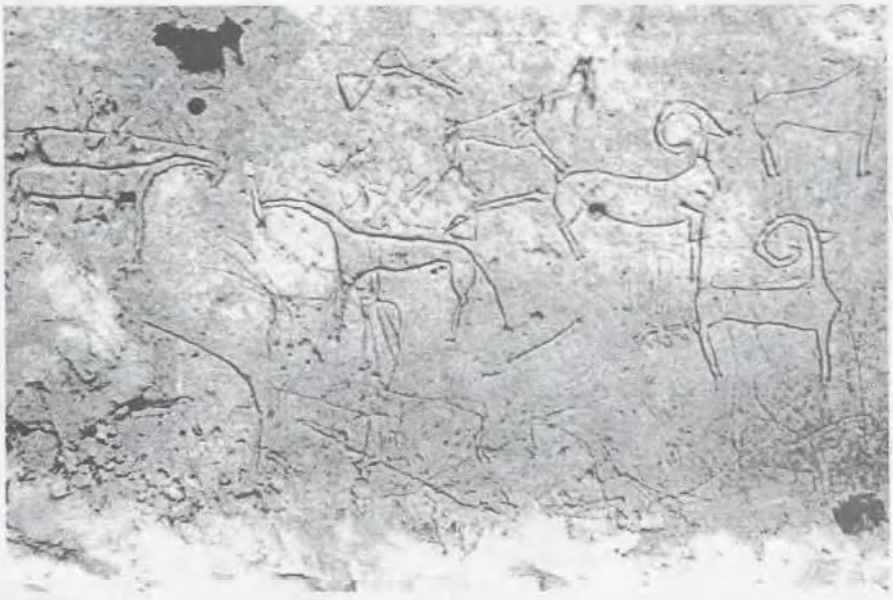


FIG. 71.
Mankystau.
A battle scene and zoomorphic figures

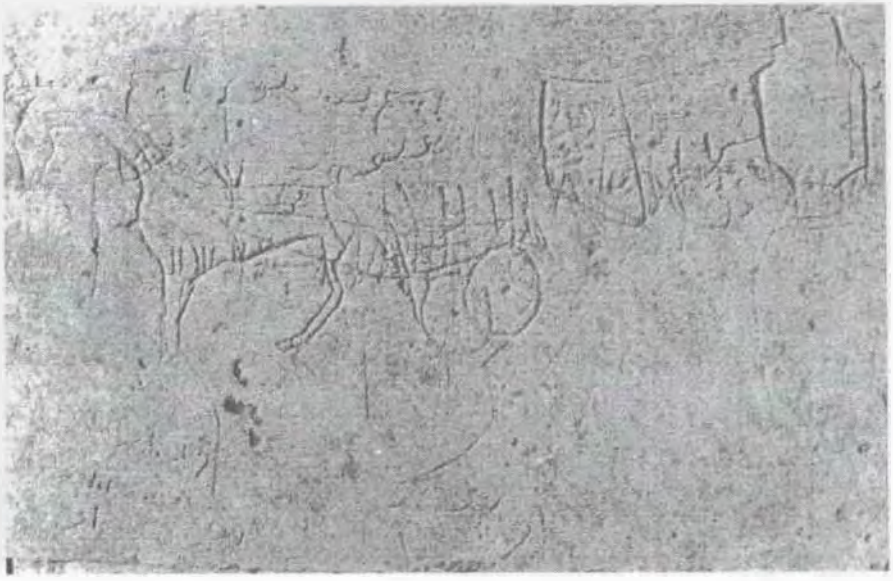


FIG. 72.
Karagashty Aulie. A two-wheel cart with people, a samovar, and epigraphy

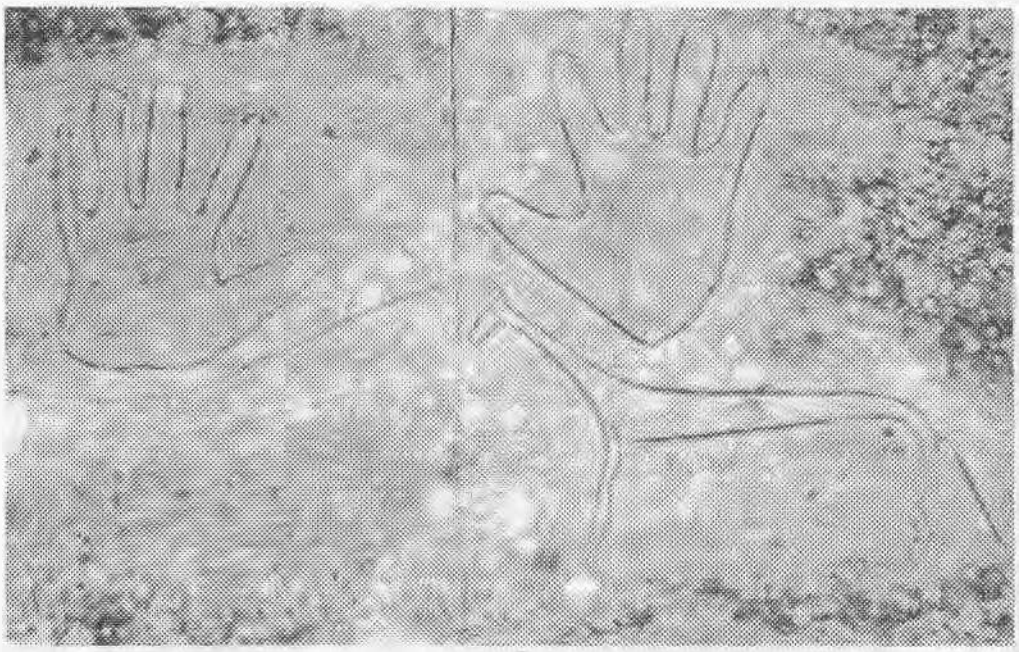


FIG. 73. *Mankystau. A hand with spread fingers and a horse*

FIG. 74. *Drawings made in the underground mosque of Shakhbagat*

lis. Apart from the other load, the sketchy figures of five passengers are seen (Fig. 72). The harness includes a bridle, a horse collar, a breast-band, and reins. The cart is followed by a mounted lance-knight wearing a belt with decorative plates and a head-dress,and holding a whip in his hand.

Minor forms of tombstones, such as sagana (a box of a sarcophagus type), ushtas (a small pyramid made of blocks), kulpytas (a stylized sculptured anthropomorphous figure, whose semantics is based on the image of an armed warrior), and koitas (a sculptured figure of a sheep) are decorated with the drawings of riders, archers, zoomorphic figures, tamgas, and arms. Arms present a leading motif in kulpytases and are usually depicted with a perfect skill. Even the minutest ornamenting details or a weapon are reproduced very scrupulously. For instance, the kulpytas of the Ushkan necropolis manufactured by masters Yegisenovs in early 20th century contains the picture of a wide battle-belt (kiseh) on the face plane. The belt is provided with two oblong rectangular metal plates at the ends. One of them finishes in a hook with a spherical end. The plates are covered with a complex ornamentation consisting of a combination of zoomorphic (koshkar muyiz, yuiye taban, etc.) and vegetative elements and motifs symmetrically disposed along both sides of a four-tiered stem (jeli). The middle of the belt is decorated with an eight-petalous rosette connected by means of rings with two others: an oval and richly ornamented rosette and a square one decorated with a border ornament and pendants. There are several objects depicted to the right of the belt,such as a wand with an ornamented spherical pommel, scourges with loops (in some cases the types of the wicker-work are discernible, including taspa, round, square, and octagonal - at cross section), a dagger in a sheath in the form of a triangle, and a curved saber. The saber has a short handle with incrusted facing, a rectangular cross with globe-shaped thickenings at the ends and a diamond-shaped superimposed plate. The sheath of the saber is decorated with various plates and has two rings for a waist-belt, which is a modification of a specific joint employed in medieval sword sheathes widely used by Sarmatians, Yueh-chih, etc. Besides, one can see some other compositions and combinations of the images of weapons,mounted warriors,household goods, and decorations on kulpytases.

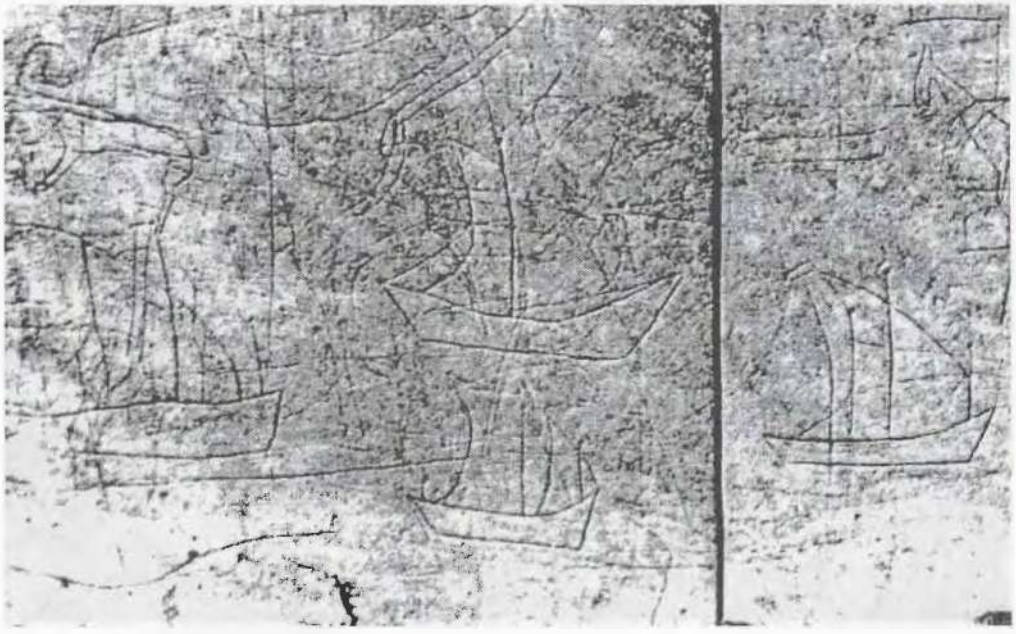


FIG. 75. ***Tolekbai's mausoleum. Vessels***

A mounted warrior, batyr, is a leading image in the Kazakh folk art, just like it was with ancient Turkis. The image of the mounted warrior appeared in the arts and mythology in the period, when people were coping with the horse as a saddle animal; in such conditions, when military leaders, martial aristocracy, and military formations played a dominating role in early nomadic societies (in early complex societies – in a broad aspect), and many nations have preserved this image through centuries-long periods with upsurges and historical cataclysms, until the ethnographic present.

The batyr's epic horse occupies a special place among Kazakh engravings: very often it is shown exaggeratedly lean, with thin legs, with a gracefully curved neck (a swan-neck), a small head with pointed ears, with dangling or bobbed mane (in rare cases the mane is shown fly-away, in the form of tongues of flame), with a tail beautifully tied, and in the condition of extreme expression, i.e. fully corresponding to the canonical principles of a verbal characteristic given to this animal (referred to as tulpar, argymak, kazanat) in the heroic epic poetry. Its prototypes were thoroughbred steppe horses, among which most appreciated were, as is known, Adai racers from Mankystau and Karabair riding horses (bred by means of interbreeding of local species with Central Asian improved ones), prevailing in the Aral, Caspian, and Syrdarya steppes, and in Inner Buke Horde. They met the norms of beauty and harmony existing in the world's hippology, but manifestly exceeded pure-blooded Arab horses and European cultural species in endurance, riding indefatigability, and fitness for severe steppe conditions. The Kazakhs carefully protected these horses from "the evil eye," kept them covered with horse-clothes, tied a talisman (tumar) to their necks (a large series of graffiti in Mankystau necropolises shows horses with such talismans), and bound eagle-owl's feathers to the racers' forelocks, manes and tails, which was the manifestation of their specific attitude toward warhorses and racers.

As for the warrior, he was depicted in scenes of hunt and battle scenes, and in some other situations. He was armed with multifarious kinds of attacking weapons suitable for both near and distant fight. Sometimes this personage is shown in a spherocon helmet (with or without a plume) or in a peaked head-dress (Fig. 66). There are no evident images of warriors wearing safety armors, though, judging from some sources, the Kazakhs used chain

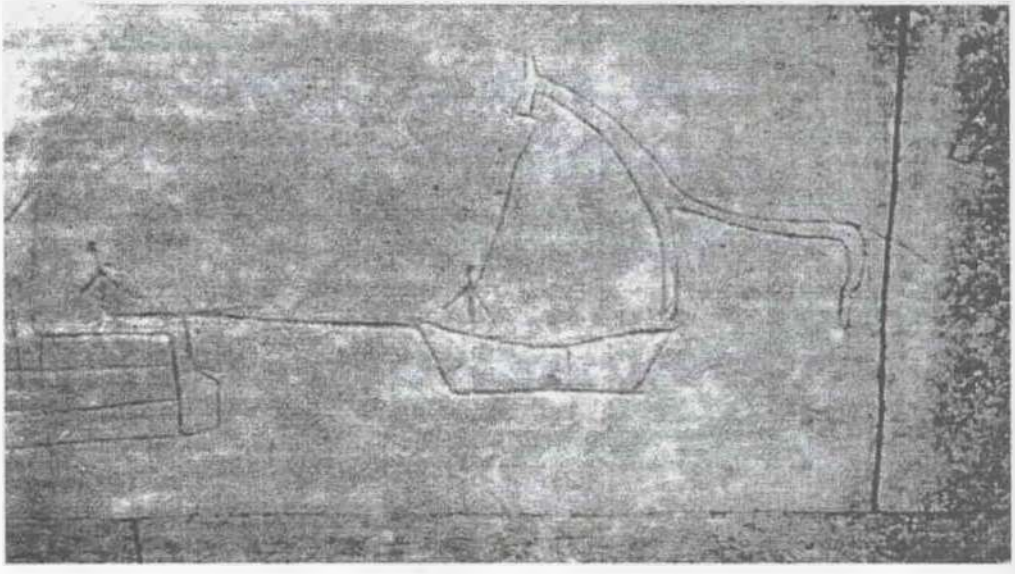


FIG. 76. ***Mankystau. Boats and a man with a horse***

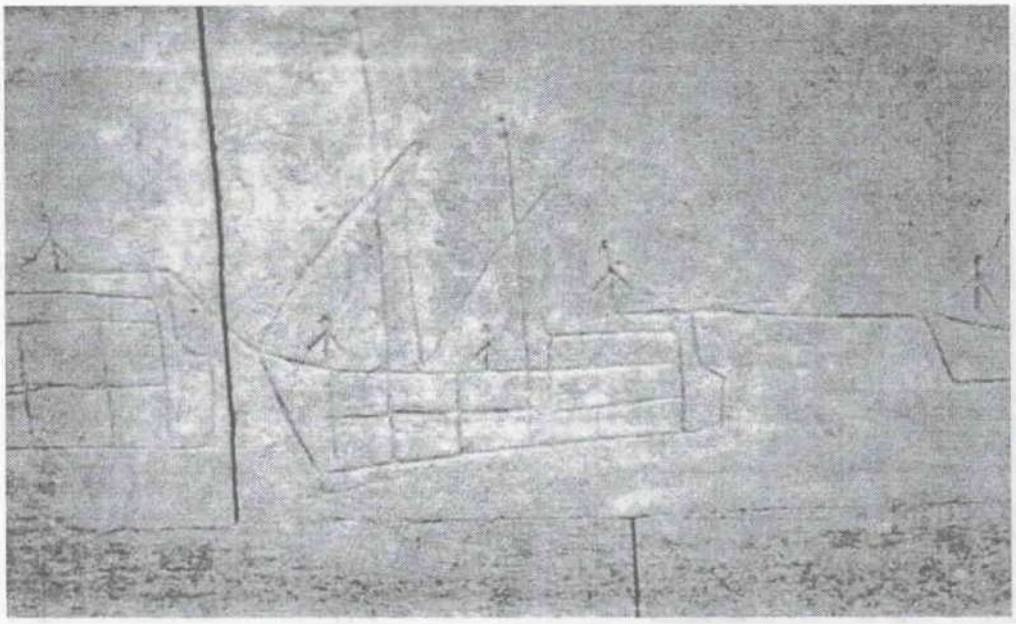


Fig. 77. Mankystau. Boats and people

armors till late '60s of the 19th century. According to information provided by a source, during the funeral repast (as) in the honor of batyr Chaldik, who died in 1867, his weapons and personal things were hung out, a chain armor among them. One of the latest evidences of the usage by the Kazakhs of chain armors was in 1869, when revolted Kazakhs belonging to Adai tribe fought against punitive expedition near Chograi cape.

The pikes from Adai, judging by the images found in Mankystau and Ustyurt, sometimes had two heads: one was long and narrow and the other was short and flat. There were two loops attached to the shaft. Sometimes an oblong metallic strip, in the form of a knife with a sharp blade, was fixed to the shaft beneath the pike-head. This is what was written about the batyrs' knack for handling this weapon, "Their dexterity is beyond the bounds of possible; one can often come across batyrs and jigits in the steppe, who can dismount tens of riders with their pikes, without being even scratched." (Makovetski, P.B., 1886). Sabers were depicted in richly decorated sheaths hanging on straps attached to battle-belts. Regular sabers were forged by local masters (usta), and valuable ones (such as Khorasan, damask steel, etc.) put in shagreen and velvet sheaths and richly incrusted with precious stones were acquired in Khiva, Bukhara, Persia, China, and Kashgaria.

Kazakh drawings depict other types of weapons as well, along with harness, various symbols, tamgas (tribal signs), banners, horse-tails, blacksmith's tools, and musical instruments.

Zoomorphic sculptures (koitases) present a specific type of Kazakh gravestones. They are multifarious both in their forms and decorative finishing. Some of them present true masterpieces of rock-cutting art, as they realistically reproduce the figures of local fat-tail sheep spices, are decorated with vegetative and geometrical patterns (Fig. 80), and contain the relief images of arms, horses, tamgas, etc. Koitases are polysemantic: probably, they were associated with the ancient Saka-Kangyu-Sarmatian symbol and the embodiment of farn, their ancestors' cult, and connected with the image (hypostasis) of a deceased warrior, in whose honor a tomb was erected. They can be connected with some other mythological views as well, however.

Seagoing crafts (Fig. 75-78), which sailed in the Caspian Sea in the 18th

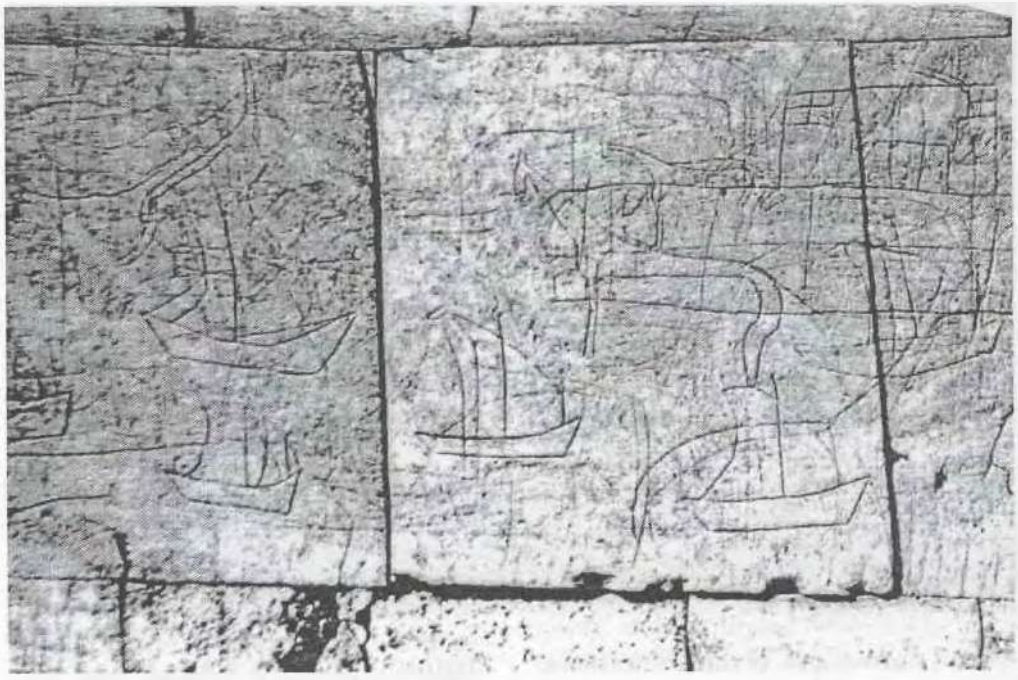


FIG. 78. ***Tolekbai's mausoleum. Vessels***

and 19th centuries present a special category of graffiti. The drawings of ships were made mainly on the walls of large domical mausoleums and sagana-tams (for example, Tolekbai's mazar constructed on Tyupkaragan peninsula, sagana-tams of Besbulak's necropolis in Ustyurt, etc.) and are the evidence of operations exercised by famous leading batyrs from Adai against sea pirates, who used to plunder Kazakh nomads' camps in the coastal area. It should be pointed out that the images of ships on walls of Moslem religious buildings are not rare. For instance, they are known to have been drawn in Imaret Mosque, the city of Plovdiv, built in mid 15th century by Shakhabedin, an Osmanli pasha.

Large mausoleums and sagana-tams (which located, as a rule, on prominent places and on the ways of nomadic traveling and transit caravans), on whose walls were engraved numerous drawings (of proclaiming or narrative character), which depicted feats of arms and other deeds (battle scenes, scenes of hunt, nomadic roaming, caravan processions), together with the wealth (herds of horses and sheep flocks), personal weapons, harness, household goods, etc. were meant to emphasize the high status of the deceased in his lifetime (a warrior, a member of the nomadic aristocracy, a kin's leader, etc.), and provide his successors and congeners with the same. Some engravings and paintings could appear right after the erection of a sepulchral construction, and others could be made in a year, after a funeral feast, during which, as some sources inform, the saddle, the clothes, and the weapons of the deceased were exposed in his yurta (including his spear with a crape flag, whose color varied depending on the age of the deceased, and could be black, white, or red). His favorite horse (which had been let go to the herd right after his owner's death, its mane and tail bobbed) and a great number of neat and small cattle were sacrificed. Horse race and wrestling with rich prizes were organized. Competition was held between improvising poets, who glorified the deceased. "This rite is meant to show the people what he acquired during his life, and, by this, to form their favorable opinion about him, as they have become eye-witnesses of his well-being" (Rychkov N., 1772).

The Scourge. A scourge, being an object of universal usage, performed also the function of a sacral-magic apanage, also was a symbol of power, and indicated the social rank of its owner (you may remember the legend how Scythians fought against their slaves with scourges). The Kazakh society of the 17th century through early 20th century distinguished between the pragmatic usage of the scourge as a utilitarian purpose object,and its symbolic function as a thing having a certain semiotic status in the condition of conversion, that is, its increased meaningfulness in some aspects, for instance, while matchmaking,during a legal procedure, at the time when a shaman ousted evil spirits to heal a person,or during mystical rites performed by soothsayers and clairvoyants, when the whip played a magic and communicative role. One more thing is to be added here. A person entering boldly one's peaceful home with a whip in his hand, became associated by superstitious people with a demon, a harbinger of a big trouble. Consequently, his conduct became strongly condemned. Such behavior in a pronouncedly provoking manner meant his readiness for committing naked aggression. On the other hand, a noble and respectful attitude of a man provided with a scourge (or with some other weapon) toward the accepted norms of behavior and their observance constituted the main principles of a steppe knight's ethnic essence.

Now, about the pragmatic function of the scourge. There were different forms of lashes and various methods of weaving them, such as jumyr – with a round cross-section, kop kyrly – a polyhedral one; some lashes had four to eight and even more edges, and were correspondingly named. Buzau tis meant "like calf's teeth," there were also snake-like, or caterpillar-shaped types of lashes. The thickness of lashes varied depending on the number of strips (taspa)employed (from four to 32), which were mainly made of neat cattle skins dressed to different extent. Sometimes masters put a flexible rod inside the woven part in order to increase the weight of the scourge and make blows more effective. The whip-handle was usually made from wood of hard species, such as meadow-sweet and others, also from ibex's horns, deer or argali's stalks, etc. Lashes could be incrusted with color stones, decorated with bone or metallic superimposed plates, and embellished with fringe, tassels from eagle-owl's feathers, and various patterns. There were different systems of joining different parts of the scourge to each other, which, by the way,had definite size relationship,

FIG. 79.
A kulpytas with arms depicted

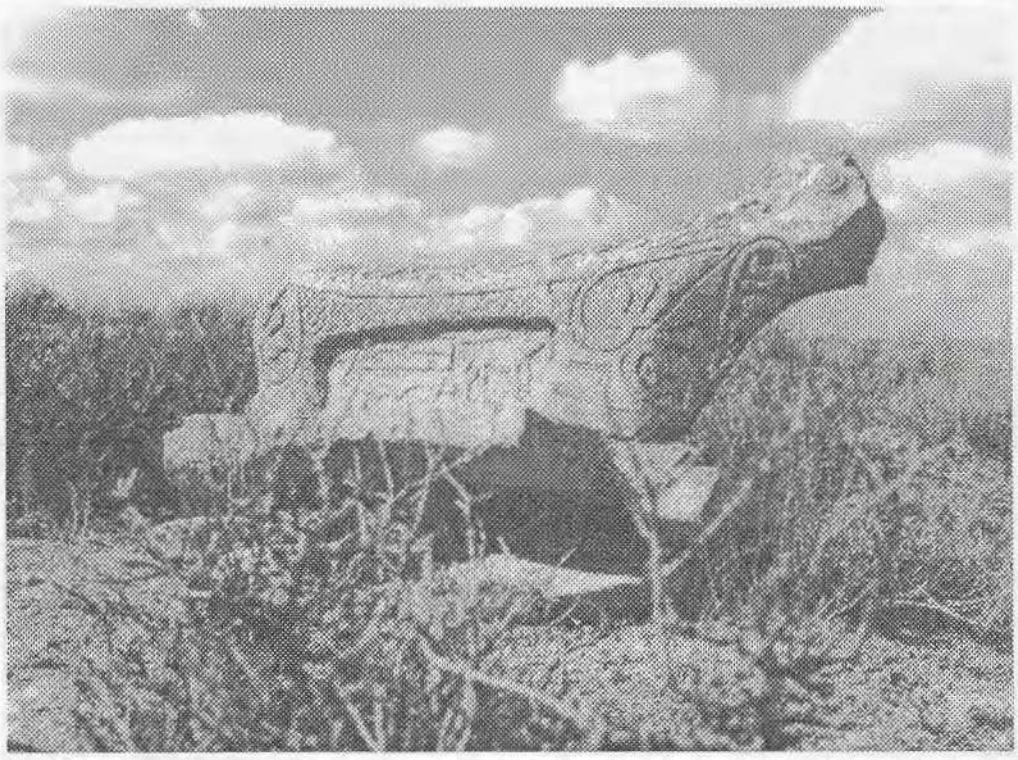


FIG. 80. ***Ustyurt. Koitas, a Kazakh grave monument***

such as orim,sap,alakan,buldirgeh,i.e. a flexible part of a scourge, a whip-handle, a palm, a loop, etc. The Kazakhs strictly distinguished between slashes used as arming (doiyr, dyrau, jylan-bauyr, ezekti, bileu, and jortuyl) meant for near attacking or defensive fights on horseback, like it was in previous historical periods,and a regular outfit used in everyday life of nomadic cattle-breeders. According to their technical characteristics and decoration, different types of scourges were supposed for different social layers and groups of population, such as for the elderly, for young people, or those at the mature age; also for men, women or juveniles; for the rich or poor; for shepherds or horse-herds; etc.

People, who mastered professional skill in using a scourge for attacking and defense (called kamshygers), like those with a perfect command of other weapons, belonged to the military elite of a society and enjoyed special respect of the people. In peace time kamshygers demonstrated (and perfected) their skill during military-athletic competitions held during a year's funeral repast, or marriage ceremonies, and other festivities, also while hunting, etc. Epic works and literature on ethnography contained the description of ways how to use a scourge; they also indicated the most vulnerable places for giving such strokes; gave their folk designation (a semasiologic aspect); and provided with information about physical and spiritual qualities,which true kamshygers had to possess.

Numerous images of the scourge, very often of hypertrophied size (in some compositions the size of a kamshy exceeds that of a rider and a horse), depicted in engravings found in Ustyurt and Mankystau, can be explained by its special role in the symbolic-communicative system of the Kazakhs belonging to the junior juz of the Adai tribe. It also means that the kamshy was equally important both as a utilitarian object and as a symbol.

The significance of the scourge was also emphasized with the fact that it belonged to the range of objects compulsorily depicted (immortalized) at religious-memorial kulpytases,whose semantics was based on anthropomorphous images, at sacramental erec-

tions. (The list of such compulsory objects included such main kinds of weapons as a bow, a spear, a quiver with or without arrows, aibalta, a dagger, a gun on bipods; a helmet; a battle or gala belt; a tribal tamga; and a saddle horse).

Scourges can be seen in battle scenes (usually those fighting hold a saber in one hand and a whip in the other),in battue scenes, also in drawings depicting nomadic roaming, pursuit, etc.

As we finish analyzing the Kazakh graffiti, we find it necessary to remind that complex mythological traditions (and the rock art mirrored them) dating back to the paleometal epoch and Skythian-Siberian time,were comprehensible to a very small group of people (such as patriarchs and priests), while the images of the Kazakh graffiti were absolutely clear, universal and accessible to the whole population.

This period witnessed the appearance of scenes bearing an abstract idea. This trend co-existed with symbolism; the origination of these scenes was connected with the Islamization of arts, when a visible image was associated not only with some concrete deity or personage but became fixed in the perception of Moslems as an abstract notion. Thus, for instance, the image of a bird corresponds, in Islamic tradition, to such notions as soul, mystery, and angel. There is a tradition to depict birds neighboring to or interlaced with words, which means blessing.

A human soul (a bird) is the result of evolutionary creation. The soul simultaneously absorbs all stages of the creation of the universe. According to the Moslem tradition, a person, in his or her different quality manifestations, possesses a vegetative soul and an animal one. He or she can finally surpass them, and achieve a complete perfection (Shukurov Sh., 1991).

The association of the image of a bird with the highest spiritual condition in the Moslem artistic tradition, most probably, goes back to the concept of the three-part mythological structure of the universe, which was popular in previous times. The bird was a representative of an "upper, sacral world" there.

On the walls of underground mosques in Kazakhstan preveil the images of a hand with spread fingers, which is traditionally considered a Shiitic (Ismalian) symbol. These signs are accompanied by mystical poetic formulas and quotations from the Koran, and were probably left by the members of dervish communities (Fig. 73, 74).

The symbol of a hand with spread fingers (panje) was especially popular among Shiites and became their emblem, like the Christians worship the cross. Metallic hands with spread fingers with the initials of Mohammed and Ali on long pikes were Mohammed's holy gonfalons during the first wars. There is a version, that the hand with spread fingers signified the cut off hands of Abbas, Hosayn's uncle, who was a standard bearer and perished for the cause of Hosayn (Marr S.M., 1970). There is one more religious explanation of this image: the palm is considered the hand of Ali; and, as is sometimes added, five fingers are the symbol of the Shiitic (Ismalian) five, including Mohammed, Ali, Fatimah, Hasan, and Hussein.

The image of the palm is also interpreted as a specific talisman, which brings luck and protects from the evil eye. Some researches associate the cult of the hand existing in Central Asia from time immemorial with the human power. Some sources say that this image served as a symbol of faithfulness to a dynasty, others believe that the cult of the hand is based on its former role as a counter mechanism.

Apart from the new religious interpretation of this anthropomorphous sign, we have to point out the ancient, mil-

lennial tradition, according to which the image of the hand was a manifestation of partial magic and partially stood for a person.

One of the peculiarities of this period's rock art became the absence of individual, portrait features of a depicted personage. For Moslem poets and artists a person's appearance was an abstraction, whose relative manifestations depended on a concrete space of his or her staying in and concrete situational surroundings (thus, Rustam's many-faced appearance in Shakh-Nameh was mainly based on his penetrating to principally different spaces). Images depicted in rock art of that time, like in former periods, were perceived depending on how they met the requirements of the existing tradition, the canon.

Like many other things taken from previous periods, the human image became involved in a principally new context of Arabian-Moslem culture, and since that time it has appeared in a slightly different semantic aspect.

The beauty and the perfection of the Man cannot be seen with one's eye, reads one of the postulates of the Islamic doctrine. The human appearance in not a true beauty. The beauty, primarily, is a beautiful way of one's thinking, "it is not so obvious or visible, it is hidden from an idle look" (Shukurov Sh., 1989).

The face of a person, in the opinion of some researchers of the Islamic art, is the value in itself. Such attitude toward the face and the name of a man is an important component of the whole Moslem culture, and the tradition to give several names and "the inner vision" is connected with this particular fact.

The trend to individualize the features of a person, which began to show in Central Asian rock art during the Turkic period, has faded away in the Kazakh graffiti.

Moslems believed that the God's image could not be perceived by peoples' vision. This concept is typical of other religions as well. Thus, in Judaism, Yahweh was always depicted standing with his back to onlookers, though drawing earthly personages was accepted in their art. As for the Christianity, as is known, there is God's hypostasis there.

Drawing a person mirrored one more important phenomenon in the Moslem art: contrasting the Word with the Face. This competition was always decided in favor of the Word (which fact is often cited in connection with frequent Arabian inscriptions made on fine art monuments and verbal calls for praying).

The facelessness of anthropomorphous images in the Kazakh graffiti has not lessened their enormous social and cultural significance as a form of a nomadic ideology, and their educative and cognitive role.

The facelessness and probably simultaneous multi-facedness of anthropomorphous personages in the Kazakh graffiti reveals the desire of a man, who lived in the paleometal epoch, to assume the appearance of another person or, more often, of an imaginary creature through wearing a mask or with the help of some other attributes. Maybe, this was not only an attempt to imitate somebody else, but also to conceal one's own appearance. As is known, this motif seems similar to women's manner to wear a veil on the face, or to the custom to hang a curtain before the portraits of the royal family; also to hide and keep such sacral people as priests, etc. fully isolated.

At all times it was rather difficult to identify anthropomorphous personages depicted in the Central Asian rock art with a certain deity or a concrete mythological hero. Like in former historical periods, one had to identify and recognize the image

or images of one person or several people from the-then "etiquette" attributes, such as the personage's poses, the compositional schemes, and ethnic signs typical of the Kazakh graffiti (for instance, the image of a tumar) and Arabian inscriptions.

The very first mentioning of the peccancy to draw human beings was made in the third quarter of the eighth century. All scholars and even theologians unanimously say that the Koran denounces only idolaters. Primarily, there were many things with the images of living beings in Mohammed's home (Bolshakov O.G., 1969). This prohibition strengthened among the theologians only at the end of the eighth century and in early ninth century, when the main collections of Hadiths, stories about Mohammed's deeds and words, became formed. It was time when Moslems made attempts to clear away faces (from paintings) and knock them off (from sculptures). "No" in Arabic was scratched on the faces on mural paintings in Penjikent (Shukurov Sh., 1989).

Nevertheless, the tradition to embellish palaces with the sculptures of people and to decorate the interiors of bathhouses with paintings remained.

In the 11th century the attitude towards the fine art changed abruptly, which most possibly was connected with the commencement of orthodox reaction in Islam: the portraying of living beings in wall paintings, the production of any sculptured figures, carpets and fabrics with the images of animals and human beings became forbidden. They were allowed only on articles laid on floor, as in such a case they became trampled on and couldn't be the object of worship. The images of living beings lacking any part of the body were also permissible.

According to researchers, one of the reasons, which caused Moslems' such attitude towards painting, was their fear for a magic force as if emanating from such images, and allegedly peculiar to Semites, - so, this prohibition appeared under the influence of Judaism. Besides, from the very beginning, Islam refused to employ the fine art in propagandizing its ideas, unlike Christianity and Buddhism, in which the images of people (icons) were a part of religious practice (Bolshakov O.G., 1969).

So, the image of a warrior in Kazakh monumental art is to be regarded as the result of centuries-old cultural and genetic processes, which occurred in steppe Eurasia, especially in the mid to late second millennium B.C. This was the period, when, as the reflection of changes in the social organism of the society, the members of military castes came to the history proscenium. Those persons were considered divine, their power was regarded as sacral. Impressive burial constructions and statues, along with the laudation of their deeds through graphic and other kinds of texts appeared the manifested forms of the apologetics of their social status, in a sense, which trend even strengthened in posterior nomadic societies, during the 1st millennium B.C. and the 1st millennium A.D. A striking example of this were Sarmatian sanctuaries in Ustyurt (Baiteh I-III), which presented a complex of burial mounds and the statues of armed warriors; also tamga-like signs, medieval anthropomorphous sculptured figures (made by ancient Turkic, Kipchaks, and Polovtsy, etc.), also engravings and paintings, which depicted katafracts and light-armed horsemen known in the vast zone of Eurasian steppes.

So, in this article we tried to consider main landmarks in the rock art development on the territory of the present-day Kazakhstan, with the attraction of relevant materials from contiguous regions. We also employed ethnographic, graphic, mythological and other texts to confirms the contents of the sources.

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ABBREVIATION

AKD	Avtoreferat kandidatskoi dissertatsiyi
ART	Arkheologicheskiye raboty v Tadjikistane. Dushanbe
AO	Arkheologicheskie otkrytiya. Moskva
VAN KazSSR	Vestnik Akademiyi Nauk Kazakhskoi SSR. Alma-Ata
VGO	Vsesoyuznoye Geograficheskoye obshchestvo
IVGO	Izvestiya Vsesoyuznogo Geograficheskogo Obshchestva. Moskva
IMKU	Istoriya materialnoi kultury Uzbekistana
ITORGO	Izvestiya Turkestanskogo otdeleniya Russkogo Geograficheskogo Obshchestva. Tashkent
ZVORAO	Zapiski Vostochnogo otdeleniya (imperatorskogo) Russkogo Arkheologicheskogo Obshchestva. Sankt-Peterburg
KSIA	Kratkiye soobshcheniya Instituta arkheologiyi
KSIIMK	Kratkiye soobshcheniya Instituta istoriyi materialnoi kultury
MIA	Materialy i issledovaniya po arkheologiyi SSSR
ONU	Obshchestvenniye nauki Uzbekistana
PTKLA	Protokoly Turkestanskogo kruzhka lyubitelei arkheologiyi
SA	Sovetskaya arkheologiya. Moskva
SAI	Svod arkheologicheskikh istochnikov
SMAE	Sbornik Muzeya antopologiyi i etnografiyi AN SSSR. Moskva-Leningrad
SNV	Strany i narody Vostoka. Moskva
SE	Sovetskaya etnografiya. Moskva
TIIAE AN KazSSR	Trudy Instituta istoriyi, arkheologiyi i etnografii AN KazSSR
TIIAE AN TadjSSR	Trudy Instituta istoriyi, arkheologiyi i etnografii AN TadjSSR. Dushanbe
TIYaLIKFAN	Trudy Instituta yazyka, literatury i istoriyi Kirgizskogo filiala AN SSSR. Frunze
TKAEE	Trudy Kirgizskoi arkheologo-etnograficheskoi ekspeditsiyi. Moskva
TKirgGPI	Trudy Kirgizskogo gosudarstvennogo pedagogicheskogo instituta. Frunze
TS	Tezisy soobshchenii
Tr. IE AN SSSR	Trudy Instituta etnografiyi AN SSSR
TD SPIPAI	Tezisy dokladov na sektsiyakh, posvyashchennykh itogam polevykh arkheologicheskikh issledovanii. Tashkent
TMI UzSSR	Trudy Muzeya istoriyi UzSSR. Tashkent
TYuTAKE	Trudy Yuzhno-Turkmenistanskoi arkheologicheskoi kompleksnoi ekspeditsiyi. Tashkent
UZ TGU	Ucheniye zapiski Tashkentskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta