

**American University of Central Asia  
Anthropology Department**

**Bachelor Thesis:**

**“DEER” IMAGE AS A POSSIBLE DIFFERENTIATOR OF  
SOCIAL GROUPS ON THE BASIS OF SAIMALY-TASH  
PETROGLYPHS**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The main focus of the paper is the innovative approach toward interpretation of the rock art images, in particular the “deer” image of the of Saimaly-Tash monument, Kyrgyzstan. For doing so I adapted different techniques of emic and etic analysis developed by several rock art research schools from North America, South Africa, Australia, Europe and Russia.

My research question is based on the hypothesis that semantic meaning of the symbol (“deer”) taken from one historical period (Bronze Age) might have different interpretations as well as purposes in accordance with other symbols that combine the composition. Thereby the semantics of the deer symbol is understood as mythological, shamanistic, commemorative and totemic relying on the detailed analysis of the additional figures in compositions.

Such an approach helps not only for petroglyph reading but also for the reconsideration of the ancient societies that populated the area of Saimaly-Tash. In the context of semantic meaning of each composition I hypothesize social belonging of ancient masters.

There are five rock art compositions been fully described in the paper, using ethnographic, written, and other applicable sources. The research aims to become a first step in the intensive analysis of the Saimaly-Tash petroglyphs relying not on the quantitative analysis (as it was before) but rather on qualitative one.

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## INTRODUCTION

Humans have long searched for the means of transmitting necessary information to other members of society. Further this idea became a development factor for the man's cognitive processes and implications of those into the abstract depiction in the rock. Such a rock art in the form of petroglyphs was long used by different communities around the world.

The purpose of these images could vary from depiction of shamanic trances to usual everyday hunting rituals. Thereby, cultural message within almost every rock art composition, amplified with the deep semantic meaning, became one of the main factors that attracted interest of the modern archaeologists.

Additionally, it has been hypothesized that different combinations of the same symbol could carry different messages. For example the depiction of the "deer" symbol could be perceived at the same time as the image of a pray, a mythological or cosmological creature, a totemic ancestor of the tribe or even as an astronomical calendar. This semantic versatility applied within one culture, same period of time and territory thus created distrustfulness of scientific world toward interpretational techniques which mostly couldn't determine the meaning of such symbols. The main problem was that simplifying the task, most of the rock art specialists just split symbols by their general semantic meanings into several groups as deers/goats, ritual scenes, horses, carriages and etc. and stopped further speculations. They didn't try to analyze the compositional consistency of every rock art image as it seemed to be an impracticable task with the lack of the good anthropological evidence concerning social and religious life of those peoples who created petroglyphs.

My interest was exactly concentrated around the question of interpretation of the compositional petroglyphs founded on the territory of Kyrgyzstan. My research question sounds following: **Could semantic meaning of one particular symbol vary depending on the compositional elements that surrounded it? Can we read and understand this message? On the basis of achieved results can we hypothesize the social groups (shamans or tribal members) who depicted it?**

My hypothesis would be that it is possible to read the message as a whole and not to consider symbols as separate informational units. Also there have to be found specific elements

that belong to different social groups which might define the social affiliation of the ancient master, whereas, the meaning of each composition depends on the master who depicted it.

As one of the innovative methods, there is offered a composite analysis of the grouped symbols. The approach is built on the notion that semantic understanding and “interpretation cannot be limited to dividing them [symbols] into single elements and analyzing them solely in relation to their real equivalents” (Rozwadowski A., 2007:99). Integrative analysis of the “deer” symbol and petroglyphs depicted near by will lead to the clearer understanding of the message encoded by the ancient master and possible recognition of his social affiliation.

While interpreting the rock art images, my goal was to develop a cohesive and intense analysis of the chosen petroglyphs. Thereto I used quite a comprehensive methodology offered by David S. Whitley (2005) which included both emic and etic analysis. This means that petroglyphs were interpreted not only from semantic but also from technological points of view. Additionally, some recommendations toward methodology were complemented from Henri-Paul Francfort and Esther Jacobson (2004) and Robert Bednarik (2007). Combination of emic and etic analyses helped to answer the thesis question more completely.

Still the interpretation of every petroglyph tends to fall into subjective speculation of the author, as there are no written sources originating exactly from the studied region. Other written materials included *Rig Veda*, the holy book of Indo-Iranian people, and ethnographic researches done in Siberia, Southern Russia. The relevance of these sources has been widely proved by different researchers who tried to interpret Central Asia petroglyphs before (Sher Ya., 1980; Martynov *et al.*, 1992; Rozwadowski A., 2004, 2008; Tashbaeva *et al.*, 2001, Samashev Z., 2002; and etc.).

The place for the research was chosen according to less influence of the anthropogenic factor as well as extensiveness and variety of the petroglyphic material presented. Saimaly-Tash as a prominent rock art gallery of Central Asia and Kyrgyzstan in particular became that place. Unfortunately, author of this piece wasn't able to get the primary sources for analysis, but used photographs done by the National University of Kyrgyzstan. This reflected in the incomplete geomorphologic analysis of the rock art surrounding.

From a great number of images there were chosen those ones belonging to the Bronze Age only. Determinant point for the petroglyphs became the “geometrical” style accepted as the main feature of the III-II millennia B.C. (Tashbaeva *et al.*, 2001:32; Bernshtam A., 1997:396). This particular period plays a crucial role in the understanding of the first people who populated

Saimaly-Tash, their belief system and social organization. Partly my research attempts to determine the religious affiliation of these people on the bases of rock art interpretation.

The research is very important for further studies of the rock art in Kyrgyzstan as it offers not only extensive resource base for image analysis but also developed interpretational techniques that might be used in the future. Also the research sets a new fresh look on the semantic importance of every image from Saimaly-Tash monument concentrating more on qualitative rather than quantitative analysis.

# Chapter 1. LITERATURE REVIEW

## 1.1. ROCK ART

Scientists believe that the first semantically rich symbols appeared in Europe somewhere between ca. 35,000 and 10,000 years B.C. during the period of the rock art. Studying it for many years, Robert G. Bednarik gave a comprehensive definition for the rock art as:

[M]arkings occurring on rock surfaces that were ‘intentionally’ produced by members of the genus *Homo* (i.e. anthropic markings), that are detectable by ‘normal’ human sensory faculties, and that are concept-mediated externalisations of a ‘conscious’ awareness of some form of perceived reality (Bednarik R., 2007 quoted in López E., 2009:7)

Thereby abstract cognition developed into a complex of visual pieces of art further known as: petroglyphs, pictographs, geoglyphs and etc. My research concentrates on petroglyphs – rock art objects which are hammered, engraved, or sculptured on the rock surface.

Pocketing the patina – a sun burnt surface of dark grey or dark brown color, with sharp objects, ancient artists scratched to the lighter stone layer, so the picture would be clearer. Scientists even found the sketch done at the first stage of the scratching. Bronze and early Neolithic age masters usually started their images from the head that further predetermined the whole composition. Some pictures were unfinished for some reason, while others were placed on the top of earlier images forming so called *palimpsest* effect (Frankfort H.-P., Jacobson E. (2004:53-78).

In general, any object of art represents a piece of information that is encoded in symbols. Possible interpretation of this object in the *absence* of the master became one of its universal functions.

This means that in order to read the “deer” symbol depicted in stones we have to look closer at its symbolical meaning during different epochs and understand this symbol through the angles of religious beliefs that this symbol could be in association with.

## 1.2. “DEER” SYMBOL

One of the most ancient symbols bearing both shamanic and totemic roots is the symbol of a “deer.” The depiction of this animal and its various species was performed on the vast areas of Siberia, Central Asia, North America and even South Africa.



Being presented during different historical epochs, semantics of “deer” varies in its initial meaning. Okladnikov A. writes about the deer with circle-like shape of antlers, coming from the Paleolithic times and meaning *sun deity* (Okladnikov A., 1964). During the Neolithic era deer symbolized the “*Mother Animal*” meaning totemic affiliation which turned into the representation of possible source of life and death (Jacobson E., 1993). Scythians seemed to continue this tradition and used the “deer” image quite often giving an assumption it to be their totemic animal.

Also, in other regions there emerged an image of deer with long branchy “tree-like” antlers and some researchers compared that to mythological “*tree of life*” or axis mundi (Antonini C., 2005: 241-251, Shiltz V., 1994). This theory was developed by E. Jacobson and she suggested Mother Goddess, depicted on the tapestry of Pazyryk 5 to be a “goddess holding a tree-like figure” (Jacobson E., 1993, quoted in Antonini C., 2005:245) while tree is representing the *genealogy*, to be substituted sometimes by its animalistic representation in the form of deer.

Concentrating more on the Central Asian region I decided to look closer at both totemic and shamanic phenomena and find ethnographic evidence for the deer.

It became evident that this symbol was widely used by Siberian shamans during their trances. In general, Shamanism is a practice where a practitioner or shaman enters upper and lower worlds in the imaginary form of an animal. This religious belief implies several basic things such as the practitioner himself, and “shaman’s attributes - drum, staff and a special dress - symbolize an animal, which, in turn, is a metaphor of movement in the imaginary world of spirits” (Rozwadowski A., In Press, pg.6)

Among the animals that were associated with shaman helpers, the deer spirits were very popular in different ancient societies. Ethnographical materials from Siberia tell us that the “drum is thought of as horse or deer by peoples such as the Khakass and Tuvinians” (Potapov 1969:75). Hereby, this belief has very complicated meaning. The drum is visualized as a living creature which shaman “rides” when enters upper or under worlds. This can be concluded from several rock art images of human standing on the animal (camel, horse, or deer) that researchers suggest to be a representation of the shaman travelling to other worlds. Rozwadowski A. comes to the statement that deer could be seen “as the oldest symbol of a shamanistic journey” (Rozwadowski A., In Press, pg.11)

Totemic interpretation for the “deer” somehow integrates into shamanic cosmological worldview and gives additional meanings. The concept was presented by Tashbaeva K. who

suggested totemic deer to be a specific *goat cult* spread among peoples of Saimaly-Tash, while in general “image of the goat was connected with the cult of mountains and the “tree”<sup>1</sup> and fertility cycle” (Litvinsky, 1972:144-148, quoted in Tashbaeva K., 1999:181). The “tree” in this description refers to a “Cosmic Tree” mentioned in *Rig Veda*’s sacrificial columns that’s been embodied in goat’s horns (Toporov, 1974:66 quoted in Tashbaeva K., 1999:181).

Roswadowski A. offers shamanistic interpretation of the “tree” motif within the deer image. Just like a tree trunk, staff of the shaman was a long stick with some pendants on the top. Staff as the drum of the shaman has its “riding” animal as well. In different cultures it was used instead of the drum (Roswadowski A., 2008:110). This means that deer’s branchy antlers could not only representation of the Vedic “tree of life” but also shamanic staff and “riding” animal (referring more to shaman himself).

Thereby, above interpretations, amending each other, reflect the poly-semantic meaning of the deer as a crucial symbol in daily life of ancient peoples. However, innumerable stylistic features of the deer images across the region might become more confusing during interpretation. This strange factor puzzled a lot of researchers and prominent Russian archaeologist Sher came to a conclusion that when we are looking at the composition including deer it becomes unclear whether this is a totemic animal, a prey that was killed today, a mythological creature (Sher Ya., 1980) or some kind of astronomic calendar is depicted (e.g. Larichev V., 2001:128-132).

Stylistic differences in the deer depiction were already practiced during Scythian time in the steppe. Kantorovich A.R. suggested that during the same period of time, two different implications of “flying deer” – a standard Scythian running deer, and “flying deer,” developed in the same region (Kantorovich A.R. 1996:14). If they had different semantic meaning was unclear and Kantorovich didn’t come to final conclusion.

Very interesting differences within the group of dead deers’ images were discussed in another recent research done by Sovetova O. She came to approximately six variations of death agonies that possibly aimed to raise the hunter’s game success (Sovetova O.S., 2006:80-93). This observation showed how creative ancient masters were when tried to find new ways of animal depiction. At the same time these six variations could have different symbolical meanings.

Variety of deer depiction and interpretation might happen within the territories where the deer image was prevalent above other animals’ ones and long practiced as a meaningful concept.

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<sup>1</sup> Among the images of Saimaly-Tash deer depiction with long branchy tree-like antlers is a widespread motif (see K.Tashbaeva *et al.* 2001:36-37). Still such deers can be presented either alone, or in hunting scenes that makes it harder to come up with final interpretation of that.

Saimaly-Tash, rock art gallery situated in Kyrgyzstan, is the place where the images of deer, elk, argali and ibex (all commemorating deer depiction) comprise up to 50-60 per cents among other motives (Tashbaeva et al., 2001:71). Images are coming from several historical periods including Bronze Age, Scythian time, and Medieval Ages. This became a crucial point in choosing the place for further studies by the author of this piece.

### **1.3. SAIMALY-TASH PETROGLYPHS**

#### *Studying of Saimaly-Tash*

Saimaly-Tash monument has long been recognized as a perfect place for scientific pilgrimages in order to see a comprehensive collection of exceptional rock art objects deriving from several historical epochs.

The first information available about the monument appeared in 1902 when a military topographer Khludov N.G. surveyed Fergana Mountain Ridge and had a chance to explore Saimaly-Tash (Khludov, 1902). Some of the attempts were done afterwards to explore the place but it didn't result in any intense researches.

After a long time break in 1946 Zima B.M. set a historical-archeological expedition and tried to come up with rock art dating and characterize the drawings on the site (Zima B., 1947).

In 1950 Bernshtam A.N. explored Saimaly-Tash more thoroughly and used more scientific approach toward rock art. He was the first one to invent stylistic and technological periodization of the petroglyphs that is still widely used by other specialists who study this monument. Also he made the topography of the site and divided it into Saimaly-Tash I (western) and Saimaly-Tash II (eastern) (Bernshtam A.N., 1997:388-407).

A great number of researchers have been to the site from 50-70's including: Cherkasov N.D., Gaponenko V.M., Podolski N.L., Pomaskina G.A. and others. During his stay from 1966-1968 at the site, Golendukhin Yu. made an interesting point about the correlation of the age of the petroglyph and the level of patination on rock surface (Goledukhin Yu., 1971). Sher Ya., contributed to more interpretational techniques of some petroglyphs and offered a mythological approach toward carriage motive after several visits to Saimaly-Tash in 1970's (Sher Ya, 1980).

From 1991-2000 Tashbaeva K. conducted annual expeditions to the site with the support of the National Academy of Sciences of Kyrgyzstan. The work that has been done at both Saimaly-Tash I and II included complete record of all the petroglyphs for further analysis.

Unfortunately, there is no complete monograph done yet, but random articles (Tashbaeva *et al.*, 2001, Tashbaeva K., 1999:179-187).

### *Geomorphology of Saimaly-Tash*

Saimaly-Tash geomorphology has been thoroughly described by Tashbaeva K. during her annual visits to the site (Tashbaeva *et al.*, 2001:20-22).

The site is situated on the height of approximately 3,000-3,500 meters above the sea level in a remote place difficult to access. Geologically it is presented with “hollow formed by a moraine, which had slipped obliquely between two spurs of Saimaly-Tash Mountain Ridge edges” (Ibid, 2001:20). From both sides of the hollow two slopes are framed with lots of ravines, narrow gullies, sairs, and descents situated in between. Little lower Sogot or Saimaly-Tash River starts flowing down into the Kek-Art River.

In the center of the hollow there is a moraine lake situated around which the main set of petroglyphs appear. However, Tashbaeva determined six other lakes which had formed not far from the central one.

The area at the this height stays under the snow eleven months out of twelve and only in August local cattle-breeders get a chance to enter summer pasture lands.

Rocks on which petroglyphs are depicted are numerous in the hollow, sairs and depressions both in eastern and western parts. The last rock slide took place around I millennia B.C. when Bronze Age petroglyphs already existed (Bernshtam A., 1997:391). Describing the rocks themselves Tashbaeva points out that: “[a]ll 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” (Tashbaeva *et al.*, 2001:21).

From Kyrgyz language “*saimaly-tash*” means “patterned” or “embroidered” rock. The number of petroglyphs is still unconcerned, but Tashbaeva came up with the total of 100,000 images depicted on around 10,000 rocks. This approximate number makes Saimaly-Tash to be one of the largest collections of the ancient rock art images on the territory of Central Asia.

Unfortunately, fixed facing position of the petroglyphs wasn’t determined, meaning that they didn’t follow one direction. The technique of pecking varied from 0.5 to 1 cm and less frequently from 0.2 to 0.4 cm. Tashbaeva also emphasized that there were no cases of palimpsest observed, but in the book of Sher “Petroglyphs of Middle and Asia Central” (1980:209) there

was shown one case of palimpsest. This makes me set a remark that cases of palimpsest in Saimaly-Tash are rarely observed.

The historical period which petroglyphs at Saimaly-Tash cover starts from Late Eneolithic – early Bronze age and ends during 15-16 century A.D. These epochs are presented by variety of techniques and compositions depicted on rocks.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **1.4. CLASSIFICATION AND INTERPRETATION**

Coming to interpret the images created hundreds and thousands years ago we have to remember that “all symbols have multiple levels of meaning, and identifying the social meaning of rock art is the goal of interpretation” (Whitley D.S., 2005:80). Lewis Williams, a prominent archeologist of Southern Africa, was the first one to emphasize on the interpretive techniques that has to be applied toward rock art images:

Many surveys of Southern African rock art have depended almost entirely on amassing numerous measurements for each depiction, but numerical listings of features which may or may not be significant tell us nothing about the meaning of the art (Williams L., 1983:249)

For doing a comprehensive and well-balanced interpretation we have address to the Emic and Etic analyses which were adapted from the book of D.S. Whitley “Introduction to Rock Art Research” (2005). Additional comments were considered from European rock art school (Francfort H.-P., Jacobson E., 2004; Layton R. *et al.*, 2009), Russian rock art school (Sher Ya., 1980) and Australian rock art school (Bednarik R., 2007).

### **THE CATEGORIES**

#### **Emic and Etic analysis**

Emic and etic analyses comprise two different approaches toward rock art studies. The technological aspects of the image, as well as stylistic or motif approaches, determination of the tool used for depiction combine the *emic* analysis. On the contrary, *etic* analysis is exactly the work with ethnographic sources and image interpretation through the lenses of totemism, shamanism, or ritualistic affiliation.

### **1.5. EMIC ANALYSIS**

## Style

In this work it is crucial to define the concept of style because further discussion will include this term. In general, style is defined as a:

[C]onstant form – and sometimes the constant elements, qualities and expression – in the art of an individual or a group... For the archaeologist, style is exemplified in motive or pattern which helps him to localize and date the work and to establish connections between groups of works or between cultures: style here is a symptomatic trait, like the non-aesthetic features of an artifact (Shapiro, 1953:287).

Basically, the style answers the question *how it is painted*. Difficulty arises in when we start to talk about vast areas filled with ancient paintings and huge timeline period. *Stylistic evolution* is more an attempt to follow developmental stages of art, a concept that appeared on the territory of Western Europe (e.g. Breuil A., 1952). North American specialists contributed a *cultural-historical style* that is a type of style “exemplary of a particular culture during a specific time period” (Whitley D.S., 2005b:48).

However, some of the cultural-historical styles invented by one society were then widely accepted by others and further determined as separate stages of stylistic evolution. Talking about the Asian region we might emphasize on “bi-triangular,” “angar,” and “minusinsk” styles which were first localized in small societies and then became widely used techniques (Sher Ya., 1980 quoted in Francfort A.-P. and Jacobson E., 2004:62). Following this idea, prominent Russian archaeologist, Okladnikov distinguished similarities in stylistic evolution of the East and West rock art systems in the terms that “image of a beast is changing through time from realistic expression to the reduced statics” (Okladnikov A.P., (1972a) quoted in Sher Ya.A. (1980:185).

This gives us a clue in generating basic principles of stylistic division in Saimaly-Tash which is presented by several periods: “bi-triangular,” “Saka-Usun,” “ornamentally-realistic,” and “lineal” (Bernshtam A., 1997:396-398). In my work we would be interested in “bi-triangular” or “geometric” style as it is a distinguished point of the Bronze Age. This type of style can be easily distinguished by its specifics: all the bodies of animals are built from two triangles or rarely one rectangle. Other elements of the image (head, tail, hooves, antlers) are carved or pecked additionally (Ibid). This style belongs to III – beginning of II millennium B.C. with the characteristic thematic affiliation in depiction of chariots, carts, animals and humans. Late Bronze petroglyphs lose some triangular features and resemble in the images of cult scenes, solar signs, single animals and anthropomorphous figures (Tashbaeva *et al.*, 2001:32-33).

### *Motif*

For defining the motif archaeologist has to look at several images of the same geographic area and time and search for motif attributes – unconscious or conscious elements that author adds to the images of a human being like arm/feet position, or some geometric patterns (grids, circles, lines, dots, spirals) for animal images; if this elements is single and appropriate to the only one image that's motif, but if it becomes too often, it is defined as style (Whitley D., 2005:44-45).

### *Technique*

Technique is distinguished through the process of the image depiction on the rock surface. This includes the following means: fretwork, scratching, knockout, carving, pecking, harrowing, chipping, hewing and others, using metal or stone tools. By the technique of the ancient master we might determine the type of tool that he used during the depiction as well as date the picture.

In most of the cases it was noticed that ancient artist started his work from the sketches on the stone with some sharp tool's edge, possibly for defining the proportions of the image, then compositional solution followed and final refinement of some parts (Francfort A.-P. and Jacobson E., 2004).

During his research at Saimaly-Tash Bernshtam came up with specific three groups of images according to the used techniques (Bernshtam A., 1997:394-395).

#### *Saimaly-Tash technique grouping*

First group - “*shadowy*” was distinguished by carving or point-pecking of the borders of the image with further cleaning of the inner surface. Such a technique was used in early times during pre-Scythian and early Saka-Usun periods.

Second one is *contour* technique which is determined by the following features. The contour of these images was engraved using one line consisting up to three dots in row. The inner space of the image stayed not fully engraved until some fancy patterns were added (like in Scythian style). This technique applies to Saka-Usun and Hun styles.

Third style is “*skeletal*” and is presented by dotted lines that comprise only skeleton of the image without any attempt to give three-dimension of it. During the Turkic time such images were been carved in the stone.

Uncertainty works for the sites where there was no constant population for passing the traditions of technical methods (as we have in our case with Saimaly-Tash). This applies not only to the tools that could be used in image-making, but also to the stylistic approach.

However, as long as Bernshtam could split the images of the site by the technical and stylistic groups, might suggest that ancient people used the same tools across long time periods (centuries and millennia) and stylistic approach passed somehow to their off-springs.

## 1.6. ETIC ANALYSIS

D.S. Whitley as well as other rock art specialists pays great attention to the interpretational stage of rock art. Explanation of the symbolic behavior of human beings helps us to identify the hidden meaning of every image. In other words, symbolic or *semantic* analysis is based on the interpretation of art through conceptual understanding of what is depicted.

For most of the early religious beliefs, symbols originated from *natural objects* – in most of the cases, from animals and their behavioral specifics (Whitley, 2005:93-95). This applies to pictographs, oral folklore, and early religious beliefs in totemic creatures.

Etic analysis is generally presented with *ethnographic* and *neuropsychological* approaches. Both of them represent symbolic behavior of human being in the terms of art.

### *Ethnographic Analysis*

As it was stated earlier rock art appeared among tribal communities for transmitting symbolic information. In order to understand this information outsiders have to gain knowledge in cultural traits and specifics of those people. This kind of approach is known as ethnographic analysis and is widely used in rock art interpretation.

D.S. Whitley separates ethnographic analysis into three basic braches: shamanistic, totemic and commemorative.

*Totemic* art is based on the totemic affiliation of the particular tribe who usually leave specific marks of their totems on their territory. Totem is usually represented by specific natural object (i.e. sun, moon, plant, tree, etc.) or animal that is considered to be the ancestor of the tribe.

From ethnographic materials it is known that “ibex” or “kiyik” (Kyrgyz translation) is a totemic animal of several groups of Kyrgyz people who have names like kiyik-naiman or kuran-naiman (Abramzon, 1946:130 quoted by Tashbaeva, 1999:181). Also it is a well-known rock art motive across vast territory that includes Siberian and Central Asian regions, while in Saimaly-Tash it comprises around 60 percents of all other motives as it was stated above (Tashbaeva,



1999:181). This includes hunting scenes, totemic marks, episodes from daily life of ancient people and many more topics.

The depiction of deer (Tashbaeva *et al.*, 2001, consider it to be equal to the ibex semantics) is quite expressive, especially in the part of antlers. In most of the cases this part is exaggerated, sometimes it becomes even confusing because antlers look like tree branches chaotically spread above the head of the creature or like unusually long antlers arching to the deer's back. According to the prevailing motive of the deer/ibex among other images it might be assumed that people who depicted them had the same totemic affiliation as modern Kyrgyz tribes do and were performing the "kiyik" cult.

The next rock art type is *shamanistic* which aims to portray shaman's visions that he sees during the trance. This includes unclear episodes of rock art that are depicted in the places of power. In North American practice these images mostly visualize the animal spirit which is the shaman's helper (Whitley, 2005:98). Though some researchers do not rely on shamanistic nature of Central Asian rock art images (Francfort H.-P., Jacobson E., 2004:68-69), Rozwadowski A., on contrary, suggests that because of the syncretic nature of shamanism along with other religious beliefs and its long-practice in the region it is possible to look for shamanic details in the given images (Rozwadowski A., 2010:14-15). Unfortunately, rock art studies miss the complete studying of the shamanistic implication into the interpretation itself that is why my intention to apply shamanistic approach would be very careful.

*Commemorative* rock art is always associated with transmission of culturally important information. To some extent this kind of rock art is placed in the very important historical places used for pilgrimages and different kinds of ceremonies within a community. But, mostly, commemorative art narrates the moments of communal life like hunting, dancing, ritual performing and others.

### *Neuropsychological Analysis*

Neuropsychological analysis is among the widely applicable models that are used in the formal analysis of rock art. In itself the dimension represents determination of the origin of art rather than its meaning.

Basically this kind of analysis is based on the identification of hallucinatory images during the altered state of consciousness (ASC) or, in other words, trance stage, according to the neuropsychological model (N-P model). While the ASC is the main attribute of shamanic belief

it's been widely accepted in different cultures as their symbolic representations. This means that symbols in rock art that shamans used to identify their visionary stages with, were given cultural meaning afterwards according to cultural background of each community. And this might actually imply that most of the rock art motives originated due shaman's visions.

Coming back to scientific approach of neuropsychological analysis most of the researchers emphasize on three components of the reactions occurring during ACS condition that further combines the N-P model.

1. First stage is *entoptic patterns* which is the scheme consisting of the simple forms been "generated internally in the human optical and neural systems during ASC" (Whitley D.S., 2005b:111). There are basically seven of them been universally spread such as: "grids; dots, circles and flecks; concentrics and spirals; parallel lines and ticks; zigzags; meanders; and nested curves." (Ibid).
2. Second stage is more complicated as it doesn't show the exact state of ASC but combines *three stages* of trance. During these three stages human is passing through the entoptic simple patterns, then culturally complex "iconic images" which this entoptic images are developed into, and finally, opposition of iconic images to entoptic patterns themselves.
3. At this stage trance images become so vivid that they reduce original visions of a person's real world. It again consists of seven principles that involve either iconic images or entoptic patterns. Those are: "simple replication, multiple reduplication, fragmentation, rotation, juxtaposition, superimposition, and integration" (Ibid:112).

For making the picture clear enough for interpretation of shamanic rock art it is also essential to address to "metaphors of trance" – a cross-culturally used "bodily metaphors" of ASC stage. The technology of analyzing rock art in Central Asia according to this scheme is still undeveloped, but Euro-American cultures (that seems to be so much culturally different) found these metaphors quite applicable and universal. David S. Whitley in his book "Introduction to Rock Art Research" lists six of the main "bodily metaphors": death/killing, fighting/aggression, magical flight (is based on the weightless feeling or spinning in the vortex), drowning/swimming, sexual arousal/release, bodily transformation (feeling of been changed into other form, like half human and half animal). In most of the cases neuropsychological interpretation involves all of the listed models at the single shamanic rock art (Whitley D.S., 2005).

Knowing that shamanism in Central Asia has long roots of existence along with Totemism and other cults it is essential to imply this analysis and find entoptic patterns and iconic images presented. I suggest that it is important to remember that even totemic images could be representations of shamanic visions, so it is quite possible to look at shamanic implication through totemic lens, meaning that “deer motif” could be used as one of the ways to interpret trance stages.

Other question rises of how then to distinguish totemic image of “deer” from that one painted by shaman during his trance visions? In this case we have to be very attentive as entoptic patterns of the first stage of ASC can be overlapping the iconic image or be a significant part of it. While, totemic image would be possibly made by non-shamans and be more natural. New ways in transmitting shamanic implication were recently found out. According to researches conducted on Tamgaly<sup>2</sup> there were determined crack images and horses/bulls used along with shaman pictures.

## **FINDINGS**

For answering the thesis question there are five rock art composition deriving from approximately the Bronze Age (early, middle and late) were closely explored. Compositions also were chosen according to the deer symbol presented in all of them. Advantage was taken during poly-semantic analysis of all the symbols depicted with further interpretation of the whole idea.

Familiarizing with the description of each stone I hope that reader would also interested in visual supplementary materials added in appendixes of this paper.

## **Chapter 2. INTERPRETATION OF THE ROCK ART IMAGES**

### **2.1 FIGURE 1 - “DEER AND IBEX”**

#### *Emic Analysis*

The first picture is a full-stone length composition that’s been preserved in a very good condition. There is no palimpsest observed. There are no surface deformations due to glacier move observed (like in Jacobson E., 2002:41, 42).

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<sup>2</sup> Tamgaly is a prominent petroglyphic complex situated in the Southern Kazakhstan that has some stylistically similar petroglyphs to Saimaly-Tash ones (anthropomorphous creatures, deers, bulls and etc.).

The technique used is pecking of the borders of the upper sun-burnt layer with iron sharpen tool with further cleaning of the internal part. This technique is widely used in Saimaly-Tash as was observed by A. Bernshtam who dated it accordingly to the Bronze Age (Bernshtam A., 1997:394). The type of a tool used for depiction is relevantly thin (3-5 mm in diameter) that lead me to conclude about accuracy of implementation of the artist's idea.

The picture depicts a deer and an ibex. This can be concluded from the difference of their horns pecked – deer has long antlers, while ibex has slightly bended horns, as well tails of both are different – ibex' tail is looking up, while deer's one is looking down (like natural analogies have). The animals are leading up right. This direction was determined by Maximova as the typical for images of II – I millennia B.C. among the Kazakh (Maximova *et al.*, 1985:14) and Siberian (Okladnikov and Martynov, 1972:170) petroglyphs (Martynov *et al.*, 1992:41). Stylistic implementation of the image also speaks for the Bronze Age. Animals are depicted next to each other where the image of a deer goes underneath the small ibex.

The composition was done at the same time because there are no stylistic differences between the bodies of the animals, except the imaging of their horns. The deer is shown with a long antler having nine branches on it. Both animals are shown static, leading up (?). Also it is interesting to point out that animals are depicted in profile, meaning that there are two antlers, but from our side only one is visible. Artist used this interesting method in order to achieve some goal that might be further interpreted in several ways.

Such ibex imagery is stylistically prevalent on Saimaly-Tash site (Bernshtam A., 1997:398), while antlers of the deer look more like a motif element. However, some analogies of the last can be found at the same site. Deers with antlers “like a tree or herring-bone” (Tashbaeva *et al.*, 2001:24) are painted much later concerning the image we see here (Ibid, 2001:36-37). Also Tashbaeva determines “herring-bone” symbol alone, pecked without a deer (Ibid, pp.48, 59). This might mean that the pattern existed along with deer depiction, but artist of this image used it as additional symbol.

This image is interesting in the way that ibex (due to the specifics of it stylistic approach) is shown quite naturalistic, while the deer seems to mean something beyond the simple animal depiction.

#### *Etic Analysis*

Both animals represent an abundant concept at Saimaly-Tash site that in general is known as “deers” (Tashbaeva *et al.* 2001:24). From the above discussions the most applicable theory of

what is depicted would be either totemic affiliation been painted by tribal members or the cosmic “tree” cult been painted during the ceremonies (Ibid). This might apply especially to the deer image, but doesn’t explain the presence of ibex. It’s important to mention that Tashbaeva places both animals on one semantic niche (Ibid, pg.74) while we might hypothesize that ancient people won’t depict two symbolically identical images next to each other.

However, the antler of the deer gives broader field for discussion. As I said above the technique is very fine and “herring-bone” antler is presented in the way author intended it to be (nine branches in order with one facing to the deer’s back, five – leading up, and three – just straight stripes). I want to look closer at the “herring-bone” pattern and find some additional interpretations.

The idea that image is more symbolic was accidentally observed in the book of D.S. Whitley where he provided a photograph of North American shamanic cave art painting with very much alike symbol (D.S. Whitley, 2005b:31). In addition to Tashbaeva’s “herring-bone” symbol emphasis it becomes more evident to interpret this pattern through the lenses of some universal cosmology.

Theoretical base for “tree” symbol seems to be quite attractive to refer in this case. According to Ivanov V. ritual images on Siberian shamanic drums included symbol of “world/cosmic tree” in the form of “X” (Ivanov V., 1974:120). This tree didn’t have any leaves as it symbolized not only a tree as a natural object, but also “world axis.” Also Siberian folklore tends to believe that when shaman’s soul is taken by the “mother spirit” into the underworld it is been left “on the *ninth* and highest branch of a pitch pine (the so-called Schamanenbaum, also considered here as the Cosmic Tree) until it reaches maturity” (italic added) (Waida M., 1983:229). The number of antlers that we see on our image is also nine.

The concept of “axis mundi” seems to originate during the times of Rig Veda (sacred book of Indo-Iranian tribes) where offerings (horses) to different gods were tied to some column and after death their souls went up by the column to the necessary god. Additionally, in the source there is a description of this tree given: “upper part of the sacrificial pillar, made of wood and drug into the earth, is similar to *animal horn* (italic added)” (Rig Veda III, 8, 10). Referring to the Vedic translation of the word “*aśvattha*” we get “column to which a horse is tied as an offering” (Sher Ya., 1980:267).

The symbol itself usually appears along with images of horses tied to it from either both or one side (e.g. Sher Ya., 1980, Fig.124, Roswadowski A., 2004, Fig.25).<sup>3</sup> However, there is one remark. The animals that appear standing next to the “world axis” may vary from horses, dogs to goats (Roswadowski A., 2004:40). This gives us a clue of presence of the ibex next to the deer.

Thus I’m supporting the hypothesis of this antler to mean “world tree” that is in our case an antler of a deer. This assumption was done by Tashbaeva K. as she wrote “it is believed that the deer’s horns could symbolize the World Tree and its parallels, such as Tribal Tree and the Tree of Life” (Akishev A., 1984:39 quoted in Tashbaeva *et al.*, 2001:73). For specifying the symbolical meaning of the Tree I want to refer to the deer depictions among ancient Siberian peoples that might be interpreted as a representation of shaman.

Roswadowski A. in his work devoted to shamanistic rock art refers to one interesting theory. Deers, as stated above, are one of the imaginary modifications of shaman’s staff or drum that help shaman to travel on during his trances. Both of these magic objects were done using deer’s skin in order to transmit the power into inanimate item. This was also the case moment at the ceremony been performed by shaman and tribal people of animating the drum or staff (Diakonova V., 1981). Looking at the antler we see parallels of it with shamanic staff where short branches might represent pendants of it. Also knowing that staff was spread during Bronze era (Roswadowski A., 2010:11) that corresponds to my relevant dating, this hypothesis start to look more applicable.

Combining two semantic representations I want to add that among Siberian tribes the concept of “axis mundi” transformed into the “shaman’s tree” (Novik E.S., Hristoforova O.B., 2010). Next to this tree the animal offering has been widely performed. Also this object was a guarantee of shaman’s life and his good performance as well as the existence of the whole tribe.

Concluding everything said above I came to the final stage of interpretation. The scene seems to represent an offering of the ibex to some external forces/gods. As the sources above stated this is quite accepted practice among Indo-Iranian people, especially knowing that the timeline that we are talking about is the early stage of their separation from other tribes, meaning that the cosmological principles are still quite tight. However, the element of binding together a “cosmic tree” with the deer might be a regional motif element. Representation of the shaman in

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<sup>3</sup> One of the motives on the Siberian shamanic drums shown in Roswadowski A., 2004, Fig.75, is the tree and a horse tied to it and a human being (possibly shaman) holding the tree as well.

the deer symbol is also an interesting turn and “shaman’s tree” seems to be very applicable here. So the best guess is that shaman as the religious nexus between gods and commoners offers on the behalf of the tribe this animal (ibex).

The image could be pecked by a tribal member on a special date who knew basic principles of the cosmogonical representations. The true shamanistic elements existing next to the composition are not presented so I conclude that shaman could address some special elements of the image but didn’t take part in its creation.

## 2.2 FIGURE 2 - “GRAZING ANIMALS”

### *Emic Analysis*

Next image shows a composition of several animals including: deers, some predator, one bull (top center), and two “snakes” (or “paths” according to Bernshtam A., 1997:394).

The surface is damaged as well as the stone itself is defected possibly during the rockslide that took place at Saimaly-Tash in I millennia B.C. There is no palimpsest observed. Also the stone doesn’t have glacier move marks. The most damaged part is the left side because half of the composition is missing which disables me to make more solid assumptions toward the interpretational stage.

The technique of depicting is again “shadowy” (by Bernshtam) with the additional carving of small parts (deer’s antlers and predators paws). The images of animals except the “snake” are shown quite accurately; we can even see toes (on paws) of the predator. On contrary, “snake” depiction is done quite messy with some dots spread around the picture. According to the technique differences this even seem to be an element added long after the composition of deers was done.

By the level of patination we see that both lines and “snakes” have much brighter color than deers, bull and predator. However, the image of the deer bottom-right was renewed by another master and that is why the patination might be brighter here. Overall, this is not a strong argument because the object wasn’t examined by me in the field, so the color of patination might be a sunlight defect.

The composition itself is representing the hunting scene, or so named “chase scene” (Roswadowski A., 2004:91) of a predator (“wolf-like creature”, as Roswadowski A. calls it) that catches the oldest deer after the tail (it has more branches on antlers, so I suppose this to be the oldest one). All the animals are coming from the left to right which is also a very determinant

point of the Bronze Age. Predator's movement is stressed and limbs are clutched showing the attack pose. The biggest deer is carved in oblong pose, trying to free itself and pulling ahead.

I want to continue hypothesizing that this composition, consisting of all the elements, was done by two masters. First one was thinking of depicting natural grazing animals, while the second master renewed the composition with more symbolical meaning and added "snake" and line elements. Still, both interpretations provide us with inconsistent information. Grazing animals might represent a part of the much broader composition. Little element of bull pressing its horns that look as if they didn't go into the space of the stone is the explanation that there was no continuation of the stone above, but looking at the opposite side we are not that much positive about other elements of the composition that could brake off with the piece of stone. Still it would be better to separate compositions into two semantically different scenes.

The style of engraving is bi-triangular (deers and bull depictions) and geometric in predator's image. Stylistic approach refers to the Bronze Age.

#### *Etic Analysis*

"Snake" is one of the elements of Saimaly-Tash images that repeats in different contexts quite often.<sup>4</sup> However, the symbol doesn't limits to Central Asian region only. North American researchers emphasize on the importance of this symbol (in the form of zigzag lines) among their rock art and even have ethnographical evidence of the "rattlesnake" symbol been used during girls initiation ceremonies (Whitley D.S., 1998:12, 15).

The line that divides this composition three by three (not counting "snakes") is artificially created. Long lines present at many pictures (Tashbaeva *et al.*, 2001:Fig.23, 69, 88, 90, and others). In most of the compositions those are zigzag or straight doubled, tripled sometimes single lines used along with animals' images and hunting scenes.

As long as we don't see the ending of both sides of this line we might interpret this symbol variously.

Interesting version of strange symbols consisting of line with circles/dots on the sides, used along with images of bulls, carts, and deers (rarely with hunting scenes and humans) was called "spectacle-like" or "bi-spectacle" signs (Roswadowski A., 2004:25.). This symbol is widely used during the middle Bronze Age determined in Central Asian petroglyphs (Martynov *et al.* 1992:32). However, Roswadowski doesn't give any new interpretation to the "spectacle-

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<sup>4</sup> Bernshtam A. emphasized that "snake" symbol was very popular among ancient hunters-gatherers of Saimaly-Tash and gave third place on by the frequency of depiction of it (Bernshtam A., 1997:394, Fig.2).



like” sign, but accepts a suggestion about its equivalent to the “solar signs.”<sup>5</sup> Many researchers add this to be a symbol of sun moving in the sky (Martynov *et al.* 1994:33, Rozwadowski A., 2002:44, Devlet E.G., 1992). However, in our case the line is used alone, but it has curved ends (at least from right side) that remind a little bit of “bi-spectacular” symbol. Interesting example of the oblong spectacular sign might be found in Tamgaly, Kazakhstan (Rozwadowski A., 2004:27, Fig.18).

Also, there a complementary point has to be added. In his article David S. Whitley makes an example of cracks in the rocks been used by the shamans – “painted or engraved panel was believed a permeable barrier, with rocks and cracks in the panel face opening to allow the shaman to move between the natural and supernatural realms” (Whitley D., 1998:16). This might explain the roughness of the line and the fact that it begins in the top right from a natural crack of the same width. This might also explain how the idea to put such a division was created. Other natural cracks and deformations might also be considered to form relevantly at the same time the composition was engraved by the level of its patination.

Deer, as it was stated above, is a popular symbol of Bronze Age where it possibly meant sun deity (Tashbaeva *et al.* 2001:73). But exactly on this image deers are relevantly different from each other. For bringing the realism in the composition, ancient master paid great attention to the variety of antlers among these species. Also he used quite naturalistic approach toward animal depiction themselves (e.g. long and thin limbs, tail looking down, depiction of hooves). This applies to the image of a predator, too. The best solution for such in-depth animal knowledge is that the man who carved them was a hunter himself.

However, symbolic part still exists. It is expressed in the motif of a predator catching the deer for a tail. Such an episodic scene was found among other images of Saimaly-Tash and might be considered as the stylistic element (see Tashbaeva *et al.*, 2001:Fig.83, 81). Usually the predator is shown in the pose it is depicted on this image. Sovetova O. supposes such scenes to represent “defeat, agony or death of the last one [prey] especially for demonstrating victory, triumph of the aggressive either human or animal” (Sovetova O., 2006:80). However, Jacobson E. offers another more in-depth explanation. Such scenes of “chasing” the deer are seen “as symbolic of the fight for life as well as of vital energy” (Jacobson E. 1993, 1999, quoted in

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<sup>5</sup> The idea of “spectacular” as a “solar” symbol was first hypothesized by Kadyrbaev, Maryashev (1977:203), also supported by Martynov *et al.* (1992:32).

Roswadowski A., 2004:91). Adding to this a widely accepted interpretation of the deer meaning sun deity and life this theory looks more applicable for the first interpretation.

The next ancient master decided to separate the image with a line and to add the element of “snake” that would probably express new magical meaning. In general, this symbol is found in different contexts of animal depiction as well as along with human different activities shown and ritualistic scenes. That is why it is quite hard to identify concrete semantic meaning of it. Indo-Iranian sources state that snake (representation of the God Vritra) stole the waters (in the representation of cows) and locked them in the cave, but Indra freed them soon (Venkatasubbiah, 1965, quoted in Roswadowski A., 2004:81). This means that snake could be associated with drought. Here I want to make an assumption that researchers confuse “snake” symbol with the natural zigzag river flow roughly depicted. In Siberian shamanic tradition snakes come from the under world and represent death (Golendukhin Yu., 1971 quoted in Martynov *et al.* 1992:47). It’s also necessary to point out that left image of “snake” is almost catching the deer after the tail. This resembles us the scene from right side where predator is doing the same.

My best guess for the whole composition should be the following: second master didn’t intend to change the meaning of the previous image. Looking closer at both “snake” symbols we see some differences. Left symbol is more tangled than the right one. Adding to this the element of “bite” we get the representation of death and underworld of the whole left side of the composition. On the contrary, right side of the picture is presented as middle world of animals and possibly humans (though they aren’t depicted here) and “snake” symbol here refers to the river. And in this case it might mean fertility cult.<sup>6</sup> Both “snake” and “path/river” symbols presented in one composition might be understood as counterbalance of each other. The presence of a semi-spectacular symbol in this composition is not clearly understood, however, it completes the cosmogonical representation and division into two worlds.

There have to be said several words about the authors of both ideas. As I said above the first master could be quite ordinary tribal member and hunter. But the second one was less clear in expressing his ideas. The deep meaning that should be found in “snake” and “river” symbols might be much broader than I showed and accuracy of images is also quite low. The symbols themselves represent lines and zigzags that originated during the first stage of ASC as entoptic patterns. Adding to this the point that division reminds of an artificially created crack we get the

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<sup>6</sup> However, there has to be done more ethnographic research to prove this hypothesis.

probable answer. My best guess is that it was shaman who renewed the image after it was firstly carved.

### **2.3 FIGURE 3 - “DEER AND MAN WITH THE SUN”**

#### *Emic Analysis*

First of all this image on the photo is incomplete. The whole composition can be found in Tashbaeva *et al.*, 2001, Fig.33. From the right side of the exaggeratedly giant deer there is a man approaching, holding some object in both of his hands.

The technique used in the image is pecking with the diameter of iron tool of approximately 2-3 cm. Rock itself is damaged from the top while surface is quite smooth with minimum cracks. There is no case of palimpsest observed. The image itself is very clear.

It would be difficult to describe the semantic meaning of the composition as long as the full size of it is shown only in black and white reproduction.

Image of the deer is rather complicated and exceptional considering the style of its antlers. I didn't find any analogies of depicting antlers in this way; however, such attempt is usually used toward the imaging of bulls of the Bronze Age (see Tashbaeva *et al.* 2001, Fig.10, 14, 16). At the same time on Fig.11 and 12 of Tashbaeva (Ibid), the stylistic decision of branchy antlers seem to be resembling, but branches of those deers are looking outward, while we have the opposite result in our case.

The size of the deer is big enough and a human being on the right side of the image is four times smaller considering the first. The human is holding a sun object in his right hand and something else in the left one. The sun object is radiating nine rays outward.

The two strange vertical lines on the back of deer have no analogies in other pictures I researched and so are a great deal for future debates.

#### *Etic Analysis*

In general, it is not a hunting scene depicted as there are no arrows, bows or any other hunting attributes presented. However, there are some elements that attracted my attention. The pose of the deer is a little strange considering that it's tiptoed. The mouth is also opened that is a characteristic element of the animal in death agony. Both these elements were pointed in the research of O.Sovetova where she mentioned a group of images known as “sacrificial,” “pacified,” and “submitted to a man” (O.Sovetova, 2006:81). She describes this pose as following: “animal has uplifted, suspended body, weak-willed hanging limbs and sometimes

head that looks at the hunter” (see the image on Ibid:90) (Sovetova O., 2006:81). Examining more this stylistic approach we see that croup of the deer is unnaturally downed and there are two objects in its neck (possibly arrows).

As the man that is approaching to the deer doesn't have any weapon we might draw additional conclusions. The size difference between both objects gives a clue that it might be some ritual preserved or a mythological episode.

The symbol of deer, as it was previously discussed, resembles life, energy and sun patronage for the people of Bronze Age. Seven branches of the antlers perhaps are keeping additional message. Seven as a number holds a cosmological important message like “7 phases of the moon, the cult and idea of fertility” (Samashev Z., 2002:39). Accordingly, such specific numbering of seven “invariably show their associations with the numerological characteristics of the universe and the cosmic tree, as well as the connection of the Eurasian mythology of shamanism, which furthermore, shows a typological correlation to the Indo-Aryans which are preserved in the *Rig Veda* (Ogibenin, 1968:78-79 quoted in Samashev Z. (2002).” Also number seven plays an important role in Siberian shamanistic tradition. In the cosmologies of several tribes (Nenets, Selkups) sky as well as under-earth consist of seven sub-stages and on the Selkup drum every image on its surface combines the number seven (see Rozwadowski A., 2004:75, Fig. 64). This gives us a clue of cosmological importance of the deer in this composition.

The scene doesn't consist any entoptic patterns that is why cannot be associated with shamanistic rock art. However, the sun element in the hand of a human being is unreal in its nature and the only one might resemble shamanistic entoptic image determined by S.Whitley (2005b) as dots, curves and further as sun-like patterns determined by Horowitz (1975), and Siegel and Jarvik (1975).<sup>7</sup> The man depicted doesn't represent a shaman (e.g. in the images of Samashev Z., 2002:40, 41) and seem to be a commonly represented tribal member (as in the images of Tashbaeva *et al.* 2001, Fig.32, 45, and etc.). So we might suggest that the motif is not related to shamanistic rituals because the whole scene is rather realistically depicted (not considering the sizes).

Following this idea I want to offer my own interpretation that is connected to mythological types of images.

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<sup>7</sup> Sun-like images were marked out of those entoptic images that Huichol Indians of Northern America visualize during ASC stage (according to Horowitz (1975), and Siegel and Jarvik (1975).

The episode reminds of another image where the man is “flying” with the help of four dogs, caring a sun in his right hand (Tashbaeva *et al.* 2001:42, Fig.39). Other images that show both man and sun at once are so-called “sun-deities” which represent sun-headed creatures only (Rozwadowski A. and M.Koško, 2002:40, Fig.4). Neither Tashbaeva *et al.* (2001) nor Martynov *et al.* (1992) have other cases in their Saimaly-Tash albums that show human holding a sun, so I suppose these two episodes, I exemplified above, to be exceptional ones. Unfortunately, I don’t know how far both episodes stand from each other and if they are close in depiction this might be a good demonstration for my theory. Still, they seem to be a continuous episode representing one story.

For proving a mythological hypothesis I want to offer a very interesting myth from Evenks’ folklore where all the elements including a deer, a man, the sun, and dogs are presented. This is the story of creation of the Milky Way, Ursa Major and Minor (constellations of Big and Little Bears) and actually the alteration of the day and night. It tells that once the deers – buck and doe, decided to steal the sun from the sky so that the night will cover the earth. But brave hunter Mani saw them and followed the deers running away across the sky with the sun. With the help of his two dogs Mani was pursuing the deers until they divided. Hunter killed the buck but didn’t find a sun because the doe stole it. Having looked around he saw the doe coming up to the sky hole. As soon as Mani shot her and returned the sun to the people, stars appeared on the place of their cosmic hunting. Since that time every day and night this hunting repeats again.<sup>8</sup>

I do not claim that this is the only mythic episode that explains our petroglyph scene, but man holding a sun standing next to quite an impressive deer figure might be explained as mythological pattern. Such story of cosmic visions of main constellations of Big and Little Bear and alteration of day and night could be spread among ancient Indo-Iranian people who settled in Saimaly-Tash. And if my theory is more or less applicable such a scene could be depicted by the members of society. However, this mythological picture holds some shamanistic peculiarities, but in the lack of entoptic patterns of all the stages and quite naturalistic depiction I would doubt that shaman has carved that or helped to do so.

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<sup>8</sup> The story was told by the N.I. Antonov from the clan of Chikagir in 1976. The story was published in Mazin A.I. (1984) *Tradicionnye verovaniya i obryady evenkov-orochonov*, Novosibirsk, pg.9

## 2.4 FIGURE 4 - “DEERS AND IBEXES”

### *Emic Analysis*

The image is done on a quite smooth surface, but compositionally the photo is not complete. At the same time the stone surface is damaged and it's not clear whether the damage was natural or artistic. There are some little scratches on the surface but I don't find them enough evident to consider further interpretation through the lenses of shamanism.

The technique used is pecking and carving which both applies to all figures of the composition. Especially the deers' tails, branches on antlers, limbs are done very accurately where the metal tool made a 1-2 cm dots in diameter. Unfortunately, for the cruciform symbol master used very heavy tool that damaged the stone during the process of pecking.

The image consists of four main figures: two ibexes and two deers. The difference between two groups of animals in horns and tails is quite evident. Besides, there is a “snake”/ “path” figure which one of the ibexes is touching. This seems to be an intentionally done item. However, there is another symbol that is in the middle of the composition and in the form of trident. But this element, if it's been done intentionally, is pecked much later and possibly belongs to the group of tamgas.

The style of the whole composition is hardly distinguishable because it seems that several artists were implementing their ideas. The level of patination between ibexes and deers seem to belong to the one period of time, but stylistically deers represent very accurate rectangular style with prevailing carving technique. At the same time ibexes with some strange dots around them (the last ones are perhaps of the natural origin) are done with pecking element and even their habitus varies. The ibex that is perhaps, entering the “path” has curled horns and active running pose while others are depicted as still. The image is covered with pecked dots both big and small. Big dots are situated around the tamga element and were done with quite a big metal tool with diameter of 5 mm comparing to older pictures done with metal tool in diameter up to 2 mm.

### *Etic Analysis*

By the level of patination I hypothesize that there were at least two masters who tried to depict their ideas, so during the interpretation stage we again will split the image into natural motif and tamga motif added much later.

The animals are shown by pairs presenting equality. Deers are presented schematically and over-stylized meaning that author of the first composition was in lack of knowledge of the

natural specie. Still the master included some basic distinguishing points of the deers – long limbs and tails looking down. The quantity of branches that might somehow lead us to semantic analysis varies from four to seven on different sides of the antlers. However, the right deer has in total 12 branches, while the left one has 13 branches which is approximately the same number. It's also interesting to mention that antlers of both deers are bended in such a manner that represents a circle-like figure. This might mean that two deer have to be seen as halves of the whole. The concept is seen more as motif element as didn't appear in other images from the same site.

By the zigzag line (left) and accuracy of its implementation I would suggest that this is the “snake” symbol been depicted. Additionally, I found another image where animal is also “touching” a snake/river symbol in Martynov *et al.* (1992) Photo 13 and Fig.85. Still it does not repeat the style of this picture, but rather repeats the idea itself. Snake in this case would represent the underworld (Golendukhin Yu., 1971 quoted in Martynov *et al.* 1992:47) and death. Thereby the ibex should be dead. Interesting interpretation of the falling animals and humans was suggested by Sovetova who mentioned that “researchers assume diving and falling headfirst figures who are leading vertically down to embody inverted cosmos, while this act is seen as a part of ritualistic rebirth” (Akimova, Kifishin, 1994:193-216 quoted in Sovetova O., 2006:89). This gives us a clue of combination of the two elements like snake and ibex on this depiction and I guess that “rebirth” concept along with deers who represent energy and life is also very attractive in our case.

Actually if to look more abstract we can find that trinity of creatures (two deer and one ibex) all facing right side, which is determined as “life side” by Sovetova, are placed crosswise or in the X-shape that in general represents the concept of life circle (Sovetova O., 2006:82). Knowing that ibex is considered to be one of the sacrificial animals make some additional comments.

Hypothesizing that animals represent cruciform concept we start to understand better the presence of cross-like tamga situated in the center. Represented with oval sides it completely fits into the initial idea. The level of patination shows that this image was added long after the first stage of the composition was complete and Martynov *et al.* (1992:44) suggests this might belong to the early Turkic epoch. Still there is no direct definition of this symbol as tamga. However, I want to offer additional interpretation.

Siberian tribes, namely Kets, have this symbol representing world tree which is balancing the world structure dividing it by equal numbers of animals (image is presented in Novik E. and Hristoforova O., 2010). From the right side of that exemplified picture we can find sun, while left side is represented by a number of snakes. The same approach we have in the Figure 2.4 where antlers of both deers are bent in the form of circle resembling the sun and snake as an opposite symbol is situated to the left.

The symbol of deer in this picture is dual and perhaps presents cosmological concept rooted in the ancient mythology. The hypothesis is supported by mythological depicting of the deer with unrealistically long branchy antlers. I guess that for the later author to understand the concept of the previous master he had to share alike values and cosmological principles. The first master wasn't necessarily a hunter as he used only rigid stylistic approaches of his times. Neither was he a shaman as no entoptic patterns have been determined at this stage of depiction. The next author is more likely to bring more power into the composition, but as he did a lot of mistakes – used crude metal tool and destroyed half of the “tree” symbol I guess that he didn't depict before. The symbol is done very primitively (comparing to previous master's work) and could be created by the shaman. To some extent this symbol might belong to the entoptic patterns, but in this case I pay attention more to the cosmological view of this man and its implementation into the picture.

## **2.5 FIGURE 5 - “DEER AND RITUAL SCENE”**

### *Emic Analysis*

Again this image is photographed partly and Tashbaeva *et al.* 2001, Fig.23 gives more completed version of the whole composition. On the photograph we are missing two carriages lead by two men at the bottom.

This image is done on a very smooth surface using the technique of pecking with the sharp metal tool. There are no cracks or damages observed. There is no palimpsest observed. All the figures depicted might belong to one period of time according to the same level of patination.

The style of the imaging is bi-triangular for all the figures deriving approximately from early Bronze Age. Also all the figures are looking at the right side which also contributes to the theory of all the components belonging to one composition and time of depiction. As we can see here, the deer motif, including its legs, head, and antlers, is completely different from what we



have observed before, meaning it might represent a motif element. However, it should be said that naturalistically deer is reproduced poorly. The limbs are small; the body is bulky, while antlers are over-stylized. This might mean that author didn't see the real deer prior to depiction or he didn't have an intention to show a real animal. Also the image is covered with little dots which seem to be created by the ancient master during the depiction.

At the top of the composition it is a semi-hunting scene depicted. The image includes human being which is carved quite naturally, with slightly bent knees. Man is holding a "wolf-like creature" with the rope, meaning that it is a domesticated animal. Both figures look directly at the deer that is leading right side. Above these figures there are two zigzag lines which are either "snakes" or "rivers" and above that there is a strange motif consisting of three circles been connected together (perhaps the forth circle is shown incomplete). The symbol is quite ridiculous and doesn't have any analogies observed in other images. Also there is an additional strange symbol of two parallel lines that seem to be some unfinished motif. However, these lines fill compositionally the free space. At the bottom there are two carriages harnessed with bulls and possibly goats (they have special small beards) and two people who control the carriages. The knees of both are also slightly bent.

There should be said some words about the harnessed animals. Unfortunately, the image of both chariots is black and white, so it should be considered that some of the parts are either omitted or exaggerated due to copying technique. The upper chariot consists of a bull and a creature without horns that might be understood as horse (however the complexion of the last is quite bulky and has goat's beard). The bottom chariot is harnessed with two bulls and one of them again has goat's beard.

#### *Etic Analysis*

The first question that arises during the etic analyses is whether this multi-figured composition holds one semantic idea and was created by the same author. To the information that I've said above about the same level of patination I want to add that Martynov *et al.* pointed out that along with the symbols of chariots/carriages there are usually used spectacular symbols, humans, bulls, and snakes (Martynov *et al.*, 1992:36). All these components are presented in our composition that means that they are tied logically. First of I will separately interpret all the symbols and then combine them under one idea.

The man that is holding a "wolf-like creature" has some interesting characteristics. As I said the knees are bent and hands are up that are interesting features of ritualistic scenes of

Saimaly-Tash (i.e. Tashbaeva *et al.*, 2001, Fig.40, 41). The palms are also quite emphasized comparing to the ones of the charioteers' that reminds other interesting anthropomorphic figures from Tashbaeva *et al.* 2001, photo 4 on the page 53 and Fig.68, 72, 73. There is no specific description done yet of what such exaggerations mean but still men with bent knees might be considered as performing a ritual according to other images' content.

The "wolf-creature" shows some naturalistic qualities. Its tail and fur is risen up as in the attack position. Still it is not clear if it is a hunting scene depicted as the human being doesn't have any weapon and the deer is running away (in hunting scenes of this period deer is shown as already killed prey standing still or bleeding with arrow). There are rare cases when animals, especially predators are shown as domestic animals. I founded only one semi-domesticated predator coming from Martynov *et al.*, 1992, Fig.85. This shows exclusiveness of the image that we have in the research and also uncommonness of the cases of combined hunting with predators.

Unreality to the picture brings also the image of the deer. Its antlers in general consist of seven horns that as I said above, was a very significant number for Indo-Aryan people (it was emphasized in *Rig Veda* and also found in Siberian shamanistic practice). The deer as it was previously discussed in the Figure 2.3 might hold cosmological meaning. This fact made me hypothesize that the deer in this image might represent a totemic animal tracing back to mythological cosmology of ancient tribes who populated Saimaly-Tash.

The deep semantic effect is strengthened with "snake" and "river" images to the left. Evident stylistic difference of both symbols sets an assumption that they represent two separate things (in the previous examples of Fig.2.2 we faced only with roughly made lines). More accurate line has little thickening on its end with two dints done on its both sides. I hypothesize this to be a "snake" symbol possibly creeping into the earth. In general, snakes in Siberian tradition represent the underworld (Golendukhin Yu., 1971 quoted in Martynov *et al.* 1992:47) also meaning death.

At the same time line to the right is roughly depicted and might present a "river" symbol. I want also to pay attention to the technique factor in this case that will add more information for the interpretation. Comparing to the sharp corners of the "snake" symbol, "river" has two corners with obtuse angles. It's also interesting that the fragmented line placed to the right of the "river" symbol is on the one line with obtuse angle of the "river" itself. This means that they were both placed as lines before the image of "river" was done. The dot under that fragmented line is

situated on the same distance, as the “river” zigzag is from that fragmented line. This means that all three symbols – “river,” fragmented line and dot were intentionally created by the ancient master. Taking into consideration that two fragmented lines were created intentionally during, I guess, the first stage of the compositional sketch it is quite obscure why the master used only one line that further was turned into a zigzag.

I have a preliminary suggestion to that. Both fragmented line and dot might represent a dry wash of the river. However, I’m missing a good evidence to prove that. Also I want to point out that the zigzag lines of the “river” (on the example of the fragmented line) were created quite accurately (at the stage of sketch) and intentionally messed with dots afterwards, meaning that this is the specifics of the symbol.

Other element that is emphasizing on the ritualistic purpose of the image is spectacular or solar symbol to the left of the “snake” and “river.” The motif, having several circles remind of the solar symbols that Martynov *et al.* (1992) is presenting in his research (e.g. Fig.14 on the pg.57) as well as some chaotic system of solar signs in Tashbaeva *et al.*, 2001:53. The best guess that I can give in the absence of analogies is that it belongs to division of the world into several sides. This hypothesis is partly proved by the tradition to put four circles at its ends while painting on the surface of drum among Siberian shamans. This world division points on the four corners of the earth (Novik E., Hristoforova O., 2010).

There are also some interesting elements that surround the composition and which are seemingly done by the same master. These are dashes that cover the top part of the image. In both extensive publications on Saimaly-Tash done by Martynov *et al.* (1992) and Tashbaeva *et al.* (2001) there is no interpretation of dashes used as semantically important parts of the images.

However, the dash symbol has long been identified in African, North American, and Australian rock art images where scientists tried to find some interpretations for them. In general, this symbol derives from the neuropsychological analysis where it is connected to the first stage of entoptic visions of a shaman. However, it doesn’t mean that this image is shamanistic in general, but entoptic model might have been accepted as ethnographic symbol as well.

In Australian rock art school dashes have several interpretations. When they are painted around animals they might mean “smell or heat” while founded in the entire composition might remind of the rain (Chippindale C. *et al.*, 2000:82). But the constancy and variety of dots been used in different pictures made Chippindale C. *et al.* suggest that the whole idea of dots is “spiritually deprived power” that helps in hunting or any other activities (Chippindale C. *et al.*,

2000:83). This power ethnographically originates from shamanistic rock art sometimes meaning visions. Thus, used in shamanistic rock art it was as well used in commemorative images.

Interesting example comes from the Selkup drum (see Rozwadowski A., 2004:75) which portrays a shamanic cosmology where the whole surface of the drum is studded with dots or so-called “stars” (Novik E., Hristophorova O., 2010). Here the dots might refer also not only to the “stars,” but also bear power context, as the drum was meant to be the most powerful tool of shamanistic practices.

It’s necessary to mention that in Australian rock art zigzag lines are usually used along with dots. Chippindale *et al.* emphasize these compositions “scattered with dashes are ones which contain 'supernatural' elements such as therianthropes or people clinging to a giant snake” (Chippindale C. *et al.*, 2000:83). This means that zigzag lines along with dashes are both elements of entoptic patterns that co-occur together in the compositions. Still, this assemblage doesn’t give the clue for interpretation of both symbols but Australian interpretation of the dashes is one of the possible solutions for shamanistic elements in the rock art.

The carriages that are used in the bottom of the composition have several specifics. The wheels are quite small that speaks of the ancient origin of the image. In most of the cases those are known as “wonderful carriages” dating back to the Early Bronze age, III-II millennium B.C. (Tashbaeva, 2001:29). The fact that they significantly differs from original carriages is that they are harnessed with different species of animals (as in our case, bulls, goat, and a horse) that in reality never would be chosen for pairs. The best example is the image of the animals from the bottom carriage where we have both bull and half-bull half-goat creature leading the cart (like in the images of Tashbaeva *et al.*, 2001, Fig. 21, 25, 26). This interesting feature made Sher to suppose chariot motif to belong to the mythological thematic (Ya. Sher, 1980:282). However, I would agree with Martynov *et al.* to consider this symbol having broader semantic context (Martynov *et al.*, 1992:39).

But it should be noted that we are dealing with two different carriages. The top image of the carriage doesn’t have wheels, but consist of a pole, and “sharpen tip, which is leading down from the driver” (Ibid, pg.35). This possibly points on the wooden plough (Ibid) which is harnessed with bull and a horse.<sup>9</sup> The charioteer in both cases is not riding a plough or carriage but follows it holding a gad.

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<sup>9</sup> The horse shown in the carriage has analogies in Tashbaeva *et al.* 2001, Fig.21 and detailed description in Ibid, pg.25

Basically chariots have two interpretations when they are perceived as gods' transportation and as nexus between the world of dead and alive (Ibid, pg.38-39). In consideration of the solar symbol at the top of the whole composition I want to stress more on the solar cult that chariots are associated with (Formozov, 1969:240). Additional interpretation suggests that the concept of the sun's movement across the sky was also imitated by the carriage with fire (Yevsyukov, Komissarov, 1984:63).

However, in our case we should think about both plough and chariot/carriage symbolizing two different things. In general plough might be seen as the symbol of agriculture, while chariot belongs more to the nomadic way of life. The naturalistic approach that is chosen by the author of composition toward the depiction of the carts seems to be pointing on true existence and utility of these objects in everyday life of Bronze Age people. Accordingly, unity of these two nomadic and agricultural lifestyles leads me to hypothesize that this could be a special ritual performed concerning integration of both social structures into one culture or a seasonal calendar of year activity presented (for the winter there is a chariot, for the rest of the year - plough).

Animals in the harness are also significant parts for interpretation. Originally, the bulls as symbols of the *Primal Bull* deriving from the Indo-Iranian cosmology were used as basic sacrificial animals. In the II millennium B.C. horse became the second animal that was further considered as sacrificial instead a bull (Rozwadowski A., 2004:35). Addressing to *Rig Veda* texts we find an interesting hymn concerning combination of two different animals: "your golden chariot separating two worlds would come harnessed with bull-like horses" (Ogibenin B., 1968:28). This helps us to explain partly the animals harnessed into the plough. However, by the *Rig Veda* text quoted above it is quite obscure why these animals were used for the plough but not for the chariot.

In conclusion I want to say that the information transmitted through so many symbols is very intense. The upper image of the man holding the "wolf-like creature" and following the deer is a cosmological concept of the existence of specific tribe. I want also to hypothesize that three objects to the left of the human including "snake," "river," and solar symbol might reflect the trinity of Indo-Aryan cosmology. From *Rig Veda* sources we know that the world structure consists of "Heaven – the upper world; Atmosphere – the intermediate space; and the Earth – the lower world" (Rozwadowski A., 2004:48) It is also specified that Atmosphere is represented by *waters*, mist, and clouds (Macdonell, 1897:8-10; Keith 1925:77-85 quoted in Rozwadowski,

2004:48). This interpretation correlates with the “river” element that is crossing the composition. Additionally, the “snake” as it is stated above is a representation of the lower world while solar symbol might represent in our case the Heaven. The question rises of why the “snake” is put in between the Atmosphere and Heaven while on the image in Rozwadowski A. (2004) Fig.32 it should be at the lowest level. I found very interesting remark where “snake” zigzag line is a “symbol of dividing and uniting the heavens and earth” and sometimes is used in between (Samashev Z., 2002:44).

Also continuing the idea of trinity of the Atmosphere (waters, mist and clouds) we see the equal division done by three lines (two fragmented lines, top center) where dots are especially concentrated around. Idea of a dotted Atmosphere is also represented in the same Rozwadowski A. (2004) Fig.32.

The additional semantic meaning brings the bottom of the picture where men lead plough and carriage. My best guess to the composition would be that both carriages represent the tribal calendar division that uses both agricultural and nomadic ways of life year round. Different animals that are harnessed into these carriages might represent seasonal offerings done by the tribe, but originally deriving from Vedic mythology. The symbol of goat (goat’s beards in particular) used in both images of carriage animals has quite a universal meaning. Samashev in his article mentions that:

It maybe possible that the animals found next to the images of anthropomorphic figures represent sacrificial goats during the time of certain feasts (perhaps they were connected with annual cycles such as passing of the old year into the new, the spring-summer solstice, or others as well as the cult of ancestors) being the manifestation of the concept of fertility (Samashev Z., 2002:43).

This basically means that goat might be seen as the determinant point of the calendar of the ancient peoples. In harness along with bulls (or other animals) it represents the beginning of each period: either agricultural or nomadic.

Such an immense cosmological motif could be created by the special tribal member, but the shaman had a lot to do with composition as well as correct representation of all the elements. Unclear cosmological trinity derives mostly from entoptic patterns of the ASC stages of the trance and I want to hypothesize that this part could be created by the shaman himself. Also it is very important to look at the surrounding geomorphology of the place where this image is situated. I guess that it has been a chosen place for ritual performances as well as the important place for seasonal pilgrimages.

## CONCLUSION

Concluding to all said above I want to emphasize on the several following points. My research tends to become the first one in the field of rock art studies in Kyrgyzstan that didn't separate symbols in groups but interpreted the compositional completeness of every motif.

This helped me to answer the question of how ancient people perceived the symbol of deer during the Bronze Age. Through comprehensive analysis and diverse sources that I mentioned I showed that this symbol was playing different roles in the society: it could be seen as a symbol of life and energy when was used in hunting scenes (e.g. Figure 2.2), as well as it could be found as a center for cosmogonical view in offering scenes (e.g. Figure 2.1). Also the deer was the main hero of mythological folklore of Bronze Age peoples who deeply connected it with Sun. Contextual analogies of Indo-Iranian myths and Saimaly-Tash petroglyphs also shows the interconnection of worldviews of diverse people who lived on the vast areas of Eurasia.

I showed that the best way to understand the semantic meaning of one particular image of the deer has to be seen through deciphering of all the additional figures as well as the stone deformations that could also bear symbolic notions. Sometimes seen as simple mistakes of the author, symbols could have deep shamanistic origin. Following entoptic patterns, such as dots (small and big ones), zigzags, straight lines, and circles are widely used in Saimaly-Tash petroglyphs. All of these symbols were emphasized worldwide as connected to shamanistic religious believes. If not attentively described and considered, these elements might mislead the researcher in his further interpretations.

However, I couldn't determine the whole shamanistic style due to several reasons. The exploration of the photographic material is not enough for this issue. There should be taken into consideration geomorphology of the stone as well as of neighboring compositions. The number of researched compositions should be significantly increased in order to make final declarations. However, from my thesis you could see how intense the description of each stone is thereby I wasn't aiming for quantitative research of images as it was done by previous researchers.

Still my research showed that presence of shamanistic magic might exist in every picture. This tends to mean two things: either the entoptic models were culturally accepted phenomena and widely used in image creation by ordinary tribal members, or shaman was presenting during the pecking process. The second version is an interesting turn in our discussion as long as we faced with complicated cosmologic compositions that were mostly of shamanistic tradition. As

Figures 2.2, 2.4 and 2.5 showed various pictures according to the technique it was done with. Those were quite naturalistic images of animals and obscure symbols coming from entoptic patterns. This might mean that there were special people – masters or artists in that ancient society, who depicted animals and people. However, their images were logically finished or so-called “blessed” by the shamans when they pecked dots or lines. Here I want to offer an interesting detail that was found in Siberian shamanism. For painting shaman’s drum there was chosen an ordinary person who did all the work under the conduct of shaman and then on the behalf of all the people during special holiday there was performed the procedure of “animating” the drum (Potapov, 1947 quoted in Rozwadowski A., In Press, pg.7). It was seen as a “blessing” of the shaman who spiritualized the inanimate thing through the ceremony.

Still, for good relevance of petroglyphs to ethnographic evidence there should be collected more materials around Saimaly-Tash as it was done in Tamgaly monument of Kazakhstan.



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### **Internet Resources**

63. Novik E.S., Hristoforova O.B(2010) Vizual'nye obrazy Mira v Sibirskom Shamanizme

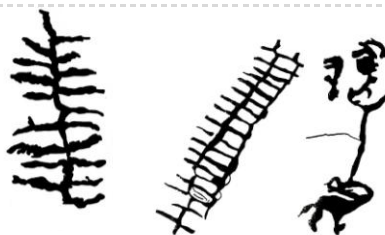
## APPENDIX 1

2.1 Figure 1 - "Deer and ibex"



D.S. Whitley, 2005b:31

Photo of red-painted panel at the Texas Canyon site, near Agua Dulce, California.

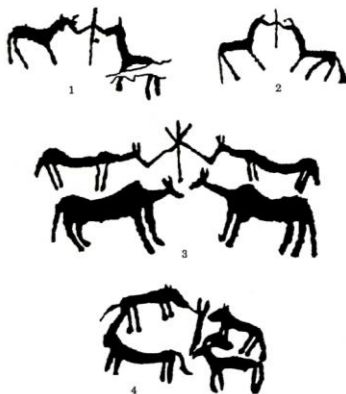


Tashbaeva et al. 2001, Fig. 89 and 67

Herring-bone symbol from Saimaly-Tash

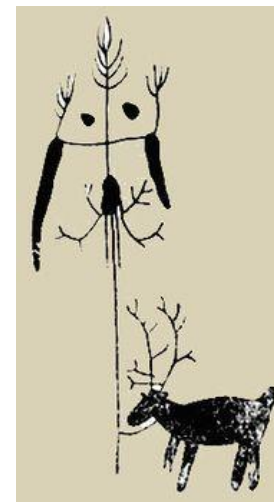


Nine branches coming from schematic depiction of deer's antler (author's detailed representation).



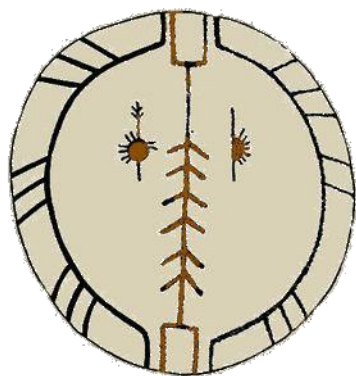
Rozwadowski A., 2004:40, Fig.25 after Sher 1980 and Samashev 1993

Horses tied to poles from Tepsei, southern Siberia and Zaysan, Kazakhstan



Novik E.S., Hristoforova O.B., 2010, "Shamanistic tree" –

picture by shaman, Siberia

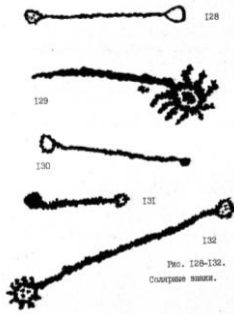


Novik E.S., Hristoforova O.B., 2010

Selkup drum, Siberia

APPENDIX 2

2.2 Figure 2 - "Grazing Animals"



Martynov et al., 1992 - Solar symbols



Spectacular symbol from Tamgaly, Kazakhstan (A. Roswadowski, 2004:18)



Possible river symbol from Tashbaeva et al. 2001: Fig. 69



Spectacular-like symbol (author's detailed representation).

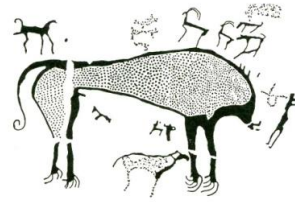


Fig. 80. Feline predator with characteristic claws, Sarmish

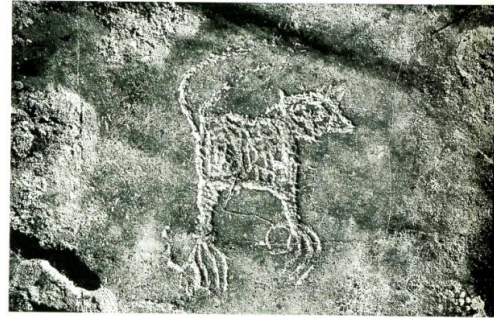


Fig. 81. Wolf-like image with exaggerated claws, Kalbak-Tash

Image of a predator from A. Rozwadowski 2004: Fig.80, 81



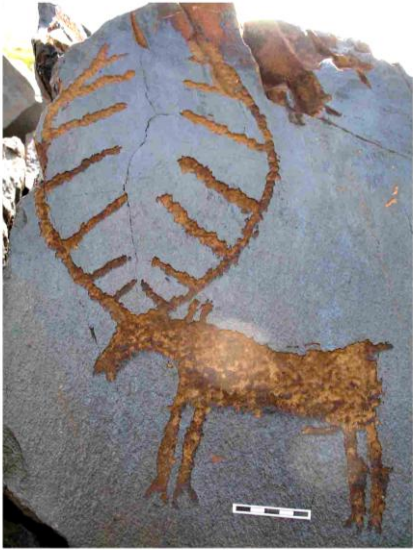
Snake/path symbols from Tashbaeva et al. 2001:Fig 88



Line of ibexes with predator from Tashbaeva et al. 2001, Fig.83

APPENDIX 3

2.3 Figure 3 - "Deer and Man with the Sun"



Tashbaeva et al. 2001, Fig.33 full picture of the deer and man



Man "holding" a Sun, possible mythological motif, after Tashbaeva et al., 2001, Fig.39



Death agony of deers, pose on "tip-toes," after O.Sovetova, 2006, table IX.



## APPENDIX 4

2.4 Figure 4 - "Deers and ibexes"



*World Tree representation on the piece of sledge, Kets, Siberia from the Novik E.S., Hristoforova O.B., 2010*

## APPENDIX 5

2.5 Figure 5 - "Deer and Ritual Scene"



The whole composition presented in Tashbaeva *et al.* 2001, Fig.23

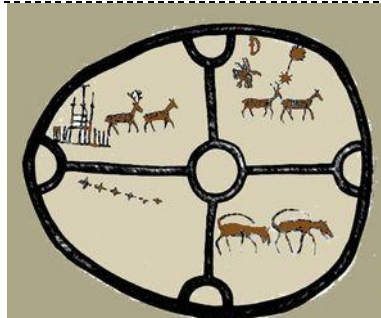


Ritual dancing scene from Tashbaeva *et al.*, 2001, Fig.40

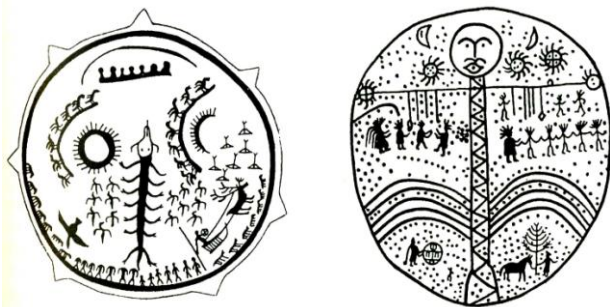
FIG. 21. Chariots (Saimaly-Tash)



Chariots harnessed with different animals (horses, ibex) from Tashbaeva *et al.*, 2001:32, Fig.21



Division of the world into 4 directions on the Evenk drum, after Novik E.S., Hristoforova O.B., 2010



Selkup drum after Roswadowski A., 2004, Fig.64

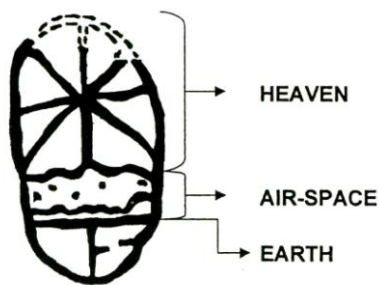


Image of possibly cosmological representation of the Indo-Iranian world, after Roswadowski A., 2004, Fig.32

