

## Gabaevka petroglyphs

**There is a picture of three archers with a marked male trait and nine men hand in hand in the petroglyphs of Gabaevka village.**

One of them holds a club. This scene of the dance is reminiscent of the same image found in Chulaksky and Anrahaysky mountains in the Zhetysu. Analogies to them can be found far outside of Kazakhstan.

The collective character of these dances is an indication of the archaic ritual. It is known from ethnographic observations that in dancing only men-warriors were involved, dancing was performed collectively and the dancers often imitated animals: fastened tails to their waists, put make-up on and imitated their movements.

Perhaps, dancing had different purposes. In some cases, it could be a dance performed during spring holidays associated with the fertility cult, while in others – such dancing could be an indication of commercial cult, as in the dancing reproduced the whole process of hunting.

As it has been already noted, Saka time petroglyphs are much less than the engravings of the Bronze Age in Karatau.

If in the ancient rock paintings religious-magical revival of ideas of nature and fertility, cosmology emerges quite clearly in the stylized engravings of Saka time, it gradually disappears. In the figures – convention, decorative forms rises in separate compositions began to prevail over visual and narrative basis of the beginning. The world of animals images is gradually replaced by pictures-symbols and stories of the themes of heroic epic in the foreground are anthropomorphic themes and ornamentations.

Decorative nature of some tracks is clearly seen even in the symmetrical arrangement of the plane figures of horses in the canonical poses, bears, boars and deer made in a terse Scythian-Saka manner.

On the origin and the semantics of Scythian-Saka art literature, there are different points of view and this problem is still far from its final decision. But the complexity of semantic decoding of images ‘animal style’ is explained apparently, not only because of the Scythian-Saka art is a kind of syncretism of artistic-aesthetic, social and religious aspects. After all, undivided form of social consciousness, which have merged religious principle and reality served as a kind of ‘feed’ basis of art, not only the early Iron Age.

Imaginative reproduction of reality based on the dualism of art-aesthetic, social and religious beginning was typical for all primitive art, beginning with its first steps.

End of the early Iron Age was the period, when the images of animals in cave paintings have lost their direct totem-magical significance. Fertility and cosmology cults can even be traced in the earliest petroglyphs of that era. They are, as already noted, reflected in images of deer, goat and camel. In general, the rock art of the Saka period has already embarked on a path of schematization in the form side and subsequently impoverished even in content.

Traces of primitive beliefs of pastoral tribes of Eurasia did not disappear completely. In the updated form, as zoomorphic attributes of tribal cult, they kept by many of people of Siberia,

Kazakhstan and Central Asia. But it was still distant echoes of primitive beliefs, moreover, reflected in other stone materials.

There was only a hunting theme left, still living on rock paintings of pastoral tribes and nations, little changed in its own 'eternal' way of content, even to the present days.

One of the most popular figures in the petroglyphs was mounted warrior the battle vest in the Middle Ages. This image was distributed to a wide area of Eurasia and marks hiking trails and the settlement arrangements of the ancient Turks from the Pacific Ocean to the steppes of Dzungaria and Adriatic. Sitting on a horse followed by a dog or a leopard, often with a golden eagle on the arm, the warrior depicted on the rock of the canyon and mountains of Talas Alatau. Armed 'heavily' in the protective armor, a steppe knight on horseback clearly demonstrated the willingness to fight. In the military subjects due consideration there were military attributes – banners, horsetail and standards, embodying conquest 'from sea to sea', which symbolizes the era of finding a new homeland and protection of its borders. The image of 'flying horseman' as it carries with the military-political idea of the Turks – from the ancient Turks to Oghuz and Kipchaks.

Ethnographic drawings of Kazakhs in XVII-XIX centuries were widespread in West Kazakhstan, Mangystau, Ustyurt, they occur rarely in Zhetysu and South Kazakhstan. These monuments are of great importance as indicators of prevailing traditions that are rooted in the period of ancient and medieval tribes and nations participated in the ethnogenesis of the Kazakhs for thousands of years.

*Used material:*

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