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# HIMALAYAN AND CENTRAL ASIAN STUDIES

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## LARICHEV SPECIAL

VITALY EPIPHANOVICH LARICHEV: THE ORIENTALIST,  
ARCHEOLOGIST, ASTROARCHAEOLOGIST

*V.N. Tuguzhekova*

PETROGLYPHS OF THE RED STONE SANCTUARY

*V.E. Larichev, S.A. Parshikov and E.G. Gienko*

GREAT SALBYK BARROW – THE BIGGEST MEGALITHIC  
MONUMENT IN SIBERIA

*L.S. Marsadolov*

IN MEMORY OF PROFESSOR VITALY E. LARICHEV

*S. V. Alkin*

THE EMERGENCE OF 'EARLY NOMADIC CULTURES' IN EASTERN STEPPE

*K. Matsumoto*

EMERGENCE OF MONEY ECONOMY IN TUVA AT THE  
TURN OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

*M.M.B. Kharunova*

KHAKASSIA AND INDIA: HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL LINKAGES

*K. Warikoo*

TRANSCENDING STEREOTYPES OF GENDER AND NATIONAL IDENTITY:  
DERVLA MURPHY'S SIBERIA

*Sindhu Janardhan*

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**Editor** : **K. WARIKOO**  
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## CONTRIBUTORS

- Dr. V.N. Tuguzhekova** is Director, Khakass Research Institute of Language, Literature and History, Abakan, Russia.
- V.E. Larichev** is an orientalist and archaeologist at the Institute of Archeology and Ethnography of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Novosibirsk, Russia.
- S.A. Parshikov** is associated with N.P. Environmental Center of Rational Management of Natural Resources, (NP Ropren EC), Krasnoyarsk, Russia.
- E.G. Gienko** is Associate Professor at Siberian State University of Geosystems and Technology, Novosibirsk, Russia.
- L.S. Marsadolov** is senior researcher at the State Hermitage Museum, Archaeology of Eastern Europe and Siberia, Saint-Petersburg, Russia.
- S.V. Alkin** is Associate Professor at Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, SB RAS, Institute for the Humanities of Novosibirsk State University, Novosibirsk, Russia.
- K. Matsumoto** is associated with the Department of Archaeology, Graduate School of Humanities, Kyushu University, Izumi, Osaka Prefecture, Japan.
- O.V. Kovaleva** is senior researcher at Khakass Research Institute of Language, Literature and History, Abakan, Russia.
- A.A. Burnakov** is associated with Khakass Research Institute of Language, Literature and History, Abakan, Russia.
- M.M.B. Kharunova** is senior researcher at Tuvinian Institute for Exploration of Natural Resources of SB RAS, Kyzyl, Tuva, Russia.
- Dr. K. Warikoo** is former Professor at Center for Inner Asian Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India.
- Dr. Sindhu Janardhan** is Associate Professor, Department of English, Bangalore University, India.

# HIMALAYAN AND CENTRAL ASIAN STUDIES

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## CONTENTS

|   |  |         |
|---|--|---------|
| <b>Editor's Page</b>  |  | 1-2     |
| Vitaly Epiphanovich Larichev:<br>The Orientalist, Archeologist,<br>Astroarchaeologist   | <i>V.N. Tuguzhekova</i>                                      | 3-16    |
| Petroglyphs of the Red Stone Sanctuary  | <i>V.E. Larichev,<br/>S.A. Parshikov and<br/>E.G. Gienko</i> | 17-45   |
| Great Salbyk Barrow – the biggest<br>Megalithic monument in Siberia                     | <i>L.S. Marsadolov</i>                                       | 46-58   |
| In Memory of Professor Vitaly E. Larichev   | <i>S.V. Alkin</i>  | 59-65   |
| The Emergence of 'early nomadic<br>cultures' in Eastern Steppe                          | <i>K. Matsumoto</i>  | 66-74   |
| Characteristics of Visual Art in the Late<br>Bronze Age from North Asia to Europe       | <i>O.V. Kovaleva</i>   | 75-84   |
| Religious Syncretism in Khakassia in early<br>Twentieth Century                         | <i>A.A. Burnakov</i>   | 85-88   |
| Emergence of Money Economy in Tuva<br>at the turn of the Twentieth Century              | <i>M.M.B. Kharunova</i>                                      | 89-96   |
| Khakassia and India: Historical and<br>Cultural Linkages                                | <i>K. Warikoo</i>  | 97-104  |
| Transcending Stereotypes of Gender and<br>National Identity:<br>Dervla Murphy's Siberia | <i>Sindhu Janardhan</i>                                      | 105-116 |



**Vitaly Epiphanovich Larichev (1932-2014)**

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## *Editor's Page*

Vitaly Epiphanovich Larichev (1932-2014) was an outstanding Russian scientist, honored worker of culture in Russian Federation (1971), full member of Russian Academy of Natural Sciences (1992). He has been one of the greatest experts in archaeology and history of Nvzhen and other ancient peoples of the Russian Far East and neighboring Manzhouli and Mongolia. He defended his Candidate thesis on the subject Ancient cultures of North-East China, Stone and Bronze ages. In 1971 he defended his PhD thesis on the subject Paleolithics of North, Central and East Asia. Formation of the foundations of modern ideas about the cultures of the ancient stone age of Asia, 1871-1960. His research interests were extremely wide: oriental studies, Paleolithic art, astroarchaeology, and the study of ancient calendars. His contributions in all these fields of science are well known to a wide range of scientists. He was also the organizer of the first conference in Russia, dedicated to the study of the scientific heritage of the Roerich family, held in Novosibirsk in 1976.

Larichev spent over forty years of his life in studying an outstanding monument of ancient art Sunduki, located in the north of Khakassia. Here, the main task of his research was to identify the "astronomical aspects" of ancient cultures - how the ancestors perceived the world, structured it, and explained its origin; how they calculated time and lived in accordance with the movements of the celestial bodies. Dr. Larichev was an outstanding popularizer of science, author of numerous scientific and popular books, particularly on anthropology and, especially, on paleoastronomy, interpretations of cultural monuments of ancient people, which according to the researcher, could personify the idea of their creators about the structure of the universe. Some of his main publications are listed below:

1. The Bronze age of North-Eastern China. *Soviet archaeology*, No. 1, 1961. pp. 3-25.
2. *Primorsky region tribes in the early period of the history of the Jin* (according to "Jin shi"). Third scientific conference on the history,

- archaeology and ethnography of the Far East. Vladivostok, 1962. Vol. II, pp. 8-12.
3. *The Mystery of the stone turtle: A Documentary story about an archaeological search.* Novosibirsk, 1966. 254 pp.
  4. *Asia - far and mysterious: Essays on the journey for antiquities in Mongolia.* Novosibirsk, 1968. 294pp.
  5. *Paleolithics of Northern, Central and Eastern Asia. Part 1: Asia and the problem of the human homeland.* (history of ideas and research). Novosibirsk: 1972. 414pp.
  6. *Travel to the country of Eastern foreigners.* Novosibirsk, 1973. 340pp.
  7. Peoples of the Far East in ancient and middle ages and their role in the cultural and political history of East Asia. In *The Far East and neighboring territories in the middle ages.* Novosibirsk, 1980. pp. 8-38.
  8. *Wisdom of the snake: Primitive man, the Moon and the Sun.* Novosibirsk, 1989. 270pp.
  9. Peoples of the middle and lower Amur in the middle ages. In *Central Asia and neighboring territories in the middle ages.* Novosibirsk, 1990. pp. 78-84.
  10. *Creation of the Universe: the Sun, the Moon and celestial dragon.* Novosibirsk, 1993. 288pp.
  11. A brief sketch of the history of Nvzhen before the formation of the Golden Empire. In *History of the Golden Empire.* Translated by G.M. Rozova, comments by A.G. Malyavkin. Novosibirsk, Institute of archaeology and ethnography of the Siberian Branch of Russian Academy of Sciences.
  12. *Star Gods: a word about the great artists-contemplator of the Sky, the wise men and magicians.* Novosibirsk, 1999. 355pp.
  13. Sacred tractate, performed in stone. *Eastern Collection*, 2007, No. 3. pp. 110-116
  14. Sanctuary of Ich Tengeriyn-am of the time of "Heaven Empire" and the early iron age (to the problem of sustainable preservation of the cult-religious traditions of the nomads of Central Asia). In *Tanguts in Central Asia: a collection of articles in honor of the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of professor E.I. Kychanov.* Moscow, Eastern literature, 2012. pp. 194-205.



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VITALY EPIPHANOVICH LARICHEV  
*THE ORIENTALIST, ARCHEOLOGIST,  
ASTROARCHAEOLOGIST*

V.N. TUGUZHEKOVA

ABSTRACT

*The article describes the main milestones of the life of Vitaly Epiphanovich Larichev – the orientalist, archaeologist and teacher. Much attention is paid for research study of the mountain ridge Sunduki as an astroarchaeological object.*

**Key words:** *astroarchaeology, petroglyphs, Khakassia, Paleolithic period, ancient settlement.*

12<sup>th</sup> December 2017 was the 85th birth anniversary of Vitaly Epiphanovich Larichev. He died on 2 June 2014. More than 5 years have already passed after that day. But today we still can feel his soul at the site Sunduki.

In the spring of 2014 year he was scheduled to come to Khakassia to visit the site Sunduki and in autumn of that year we also wanted to travel to the south part of the Republic in search of ancient settlements there. In May 2014, S.A.Parshikov, in his reply to the request of Vitaly Epiphanovich, sent him an article *Petroglyphs of the Red Stone Sanctuary*, that we published in our conference materials. When I talked to him last time in March - April 2014, he said, that Academician A.P. Derevyanko, who always supported Vitaly Epiphanovich in his studies on the site Sunduki, came to visit him. Vitaly Epiphanovich warmly remembered that visit. Anatoly Panteleevich stated that nowadays not everyone could understand him, because he was ahead of his time, and people would no doubt think another way in future. His interview, named *Confession of a Time Traveler*<sup>1</sup>, in *Siberia Science* journal in August 2013 reflected the same. It seems to me, that Larichev must have lived there in ancient times and

was one of those priests, who observed, standing at the point of astronomical objects, the movements of the Sun, the Moon and other cosmic objects.

Khakassia is the unique region of North Asia with high concentration of ancient sites. Among these sites there is a great sacred center of North Khakassia, known as Sunduki<sup>2</sup>. V.E. Larichev spent more than 40 years of his life searching precisely for the north Khakassia and Kuznetsky Alatau. As his student S.V. Alkin said, actually North of Khakassia became exactly the place of intensive scientific research of the archaeologist. Here, on the banks of the White Iyus river, the research power of the scientist opened up fully. The image of Time River comes through all works of V.E. Larichev. Sunduki site on the White Iyus river has become one of its symbols<sup>3</sup>.

But how did it all start? According to the memories of Larichev himself, love for reading was the reason of his childhood fantasies and addictions, that were generated by books. In his school years he read avidly everything, that he could find in the family's, school's and country's libraries. He was born in the Don's lands, the place, where people always loved and respected knowledge. It was the land of love for freedom, the motherland of great writer Sholohov, whose village Veshenskaya was located several dozen kilometers from the Glazunovskaya village, that was the family land of V.E. Larichev. The love for reading, as Larichev remembered, apparently was the character, that was given to him genetically, because he was never forced to read by anyone. According to family's traditions, the father of his mother, Stepan Yemelyanovich Melnikov was a humorist, an inventor of all kinds of unexpected arrangements for housekeeping, and a passionate lover of reading. He often made his family wake up in the deep winter night, expressing unrestrained and loudly his impressions of what he read in the company of the warm Russian stove, a kerosene lamp and a mirror that amplified the dim light. Grandmother grumbled: "What have you read, which makes you laugh so much! We have no rest in the day and night of you". The mother of Vitaly Epiphanovich, Anna Stepanovna, wasn't educated until the middle of 1930s, but she successfully got educated diligently attending an educational program. The first books read by her were *Stories about animals* by Seton-Thompson, *Tales of uncle Remus* (charming, full of subtle humor stories about small brothers) and the harsh novel about the life of miners of France *Germinal* by Emile Zola.

His father's father, Kirill Semenovich, had three sons. The oldest was the father of Vitaly, his name was Epiphan Kirillovich. He was a farmer,

at the same time he helped younger brothers Vladimir and Procopy obtain higher education. The first of his younger brothers was the one, who collected the family library. It was placed at the oldest brother's place. The books became the first guides to the real life of Vitaly Epiphanovich and also a thing of moral teaching and correcting "domestic" Don's rules<sup>4</sup>.

Since childhood, Vitaly Epiphanovich had great interest in traveling to different parts of the world - from the virgin forests of the Amazon to the travels of seafarers to Arctic and Antarctica. Vitaly Epiphanovich remembered his teacher of Russian language Lidiya Sergeevna Kititsina and teacher of physics and astronomy Peter Leontyevich Solyanik with gratitude. His teacher acquired Maksutov's telescope, and a 10 grade pupil Larichev fell in love with astronomy, and this love remained with him until the end of his life. Following the instructions of the history teacher, V.E.Larichev entered the Leningrad University in the Oriental Faculty at the Department of the History of Far East, where he learned in the "China's history" class<sup>5</sup>. Studying at the University and the academic environment imbibed the soul of young Larichev such points of character as extraordinary general historical erudition and deepest knowledge. His meeting with the famous archaeologist and future academician A.P.Okladnikov defined his scientific interest.

In 1955 after graduating from the History faculty of the Department of Far East History, Leningrad State University, he worked at the History Department of Far East Branch of the USSR Academy of Sciences, Vladivostok as a laboratory assistant. Graduate V.E. Larichev was not scared to work on the "outskirts of Russian land". He was already well acquainted with it due to his teacher, A.P. Okladnikov, who made scientific work in ancient history entitled *Asia, far and mysterious*, where he had taken part in expeditions as a permanent participant, in Central Asia and on Lena, Yenisei and Amur rivers and also at the banks of the Pacific Ocean. Soon Larichev was accepted as postgraduate student at the Institute of the History of Material Culture of the Leningrad Branch of the USSR Academy of Sciences, where he was involved in the study of the antiquities of Russia, China, Japan and Korea. The result of his studies was the work *Ancient cultures of Northeastern China*, that still remains the sample of source book, historiographical understanding and formulation of archaeological problems. In his PhD thesis titled *Paleolithics of North, Central and East Asia*, that the scientist worked during eleven years, he not only created the concept of "Asian" archaeology, but also marked the milestones, defining the way this field of science must be developed. However, Vitaly

Epiphanovich was deeply interested not only in Chinese antiquities. His big passion was the "Mystery of stone turtles", carrying steles with epitaphs, discovered by first researchers I.A.Lopatin and P. Kafarov near the Nikolskoye country (now called Ussuriysk) and excavated by F.F. Busse<sup>6</sup>.

In the first two decades of his activity, Larichev made his researches in the framework of traditional archaeology, took part in specific science research expeditions in the territories of Primorye, Priamurye (excavations of Osipovka and Condon settlements; copying Arkharinskaya script), in the Amur region (exploration works at Amur and Zee), in Zabaykalsky region (exploration works in the Ingoda and Shilka valleys, as well as in the North of Chita region) and the Baykal region (excavations of Neolithic settlements and burial grounds in the Svirsk and Ryutino), in the Krasnoyarsk territory (excavations of the Achinsk settlements), in Khakassia (excavations of the Malaya Siya settlement), in Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, as well as in Mongolia and the Aleutian Islands (First Russian-American Archaeological Expedition of 1974).

During the period 1950-1970s, he paid great attention to the problems of initial human society developing in the territories of China, Mongolia, Korea, Japan and also Siberia and North America. He traced in detail, the process of research in early cultures of these Asian regions for about 100 years, considering the formation and development of the main hypotheses and theories that were developed by archaeologists and paleontologists in Europe, Asia and America during one century. He is the author of publications devoted to the detailed analysis of the industries of the cultures of the ancient stone age in North-Eastern, Northern and North-Western China, Mongolia, North Korea and Japan. He also paid attention to the monuments and cultures of the Neolithic and Bronze eras of Northeast China and North Korea.

Then V.E.Larichev also enthusiastically studied the field of ancient and medieval history of the Russian Far East and adjacent areas of Northeast China. In this regard, he was interested in essays on the political and cultural history of the peoples of Primorye, Amur and Manchuria, that lived on the basins of the Nonni, Tumangan, Sungari, Ussuri and Amur rivers in the 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> centuries BC and subsequently, up to the 13 century AD (*sushen, yilou, wuji, bohai, qidan, nvzhi*, the natives of the Middle and Lower Amur, as well as Sakhalin and Kamchatka).

Oriental studies at the Siberian Branch of Russian Academy of Sciences were initiated ever since it's foundation in 1957, but it was Larichev and the department of History and Archaeology of the Far East countries

headed by him, which gave a new impulse to this course. At the anniversary conference in 2002, dedicated to the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of V.E. Larichev and the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the department headed by him, Academician A.P. Derevyanko spoke about the achievements and prospects of this department<sup>7</sup>.

Since 1972, that is from the very first year of the revival of publications in China of archaeological periodicals, the library of Institute of History, Philology and Philosophy received all central and many local journals. At the same time Japanese periodicals on archaeology were also acquired. Due to such a well organized policy, the library (which was then headed by Z.V.Borodina), now has one of the best collections of literature on ancient cultures of East Asia, in Russia.

As a result, over the past years, science fellows of this sector have published more than five dozen books and collections of articles on these topics. The full bibliography of scientific, popular science publications contains over one and a half thousand titles, among which the following large blocks can be distinguished: the Paleolithic of China (V.E.Larichev) and Japan (V.E.Larichev and B.G.Grigorenko); stone culture of the Korean Peninsula (V.E.Larichev) and other areas. V.E.Larichev also learned the history of Russian oriental studies, particularly, devoted to a number of major works on Palladium (Kafarova) and on G.Ts.Tsybikova, N.K.Roerich and Yu.N.Roerich. Most of the sector's researches were included in the serial edition of the *History and Culture of Eastern Asia* (HCEA). Its first volume (about Tibet) was published in 1972<sup>8</sup>. Now there are more than 40 volumes of this serial edition by the department.

V.E.Larichev took care about personnel training. That is why almost at the same time with the foundation of the sector, the training of young specialists who could speak Chinese and Japanese was started at the Humanitarian Department of the Novosibirsk State University. Currently, the students of V.E.Larichev successfully continue these activities. V.E.Larichev can rightly be called the patriarch of the Novosibirsk Sinology and Oriental studies in general. He in particular created a special scientific school of archaeological oriental studies, whose activities were also connected with medieval themes<sup>9</sup>.

In Larichev's department, the North Khakass archaeological party of the North-Asian complex expedition was created to explore the ancient monuments of northern Khakassia in the valleys of the White Iyus and Black Iyus rivers. It was Khakassia that made a new turn in the scientific and research activity of Vitaly Epiphanovich Larichev. Now began his

astroarchaeological epic. Works in Khakassia were started from the excavation of the Achinsk site in 1972. Here is what Larichev himself told: "I think that the rare success of the excavations in the Achinsk site in early 1970s is truly fateful. The dating of this monument can be referred to 19,000 years before now. Within this site it became possible to discover a mysterious building made of bones of extinct animals, furnaces that were heated with coal and, what is most important, the pieces of art, made of mammoth tusk, the priest's "rod", "decorated" with two spiral ribbons. They contained more than one thousand holes, numeric characters that organized an ingenious arithmetic system of time calculation by the triennium of moon. Since then I became the representative of "unformatted archaeology", "unpopular scientific tradition", that the prince Pavel Arsentyevich Putiatin, who was uncomfortable with the authorities, called as astroarchaeology or, alternatively, cosmic archaeology in the mid-80s of the 19 century"<sup>10</sup>.

And then followed the excavation of the settlement Malaya Syya (1976-1979). According to Larichev's speech: "The finest hour", actually, that was noisily scandalous about the excavations associated with discoveries in this area, happened at the end of the 1970s, when I started excavating at the settlement Malaya Syya in the Northern Khakassia. It was an occasion for everyone that the beginning of development of Siberian homo sapiens was defined at the date about ten thousand years later than it was usually considered before (the event stood out of the time boundaries of 30,000 years!), and the culture itself puzzled one with impossibility, seemed obvious, of the original stone art objects. The discovery of those was not supposed in Siberia, because it was considered as a bearish deaf periphery of the resettlement of "educated people" of Eurasia. It cost me too much to give to the world the chronology of the monuments, that aroused authorities so strongly and in particular the non-trivial interpretation of images of the most ancient art in Asia. Excavations at Malaya Syya were forcibly interrupted, the monument and its materials were compromised, and I really don't want to go into the details of the scientific drama, just only for the reason, that now the camps of the same age became known also in other regions of Siberia, and during the excavations there such pieces of art were discovered too. I have no desire to talk about this also because being a Paleolithic historiographer, I'm aware of what kind of disgusting hostility of the scientific community of 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century treated every new step to the "wildly barbaric" past of humanity, that was not actually so wild.

I devoted several books to the heroes and victims of past scientific tragedies, but now I would like to rewrite my instructive biographies again to make my story deeper, giving to it my own sorrowful experience"<sup>11</sup>.

Vitaly Epiphanovich and I dreamt of finding settlements in Khakassia that could be more ancient than what were found in Siberia. We even made a plan to make an expedition to the southern regions of the republic in autumn of 2014. It was Malaya Syya, that pushed Larichev to study further at the White Iyus river valley, forming an unique Iyus basin with adjacent foothills of the Kuznetsk Alatau, above which the mountain ridge Sunduki rises. The First Chest of Sunduki rises above this ridge. It looks like a ship of aliens coming from far away, or maybe like a bird. And when looking at it closer, it is actually a chest, that keeps ancient knowledge. V.E.Larichev believed, that ancient priests considered this pictorial hill Sunduki as the World Mountain's Earth hypostasis. This mountain and the surrounding territories turned into a sacred place. It was established in strict harmony with the religious canons of priesthood<sup>12</sup>.

Further study of this basin showed, that objects of the same greatness spread out in the nearest localities of the site Sunduki, outlining clearly along the perimeter borders of whole marshy basin of villages of Iyus, Maloye Kobezhikovo, Fyrkal, Kobyakovo, Solenoozerno, Chernoozerno and Podlistvenki<sup>13</sup>.

In the new field of research, called astro-archaeology, Vitaly Epiphanovich attracted astronomers, geodesists and mathematicians. So in 1984, at the invitation of V.E.Larichev the expedition was attended by the faculty of NRIGAC (Novosibirsk Research Institute Engineers of Geodesy, aerial photography and cartography, now SSAG, Siberian State Academy of Geodesy) – G.S.Sheptunov, V.N.Komissarov, G.F.Serkin, headed by V.A.Merkushev - Head of the Department of Astronomy and Gravimetry.

Since 1985, works on astronomic and geodetic surveys were started at the Fifth Chest of the site Sunduki. A group of students of NRIGAC under the leadership of V.N.Komissarova performed a detailed topographic survey of all detected objects. G.F.Serkin made a definition of the reference astronomical azimuth on the basis of observations of Polar and the Sun, and then he made a definition of the panorama of the far horizon and definitions of the astronomical azimuths of all its points from the southeast to the northwest. At the same time, it was noted that all astronomically significant events: the rising of the winter sun and its sunset, as well as the setting of the summer sun, are well attached to noticeable

objects on the horizon. The area of researches expanded: works at the First Chest were completed, then exploration works were done at White Horse and at the site at the district of Kopyevo. That was the beginning of the Siberian astro-archaeology.

In 1989, due to heavy work load, G.F.Serkin transferred his duties to G.S.Sheptunov, and after his untimely death, E.G.Gienko took over the responsibilities for this work from the year 2003. From 1997 to 2013, D.A. Sevostyanov working as doctor and photographer, at the same time being a petroglyph researcher and cook, took part in expeditions. From 2005, S.A. Parshikov took part actively in researches and organization of researches. Besides archaeologists, astronomers and geodesists, painters, photographers, specialists on laser scanners and students-trainees participated in these expeditions. Many different people gathered in the hospitable expeditionary camp to see, to talk and to learn something. Volunteers, for whom it was important to communicate with Vitaly Epiphanovich, and who were interested in surrounding places, came and worked in the camp<sup>14</sup>.

During the surveys of mountain ranges in the area of First Chest, Larichev discovered the "White Horse" Paleolithic sanctuary, on the side of Solbon mountain in 1986. This sanctuary occupied the attention of Vitaly Epiphanovich so much, that he visited it at the time of winter solstice (according to preliminary calculations, one can observe sunrise of the winter sun above the "White Horse" at the First Chest of Sunduki). In a dark early frosty morning going through the snowdrifts waist-deep, Vitaly Epiphanovich got up to the Picture by the shelf. He said, that most of all he was afraid of the worsening weather. But he was lucky, he successfully tested experimentally the hypothesis. In addition to this, he might feel the sensations of ancient men, who painted the "White Horse"<sup>15</sup>. His book *White Horse*—the sanctuary of the ancient stone age of Khakassia was published in 1992<sup>16</sup>. Larichev supposed, that ancient sanctuary "White Horse" was the astronomical observatory for the priests. The zodiacal belt, within which the Sun, the Moon and the planets moved at a certain distance from the Earth and from each other, was the main structural link in the picture of the Universe, that the Paleolithic priesthood recreated. The "White Horse" sanctuary was only one of the links in a complex network of astropoints, from where ancient people observed the Sky of the Paleolithic age in the White Iyus river valley. The age of this sanctuary is dated as from 18,000 to 32,000 years ago<sup>17</sup>.

Technical science candidate Elena Gennadyevna Gienko and



associate professor of the Department of higher mathematics of SSAG German Federovich Serkin wrote a short review *In memory of V.E.Larichev* in *Astroarchaeological researches in Northern Khakassia*, 2014. V.E. Larichev, shared his achievements in the valley of the White Iyus: "I would like to mention the discovery of rock temple of the early Iron Age with multi-figured paintings of a heroic epic in Khakassia. They defined the age of this outstanding cultural phenomenon, the evidence of the beginning of the formation of early statehood as more ancient, exactly for almost one thousand years (2<sup>nd</sup> century BC, and not 7-8 century AD, as thought before).<sup>18</sup>

Larichev discovered this unique monument at the foot of the mountain at the Fourth Chest and made the dating of heroic legends of Siberian people longer for several centuries. According to the rock paintings, Larichev created a big heroic epic, narrating about hero, who accomplished feats. The tale began according to canons of the heroic epic of the different people of the world with a tragic scene of attacks on the father of the future hero by the enemies. But he was saved from death by his mother, who managed to run away from the foreign warrior, who pursued her. The "pictures" tell us about how one fragile and almost unarmed adolescent defeated the mighty warrior. Grateful tribesmen choose one Elder to hand him traditional attributes of the national hero-liberator - bow, daggers, and, obviously, a helmet. The final scene from the life of the hero, however, was sad. He, making a perilous journey to far, cold and snow clad lands, was ambushed by a friend and died.

However, the adventures of the epic hero did not end there. The "Pictures" at the lower level of writing of the sanctuary tell us how he, after death, when he turned up in hell, with honor of real warrior overcame one after another the obstacles of the world of monsters, terrifying spirits and land of death and darkness of great deities. Ultimately, he managed to escape from the dance of humanoid creatures and emerge from the underworld in full in robe of knight, ready for new feats<sup>19</sup>.

Over the years of researches, many astroarchaeological monuments, proposed for observing the Sun, Moon and other planets have been discovered and researched.

A review for most part of the monuments of the First Chest of the site Sunduki was made by V.E. Larichev and his associates in the article *Sunduki as a great sacred center of Northern Khakassia* in the collection of scientific articles of symposium on astroarchaeology, held jointly with KhRILLH in 2008. The First Chest was in ancient times a great complex

for monitoring the celestial phenomena during the whole year and was mythologically evaluated as the World Mountain<sup>20</sup>.

It was the first time in Siberia, that a field seminar "Astroarchaeology as a natural science tool for learning proto-science and astral religions of the priests of Khakassia" was held at the initiative and under the leadership of V.E. Larichev in August 2008 in Khakassia.<sup>21</sup> This event was attended by leading astro-archaeologists T.M. Potemkina, V.E. Larichev, L.S.Marsadolov, E.A.Okladnikova and others.

For the first time in May 1994, under the leadership of Tamila Mihailovna Potemkina, a round table was held at the Institute of Archaeology of the Russian Academy of Sciences in the theme of astro-archaeology. Researchers, including A.A.Gurstein, S.V.Zhytomyr, E.A.Kaurov and others, who made researches on ancient astronomy, were invited to take part. Participants noted, that archaeoastronomy is the newest area of science related both to archaeology and history of astronomy<sup>22</sup>. It should be noted, that archaeologist I.L.Kyzlasov made a report on the topic "Tuyimsky kromlekh - the image of the Universe", devoted to interpretations of the unique Eneolithic monument in the North of Khakassia, that was studied in 1984 by Khakass expedition of Moscow State University (headed by professor L.R.Kyzlasov). Tuyimsky kromlekh is the only one not only in Khakassia, but also in Siberia in general. This is a ring with a diameter of about 82 meters, consisting of a ring-shaped with a distance of 8-9 meters 0.6 to 1.2 meters high vertical stones, which are located in the Tuim river valley. In the middle of the ring there is an earth made pyramid of 3 meters high. At the base of it, there is a square fence of 16x16 meters, made of tiles dug into the earth. Sides of the fence are oriented to NNW, WSW, SSW, ENE. In the corners of the fence and pyramid, are 0.6 meter high stones made of granite.

To the east-northeast from observation point of the pyramid there was the gate made of six stones (three on each side). After the removal of the earthen mound, "paths" intersecting along the diagonals were found at the base of the fence. Near their intersection is the burial of a woman in a stone box. Drawings of bulls and predators were found on the plates of its walls.

The geometric figures of the early Aeneolithic carried a certain symbolism. They can be interpreted as the reproduction of the Universe (ring of stones), the Earth, bounded by mountain ranges with sacred peaks at the corners (square fence with stones at corners). In the center of the Earth there is the world mountain (earth pyramid). Below there is an

underworld, that lies under. It is the world of the dead. Obviously, the inhabitants of Southern Siberia of the Eneolithic period were characterized by having the idea of vertical axis in the Universe with its three great worlds: the celestial (upper), the earth (middle) and the underground (lower). The original "gates" of six stones according to their location exactly on the same line with the longitudinal axis of the central grave (stone box 4), were directed to the east-northeast by azimuth  $73^{\circ}23'$ . This almost corresponds to the direction of the rising sun at the day of the summer solstice. So, the "gate" indicated the direction to the east to the souls of dead people who were already "flying away" to the upper world.

Objects, discovered during the excavations of "kromlekh", are made of stone, bone, animal's teeth and clay. There are no traces of metal. These words are taken from the speech of I.L. Kyzlasov<sup>23</sup>. It should be noted, that Tuimsky kromlekh is located in the Iyusskaya Basin, at the east of the Chests. Shamans and cosmologists were always interested in Kromlekh, that is why this author with the Moscow cosmologists was there. They were interested in ancient stones standing in the shape of ring.

The year 2009 was declared as the "World Year of Astronomy" by the UN General Assembly and UNESCO on the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of telescopic astronomy. And Kazan held a scientific forum "Archaeoastromy in Russia: New Researches", where one of the organizers was T.M.Potemkin. The materials of the forum were published by our Institute in 2012.<sup>24</sup> The science journal published V.E.Larichev and his team's article "To the problem of formation of astronomy and calendar-writing in the ancient cultures of North Asia (Western Siberia)". Vitaly Epiphanovich dates the astrocomplexes for observation of the Sun as built in the Southern canyon of the First Chest of site Sunduki as belonging to the second millennium BC, that is related to the Bronze Age.<sup>25</sup> He notes, that these astrocomplexes testify about the high level of observational astronomy and calendars of the priesthood in the Paleometal culture in the middle of the second millennium BC.<sup>26</sup>

Expedition of V.E.Larichev, that had been working for many years at the Chests of Sunduki, gradually went to the West. The monument named after Larichev or The Universe creation Temple was found in 2005. It took several years of hard work. The composition of paintings, constituting the illustration of the unique artwork of the ancient Siberian was expanded on the with rocky visor stone planes of the Universe creation Temple. This composition illustrates the well-known Indo-European cosmogonic mythological motif of miraculous appearance of Universe

creator, managing the world materialized by his efforts, from an egg, floating in a pristine World's ocean. As Vitaly Epiphanovich used to think, the information contained in this composition is enough to write a book. Studies of the Temple have not been finished yet; a presentation of it by Vitaly Epiphanovich one could find in publications of *Science in Siberia*.<sup>27</sup> In his article *A scared text, made on the stone*, (2007) he makes a small excursus on Sunduki starting from "World' mountain" up to the Universe creation Temple. Then he concludes: "The Egyptian pyramids have always been synonymous with the great achievements of the ancestors in the formation of proto-science and spiritual canons. The Siberian Chests, created by Nature and being created in extremely witty way, especially equipped by ancient people without great effort, deserve no less honors. The primitive man of Asian North did the same, long before the appearance of man-made phenomena on the banks of Nile river. It had been done in the darkness of ten thousand years of an ancient stone age, when mammoths and woolly rhinos prowled in the Iyus basin"<sup>28</sup>.

Some researches were made at the Saratsky chest during the last years of the V.E.Larichev's expeditions. Vitaly Epiphanovich planned to prepare a monograph about Saratsky sanctuary, he even sent me a model of it. But he didn't manage to finish. His team continues doing this work. The article *God's shadow and iconography of Zurvan* was published after the death of V.E.Larichev<sup>29</sup>.

Five years have already passed since the time we lost Vitaly Epiphanovich Larichev, an outstanding Russian scientist, Professor of Historical Sciences, the most senior research officer of Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography of the Siberian Branch of Russian Academy of Science, Academician of the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences, honored Scientist of the Russian Federation. He can rightly be called the first Soviet and Russian astroarchaeologist. Vitaly Epiphanovich had started a journal *Archaeoastronomy and Ancient Technologies* (AaATech), becoming its chief editor. He had written and published more than 30 monographs and about 600 articles. He was a brilliant populariser of science. He was a man, who loved and glorified our Khakassia. In 2003 V.E. Larichev was awarded by the Republican Council of Elders of Khakass people with medal for "Good deeds", for his contribution.

For more than thirty years, V.E. Larichev was the leader of summer expeditions in northern Khakassia, where the large amount of ancient cultural monuments of different times are concentrated in a relatively small area in the Valley of the White Iyus river (20 and 30 km). The main

objective of researches was to identify the “astronomical aspects” of ancient cultures - how ancestors considered the world, structured it and explained the origin; how time was calculated, and how they lived in accordance with the movement of the luminaries. The people of antiquity (priests) paid great attention to celestial mechanics. They calculated the movements of the planets, could predict solar and lunar eclipses that gave them great power over the tribesmen.

Thanks to researches of V.E.Larichev, Northern Khakassia is the ancient priestly center of the Eurasian space. This unique Iyus valley must be preserved for posterity. Vitaly Epiphanovich dreamed of creating the National Iyusky Park: from Malaya Syy to the Chests. I wish his dream comes true.

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## PETROGLYPHS OF THE RED STONE SANCTUARY

V.E. LARICHEV, S.A. PARSHIKOV AND E.G. GIENKO

### ABSTRACT

*Based on the analysis of the stylistics and semantics of the images of petroglyphic composition of the Red Stone sanctuary in Beisky district of Khakassia, a relative chronology of the creation of petroglyphs and their cosmogonic semantics are proposed.*

*Key words: petroglyphs, symbolism, semantics.*

### INTRODUCTION

In the vicinity of the settlement of Ust-Soss (Beisky district of the Republic of Khakassia), a sanctuary of Okunevo culture is located on the top of the mountain Red Stone, representing two ramparts with a total length of over 3,600 meters girdling the top and the northeast gentle slope of the mountain (see Figure 1).

From the south-east, the sanctuary is partially bounded by natural rocky cliffs, from the south-west of the bulk shaft with a moat length of about 700 meters. From the northeastern and southeastern sides, the sanctuary is bounded by a bulk shaft with no visible ditch over 2,900 meters long. From the north and the north-west, it is bounded by the Abakan river. The shafts are formed of sandstone fragments and are sod-plowed turfs having an average height of 0.5 meters. The width of the shaft is different in its length. At the top of the mountain, the visible width is 1.5 to 2 meters along the crest of the shaft [see Figure 2 (i)] and 8-10 meters at its base. At the foot of the mountain, in its north-eastern part, the width of the spread shaft reaches 18-20 meters [see Figure 2 (ii)]. In Figure 1, a yellow dotted line shows a shaft with a moat, a white dotted line is a shaft without a moat, the red dotted line is the most destroyed part of the plowing shaft of the sanctuary.

FIGURE 1



**Red Stone sanctuary. Arrangement of shafts.  
Beysky district, Khakassia. (Google Maps satellite image)**

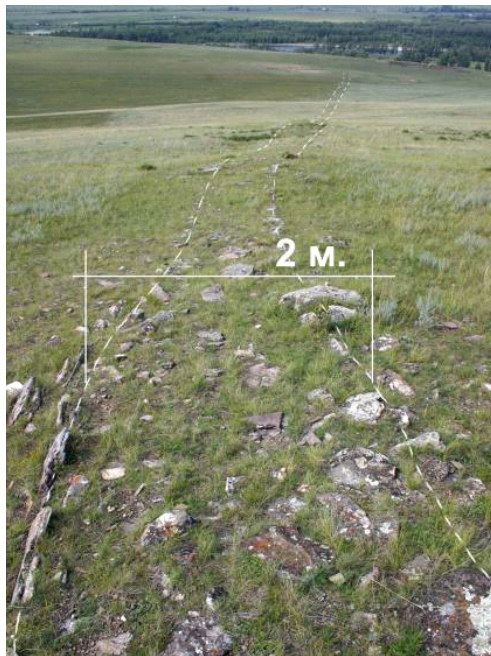
On the rocky surfaces of the Red Stone sanctuary, there are many petroglyphs of various cultures of Khakassia. Most of them are single images and compositions created by bearers of the Tagar culture in the chronological epoch of the “Middle Tagar” and the Tesian period.

### UST-SOSS PETROGLYPHIC COMPOSITION

Petroglyphs are made in various techniques: continuous embossing with wiping and filling, contour embossing and engraving. The petroglyphs of the composition made by continuous embossing are mostly created in a mixed technique. The contour of the image was created by puncturing, and filling of the silhouette of the figure was carried out by a method of non-deepened wiping. Such a technology of drawing images was determined, first of all, by the presence of a dark thin crust of “desert tan” on the rocky surface, which was formed as a result of photochemical

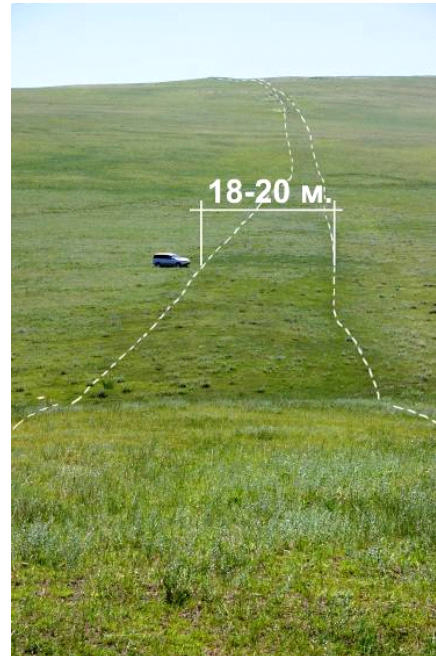


FIGURE 2



(ii)

FIGURE 2



(i)

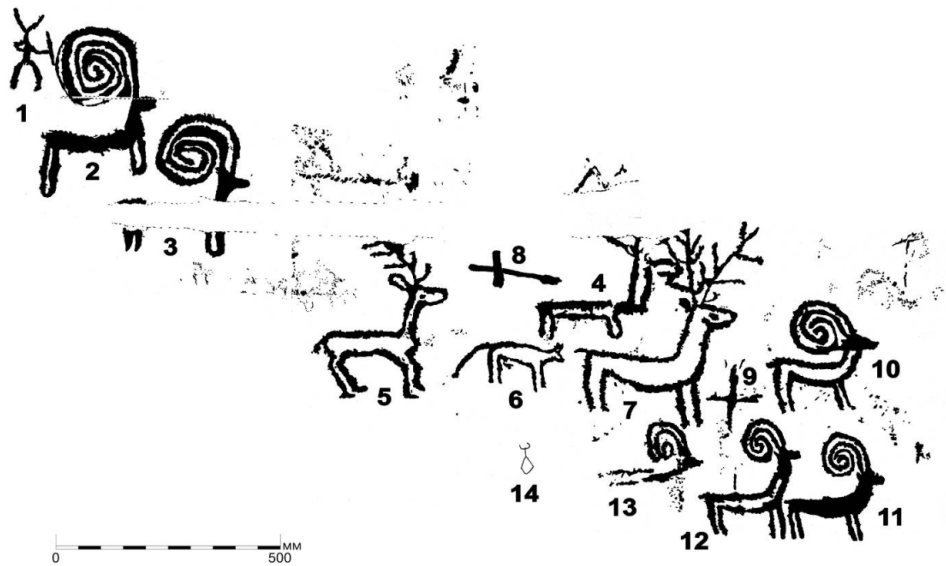
(i) The visible width of the sanctuary. (ii) The visible width of the shaft at the top of the mountain shaft at the bottom of the mountain. (Photos by S.V. Karlov, 2015).

synthesis of iron oxides contained in sandstone. This made it possible, after punching the contour of the image, to “wipe” a thin crust of the “desert tan” before the lighter layer of indigenous sandstone being found beneath it. Among the corpus of the sanctuary petroglyphs we allocate a multi-figure composition (See Fig. 3 - hereinafter - Ust-Soss composition) consisting of 14 petroglyphic images including a horned anthropomorphs with a rod, six spiral horned mountain sheep, three red deer, a fox, two symbols of the oblique crosses and stylized engraved anthropomorphic figure. Other minor characters and details of the composition due to their bad safety cannot be identified clearly. Copying the mikalent of Ust-Soss petroglyphic composition was carried out by the outstanding Siberian artist V.F. Kapelko (the copy is not preserved).

Petroglyphs are made in different techniques: solid knockout with rubbing and filling, contour knockout and engraving. The study of the petroglyphs of the compositions made in a technique of a solid knockout makes it clear that they were created mainly in mixed technique, when the image was created with contour point knockout and the silhouette

filling was carried out by shallow rubbing. Such technology was firstly defined as having denser surface than the bulk of the sandstone distressed thin crust of the "desert tan" formed as a result of photochemical synthesis of iron oxides contained in it.

FIGURE 3



Ust-Soss petroglyphic composition. Beisky District, Khakassia.

There are three different compositional blocks standing out in the structure of the Ust-Soss petroglyphic composition. The upper unit has images of the horned anthropomorph and two rams with spiral horns, the average image has three red deer, foxes, sheep and two crosses and lower unit with three sheep.

The image of one of the sheep on the lower trinity has not been completed. The style of the horned anthropomorphic image with V-shaped horns [Fig. 3 (1 and 4)] is common with the Angara petroglyphs<sup>1</sup>, Tomsk petroglyph composition<sup>2</sup> and the most ancient layer of the Khakassia Shalabolino petroglyph composition<sup>3</sup>. The first thing that attracts our attention in the study of the image stylistics is a multi-temporal sequences of creation of the images and the lack of palimpsests. Due to the fact that in the composition there are no palimpsests, identification of the relative chronology of the creation of heroes images is only possible by means of a comparative analysis of stylistic images and figuring out features inherent to the petroglyphs attributed to different cultures of Khakassia. To find the principles of the composite placement of the petroglyphs in the

FIGURE 4



Chronologically, the first images of Ust-Soss composition. (Fragment)

composition and the symbolism of its images, one needs to understand the chronological sequence of creation of the pictures.

While assessment of the chronology we proceeded from the fact (arguments which are given below) that the most ancient petroglyphs of the compositions are horned anthropomorph - "Priest" (priestess) with a rod [Fig. 3 (1,2,3 and 4)] created by comers from the Angara River Basin – Angara culture and two spiral-horned rams created by Andronovo culture in Khakassia. All other "heroes" of the composition have been depicted consistently later than these three images and by other cultures of Khakassia. A distinctive feature of the image of the "Angara anthropomorphic" priest is to place it above all as the hero of the composition and its size is the smallest among other petroglyphs. At the same time, the size of the priest is exactly equal to the diameter of the horns of the nearest sheep image. We believe that the composition completed with the images of two Andronovo rams, was made this way so as to adjust the size of the priest to the size of the horns of the nearest sheep and connect it with a single sacred rite depicting a "touch point" of a votive priest's scepter (Fig. 4) to the horns of a ram.

Regarding the breed of the spiral horned animals [Fig. 3 (2, 3 and 4)], it can be said that they are the males of Altai mountain sheep - *Ovis ammon* Linnaeus, having powerful horns curved in a single spiral. In the Paleolithic area the distribution of *Ovis ammon* Linnaeus reached the latitude of

Krasnoyarsk. In the Neolithic and Bronze Ages, the images of Altai mountain sheep were petroglyphically imprinted on rock surfaces of Altai mountains and basins of the Yenisei, Abakan and the Black Iyus rivers in Khakassia. It should be noted that petroglyphic images of *Ovis ammon* Linnaeus are rare on the rocks of Khakassia. The overwhelming majority of the Khakassian petroglyphs with alpine ungulates depict a Siberian mountain goat – *Capra sibirica* Pall, the main external difference is a saber-shaped horn rather than spiral one like a *Ovis ammon*. Due to the fact that in nature there was no *Ovis ammon* Linnaeus with horns twisted into more than one-time helix, images of sheep with horns in the form of a two and fourfold helix [Fig. 3 (2, 3)], have a votive mythological character.

### *The Style of Ust-Soss Petroglyphs*

The chronologically first figure of the composition, the Stylistic and compositional features of the image of the horned priest [Fig. 3 (1 and 4)] are:

1. Linear, “flat” style of the picture, that is different from the style of the other dimensional petroglyphs.
2. Depicting his figure en face in contrast to other heroes of the composition.
3. Horned head dress granting the anthropomorph with zoomorphic features.
4. The absence of clear sexual characteristics.
5. The head of the priest is not allocated in a separate way, so that the neck immediately goes into his horns.
6. Priest stands akimbo with right hand, legs are wide apart and holds in his left half-bent hand a votive rod.
7. The priest’s wand touches the horns of the sheep closest to it.
8. The size of the priest’s wand is less than 1/2 the size of its image.
9. The size of the priest’s horns is less than 1/3 the size of its image.
10. The size of the image of the priest is equal to the diameter of the spiral horns of the nearest ram.

Next on the relative chronology of creation of the composition is the figure of a ram [Fig. 3 (2 and 4)]. The stylistic and compositional features of his image are:

1. Silhouette style of the images made with solid shallow rubbing.
2. Stylistically sharp - close to a right angle drawing - line in the depiction of the transition from the neck to ram’s neck to its torso

from the to the bottom jaw and a sheep's head to its horn.

3. Four-time screwed spiral formed with a single horn.
4. The hook-nosed head profile.
5. Roach down the lower jaw.
6. Absence of the ear and the eye.
7. The deflection in the back and abdomen convex.
8. The tail image.
9. Straight front and hind legs in a static position illustrated standing outwardly at an obtuse angle relative to the ram body.
10. Linkers connecting front and hind legs in the lower part.
11. The front legs are twice shorter than the hind ones.
12. The closest place of the ram to the priest.
13. The highest placement against other animals of the compositions.

The main feature of this image is a four-time screwed spiral of the ram's horns forming a single horn and connected with a linker front and hind legs of different lengths.

Next on the relative chronology of the creation, is another mountain sheep. [Fig. 3 (3 and 4)].

Stylistic features of this petroglyph are:

1. Silhouette - "volumetric" style of the images made by solid shallow rubbing.
2. Stylistically smooth pattern of the petroglyph. The transition from the neck line to its lower jaw not at a right angle and transition at a right angle from the ram's head to its horns.
3. Four-time screwed horns formed with two horns.
4. Direct no hook-nosed head profile.
5. Direct not curved lower jaw.
6. Absence of the ear and the eye.
7. Straight front and hind legs shown in the static position at right angles to the ram body.
8. Linker closes only the front legs at the bottom part.
9. The front and hind legs are equal length.
10. Lower compositional placing of the image in relation to the images of the priest and the first ram.

The main feature of this image is a four-time screwed horns formed by two horns not only as a single horn of the first ram and only the front legs are connected with a linker. Since this image is only partially saved, it is not possible to judge the presence or absence of a bend in the lines of the

back and abdomen, the presence or absence of a tail and a body as a whole.

Images of two rams with spiral horns [Fig. 3 (2, 3 and 4)] were attributed by us to Andronovo culture of Khakassia, based on the analysis of votive images with the symbolism of the spiral in the Andronovo and chronologically synchronous Mycenaean culture of Greece. In this analysis, we relied on the implementation of E.E. Kuzmina<sup>4</sup> chronological systematization of the types of psalia and images on the discoid psals of Andronovo people and Mycenaean. E.E. Kuzmina's comparative analysis of ornaments on the Andronovo people and Mycenaean psals allowed to establish the chronology and area of psalic origin, in the cultural and historical space from Greece, the Danube and Ukraine to the Southern Urals and Northern Kazakhstan. In the process of considering the pro and contrary arguments about the possible cultural affiliation of the images of two rams, we study [Fig. 3 (2, 3 and 4)] to Andronovo people of Khakassia, we relied on a comparative analysis of the stylistics and semantics of images on psals, Andronovo and Mycenaean votive artifacts<sup>5</sup>. While comparing these images with atypical petroglyphs of Khakassia with stylistics unusual of the Okunevo, Karasuk and Tagar culture, the stylistic and compositional features of these petroglyphs [Fig. 3 (4)] are:

1. Contour style without filling it with a solid knockout or rubbing.
2. Stylistically smooth transition from the neck deer to its torso and neck to the lower jaw.
3. Disproportion of leg length and body size.
4. Head exceeding the length of the legs.
5. Hooked-nose profile of the head, more characteristic of the image of an elk.
6. Straight lower jaw not connected to the neck.
7. The straight line of the back and abdomen convex line.
8. No tail image.
9. Straight front legs shown at an obtuse angle to the body of a deer in a pose of a sudden stop.
10. Straight hind legs, depicted in a static pose at right angles to the body.
12. Jumpers, closing the front and rear legs at the bottom.
12. Absence of the eye image

The main features of the images are the dimensions of deer's head and neck exceeding the length of its legs and linkers connecting both pairs

of legs in their lower part. On this basis, we attributed the creation of the image to Andronovo people, but later they created the images of a sheep (Fig. 4). Since the image is partially saved, it is not possible to judge about the structure of its horns, the number of parts, the presence or absence of the ear.

Next on the relative chronology of the creation is another image of a deer [Fig. 3 (5)] which significantly differs from other animals of the compositions in style.

The features of the deer are:

1. Outline drawing style without filling it with a solid knockout or rubbing.
2. Stylistically sharp at the right angle transition from the neck of the deer to its torso and from the neck to the lower jaw.
3. One branch of horns.
4. Direct not hook-nosed head profile.
5. The straight line of the back and belly line slightly arched.
6. The presence of eye.
7. Roach down lower jaw.
8. The ear, depicted in the form of a loop.
9. A tail.
10. Front and hind legs bent in joints.
11. Human like hoof.
12. No linkers connecting the front and hind legs in the lower part.

The main feature of the deer [Fig. 7 (5)] are its legs bent at the joints and hooves depicted as human feet and stylistically open circuit of the petroglyph due to the lack of linkers in a place of joining legs to the animal's body. The number of parts on the horn of the deer cannot be determined as the image is partially saved.

Next on the relative chronology of the creation of is the image of a fox [Fig. 7 (6)] which is the only ungulate animal in a composition. The features of his design are:

1. Outline drawing style without filling it with a solid knockout or rubbing.
2. Stylistically smooth without right angles outline of the whole image.
3. Absence of eye.
4. Two ears made with a solid punching.
5. Direct line belly and arched back.

6. A trailing tail.
7. The image of a fallos.
8. Direct front and hind legs shown in a static position.

The main feature of the fox is the most careful execution of drawing the thinnest line of graphics among all petroglyphs of the composition. Body contour of the fox is stylistically not closed due to lack of linkers at the junction of the front and hind legs to the body. The fox is the only animal whose composition has both the ear and the fallos. Stylistically the unifying feature of the image of the fox [Fig. 3 (6)] and a deer [Fig. 3 (5)], different from all other figures of animals in the composition, that there is a single graphic line drawing front right and hind left legs and a single graphic line of the front left and hind right legs of both animals.

1. Contour style without filling it with a solid knockout or rubbing.
2. Stylistically smooth transition from the neck deer to its torso and neck to the lower jaw.
3. Two branches of horns with seven spikes on each horn.
4. Direct no hook-nosed head profile.
5. The image of eye.
6. Roach down the lower jaw.
7. The image of the ear made with a solid punching.
6. The straight line of the back and abdomen convex line.
7. The tail image.
8. Straight front legs shown at an obtuse angle to the body of a deer in a pose of a sudden stop.
9. Gently curved hind legs shown in the static position at right angles to the body.
10. No linkers connecting the front and hind legs in the lower part.

The main features are the image size, surpassing all other heroes of the composition and two branches of the horns. Body contour of the deer is stylistically not closed due to lack of linkers at the junction of the hind legs to the body. In general, the image of the third deer [Fig. 3 (7)] is very different in the style from all the above animals and is similar to the style of the second composite group of three spiral horned rams [Fig. 3 (10, 11, 12)] depicted to the right and below the deer.

Due to that stylistic identity the second group of three rams [Fig. 3 (10, 11, 12)] chronologically might be displayed either simultaneously or sequentially after the third deer. The composite sequence of creating the petroglyphs of this animal group was as follows: first the priests depicted



the deer [Fig. 3 (7)] and then sequentially the rams [Fig. 3 (10, 11, 12)].

Stylistic features of the second group of sheep [Fig. 3 (10, 11, 12)] are:

1. Contour style of the body and necks of two animals [Fig. 3 (10, 12)] without filling them with a solid knockout or rubbing.
2. No contour formed with a continuous rubbing of the body, the neck and the head of the third ram in the group [Fig. 3 (11)].
3. Stylistically sharp drawing of the animals, showing a right angle transition from the neck to the lower jaw and a smooth transition from the head to the horns and from the neck to the body in all three sheep.
4. Complete filling of heads of all three sheep.
5. The double spiral horns formed with two horns at each of them.
6. The hook-nosed head profile with a pointed nose of the ram [Fig. 3 (10)] and a hooked nose profile with rectangular heads nose of the rams [Fig. 3 (11, 12)].
7. Direct lower jaw in all three sheep.
8. The image of one ear in all three sheep.
9. The presence of a small deflection of the back and belly bulge in all three sheep.
10. The tail image in all three sheep.
11. The front and hind legs of equal length.
12. Straight front and slightly curved hind legs depicted in a pose of a sudden stop at a small acute angle to the body.
13. No eye images in all three sheep.

The main feature of sheep image [Fig. 7 (10, 11, 12)] is their stylistic unity with a deer [Fig. 7 (7)], no linkers connecting front and hind legs of sheep in the lower part and therefore stylistically not closed contours of bodies of two rams [Fig. 7 (10, 12)]. For the some reason, the image of one of the rams [Fig. 7 (13)] was not completed. Due to the incompleteness of the images we cannot correctly judge its style as a whole, although judging by the picture of the head, it is clear that the image is closest in style to the image of a ram [Fig. 3 (10)].

In addition to the above images of the Ust-Soss composition, the engraved image of another horned anthropomorphic figure [Fig. 3 (14)] and [Fig. 7 (1)], probably created by the priests of the Tashtyk culture, draws attention. From an analysis of the principles of construction of the Ust-Soss composition and the stylistics of its petroglyphs, it is obvious that this image is “artificially” included in the composition, with the likely

goal of “rebranding” the composition with Tashtyk symbols.

### *Chronology of Creation of the Petroglyphs in Ust-Soss Composition*

As an argument to justify the lower chronological boundary of the creation of the Ust-Soss petroglyphic composition, we considered the possible time of creating a horned image of the priest with a rod [Fig. 3.1 and Fig. 4]. For Khakassia depiction of Angara horned anthropomorphs is not typical except for Shalabolino petroglyph composition<sup>6</sup>, where these petroglyphs are found repeatedly. The style of this image is characterized primarily for petroglyphs of Angara and belongs to the type of Angarsk type of images at the end of IV to the first half of the III millennium BC<sup>7</sup>. On the basis of a single style images of the horned anthropomorphs of Shalabolino petroglyph composition and Ust-Soss composition, this chronological interval was initially admitted for the most likely time of creation of the Ust-Soss priest. At the same time, a considerable distance between Shalabolino and Ust-Soss petroglyph composition and absence of Angara type horned anthropomorphs’ images raises the question of correctness of such chronological assessment. There is another question: why in Khakassia, Angara anthropomorphic images with V-shaped horns exist only in Shalabolino and Ust-Soss petroglyph composition and when they were created by “Angara people”?

It is known that historically Angara people, preceded Fedorovo and Andronovo people of Khakassia and among the petroglyphs of the Angara there are no images of spiral horned zoomorphs<sup>8</sup>. But, despite the apparent chronological contradiction, we believe that in the Ust-Soss petroglyphic composition, first Andronovo people depicted two votive spiral-horned sheep [Fig. 3 (2, 3), 4], and then the Angara people created an image of a horned priest [Fig. 3 (14)]. We propose to consider the arguments in favor of such a position.

Based on the well-known chronology of the cultures of Khakassia, we first consider the probable time and possible reasons for the appearance of anthropomorphic images of the Angara type on Shalabolino petroglyph composition.

- 1) At the final stage of Afanasievo culture in Khakassia (in the first half of the III millennium BC), Shalabolino petroglyph composition could be shared sanctuary for bearers of Angara and Afanasievo cultures. In favor of the possibility of such an assumption, there is a fact that the Angara type petroglyphs are not on a palimpsest in

the ancient petroglyphs of the Shalabolino petroglyph composition. Angara people chose clean rock planes for their horned anthropomorphic images and boats separating their mythology from the mythology of Afanasievo and cultures that precede them demonstrating the non-contentious nature of their usage of Shalabolino sanctuary.

- 2) Geography of Okunevo culture monuments distribution<sup>9</sup>, (Fig. 1) shows that Shalabolino petroglyph composition is located at the very eastern edge of Okunevo ecumene. It is, therefore, possible that in the process of displacement of Afanasievo by Okunevo cultural bearers in the middle of the III millennium BC there was time when Afanasievo people had already left the area of Shalabolino petroglyph composition and Okunevo people did not firmly settle in the area. In such situation Angara people could occupy the territory of the Shalabolino petroglyph composition at any time and create there the petroglyphs, until Okunevo people ousted them. The probability of such version of historical development is confirmed by the fact that among all monumental petroglyph compositions of Khakassia, only the Shalabolino one is located at a minimum distance from the confluence of the Angara and Yenisei rivers and in the most geographic accessibility for Angara culture bearers. In addition, the images of Okunevo solar masks in the Shalabolino petroglyph composition are palimpsest superimposed on the horned Angara type anthropomorphic petroglyphs<sup>10</sup>. Consequently, Okunevo people came to the area of Shalabolino petroglyph composition later than Angara people.

Any of the two above stated hypotheses on the appearance of the Angara horned anthropomorphic images on the Shalabolino petroglyph composition are possible. But it is confirmed that Angara bearers were there no later than mid-III millennium BC before the arrival of Okunevo people. At the same time, the above listed arguments are incorrect for determination of creation of a horned anthropomorph of the Ust-Soss petroglyph composition located in the southern part of the Minusinsk basin in areas with the highest concentration of Okunevo monuments<sup>11</sup>, (Fig. 1). That Angara petroglyphs on the eastern periphery of the Okunevo ecumene in Khakassia on Shalabolino petroglyph composition were covered with Okunevo palimpsest, but in the epicenter of the Okunevo

culture in Khakassia at the Ust-Soss sanctuary Okunevo people left them intact, has no possible explanation.

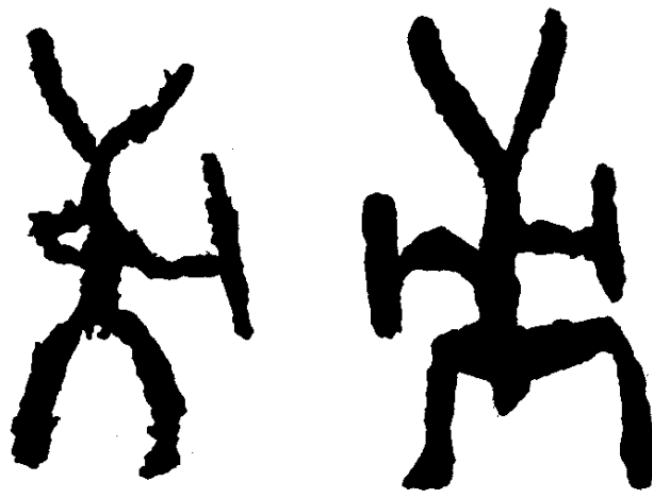
Therefore, it was decided that a more likely time of appearance of the Angara horned anthropomorph in the Ust-Soss petroglyphic composition could be the time of displacement of Okunevo people by Andronovo people. Andronovo came to the Minusinsk hollow in the first half of the II millennium BC from the territory of the North-East Kazakhstan<sup>12</sup>. Firstly they occupied the north-western regions of Khakassia gradually moving to the south of Khakassia. In this situation, after the departure of Okunevo to the south of Khakassia under pressure of Fyodorovo-Andronovo people, the Angara people could have temporal access to Ust-Soss sanctuary organized by Okunevo people and set up their petroglyphs there at the free rocky planes until their final displacement by Andronovo people. There are several reasons:

- 1) There is an available waterway from the Angara confluence with the Yenisei River to the south of the Abakan and up to Ust-Soss sanctuary, which greatly facilitated the access to the sanctuary for Angara people;
- 2) The results of radiocarbon analysis of the samples from the graves and Bronze Age settlements of Khakassia<sup>13</sup> show that in the process of displacement of Andronovo by Okunevo people there was a considerable amount of time when Khakassian area was not densely populated by bearers of both cultures. Then Angara people had the opportunity to attend Okunevo sanctuary before the arrival of Andronovo people and create their palimpsests on the Okunevo images. This version of historical events is supported by the fact that some of Khakassian Okunevo stelae there are palimpsests depicting an Angara type elk<sup>14</sup>.
- 3) It is also possible that in the transition period during cultural changes in Khakassia in the first third of the II millennium BC, Angara and Andronovo people might use the Ust-Soss sanctuary alternately or consistently for the rituals. So it could last until the final displacement of Angara and Andronovo people from the basin of the Abakan river. Such a possibility is supported by the fact that the Angara horned anthropomorph at the Ust-Soss composition was not blocked by palimpsests of the Andronovo petroglyphs (Fig. 8).

As a result of the foregoing, it is evident that in the first third of the II

millennium BC, Angara people for several decades had an opportunity to create their petroglyphs in Khakassia not only at the Shalabolino petroglyph composition, but in the Ust-Soss sanctuary. As a result the question arises as to whether additional archaeological evidences of the Angara culture presence in the first third of Khakassia II millennium BC outside of the Shalabolino petroglyph composition exist. There are such evidences. In 1975 L.R. Kyzlasov excavated a burial of the Angara type in a stone boat in Ordzhonikidze district of Khakassia on Chulsky chaatas. This burial was blocked with a reused and partially broken stone slab depicting the antics Okunevo solar type image<sup>15</sup>. The fact that the burial of the Angara type in a stone boat was blocked by the Okunevo stove indicates that the dumping was made after the departure of Okunevo people from the territory of Northern Khakassia. Therefore, the Angara type burial opened by L.R. Kyzlasov at the Chulsky chaatas can most probably be dated to XVIII-XVII centuries BC—the historical period when there was repression of Okunevo people in the territory of Khakassia by Andronovo people.

FIGURE 5



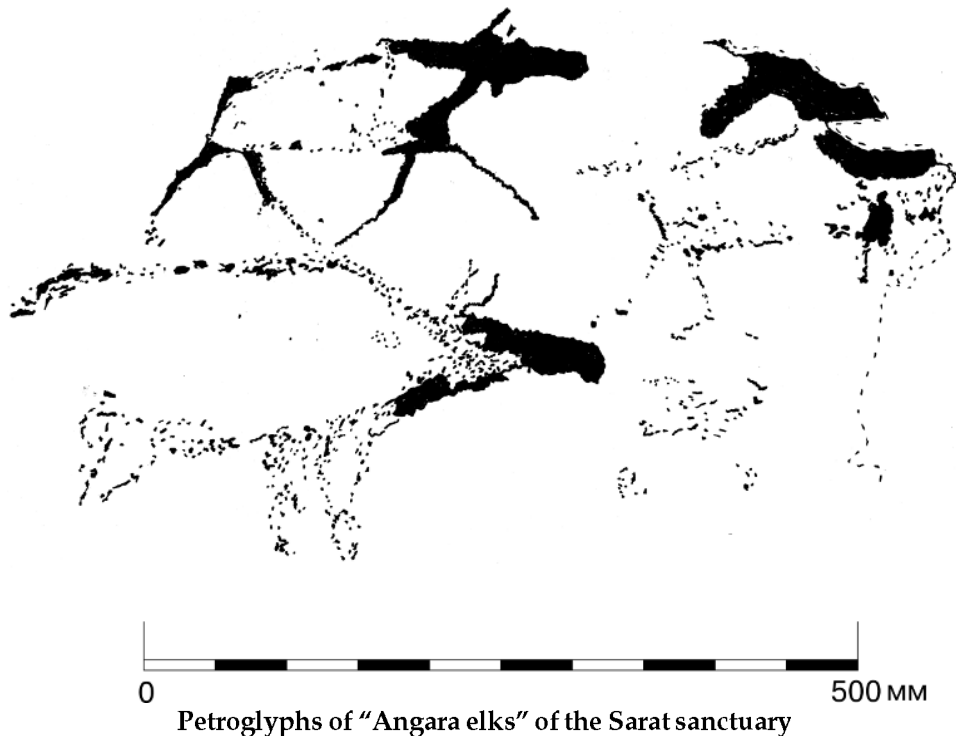
- 1 – the petroglyph of the Ust-Soss composition  
 2 - petroglyph of the “Big astronomical dial” of the Sarat Sunduk sanctuary.

The correctness of the proposed dating – XVIII-XVII centuries BC, Angara burial on Chulsky chaatas, is supported with artefactual evidences:

- 1) On one of the pillars of the “Big Astronomical dial: of the Sarat sanctuary located in the direct line of sight from the Chulsky

- chaatas there was found a petroglyphic image of the horned Angara type anthropomorph<sup>16</sup> similar in its style to the image of the horned anthropomorph at the Ust-Soss sanctuary [Fig. 5 (1,2)].
- 2) In 2012, an Angara type elk image was found on a massive block of sandstone embedded in the structure of the shaft of the Sarat Sunduk sanctuary petroglyphic composition (Fig. 6). In the process of topographical study of the sanctuary shaft's structure it was revealed that the petroglyphic composition gives one of the astronomically significant directions<sup>17</sup> [Fig.6]. From which it was concluded that a block of sandstone with images of elks was set intentionally by Angara people and astronomically built into the structure of the south-eastern wall of the Sarat sanctuary. Obviously, Angara people could make their sacred image [Fig. 5 (2)], after Okunevo people left the Sarat sanctuary under pressure of Andronovo people.

FIGURE 6



The totality of the above arguments leads to the conclusion that the most likely time when Angara culture bearers could create the image of

an elk (Fig. 6) and the horned anthropomorph of the Sarat sanctuary [Fig. 5 (2) and Ust-Soss Fig. 5 (1)] sanctuaries, is XVIII- XVII centuries BC. When in the course of displacement of Okunevo by Andronovo people the area of Khakassia was not densely populated by bearers of both cultures and there was a possibility of unimpeded penetration of Angara people to the area of both sanctuaries.

The proposed relative chronological sequence of creating images of the first plot [Fig. 3 (1, 2, 3, 4)] of the Ust-Soss petroglyphic composition, in addition to the above arguments, is justified:

- 1) Difference between the cultures of Angara and Andronovo people, the symbolism of the shape of the horns in the images of anthropo and zoo-morphs.
- 2) Stylistic and trace differences in the nature of the execution patterns of the priest and sheep.
- 3) The fact that the destruction of the rocky surface on which the composition was created damaged the multi-temporal images of the first and second composite block: the body of the second spiral-ram ram [Fig. 3 (3)] and the horns of three red deer, [Figure 7 (4, 5, 7)]. Consequently, when these images were created, the rocky surface was not destroyed and allowed to place chronologically different-time images in an arbitrary order. Despite this possibility, all petroglyphs, including the horned priest, were placed on the plane by three compositional blocks, from left to right and from top to bottom.

Based on the systematization of the petroglyphs of the bronze era in Khakassia proposed by O.V. Kovaleva<sup>18</sup>, let's consider the probable time of creation of other petroglyphs of the Ust-Soss composition. The most characteristic and different from other images composition is the image of a deer [Fig. 3 (5)]. The style of its design is in stark contrast with the images of rams [Fig. 3 (2, 3)] and two other elk of the composition. Their main differences are stylistically unclosed contour of the body, legs connected at the joints and hooves similar to the human feet. From the list of known petroglyphs of the Bronze Age the petroglyphs of Hurbo-Nur on the Baikal lake dating by O.I. Goryunova<sup>19</sup> to the late Kurykan period are stylistically close to the images of the composition.

Also the image of a deer in the Shara-Shubute composition III made in the art of engraving, is dated by V.S. Nikolayev<sup>20</sup> to the second half of II to the first half of the I millennium BC.

Due to the fact that the images of deer in Shara-Shubute III and Hurbo-Nur compositions and the image of a deer in the Ust-Soss composition have significant stylistic differences an attempt was made to find a more compelling analogy. An image closer in the style was found among the petroglyphs of the early Tagar period which is dated by M.P. Gryaznov and G.N. Kurochkin to VIII-VI centuries BC<sup>21</sup> on account of the following:

- 1) Images of a deer in Tagar compositions of the Oglakhty petroglyph composition<sup>22</sup>, Lighthouses<sup>23</sup> and Sulek VI<sup>24</sup>;
- 2) Images of a deer with hooves similar to human feet on Beysky stella<sup>25</sup>, Turan IV petroglyph composition<sup>26</sup> and Bychikha<sup>27</sup>;
- 3) The images of goats, with open-circuit of the body at the Tagar Suhaniha petroglyph composition<sup>28</sup> and Bychikha<sup>29</sup>.

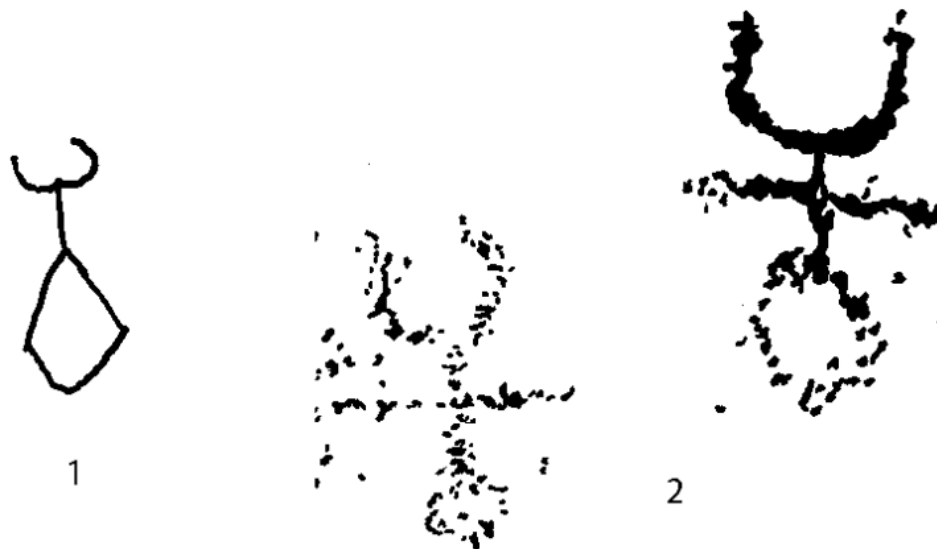
Among the petroglyphs of Kamenolozhsk of the period in X-IX centuries BC of the Karasuk culture the petroglyphic layer stands out including deer images<sup>30</sup>, horses<sup>31</sup>, bulls<sup>32</sup> and goats<sup>33</sup> with hooves similar to the feet of a man.

From the analysis of the stylistic similarities it follows that the image of a deer [Fig. 3 (5)] of Ust-Soss composition may be attributed to the chronological interval of X-VI centuries BC. This dating of the interval can be specified by two petroglyphic images of marals from the 01-00 plate found during excavations of an Argens-2 burial and memorial complex<sup>34</sup>. Images of Arzhan petroglyph composition deer also have an open circuit. Compositionally, the lowest deer from 01-00 plate stylistically is the most ancient image among images of ungulates at Arzhan petroglyph composition. It is also stylistically as close as possible to the image of a deer from the Ust-Soss composition. Upper chronological date of the petroglyphs from the 01-00 plate is the time of constructing of Arzhan funerary complex. Which according to K.V. Chugunova<sup>35</sup> is the second half of the VII century BC. Thus, the creation of deer images [Fig. 3 (5-7, 10-13)] of the Ust-Soss composition is more likely to be placed in a chronological interval between X – the first half of VII century BC.

The engraved petroglyph [Fig. 3 (14), 7 (1)], created probably by Tashtyk people, is not a palimpsest on other images of the Ust-Soss composition, which may indicate the mythological and non-conflictual nature of its creators to the previous images of the Ust-Soss composition or about reformatting the myths of the Ust-Soss composition into the Tashtyk semantic format.



FIGURE 7



1-Tashtyk engraving of the Ust-Soss petroglyph composition.  
2- Karasuk horned anthropomorphic petroglyphs of the Ust-Soss sanctuary.

At the same time, image [3 (14)] is a sequential stylization of images of two horned anthropomorphs from [Figure 7 (2)], created by Karasuk people on a separate rock plane closest to the Ust-Soss composition. In this composition, the Karasuk people depicted stylized figures of two horned anthropomorphs [Fig. 7 (2)] with their legs in a shape of a ring. Images of anthropomorphs with legged legs that are stylistically close to one another, are in the Karasuk petroglyphic layer on the Schel-Tes-3a and Shel-Tes-3b<sup>36</sup> and on the plate 7 of the Barsuchy Log mound reused by the Tagar people<sup>37</sup>, dating back to early Tagar period.

Consequently, the petroglyphic composition [Fig. 7 (2)] with the image of two horned anthropomorphs was created by Karasuk people in the chronological interval of the XIII-IX centuries. BC. Probably, for religious reasons, Karasuk people did not consider it possible to supplement their petroglyphs with the Ust-Soss composition, but they created their images on a free rocky surface. They located their petroglyphs, to the left and above the Ust-Soss composition. Thus, Karasuk priests “elevated” their votive images over the symbolism of images of the Ust-Soss composition.

At the same time, despite the apparent theologemic distancing from cosmogony of the Ust-Soss composition, the Karasuk petroglyphs (Fig. 7, 2) have stylization of the Angara people horned anthropomorph [Figure 3 (1) and Figure 8] of the Ust-Soss composition. Then Tashtyk stylized the

image of the Karasuk horned anthropomorphs and created their engraved image (Fig. 22, 1) on the rock plane of the Ust-Soss composition.

Also, two cross-shaped symbols depicted on the rock surface [Fig. 3 (8, 9)] are outside the general composite placement of petroglyphs of the Ust-Soss composition at three levels. The chronology of the creation of the petroglyphic crosses of the Ust-Soss composition is difficult to be determined correctly due to the prevalence of this symbolism in the petroglyphic images in different cultures of Khakassia in the Bronze and Iron ages except for the Tagar culture. For example, the images of crosses are among the Karasuk petroglyphic compositions<sup>38</sup> and petroglyphs of the Shalabolino petroglyph composition<sup>39</sup>. Therefore, taking into account "out of the composite" principle of crosses at the Ust-Soss petroglyph composition [Fig. 3 (8, 9)] the most likely time of the creation of their images is a chronological interval between XIII - first half of the VII century BC.

Considering the above facts, based on the above-described relative dating of petroglyphic images of the Ust-Soss petroglyph composition, we can offer the following chronological order of their creation:

- 1) Images of rams [Fig. 3 (2, 3) and Fig. 8] – the second half of XVIII-XVII centuries BC.
- 2) The image of the priest [Fig. 3(1), 4, 5(1)], XVIII-XVII centuries BC.
- 3) Deer image [Fig. 3 (4)] XVII-XIV centuries BC.
- 4) Cruciate images [Fig. 3(8, 9)], XIII-X centuries BC.
- 5) Images of two red deer and a fox [Fig. 3(5, 6)], X - in the first half VII century BC.
- 6) Images of the four sheep [Fig. 3(7, 10, 11, 12, 13)], X - in the first half VII century BC.
- 7) Engraved image of the horned anthropomorph 7(14), 5(1), III century BC-VI BC.

### ***The Cosmogonic Symbolism of Petroglyphs of the Ust-Soss Composition***

Rocky plane with petroglyphs of the Ust-Soss composition is located along the direction of the true azimuth of 104 ± 5 degrees. The orientation of this direction was determined in two ways: on the hour angle of the Sun (the time when the plane with drawings is completely illuminated after sunrise) as well as casement measurements (determination of geodetic coordinates of points forming a gate using GNSS navigation and further calculation of the azimuth with known formulas). The value of the azimuth

for given latitude corresponds to the direction of the sunrise in the beginning of March and in early October and the direction of the sunset in the middle of April and the beginning of September. Thus, the rock plane predominantly faces to the south so that the petroglyphs on it are illuminated by the sun throughout the year. In the Equinox the rising sun appears to the right along the plane drawings and at a height of about 10-11 degrees above the horizon begins to illuminate the petroglyphic composition. At the summer Solstice, the height of the Sun above the horizon is about 40 degrees (according to astronomical calculations made in StarCalc program). Thus, the plane itself with petroglyphs is located in the "gates direction" to the West-East with a particular contact inclination of the rock plane to the south at 14.5 degrees.

At the summer solstice, chiaroscuro divides the first three images of the Ust-Soss composition in half, thus setting the dichotomy of the content of this plot in the mythology, [Fig.8]. At sunset (at 17:31 local time) the light and shadow divides the plot into illuminated and shaded parts, in a way [Fig. 8] that the front "hooves" of rams "become" on the border of chiaroscuro, and the horns of rams and the priest remain illuminated by the Sun. In order to observe the dichotomy of the cut-off principle of composition, the priests were forced to depict their front legs higher than the ram located [Fig. 3 (2), 4, 8] two times shorter than its hind legs. While the front and the hind legs below the ram located [Fig. 3 (3), 4, 8] have the same length.

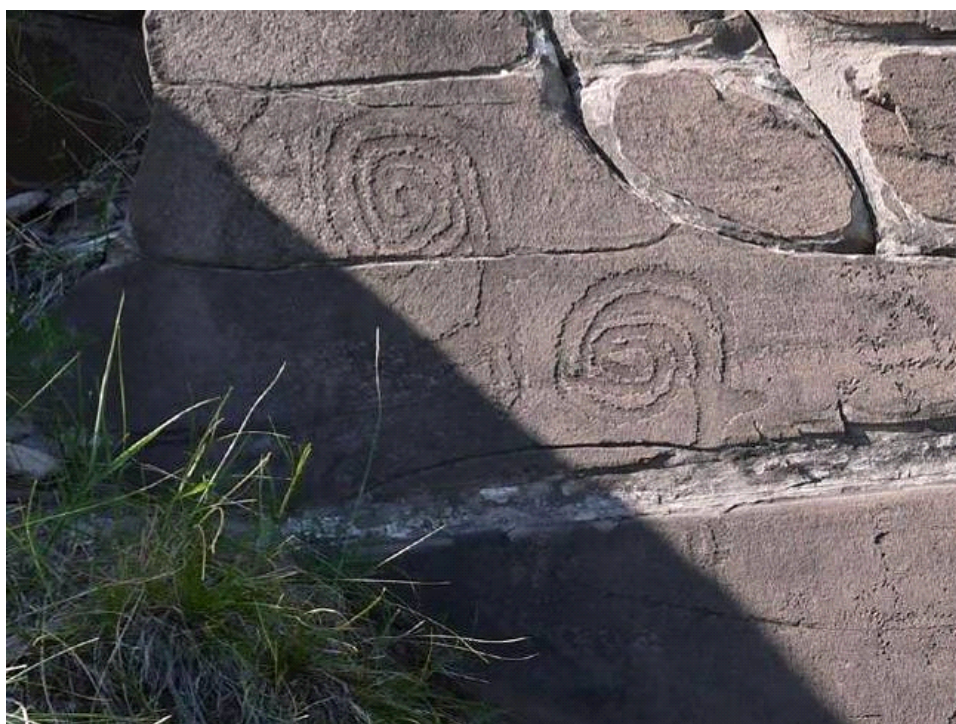
At the same time, chiaroscuro "divides" the priest's figure into three parts - "three levels of the universe":

- 1) The first is the heavenly level, symbolized by the fully illuminated horned head of the "priest" and a rod relating to the illuminated sun-sanctified horns of the upper spiral-horned ram. The border of light and shade at the same time adjoins with the lit horns of the upper ram and "sets" the angle of inclination of the priest's left leg, above the knee, [Fig. 8].
- 2) The second is the level of the world of existence, symbolized by the priest's upper body illuminated by the sun above his belt. The priest's right hand below the elbow is in the shade, and above the elbow is illuminated by the sun. At the same time, chiaroscuro "sets" the angle of the priest's arm below the elbow.
- 3) The third level is the underworld, symbolized by the feet of the priest and the parts of the bodies of the rams that are in the shadows.

It should be noted that such a cut-off picture is observed during the three days of the summer solstice. On other days, the sun sets at a different angle and does not create the cut-off pattern observed in [Figures 3 (1, 4, 8)]. In winter, at sunset, the shadow of the rock, creating a light and shade pattern at the summer solstice, does not fall on the composition.

Due to lack of palimpsests in the Ust-Soss composition we can conclude that the images of the sheep and a horned priest were perceived by Andronovo people as a single cosmogonic concept.

**FIGURE 8**



**Chairosкуро principles of Ust-Soss petroglyph composition. Summer solstice.  
(Photo by S.V. Karlov, 2016)**

Most likely, that a horned anthropomorph of the Ust-Soss composition was perceived by Andronovo people as a priest-organizer not as the supreme deity. This assumption is confirmed by following facts:

- 1) The deity image cannot be less in the size than any other hero of a cosmogonic composition.
- 2) The sights of the cosmogony animals of the Ust-Soss composition and the horned priest are watching in different directions.
- 3) Multilevel composite image of the priest and the sacred animals

suggests the separation of the spiritual space of cosmological animals and the sacred space of the sanctuary at the top of the mountain where the priest is.

Obviously, the top of the mountain as the pinnacle of the sanctuary allowed the priest to “reach the heaven” - the abode of the gods. This sacred meaning was fixed by placing the image of the priest at the top “heaven” compositional level [Fig. 3, 4, 8] together with the cosmogonic rams.

The rod in the hand of the priest (Fig. 8, Fig. 20) is a votive artifact which shows that he makes a ritual action as it is set out in the *Shatapatha Brahmana*<sup>40</sup>.

*Shatapatha Brahmana* (XI.1.2.11)

He gives the crook as a sacrificial gift to the priests.  
Truly, the dog (the moon) is driven away with a staff.  
This is exactly this (Moon-Dog), he thereby drives away,  
when giving the staff as a sacrificial gift to the priests.  
Such a sacrificial gift as prescribed. ...

Priest is “facing” the tribesmen. The orientation of the priest looking upon us as the observer of the cosmogony of the existing world connects the “heaven” with the world that exists in order to preserve its harmony, and the priest performs his sacred act. At the same time, on the basis of zoomorphism, the horns of priest connect him with the sacred images of cosmogonic animals of the composition.

The absence next to the priest of the figure of any other sacred ceremonial artifacts, whether the boat for the journey to the underworld or mortar and pestle for cooking the sacred drink, may indicate that the priest during the calendar year makes a verbal sacrifice and sing the ritual hymns to the gods as this process is described in *Shatapatha Brahmana*<sup>41</sup>.

*Now, indeed, the gods were at first mortal; and only when they had gained the year they were immortal; for the year is everything, and the imperishable means everything: thereby then accrues to him imperishable merit, the imperishable world. XI.1.2.12*

*Verily, in the beginning, this (universe) was the Brahman (neut.).  
It created the gods; and, having created the gods,  
it made them ascend these worlds:  
Agni this (terrestrial) world, Vāyu the air, and Sūrya the sky. XI.2.3.1*

*And the deities who are above these he made ascend the worlds which are above these; and, indeed, just as these (three) worlds and these (three) deities are manifest, so are those (higher) worlds and those (higher) deities manifest (the worlds) which he made those deities ascend. XI.2.3.2*

*In the beginning, indeed, the gods were mortal, and only when they had become possessed of the Brahman they were immortal. Now, when he makes the libation to Mind form being mind, in as much as it is by mind that one knows, 'This is form'—he thereby obtains Form; and when he makes the libation to Speech name being speech, in as much as it is by speech that he seizes (mentions) the name he thereby obtains Name;-as far as there are Form and Name, so far, indeed, extends this whole (universe): all this he obtains; and the all being the imperishable imperishable merit and the imperishable world thus accrue to him XI.2.3.6*

## CONCLUSION

The above fragments of *Shatapatha Brahmana*<sup>42</sup> confirm that approximation of the previous divine pantheon by the bearers of the following theologem could have a non-conflicting character when the images of their own gods were depicted on a descending line towards the previous “alien” gods. The consequence of which is a multi-level compositional placement of images of their own and previous deities. Similarly, the placement of Agni, Wind and the Sun at different levels of the universe is described above in *Shatapathka Brahmana* (XI.2.3.1). At the same time, images of their own deities of composition could be placed in descending order in relation to the previous “foreign” ancient deities, depicted earlier and already “occupied for themselves” free upper rock planes, suitable for creating other images. This objective natural (lack of free upstream rocky planes) and the theological factor (recorded in *Shatapatha Brahmana*-XI.2.3.1) can explain the absence of palimpsests in the Ust-Sos composition, created consistently for at least eight hundred years by carriers of various cultures of Khakassia.

That this fact is not single, is evidenced by the petroglyphic

compositions of other sanctuaries of the Bronze Age of Khakassia. Such as the First Chest<sup>43</sup> the Temple of the Creation of the Universe<sup>44</sup>, the Sarat Sunduk, in which petroglyphic compositions, supplemented over the centuries by images of various cultures of Khakassia, are also devoid of palimpsests.

At the same time, for example, when Karasuk people found it impossible to approximate “foreign” deities in their pantheon, they depicted their two gods on a separate rocky plane located above and to the left of the Ust-Soss petroglyphic composition and, accordingly, closer to the sky and the Sun. The Tashtyk citizens, in turn, designated their own presence in the Red Stone sanctuary, branded Ust-Soss composition with the image of their deity, violating the sacred three-level composition principle.

Lack of palimpsests in the Ust-Soss composition may indicate a non-contentious nature of the cosmogonic myths of different cultures participated in its creation or on priests’ own interpretation of different cultures of the original myth [Fig. 4, 8].

The differences in the stylistics of the petroglyphic images of the Ust-Soss composition indicate that the carriers of successive cultures of Khakassia (with the exception of Karasuk) consistently complemented the composition with images of votive animals, observing the following “cosmogonic principles”:

- 1) All cosmogonic animals (from the observer side) are depicted facing to the right, when their “sights’ are watching to the East, to the sunrise in equinox, as is fixed in *Shatapatha-brahmana*<sup>45</sup>.

*When they had sacrificed they beheld (discovered) the eastern quarter,  
and made it the eastern (front) quarter;  
as it now is that eastern (front) quarter:  
therefore creatures here move in a forward direction,  
for they (the gods) made that the front quarter.  
‘Let us improve it from here!’  
they said, and made it to be strength,  
‘May we see this strength!’ they said; and it became yonder sky*  
**XI.1.6.21**

- 2) All animals are depicted larger in size than the image of the priest and are placed lower although the rock plate, when the composition’s creation began, placed their pictures at the same level.
- 3) The size of the animals in the composition is bigger than the size

of the priest, the spiral horns of first two rams and joined in the shape of the ring legs of sheep and the ram [Fig. 3 (2,3,4)] indicate their sacred – “heaven” – origins and their cosmogonic symbolism.

- 4) The differences in the images of two spiral horned sheep [Fig.7 (2,3) 4], and their three leveled composite placement could confirm their sacral.
- 5) The “sight” of the priest [Fig.7(2,3) 4] is faced to the south to the Sun on the maximum height above the horizon at any of the season cycle “intermediate” for the god of the existing world, as is written in *Shatapatha Brahmana*<sup>46</sup>.

*They then beheld the southern quarter,  
and made it the southern quarter;  
and it now is that southern (right, dakshing) quarter:  
whence the dakshing (cows) stand to the south (of the altar),  
and are driven up from the south,  
for they made that the southern one (dakshing).  
'Let us improve it from here!' they said, and made it to be space.  
'May we see this space!' they said; and it became this air,  
for that (air) is space;  
so the resting-place there in yonder world is clearly this air;  
and because, whilst being here on earth,  
one does not see that space, therefore people say,  
'That space (or, yonder world) is invisible.'* **XI.1.6.22**

- 6) The participation of a priest in the ritual of “cosmogonic co-creation of the universe” [Fig. 3(1),4, 8], shows his horned headdress symbolizing the sacred and votive zoomorphism and a votive wand of the priest used in the ritual practice.

Using the cut-off picture on the rocky surface in the summer solstice, the creators of the composition “marked” the dichotomy of the Ust-Soss cosmogonic myth, relegating to the priest the role of “co-participant” of the ritual actions of “pasturing” two cosmogonic helicopter-like rams, (figures 3, 4, 8). The equality of the sizes of the images of the priest and the horns of the ram closest to him connect the mythological subject with a single content of the act of co-creating the universe. The touch of a priest with a rod to the solar horns of the upper ram symbolizes the unity of the act of cosmogonic creation and the act of creation created by the priest. On the basis of the content of the semantics cosmogony depicted in the composite plot Fig. 8, we can judge about mythologem of twin myth as



the evidence of presence of the day and night dichotomy, summer and winter seasons, summer and winter solstices, vernal and autumnal equinoxes characteristics of a wide range of Indo-Aryan cultures.

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# GREAT SALBYK BARROW – THE BIGGEST MEGALITHIC MONUMENT IN SIBERIA

L.S. MARSADOLOV

## ABSTRACT

*In different historical periods, megalithic structures were erected in many countries of the world. Until recently, the archaeologists have not been considering the territory of Siberia as being an area of distribution of megalithic cultures, although the Saian-Altai area is now known for a variety of megalithic structures of different archaeological periods. The construction of big barrows in Salbyk probably was based on the astronomical knowledge at that time. Installation of fence slabs is connected with the main positions of the rise and setting of the moon and sun on astronomically significant days.*

**Key words:** *megalithic monument, nomadic, barrow, astronomical aspect, moon, sun, Salbyk, Siberia, Khakassia*

## INTRODUCITON

Not only in the settled civilizations, but also among the nomadic peoples of Eurasia, there lived in the past outstanding politicians, religious leaders, warriors, wizards, architects and craftsmen-artists, who either directly or indirectly influenced the course of world history. This is evidenced by the presence of huge burial mounds of chiefs of nomadic groups, the unique layout of the settlements, ancient sanctuaries in the mountains and the valley steppes, petroglyphs and artistically designed objects.

The Great Salbyk barrow is the best known of the megalithic monuments in Siberia. The barrow is situated 65 kms. northward of the town of Abakan in Khakassia Russia. Coordinates of the monument are: geographical breadth (northern) – 53 53.4', longitude (east) – 90 45.1', height above sea level is 540 metres. There are more than 50 big and middle-sized barrows, as well as many small ones. The archaeologist S. V.

Kiselev excavated the Salbyk barrow in 1954-1956<sup>1</sup>.

The expedition of the State Hermitage Museum investigated the Salbyk valley in 1992, 1994, 1996, 1998, 2008, 2010 and 2015<sup>2</sup>. The expedition has recently composed a plan of the fence of stone slabs, taken samples for the tree-ring and radiocarbon analysis, conducted the astronomical and topographical analyses, and traced the connection of the barrow with the surrounding landscape.

The barrow height is more than 20 metres and originally it was pyramid-shaped (Fig. 1, 2). Under the mound was a square “fence” (71 x 71 metres) made of huge stone slabs placed vertically and horizontally and weighing some tones (the average size was about 5 metres). Inside the fence, a square pit-grave had been dug, and there were seven persons buried in timber at its bottom. It seems probable that the chief of an alliance of tribes and his favourites were buried in the grave. The construction of big barrows in Salbyk probably was based on the astronomical knowledge of that time. The installation of the fence slabs is connected with the main positions of the rise and setting of the moon and sun on astronomically significant days. On the basis of the new analyses, the barrow is dated to the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC.

### CONSTRUCTION OF THE BARROW

The process of building the great barrow in Salbyk, which is very complex due to its construction and the burial ritual, can be reconstructed in the following way. Probably not a whole year was spent for the construction of the monument. Hundreds of persons took part in the building of the burial monument temple.

In the mountain valley, a point for the barrow centre was chosen very carefully. The point had to satisfy certain requirements:

- 1) It had to be on the highest place between mountains.
- 2) It had to be surrounded by mountains lower to the west and east than to the north and south.
- 3) It had to be conveniently situated for astronomical observations.

It should be mentioned that such a place had probably been found in the earlier period and its meaning remained in later epochs. Near the Great Salbyk barrow there is the Bronze Age ritual centre with stone sculpture of the Okunevskaya culture, sites of the Early Tagar period.

The burial construction consisted of three parts: a corridor (*dromos*),

an extension near a door, and a burial chamber. In the central part of the barrow, but closer to the western wall of the fence, a structure consisting of earth and logs was found. It looked like a reduced pyramid; its height was about 2 metres and its upper platform was 8 x 8 metres (Fig. 1). The pyramid was at first sight snow white because its slopes were covered with a thick layer of birch bark (sometimes 15 layers). In addition, the upper logs of larch were rolled up in birch bark. Thus, a larch seemed to be a birch.

Under the pyramid there was a square pit – 5 x 5 metres and its bottom was 1.8 metres deep. Its walls were lined with vertical logs. In the bottom of the pit there was a wooden framework with 4 rows of larch logs cut like bars. The chamber was 4 x 4 metres; its height was about 2 metres. It was covered by six rows of massive logs with a thick layer of birch bark. The bottom of the framework and the space between its walls and the logs covering the pit's walls were full of solid red, water-resistant clay. S.V. Kiselev established that the bottom was covered with birch bark under the clay. Six layers of crossed logs formed a roof under the framework, but they could not withstand the great pressure of the earth and had fallen into the chamber.

In the chamber, the remnants of seven persons were found—men and women. An old warrior was buried in the centre, some of whose bones were broken. A large clay vessel was found in fragments. Near the middle part of the western wall of the framework, on the bottom, a miniature bronze knife was also found.

The *dromos* began with an entrance near the middle stele of the western wall of the fence and went close to the western slope of the pyramid. There was a narrow hole into the chamber, which appeared to be filled with pieces of wood. The walls of the corridor (width 2-3 metres) were covered with logs, and the upper parts of these were covered with a thin ceiling made of hewn planks. Both walls and the corridor's ceiling were decorated with a layer of birch bark.

The fence was made of massive blocks of sandstone placed in a standing position; the largest of these weigh about 30-100 tons (Fig. 2). The fence's blocks were put in narrow deep trenches, their width being less than 0.6 metres. The depth of the trenches varied—from 0.8 to 2 metres, depending on the height of the blocks, which were placed in such way that they were at about the same level above ground, with heights of 1.8 to 2 metres. The entrance from the barrow's eastern side was rather complex. From the two middle steles, the long slabs were perpendicular

to the line of the wall, resting on two steles placed towards to the east of 5 metres (Fig. 3). From the eastern side, “the entrance” between the steles was covered with a roof of small slabs placed very carefully, with a small deviation inside the barrow.

During the clearing of the western wall, the remnants of the much destroyed burials of two persons were found in the SW and NE angles. In the process of study of the fence, near the large angle of the south-eastern stele, the destroyed burial of a child was found. In the angle formed by a block of the southern fence and the angle of the SW stele, the burial of an adult man with tied, bent legs was discovered. These were probably sacrifices that had been made in the most significant places of the barrow.

The transportation of blocks for the fence must have been very hard work. The barrow was erected in the steppe valley and the nearest deposits of Devonian sandstone are situated on the Kyzyl-Khaya mountain, 16 kms south-westward from it (Fig. 4). The remnants of ancient quarries were found there. The blocks were quarried from the rock, probably with the assistance of wooden wedges, and were transported to the place of the barrow construction, perhaps in winter on wooden rollers. During the clearing of the barrow’s lower part, many larch logs, often dry from forest fires, were discovered (Fig. 5). The logs had been moved by ropes, judging from marks on their ends.

### ASTRONOMICAL ASPECTS

Preliminary results of astronomical researches by the author and the astronomers V.L. Gorshkov and V.B. Kaptsjug of the Pulkovo Observatory, St. Petersburg, are submitted below:

Astronomical observations had probably taken place there before the construction of the stone fence. The installation of the fence slabs is connected with the main positions of the rise and setting of the moon and sun on astronomically significant days (Fig. 6). Signs in the form of circles, crescents and other figures were discovered on the barrow’s slabs. The investigation revealed that the solar directions were connected with vertical stone slabs, the moon directions – with corners of a barrow, but the entrance was oriented on sunrise in days of an equinox.

On one of the slabs from the barrow, a complicated composition is drawn. In the higher part of the slab the sky is represented: a bird, the sun, stars, a person with vizier in his hand. In the middle part of the slab, a male warrior stands with a foot on the head of a fallen person, nearby is

a moon-woman and also a man. In the lower part of the slab, there are unclear figures of perhaps a horse and a beast (Fig. 7). It is possible that on this slab the sequence of the funeral ritual is represented, which corresponds to the archaeological material from the excavations.

In Salbyk, some of great barrows have “chains” of vertically standing slabs as well as horizontally placed “slab-altars” near the mound. Outside the barrow were found vertical stones of intermediate size, aligned to astronomically significant directions. A sculptural representation of a lying tiger was also found (Fig. 8). The detailed study of the stone slabs of the fence revealed the significance of a colour spectrum — from light to dark tones and conversely.

### CONCLUSIONS

The Great Salbyk barrow, by its monumental construction, can be put in the same group as the famous Stonehenge in England, but by the volume of consumed labour, it probably significantly exceeds Stonehenge. Megalithic stone slabs at Stonehenge had a weight up to 30 tons, and the biggest plate in Salbyk is about 100 tons. The construction of big barrows in Salbyk having multiple functions (funeral, socio-political, religious, astronomical, architectural, and others) probably was based on the astronomical knowledge of their time.

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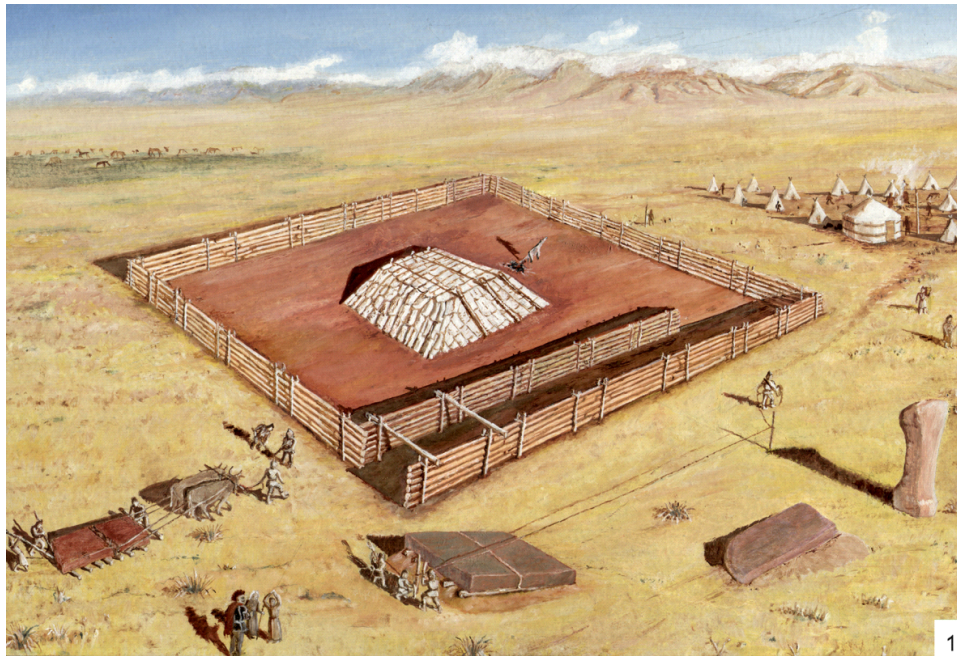


Figure 1. Salbyk. Khakasia, 7th century BC. The process of construction of the barrow:

- 1 – temporary wooden fence and the beginning of construction of stone fences;
  - 2 – process of coating of an earthen mound in ancient times;
- (reconstruction by L. Marsadolov, artist S. Zyablitsky).

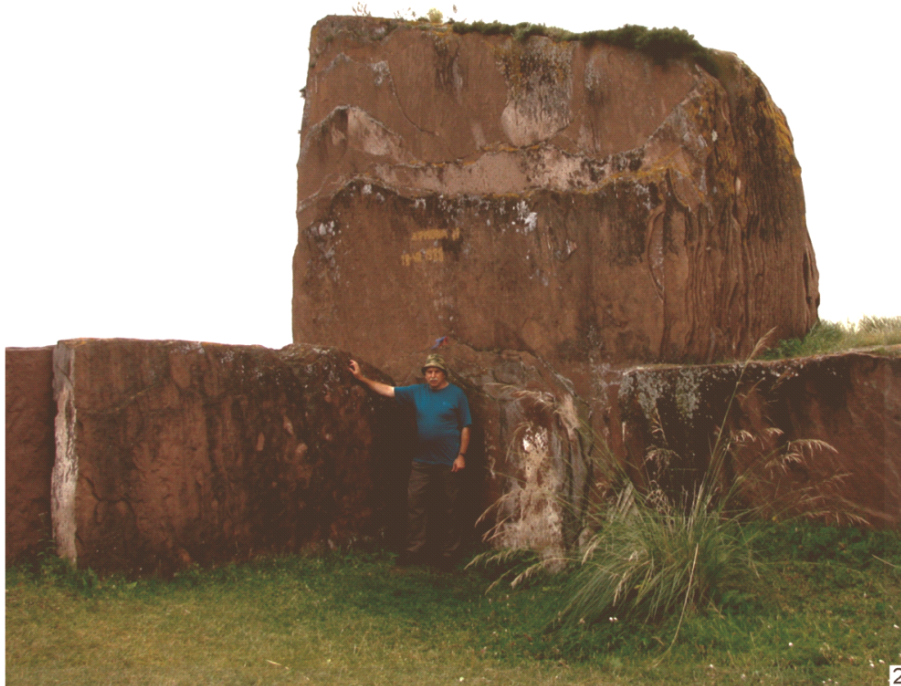


Figure 2. Salbyk. Plate No14. Photos from various years:  
1 – June 1910, photograph N. Fedorov, 2 – July 2008, photo L. Marsadolov.



Figure 3. Salbyk. The Eastern “Gate”.

Photos of different years, reflecting the “life stages” stone No83:  
1 – beginning of the twentieth century (before the excavations of the mound);  
2 – 1954 (the beginning of the excavations); 3 – 1996 (the foot of the stone  
again entered the land); 4 – 2008 (partial clearing of the bottom of the stone).

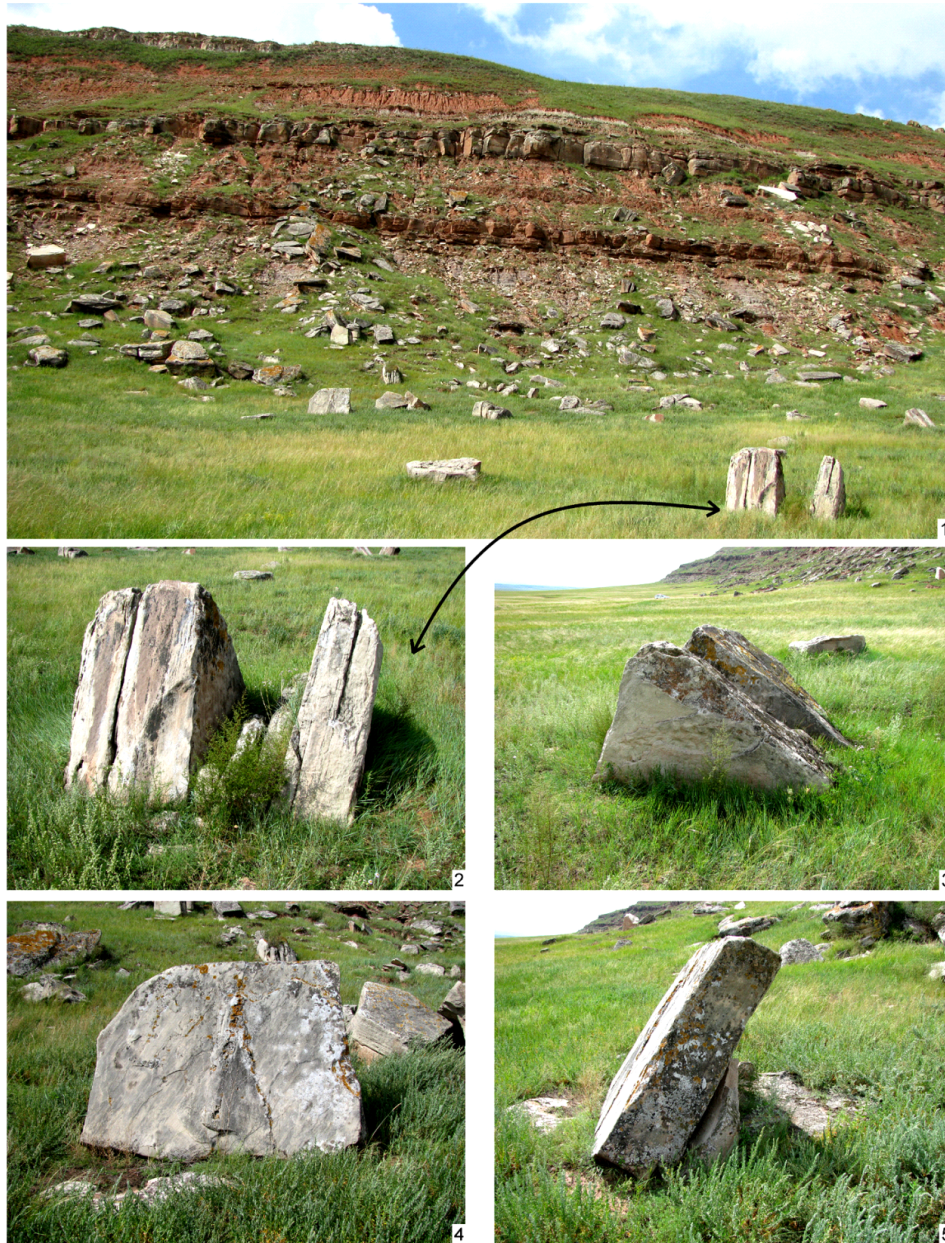
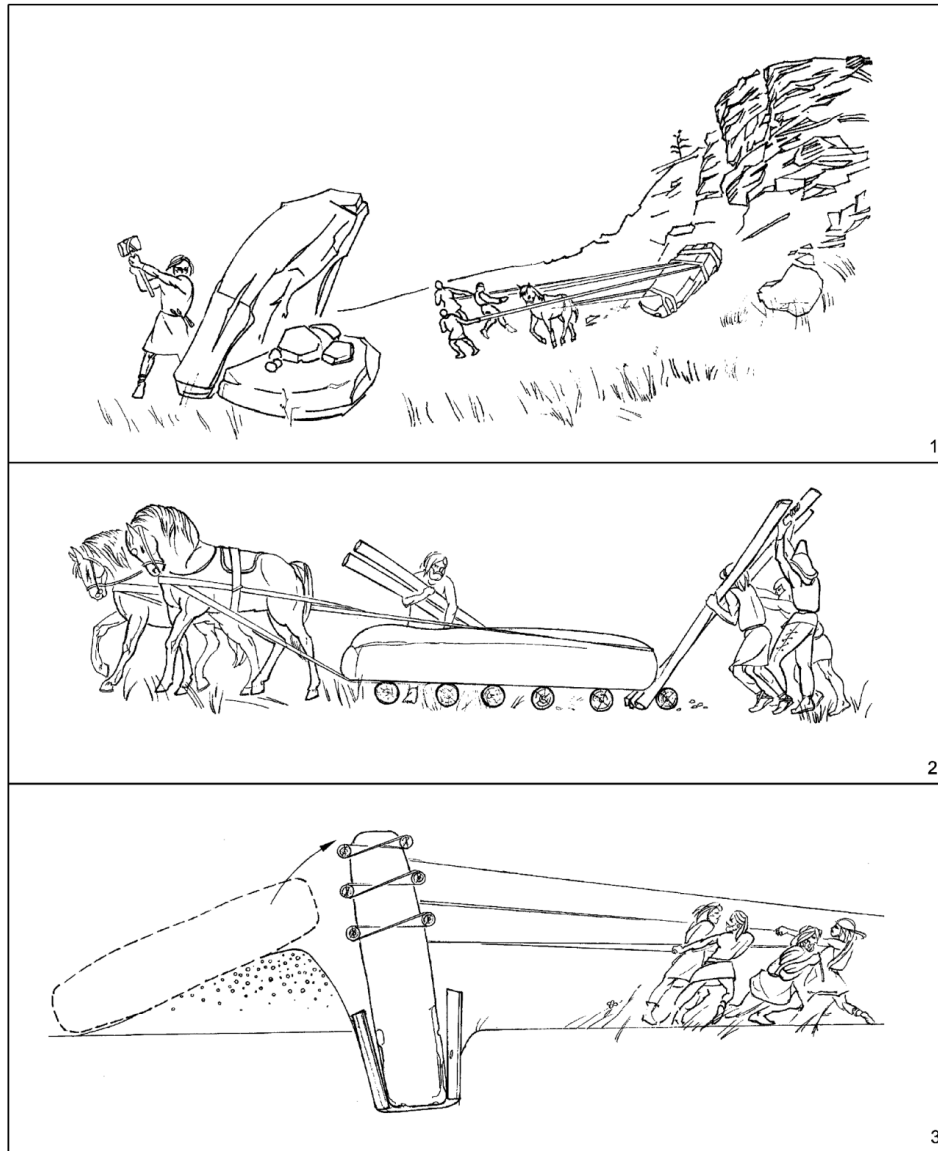
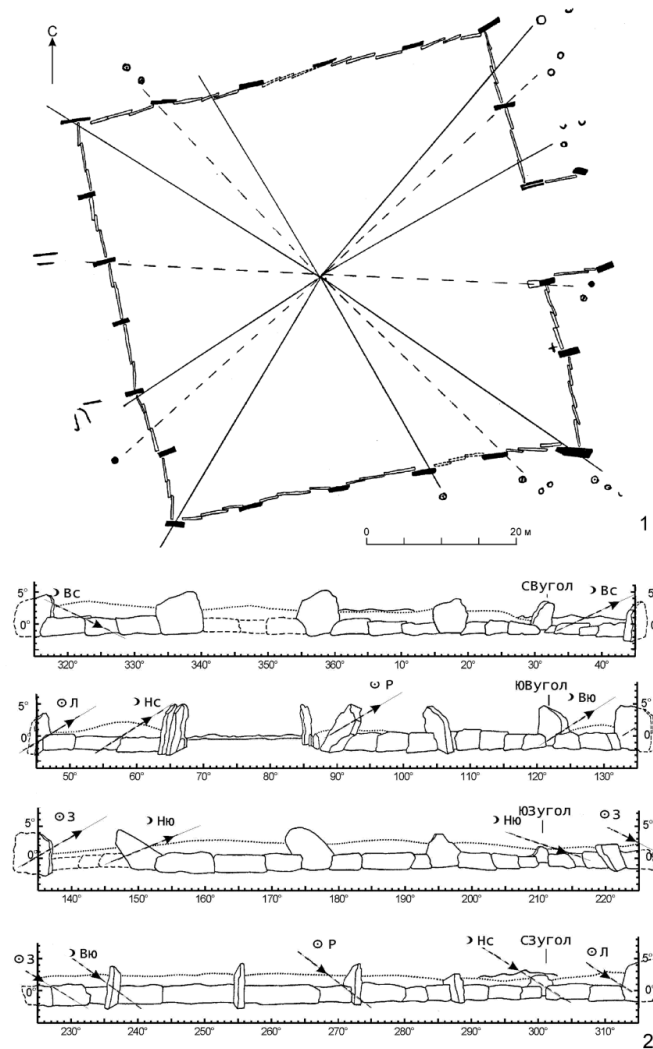


Figure 4. Stone quarry Kyzyl-Kaya ("Red rocks"):  
1 – general view; 2-5 – stands for the processing of stone slabs.



**Figure 5. Salbyk: 1 – reconstruction of extraction and initial processing of stone slabs in Kyzyl-Khaya; 2 – one of ways of transportation of the slab; 3 – reconstruction of process of installation of vertical stone slab.**



**Figure 6. Salbyk: 1- plan of a barrow and line of the astronomical direction (at the ends of the lines are shown signs that are crossed on the stone slabs, particularly interesting signs of the equinox - =); 2 - showing the rising and setting of the Moon and Sun on astronomically significant days.**

**Abbreviated:** Sun: SSR - Summer Solstice, rise; SSS - Summer Solstice, set; WSR = Winter Solstice, rise; WSS = Winter Solstice, set; EQR - equinox, sunrise; EQS - equinox, sunset.

Moon: N = Nord; S = south; MS = Moonset; MR = Moonrise; Ma = major standstill; Mi = Minor standstill: NMRMa - northern moonrise, major standstill; NMSMa - northern moonset, major standstill; NMRMi - northern moonrise, minor standstill; NMSMi - northern moonset, minor standstill; SMRMa - southern moonrise, major standstill; SMSMa - southern moonset, major standstill; SMRMi - southern moonrise, minor standstill; SMSMi - southern moonset, minor standstill.



FIGURE 7. SALBYK. PETROGLYPHS ON ONE OF STONE PLATES.

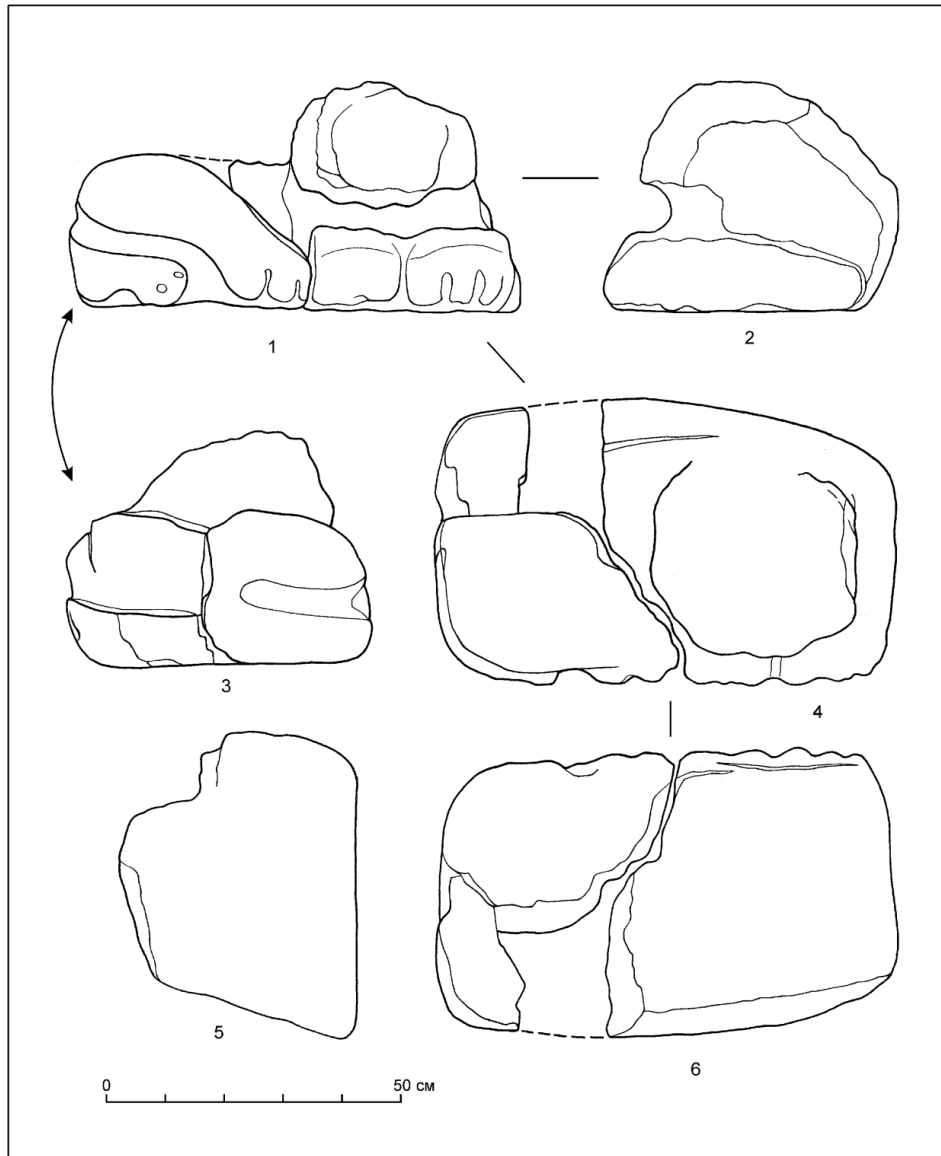


Figure 8. Salbyk. The stone sculpture as a reclining tiger:  
1 – front view; 2, 3, 5 – side views; 4 – top view; 6 – bottom view.  
The sculpture was found by L. Marsadolov in 1996 near the barrow.



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## IN MEMORY OF PROFESSOR VITALY E. LARICHEV

S.V. ALKIN

By good fortune Vitaly Epiphanovich Larichev became one of my teachers. My first mentor in archeology was Dr. Mikhail Konstantinov. I worked in my first two archaeological expeditions under his supervision and he advised me to go to Vitaly Larichev. When I was sophomore, we got acquainted with Dr. Larichev. The advice to contact him defined the choice, which I don't regret. Particularly, the name of the scientist Larichev from Novosibirsk was already familiar to me. I read his popular science books about a search of the Ancestor (he called predecessors of modern human on the planet Earth in such a way, with a capital A) at the high school.

We have spoken about V.E. Larichev's study of ancient art on the meetings of our archaeological section and near the campfire in expeditions. Our camp was near the ancient Paleolithic settlement Tolbaga, a significant site in Siberia, to the east from the Lake Baikal in Zabaikalye (Transbaikalia). Earlier, the Tolbaga site was famous only for the fact that there was driven the "golden spike" of the Trans-Siberian Railway, but in the late 1970s there was found a sculpture in the shape of bear head, made from the vertebra of Woolly rhinoceros. This discovery was made in front of us and it impressed me extremely.

When I was in Novosibirsk State University, I knew that Dr. Larichev was not only an archaeologist, but also a famous orientalist. Both these sides of the scientist were important for me, because I was studying Chinese and I wanted to combine in my profession Sinology and archaeology. The theme of my scientific work: the Neolithic of North-East China, was determined when we first met. This was the theme of my university diploma and the dissertation.

At that time Vitaly Larichev undertook field archaeological research in Khakassia, on the south of Siberia. Thus, from the moment we met there, began years of my participation in the work of Vitaly Larichev and

his first assistant Yuri Belokobylsky's expeditions. We studied kurgans of Karasuk culture and Tagar period, and searched for rock art.

In the fields and over a cup of tea in a lab Dr. Larichev told a lot of stories about his life, childhood, study in Leningrad, how did he bind himself to Siberia and East.

Vitaly Epiphanovich Larichev was born in South Russia, on the Don River on the 12th of December 1932. His place of birth was Bolshoy Lychag khutor of the Berezovskiy district of Stalingrad region. In 1947 he graduated from the 7-year school at the Karagichev khutor of Kumilzhensky district, and in 1950 from the middle school in Glazunovskaya village. The curious boy was lucky with school teachers. Lydia Kititsyna (wife of a repressed archeologist and local historian from the city of Kostroma, Vasily Smirnov) taught Russian and Literature. The love of astronomy was instilled by the Physics teacher Peter Solyanik<sup>1</sup>.

V. E. Larichev got higher education at the Faculty of Asian and African Studies of Leningrad State University (LSU)<sup>2</sup>. He continued his postgraduate studies in Leningrad Institute of the Material Culture History, one of the two archaeological centers of Russia. The defining factor in the development of a young scientist was that among his first mentors there were outstanding Russian orientalists Vasily Struve, Vasily Alexeev, Nikolay Kuner, Geronty Ephimov. LSU background in the source study and language (he studied Chinese) allowed him to analyse in detail Chinese chronicles, using archaeological and written sources in the study of issues of ancient and the Middle Age East Asia. In Leningrad he met archaeologist Alexey Okladnikov. Larichev used to say that this meeting was "accidental, but happy coincidence". Okladnikov – future academician and the founder of academic institution in Siberia, became his Principal Investigator.

In the first half of the 1950s, Vitaly Larichev participated in the study of archaeological sites in the flooded area of reservoir for a large hydroelectric station on the Angara River in the Baikal region. There archaeologists undertook large-scale work to save ancient sites. At that time Vitaly Larichev became the head of his first archaeological squad. Then, following Prof. Okladnikov, he went further to the East of the country. He participated in archaeological reconnaissance on the rivers Ingoda and Shilka in Zabaikalye<sup>3</sup>. After that he did excavations in the South Primorye on the shore of the sea of Japan. These experiences and impressions helped the young scientist to do final and deliberate choice of his profession.

In the following decades Vitaly Larichev conducted field research

under the guidance of his teacher, academician Okladnikov and then independently in the territory of Primorye in the Far East of Russia (Tetyukhe-dock), in the Amur Region (excavations of Osipovka and Condon settlements), copied the ancient petroglyphs on Arkhara River in the Amur region, was looking for new archaeological sites on the rivers Zeya and Amur, the Trans-Baikal and the Baikal region (excavations of the Neolithic settlements and cemeteries), in Southern Siberia (excavations of the Upper Paleolithic Achinsk settlement and the settlement of Malaya Syya), in the Soviet republics of Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. For nineteen field seasons, Larichev was one of the main workers of the Soviet-Mongolian complex historical and cultural expedition, and he also participated in the first joint archaeological research of Soviet and American scientists on the Aleutian Islands.

His knowledge of Chinese and deep understanding of archaeological materials of the Russian Far East helped Vitaly Larichev to make the first study of Chinese sources in domestic science and create a monograph. In 1961 he got PhD and the theme of his dissertation was *The Cultures of the Stone and Bronze Ages of the North-East China*<sup>4</sup>. He offered his vision of the historical process of ancient times and Middle Ages on the territory of contiguous regions of Siberia, Far East and China. Larichev was the first who brought into the Russian archaeological science and gave comprehensive analysis of the results of work of Russians (including immigrants of post-revolutionary period, whose contribution to Soviet science was hushed up), Japanese and Chinese archaeologists of the first half of the 20th century. It became the groundwork for Soviet and Russian archaeologists who learnt about Chinese archaeology in the following decades.

Besides, in 1950-1970s he paid attention to the problems of the initial human development of the territories of China, Mongolia, Korea, Japan and also Siberia and North America. He studied the investigation of early cultures in these regions for about 100 years, considered the emergence and development of main hypotheses and theories, which were developed by the archaeologists and paleoanthropologists of Europe, Asia and America. He was focused on sites and cultures of the Neolithic and Bronze Age of North-East China and North Korea. At the same time, Larichev passionately studied ancient and the Middle Age history of the Russian Far East and contiguous regions of North-East China, and he became one of the leading authors of the first volume of *The History of Siberia*, published in 1968<sup>5</sup>.

V. E. Larichev wrote about 700 scientific works, including more than thirty monographs. He was Principal Investigator for many dissertations on the archaeology of Siberia and China. It is hard to count his field reports, edited papers, scientific monographs and popular scientific books. Two-volume *Paleolithic of the North, Central and East Asia* is the most famous monograph. It was published at the turn of the 1960-70s<sup>6</sup>. Throughout four decades Dr. Larichev was permanent editor of the book series *The history and culture of Eastern Asia*, which is a major phenomenon in Russian oriental studies. Today it consists of fifty volumes. The last lifetime monograph *Journey of an archaeologist to The Land of the Morning Calm* about a trip to North Korea, was published two years before the death of the researcher<sup>7</sup>.

For forty years without a single missed field season, the foothills of the Kuznetsk Alatau in Khakassia have been the site of Vitaly Larichev's scientific search. He first learned about the antiquities of south Siberia in early 1970s. During the excavations of the Achinsk site (in 1972) and the settlement of Malaya Syya (in 1976–1979), the task received from Academician Okladnikov and professional luck led Larichev to the discovery of the examples of the Upper Paleolithic portable art. There began a serious discussion about these findings, recalling sad memory of the 1930s with the debacle of the Soviet archeological science. To the credit of Vitaly Larichev, he withstood opponent pressure and continued to search for his way in the study of spiritual culture and the proto-scientific knowledge of the ancient man in Siberia.

In 1987, there was discovered paleolithic sanctuary "White Horse" in the area of the Lus railway station in Khakassia<sup>8</sup>. In all subsequent years of his scientific work, Vitaly Larichev diligently and thoroughly analyzed the content of the images of primitive artistic creation. He was interested in the problems of the origin of art, which he connected with the study of the worldview of ancient societies, with the birth of protoscience, mythology and cult-religious ideas of the paleolithic man.

These were and remain the most complex and innovative scientific topics. In search of a universal decoder of sign systems of the past, Dr. Larichev referred to the exact sciences - mathematics and, above all, to astronomy. It was obvious to him that the people of the Stone Age (or rather, in his opinion, the priestly elite) paid great attention to celestial mechanics. They calculated the movement of the planets, could predict solar and lunar eclipses, which, for sure, gave them enormous power over their fellow tribesmen. But what is important, this knowledge served the

practical goals: creation of the adaptive strategies of ancient societies and development of their cult-religious sphere.

In Siberia and in Russia, Vitaly Larichev was one of the first who developed the instrumental astroarchaeological direction in the field study of the ancient sites of Khakassia. The scientific courage and promise of his ideas are confirmed by the study of a number of archaeological sites and many artifacts dating from the Stone Age to the Early Middle Ages. Solving this problem, Vitaly Larichev, in collaboration with astronomers and surveyors, conducted researches in Northern Khakassia in the area of the so-called "Chests" for many field seasons<sup>9</sup>. This case was new and difficult for both parties. Humanities and natural scientists had to overcome stereotypes, develop common approaches, create and work out research methods at astroarchaeological objects.

It is still quite difficult for archaeologists to accept astroarchaeological hypotheses. New direction makes its way with difficulty. But interest in this subject is growing year by year. Vitaly Epiphonovich did much to popularize astroarchaeological knowledge. Many of his colleagues in co-authorship with him published the results of the study of archaeological artifacts from the regions of Siberia, Urals and Russian Far East, suggesting interpretation of their semantics from the point of view of the calendar systems of antiquity.

Vitaly Larichev logically assumed that the emergence of such systems would have been impossible without the deliberate interest of the ancients in astronomy. Not only numerous articles, but the books *Wheel of Time (the Sun, the Moon and ancient People)*<sup>10</sup>, *The Creation of the Universe: the Sun, the Moon and the Heavenly Dragon*<sup>11</sup>, *The Star Gods: a Word about great artists - contemplators of Heaven, wisemen, and magicians*<sup>12</sup> etc. are devoted to this theme. The analysis of the "Achinsk rod" and the calendars of the settlement of Malta in the Baikal region is central in these works.

Larichev's discoveries and new approaches to the interpretation of archaeological objects raised and raise various responses: from indifferent or aggressive rejection to interest and desire to understand the proposed hypotheses, with critical analysis and forward movement. Evidently, for the conclusions about the results of a scientist's work, it is important if they give impulse to the development of science. One of the answers to this question is the issue of a journal in Novosibirsk State University in 2017 devoted to the memory of the researcher, the future of his ideas and discoveries<sup>13</sup>.

Vitaly Larichev's life was devoted to continuous creative search. The

first scientific article of the scientist was published in 1954<sup>14</sup>. The last monograph was published after his death in 2016<sup>15</sup>. This means that sixty years of his life were given to the passionate service of science. Prof. Vitaly E. Larichev considered popularization of science as part of his mission and he succeeded in it. During his long life, Vitaly Larichev did an extraordinary amount of work. He made a significant contribution to various branches of archeology and oriental studies. Generations of researchers have learnt and will continue to learn from his books and articles.

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## THE EMERGENCE OF 'EARLY NOMADIC CULTURES' IN EASTERN STEPPE

K. MATSUMOTO

It is in the early first millennium B.C. that there was a great social transformation from the Bronze Age to the Iron Age in Eurasia. It is said that at that time the specific group of the nomadic cultures namely 'the early nomadic cultures (or the Scytho-Siberian cultures)' began. The cultures include the Scythian culture in the coast of the Black sea, the Saka culture in Central Asia, the Tagar culture in Southern Siberia and so on. The emergence of nomadic people with horseback riding seems to have had a great impact on the history of Eurasia, considering not only the historical direction of the Eurasian Steppes after that time, but also the contrast between the steppes and the agricultural lands. This is why a number of archaeologists admit the emergence of 'the early nomadic cultures' to be a remarkable chronological landmark from the early period of study<sup>1</sup>. Moreover, it is frequently pointed out that the eastern part of the Steppes as Mongolia and Southern Siberia played an important role in the emergence of 'the early nomadic cultures'. Considering that a lot of studies have been done recently on this theme, in this paper the author refers to some gaps among the researchers and discusses the way to solve them.

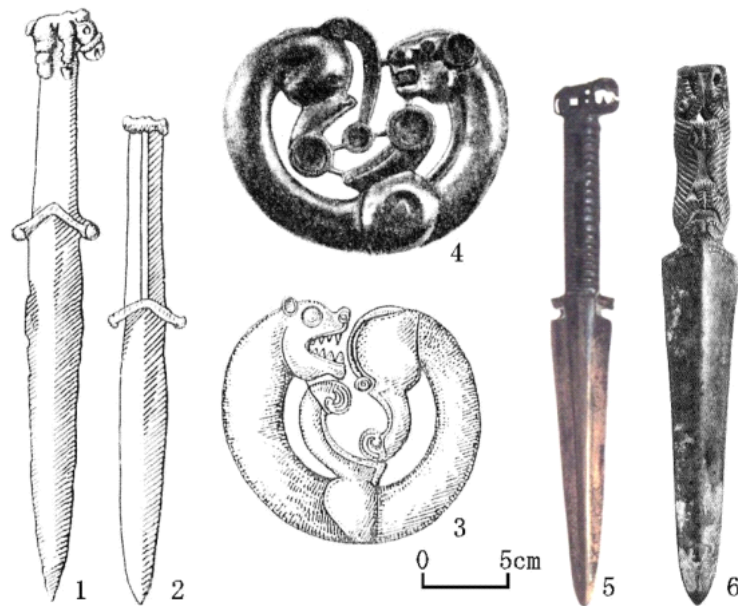
### SIMILARITY AND DIVERSITY IN 'THE EARLY NOMADIC CULTURES'

It is a very difficult and long discussed question how and when nomadism with horseback riding began. However, provided we note only on "the early nomadic cultures" in the Eurasian Steppes, many discussions have been made on the origins and formative process of the distribution of their material culture, especially weapons, harnesses and animal style. On the origin of the cultures, since the late 20th century many scholars



have paid attention to the eastern steppe including Mongolia, Altai and the Great Wall region, as field researches in these regions like in the mound 1 of Arzhan have been increasing. Because the details of this aspect [discussions whether the local (the northern Black Sea) or Asian origin of 'the early nomadic cultures'] were already discussed<sup>2</sup>, we now concentrate studies after the excavation of the mound 1 of Arzhan.

FIG. 1<sup>3</sup>



Bronze materials with the animal style

The harnesses found in this mound can be compared to the ones in the pre-Scythian period in the northern coast of the Black Sea, and this mound has the materials with the Scythe-Siberian animal style (Fig.1-1,3). This is why Gryaznov, who excavated this mound, thought that 'the early nomadic cultures' already began in Tuva region in the 8-7<sup>th</sup> century B.C., when in the Western Steppe the Scythian culture had not emerged<sup>4</sup>. In the report of this mound, he pointed out that the groups of 'the early nomadic cultures' (the Scytho-Siberian culture), which in the preceding period had various forms in economy and social system in the Eurasian Steppes, became to have similar nomadic lifestyle, and that this change of lifestyle and their contacts across the Steppes caused the wide and rapid distribution of the specific material culture in the Steppes. Although Gryaznov referred to migrations in this period, he attached greater

importance to diversity in the Eurasian Steppes and the changes in economy, culture and art<sup>5</sup>. In short, this point of view regards the emergence of 'the early nomadic cultures' as a vital turning point in the history of the Steppes, and indicates acceleration of migrations and interactions across Eurasia. Generally speaking, such an understanding on this period seems to prevail nowadays<sup>6</sup>. Moshkova also evaluates local diversities in each region of the Steppes, and regards the period from the end of 2<sup>nd</sup> to early 1<sup>st</sup> millennium B.C as a stage of an adaptation to iron materials and nomadic life. Against the background of similarities found in 'the early nomadic cultures' (the Scythian world), she referred to the environment around them, their social economy, mobility and the genetic basement from the Bronze Age as the Andronovo culture<sup>7</sup>. Hayashi suggested another point of view which stresses the similarity and mobility in 'the early nomadic cultures'<sup>8</sup>. Bokovenko divided the period of emergence of 'the early nomadic cultures' into three stages. In his opinion there were westward migrations in all stages and their scales grew bigger and bigger as time passed<sup>9</sup>. Moreover, he noted the climatic change around 9<sup>th</sup> century B.C. across Eurasia, and pointed out that this caused migrations from Mongolia to Tuva and that as a result 'the early nomadic cultures' (the early Scythian culture) emerged in Tuva where the mound 1 of Arzhan was located<sup>10</sup>. Savinov indicates that 'the early nomadic culture' (the culture of 'Scythian' type) in Tuva inherited various elements from the Bronze Age in the eastern Eurasian Steppe, and suggests the emergence of a tribal alliance there at that time<sup>11</sup>. Bokovenko also refers to the rise of a tribal alliance<sup>12</sup>.

In the early 1990s some discussions on evaluation of similarities or divergences found in 'the early nomadic cultures' across the Eurasian Steppes were made in the Russian journal of *Kratkiye Subshniya Instituta Archeologii* (no.207). Yablonskii, who was one of the authors of this issue assumed very complicated backgrounds on the similarities of 'the early nomadic cultures', considering basements from the Bronze Age, change of social economy in each region and so on<sup>13</sup>.

Incidentally, we should consider another phenomenon related to the similarities of 'the early nomadic cultures'. This is the distribution of the specific material culture in the preceding period, including the westward spread of the daggers with a crossed guard originated from the Karasuk daggers, which is often related to the Cimmerians<sup>14</sup>. The similar distributional pattern is found on bronze knife, cauldron and helmet<sup>15</sup>. On these phenomena Volkov refers to the appearance of the Karasuk-

Cimmerian community and regards it as a base of development of 'the early nomadic cultures'<sup>16</sup>. Matsumoto named these phenomena the late Karasuk bronze complex, explaining social changes in the same period<sup>17</sup>. Thus we can find two kinds of cultural similarity, namely the one in the Karasuk-Cimmerian period and the other in the period of 'the early nomadic cultures'. It seems to be important to make the meaning and background of each similarity clear, if one side (that of 'the early nomadic cultures') is regarded as a more significant historical phenomenon.

#### ORIGIN OF 'THE EARLY NOMADIC CULTURE' IN THE EASTERN STEPPE

It is well-known that materials of the upper Xiajiadian culture and of the mound 1 of the Arzhan (fig. 1-1~3) can be dated to the earliest stage of 'the early nomadic culture' in the eastern Steppe. This stage corresponds to the early Tagar culture in the Minusinsk basin. Moreover, there are some occasional findings which seem to be dated to the same stage. As already stated, many scholars have regarded the eastern Steppe as an important place related to the origin of 'the early nomadic culture' in the whole Steppes, since it is clear that these materials found there are dated back to 9th or 8th century B.C. Moreover, we can find some elements of these materials also in cultures of the Bronze Age in the eastern Steppe, namely in the Karasuk period. As there are numerous studies on the origin of 'the early nomadic culture' in the eastern Steppe, we introduce these discussions briefly, taking studies on daggers and animal style as examples.

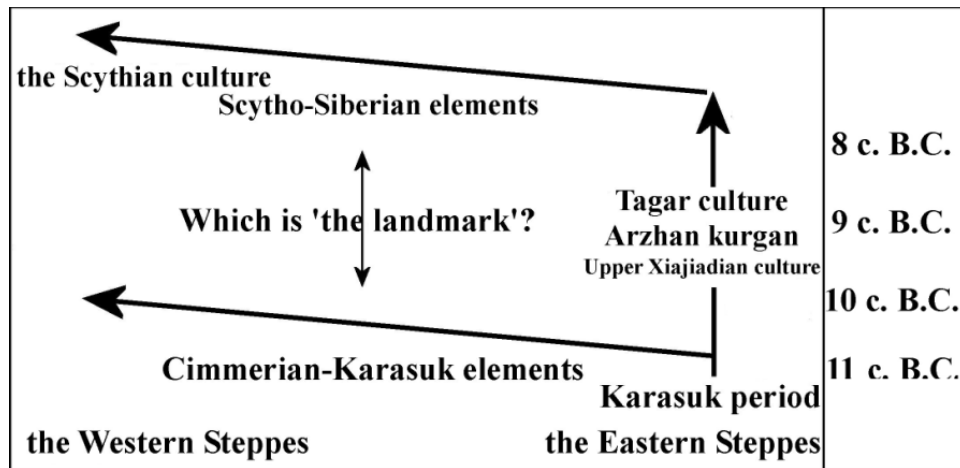
Takahama, in his classification, points out that the daggers with a notched guard often found in the Upper Xiajiadian culture (his type C<sup>18</sup>) have a genetic relation with the Karasuk daggers (his type B<sup>19</sup>). He pointed out the relationship of the caldrons, helmets, ornaments with the form of a spoon, which can be seen in the Upper Xiajiadian culture to the bronzes in the Karasuk period<sup>20</sup>. Moreover, he finds an important fact that the coiled feline motif which is one of the typical Scytho-Siberian animal motifs can be represented also in a Karasuk dagger (fig.1-5)<sup>21</sup>. Wuen also suggested that the bronzes of the Upper Xiajiadian culture, including daggers, knives and helmets, developed locally within the Great Wall region<sup>22</sup>. Thus, generally speaking, many scholars have a common idea that at least some of the daggers in the Upper Xiajiadian culture have a genetic relationship with the Karasuk daggers<sup>23</sup>. Wuen attached greater importance to local development in each region of the Steppes, and in this point his explanation of the similarities of 'the early nomadic culture' in the Steppes may be

close to the idea by Gryaznov discussed above<sup>24</sup>. On the contrary, Wuen set up a chronological vital division around 7<sup>th</sup> century B.C., when the cultures following the Upper Xiajiadian culture emerged in the Great Wall region, rather than the earliest period of 'the early nomadic culture'. For this reason, he gave an explanation that in the Great Wall region a lot of various farming tools even existed in the Upper Xiajiadian period, and that after 7<sup>th</sup> century B.C. nomadism came to be popular in this region. Miyamoto locates the Upper Xiajiadian culture on the 4<sup>th</sup> stage in his chronology of the Great Wall region, which follows the Karasuk period (3<sup>rd</sup> stage of his theory). In the 4<sup>th</sup> stage, in his theory, localized bronze materials gradually developed and the local division between eastern and western part of this region came to be clear<sup>25</sup>. Such a local division is recognized also in the thesis by Yang and Shao<sup>26</sup>. I think this local division is very interesting, considering the similarities across the Eurasian Steppes in the same period. However, in their theory the emergence of 'the early nomadic cultures' is also regarded as a vital transformation or an epoch-making event<sup>27</sup>. And they stress the similarities across the Steppes at that time. In this point their theory is different from the one by Wuen.

On the Minusinsk basin, Chlenova pointed out that, the daggers of the early Tagar culture can be originated from the Karasuk daggers, and she referred to the similar genetic relationship on the animal style<sup>28</sup>. On the contrary Lazaretov indicates influences from other regions to this basin in the Podgornoe stage in the Tagar culture, considering changes found on bronzes, burial practice and animal style at that stage<sup>29</sup>. Zavitukhina also emphasized that the animal style of the Tagar culture is different from that of the Karasuk<sup>30</sup>.

Thus, generally speaking, the idea that the similarities of material culture across the Eurasian Steppes increased after the emergence of 'the early nomadic cultures', is prevailing. However, there are various opinions on the eastern Steppe including the Minusinsk basin and the Great Wall region. Especially in some studies on the Great Wall region, the emergence of 'the early nomadic cultures' is not regarded as an epoch-making event, while they find the local diversity in this period. I think that discussions on explanation for the similarity or diversity found in 'the early nomadic cultures' are becoming complicated as the numbers of excavations in the eastern Steppe are increasing.

FIG. 2



The beginning of 'the early nomadic cultures' and the Karasuk period

### PROBLEMS

How can we evaluate the similarity or diversity found in "the early nomadic cultures" in the Eurasian Steppes? Wide distribution of similar materials across the Steppes can be observed not only in 'the early nomadic cultures', but also in the cultures of the Karasuk period. If one emphasizes only the similarity of 'the early nomadic cultures', the reason must be suggested. Moreover, we must compare the degree of similarities in 'the early nomadic cultures' to the one in the Karasuk period on the basis of common standards. One of the reasons for the lack of such a comparison may be due to the chronological borderline between, before and after the emergence of 'the early nomadic cultures'. The former period is often treated in the frame of the Bronze Age and the latter is included in the early Iron Age. Few studies analyze materials in both periods and explain the changing process from the former to the latter. On the contrary, as I already suggested, in the Great Wall region the continuity between the two periods has pointed out, and we can suggest following problem about this.

They say that in each region of the eastern Steppe some elements of 'the early nomadic cultures' can be found also in the Karasuk period. And, these elements spread across the Steppes, as Tepenozhkin and Takahama have already said. What does 'the emergence of 'the early nomadic cultures'' mean, if their main elements already exist in the preceding period (Fig. 2). This problem is serious especially in Mongolia

and the Great Wall region. And many studies have pointed out the increase of migration and interaction as a background of the similarities found in 'the early nomadic cultures'. However, similarities of material culture across the Steppes can be recognized also in the Karasuk period. We cannot have complete explanations as to how the emergence of 'the early nomadic cultures' relates to the specific similarity of the cultures.

#### FUTURE PROSPECT

The animal style has been noted as an important element which characterizes 'the early nomadic cultures'. However, as there are very few materials with animal motifs in the Karasuk period, it is difficult to make a comparison of the degree of similarities between the two periods on animal motifs. Considering this situation, daggers which exist across the Eurasian Steppes in both periods, are appropriate materials for such a comparison. This author analyzed the Karasuk daggers in the whole Steppes and found that this type of daggers emerged in the Minusinsk basin at 11<sup>th</sup> century B.C., accepting some elements from Mongolia. Immediately after that the Karasuk daggers spread from the Great Wall region to Ukraine<sup>31</sup>. Moreover, this author is now analyzing the earliest daggers of 'the early nomadic cultures' and expecting that these daggers are intimately related to the Karasuk daggers in each region of the Steppes (I plan to report that result in the near future). If so, we may regard the earliest phase of 'the early nomadic cultures' as a more localized than the Karasuk period, and it is difficult to think that the similarities of material culture suddenly increased after 'the early nomadic cultures' began. The concept of 'the early nomadic cultures' or 'the Scytho-Siberian cultures' may have to be re-examined.

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## CHARACTERISTICS OF VISUAL ART IN THE LATE BRONZE AGE FROM NORTH ASIA TO EUROPE

O.V. KOVALEVA

### ABSTRACT

*Bronze objects of a certain type decorated with images of animal heads appeared in the Late Bronze Age. The objects of this type were found not only in the territory of the Minusinsk basin, but also in the Baikal region, Ordos, China, Mongolia, Altai, East Kazakhstan, North Caucasus, Ukraine, and even in Eastern and Central Europe.*

*At the same time, rock carvings made in a unified schematic visual tradition were found in Northern Kyrgyzstan, Eastern Kazakhstan, Altai, Tuva and in other territories. Having appeared on the unified historical and spiritual basis, the visual tradition of the late era was most likely formed on the Indo-Iranian ground and, along with the objects of a certain type of bronze and ceramics, it spread throughout the entire zone of the Eurasian steppes.*

*Key words: visual art, Late Bronze Age, Karasuk culture, Tagar culture, Minusinsk basin, rock carvings*

The Late Bronze Age on the territory of Eurasian steppes was characterized by the prosperity of bronze casting and the total formation of nomadic type of economy. At the same time the institution of horsemanship, as well as the heroic epic as the basis of oral folk art had been established. Eurasian steppe zone had become the place of expansion of colorful and original nomadic cultures and communities, that had a great influence on the way of cultural and historical processes in the contiguous regions, and in some cases even on the world's history. One such significant culture of this period is the Karasuk archaeological culture, which originated in the South Siberia steppes. Its occurrence in the steppes of Minusinsk basin is related with the appearance of specific phenomenon of "Karasuk bronzes". Its main idea concludes with the appearance of a certain type

of bronze supplies, that are most often decorated with the sculpted animal heads. Objects of this type (exactly called knives) were not only found on the territory of Minusinsk basin, but also in Pribaikalye, Ordos, China, Mongolia, Altai, East Kazakhstan, North Caucasus, Ukraine and even in Eastern and Central Europe<sup>1</sup>.

Karasuk style daggers are quite widespread. Four of them were found in Eastern Bashkiria in the headwaters of Miass and Urals<sup>2</sup>. There are some finds in the territory of Northern Black Sea<sup>3</sup>. Basically, all these daggers belong to the notched with handle group (according to Khlobystina). Outside the Minusinsk basin these objects were especially widespread in the cultures of the developed Bronze and Late Bronze Age of Tuva, Eastern and Northern Kazakhstan, Zabaikalye and Inner Mongolia<sup>4</sup>.

Another type of more rare Karasuk daggers with so called "shoulders" has close parallels with Koban, Talysh and Iranian bronzes at the West<sup>5</sup>. The blade of these daggers looks like it is inserted into the enclosing guard, which is integral to the handle. A similar method of connecting the blade with the handle one finds in daggers of Pine Maza and Middle Urals (see Fig. 1:B). Analogies with the Pre-Scythian daggers of Dnepr region are also of great value<sup>6</sup>.

In the Late Bronze Age other categories of "Karasuk-type" objects got wider territorial spread, covering most of the Eurasian continent. Among them there are pottery and some bronze ornaments (see Figs. 1:A,B,D).

So, for example, paw's form hanging and bell types of decorations were found in Ukraine, in the Chernigov district of the Kiev province<sup>7</sup> (see Figs.1:A-6).

Back in 1966 M.P.Gryaznov wrote about the phenomenon of the spread of the black-glazed ceramics. These dishes, inlaid with white mass and with a similar ornament, were common in the period of Late Bronze and Early Iron in all regions of the Great steppe zone, in Northern Caucasus, in Austria, Central Asia and Southern Siberia<sup>8</sup>. Vessels of original shapes with a shiny glossy surface, mostly black, decorated with geometric patterns, that consist of shaded triangles, rhombuses, zigzags, meander shaded bands etc., are typical of the monuments of the Koban and Khojaly-Koban cultures, as well as for the Lchashenskaya and Vornak groups in Armenia, Hallstatt culture in Austria and the Colchian culture in Georgia<sup>9</sup>. Outside Caucasus and Eastern Europe such ceramics can be found in the downstream of Syr-Darya river, where during the excavations

of rich mausoleums in the Tagisken burial, a magnificent series of black-glazed dishes was successfully discovered. It was discovered at the foot of the Tian Shan mountain on the Chu river. In central Kazakhstan in several Dandybai-Begazy type burials, the series of wonderful samples of the same kind of dishes was collected too (see Fig.1:C). At the Ob river this series is known due to several sites of Karasuk period. And, finally, the same kind of findings one can find at the Yenisei river in the monuments of Karasuk culture<sup>10</sup> (see Fig.1:D).

Such a wide spread of “Karasuk type finds” prompted researchers to formulate several hypotheses, first about the influence of Karasuk culture on some Eurasian steppe cultures, and then to combine these cultures into a unified group according to the samples of the Andronovo or Scythian cultures<sup>11</sup>. In this connection M.P.Gryaznov in his work, devoted to black-glazed ceramics notes, that: “... ceramics of districts mentioned can be characterized exactly in the same words, without any corrections, that Caucasus ceramics was characterized. However, this does not mean, that ceramics of Central Asia and South Siberia are similar to Caucasian and belong to the same type with it. Each of these regions can be characterized by its own more or less different from others form of vessels. It also has its own ornaments and their compositions. However, many ornamental motifs are quite widespread. Some motifs of the ornament can be found in different versions, both in Caucasus and in the steppes of Kazakhstan and Siberia, up to the Yenisei... In every region, as a rule, the ceramics on the whole having gone through their own specific way of development, are enough original. And only one of it’s types, the black-glazed crockery, also being quite original, when taking an overall view has so many features that are similar to the same type of dishes in another regions... Having basically the same economic and household structure of pastoral tribes of the Last Bronze and Early Iron ages and extensively developed inter-tribal exchange, some forms of household and household equipment, as well as ornamental art, could get wide expansion”<sup>12</sup>.

Khlobystina expressed the same idea for knives. “Despite the original view of every object the identity of the manufacture methods can be discovered clearly. The stylistic similarity of the sculptural pommels is no doubt the real fact”<sup>13</sup>.

These observations, made in the 1960-70s, are becoming more and more relevant not only in relation to samples of material culture, but also for rock art. In the same manner with the Scythian-Siberian time the visual tradition spread in Scythian time. There was its own ideological basis in

the Late Bronze Age, expressing itself in original schematization and geometrization of forms. For example, among petroglyphs, a schematized type of images, that was called in scientific literature as “Varchinsky” style in the territory of the Minusinsk basin, was expanding in the territory of the Minusinsk basin<sup>14</sup>.

Schematic paintings of this type are well-known in the territory of Northern Italy, Switzerland and Southern Sweden. The dating of them ranges in the period from Middle Bronze to the Early Iron Age, which is chronologically connected with our samples. Among the regional map points in the territories of Europe Bohuslän in Sweden, Valkamonica in Italy and Gaubyunden in Switzerland can be found (see fig. 2). Not only the identity of reproducing method for relevant image’s but also the nature of the compositional construction, compatibility of various symbols etc. attracts much attention. For example, the composition from Switzerland (Gaubunden, Karshenna)<sup>15</sup>, dated from 8<sup>th</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries BC seems very close with the images on the Shaman-stone (see Fig. 2-1,2), which belong to 10 (9<sup>th</sup>) centuries BC. The Northern Italian steles and petroglyphs, that are captured with combinations of paintings of daggers, animals and solar signs, are very close ideologically. Although they are dated as the Eneolithic age<sup>16</sup>, and petroglyphs from Minusinsk are dated as the final stage of Late Bronze Age<sup>17</sup>, between them one can observe a clear typological similarity (see Figs. 2-3,4). Parallels of this kind have already been noted in the scientific literature, but only for deer stones<sup>18</sup>. On the Italian anthropomorphic steles in the upper part a knocked out radiant disc, matched with earrings on deer stones, can be seen; sometimes a belt line is indicated; weapons, including daggers, and also animals. What had specific significance was that there were deers among these animal figures. There were also images of carts<sup>19</sup>.

Petroglyphs from Bohuslan (Sweden), being dated as the Bronze Age, are also stylistically similar to Karasuk paintings<sup>20</sup>. Among them we can clearly find images, that we refer to a linear and conditionally realistic group. The same processes of transformation of patterns in the gradation from simple linear forms to hypertrophied elongated figures. A distinctive feature of the artistic repertoire is the presence of boat images in many compositions, is explained by the very location of Sweden and the specialization of the region. Some of the anthropomorphic figures of Bohuslan by many indicators can be comparable with Central Asian and South Siberian figures (Figs. 2-8,9,10,11). What had a special representative meaning is the scene of ploughing<sup>21</sup>. The figure of the ploughman, walking

behind the plough is depicted in a canonical pose with legs slightly bent. He holds a branch in his hand and has an original object, hanging on his belt, bringing to mind as a rounded “bag” – the essential attribute of Central Asian anthropomorphic figures in mushroom-shaped hats. The pose and figure’s proportions also coincide (Figs. 2-12,13,14).

Images of carts and chariots in the Bronze Age were spread almost over the whole Eurasian continent, but discovering its own specifics in each region. That is why it seems curious to find carvings of vehicles significantly distant from each other and marked with one main feature. Thereby, in images of carts from Bohuslan<sup>22</sup> its front stands out especially, being enclosed together with animals in a kind of semi-oval form. Probably, the reins or may be some other constructive parts were shown in this way. Among the total number of drawings of vehicles, the images of this type are only a very little part. One of them is located in Armenia (Syunik)<sup>23</sup>, and the other is in the Minusinsk Basin (Khara-Khai)<sup>24</sup>. In the painting from Syunik, bulls are harnessed to a cart, but in the Minusinsk basin it is shown without animals. But in all cases, the front part is placed in an additional circuit.

Among the rock paintings of Armenia, a group of petroglyphs is also defined, as being similar to “Karasuk” type images by its characteristics, but dated to the Early Bronze Age. They were unified by a planned projection of the carts drawings, a special features in mapping and even an original interpretation of the animal’s body: with highlighted withers, croup and arched back (Fig.2-13)<sup>25</sup>. The use of such a visual technique can be seen in the petroglyphs of so called “Teppsey” group of the Karasuk culture of the Minusinsk Basin.

In the Late Bronze Age a schematic type of images was also spread on the territory of Dagestan<sup>26</sup>. Being made in the graffiti technique these paintings demonstrate the same conceptual approach to creative work as the Karasuk petroglyphs. It should be noted, that the engraving technique was known to the tribes of the Late Bronze Age of Southern Siberia. An example of this is the engraved pebbles of the settlement Torgazhak and plates with drawings from the burial ground of the North Coast of Varch I<sup>27</sup>.

Interesting finds made in Central and Eastern Europe include original ceramic objects of the Hallstatt culture with zoomorphic and anthropomorphic ornamentation. They are usually illustrated by schematized horses, including those drawn in carts, and geometrized figures of people. Ceramics of this type are rare, and, as a rule, in a single

piece on the monuments of Hallstatt culture in Europe (Austria, Hungary, Slovakia) and the Thracian Hallstatt of Romania and Moldova (Figs. 3: A-1,2,3,4)<sup>28</sup>. The specifics of images made in a linear and geometric styles, a set of persons and scenic images – all this brings together these figures with the petroglyphs of the Late Bronze Age of South Siberia and Central Asia. The similarity is indicated additionally by the unified method of filling the ornament with white mass, used on both Hallstatt and Karasuk dishes<sup>29</sup>.

Appearing almost at the same time, the schematic way of representations in each region was developed on its own local basis. Petroglyphs, colosed to Karasuk are found in the northern Kyrgyzstan, Eastern Kazakhstan, Altai, Tuva, and other territories. Meanwhile, an unified visual tradition becomes common for them, being an original marker for the epoch or, figuratively speaking, being a kind of “times spirit”, that permeates every work of art.

The concept of “visual tradition” covers the whole complex of processes, determining our understanding of the art of a particular cultural and historical array. It is more voluminous than the concept of style, and acts as a kind of conceptual entity, within the framework of which the style can appear. Therefore, in a particular visual tradition, as a rule, several variants of one style can be highlighted.

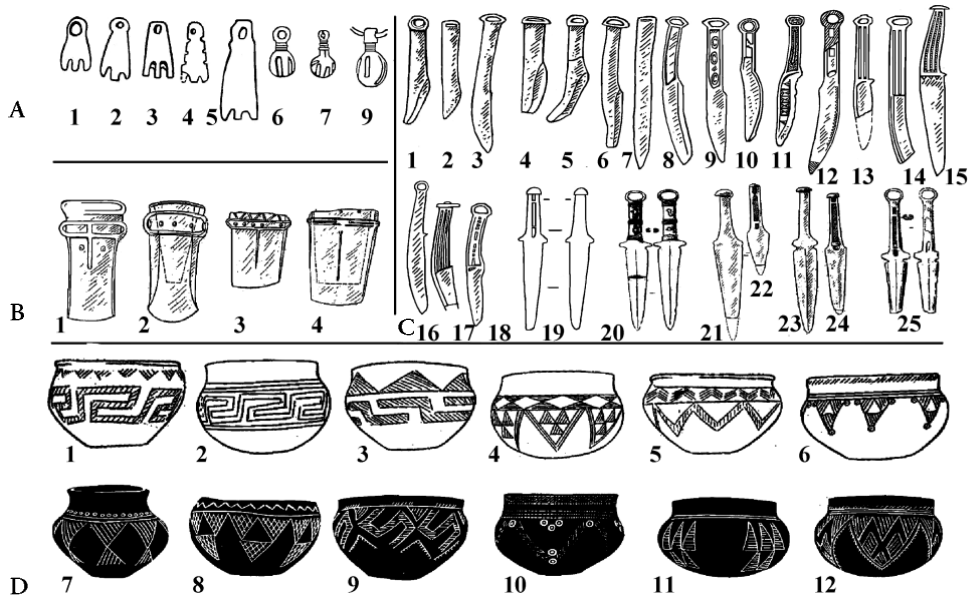
In this regard, the visual art should be understood as a way of artistic reproduction of images, expressed in visual stereotypes. Appearing on the unified historical and spiritual basis, the unified visual tradition, as a rule, quickly covers human communities and spreads over vast spaces. The basis for the formation of unified visual tradition of the Late Bronze Age in the steppe zone, perhaps, should be sought in the Indo-Iranian heritage of the steppe and forest steppe cultures of Eurasia.

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FIGURE 1



Karasuk type objects from the territory of Khakass-Minusinsk basin and its Eurasian analogs

A – Decorations: 1, 6 – Ukraine; 2- 4, 7, 8 – Minusinsk basin; 5 – Western Siberia (Osinniki settlement).

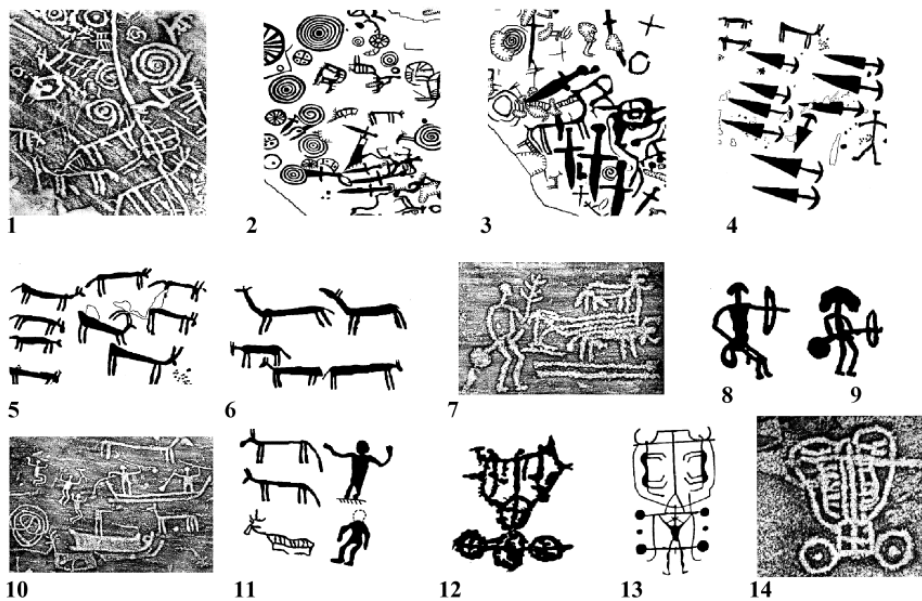
B – Celts: 1 – Moscow region; 2, 4 – Minusinsk basin; 3 – Urals.

C – Knives and daggers: 1 – Northern Caucasus; 2 – Lower Don; 3 – Prikamye; 4, 5 – Minusinsk basin; 6, 7 – Eastern Siberia (Irkutsk region); 8, 9 – Ordos; 10, 11 – Lower Austria; 12, 13 – Silesia; 14 – Greater Poland; 15-18 – Minusinsk basin; 19 – Northern Pontic; 20, 25 – Minusinsk basin; 21, 22 – Bashkiriya; 23, 24 – Minusinsk basin.

D – Ceramics: 1, 5, 7, 8 – Caucasus; 2, 4, 11 – Minusinsk basin; 3, 9 – Kazakhstan; 6, 12 – Upper Ob.



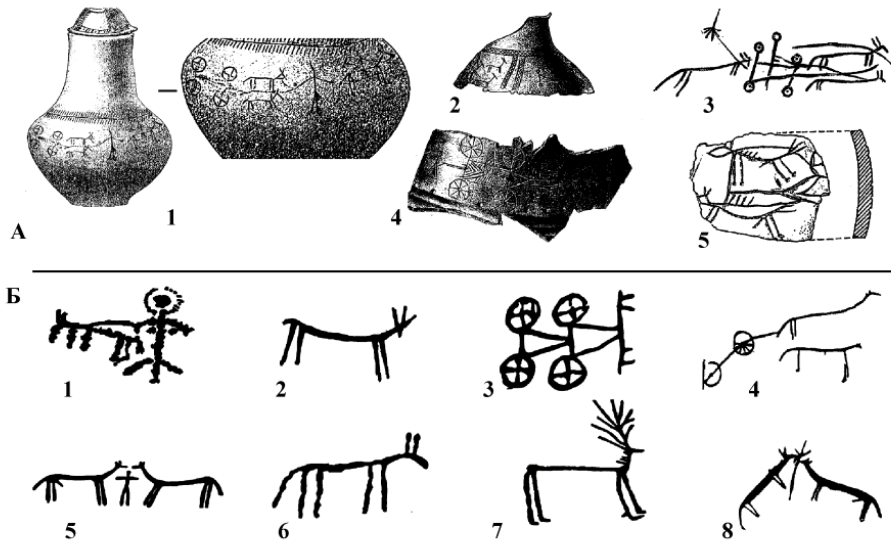
FIGURE 2



Carvings of the Late Bronze Age in Khakass-Minusinsk basin and its European Parallels

1 – Graubünden (Switzerland) 2,3 – Shaman-stone (Minusinsk basin); 4,5 – Italy; 6 – Shishka city (Minusinsk basin); 7 – Bohuslön (Sweden); 8 – Kalbak-Tash I (Altai); 9 – Usty-Mozaga (Tuva); 10 – Bohuslön (Sweden); 11 – Ust-Tuba III; Minusinsk basin; 12 – Haar-Khaya (Minusinsk basin); 13 – Syunik (Armenia); 14 – Bohuslön (Sweden).

FIGURE 3



Linear style of Images on Vessels from Central and Eastern Europe and on the rocks of the Khakass-Minusinsk basin

A – 1-3 – Central Germany; 4 – Panonia, Hungary 5 – Northern Black Sea Coast.

B – 1 – Ust-Tuba; 2 – Ilyinskaya II; 3 – Shishka city; 4, 8 – North coast of Varchi I; 5 – Sedlovina III; 6,7 – Sedlovina I.

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## RELIGIOUS SYNCRETISM IN KHAKASSIA IN EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

A.A. BURNAKOV

### Abstract

*Based on field and archival materials, the author describes the occurrence of new places of worship in south of Khakassia in early twentieth century. It represents a "mixture of the unconnectable" - Orthodox Christianity and Khakass autochthonous beliefs, which led to the appearance of the so-called "places of the Epiphany".*

*Key words: Khakassia, Tashtypsky district, shamanistic and non-shamanistic layer, Christianization, religious situation, Pechegolsky Epiphany.*

In early 18<sup>th</sup> century in the Russian empire, Christianization was considered to be one of the most important directions of state policy, designed to consolidate the newly joined territories, which included the territory of modern Khakassia. This led to the fact that for 300 years Christianity in the form of the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) has had strongest influence on the spiritual culture of the Khakasses. The assessment of the Christianization of indigenous Siberian people is far from unambiguous. There are both apologists for Christianization and their opponents, who believe that Christianization was based on the spirit of national superiority, which was expressed in the belief in Christianity (in the form of Orthodoxy) being the only "true" religion and the messianic role of Russia. Moreover, the carriers of imperial Orthodox consciousness were not only the Russians, but also representatives of other ethnic groups that were members of the ruling elite<sup>1</sup>. This opinion is confirmed by the facts of intolerance noted by the ethnographic literature towards the non-believers who became the priests of the Russian Orthodox Church, N. Katanov and I. Shtygashev, manifested by the Khakasses themselves<sup>2</sup>.

As a result, by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century all Khakasses were officially considered as orthodox Christians<sup>3</sup>. But, despite a partial change in the traditional rituals, the introduction of some Christian ideas and holidays, Christianity was perceived by the vast majority of the population superficially without profound changes in the belief system. The reason for this was that the Khakasses had their own ancient history, distinctive culture and their religious system, consisting of two harmoniously combined layers: shamanistic and non-shamanistic. At the same time, there was no religious organization and recorded creed. The administration of religious rites was mainly carried out on sacred mountains and tracts of various levels. The most significant objects of worship were: the cult of Heaven (*Тугир тайиу*); cult of ancestral mountains (*Тай тайиу*); the cult of the mountains on which the mythical ancestors of the Khakasses were saved during various critical events; the cult of stone statues, menhirs (*кјзее*) – personifying the patrons of individual clans and landscape spirits.

This article discusses a new cult for Khakassia - Places of Epiphany (*Худай тескен чирлер*), which arose at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. In the south of Khakassia, there are two such places, near the villages of Pechegol and Ust-Tashtyp. Here we consider only the phenomenon of the Epiphany in village Pechegol (Tashtyp district, The Republic of Khakassia). The place of this epiphany is in 2 to 2.5 kms south-west of the village Pechegol, in a field on the mound of the Tagar archaeological culture (8<sup>th</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC). On the phenomenon of the Epiphany, conflicting oral information has been preserved. However, archival materials have made it possible to clarify the date of the Pechegol Epiphany – 1926 AD and the name of the “God-seer” - Pavel Kuzhakov<sup>4</sup>. Two versions of this story are saved. In the first, a poor young shepherd grazed horses and suddenly a bright, blinding light spilled from the sky. The shepherd with his peripheral vision saw the silhouette of a man. It was *Khudai* (god), and he gave the shepherd a “revelation” about the future on earth<sup>5</sup>. According to the second version, *Khudai* appeared before him in bright beams of light on a white horse and in white robes and ordered him to execute three of his orders: i) gather people for prayers; ii) highlight in the form of a circle the place of the ceremony (the border of the glow); iii) set a cross three meters high<sup>6</sup>. Residents of the surrounding villages, both Russians and Khakasses, treated it as a miracle and began to come here on the Christian holidays like Trinity and Ascension. They gathered for Ascension in the evening and prayed all night, and the next morning they went home<sup>7</sup>.

The officialdom, met this event with hostility. The authorities perceived the "Tashtyp Epiphany" (possibly without any reason) as a subtle anti-Soviet action of the Orthodox clergy and the prosperous part of the population. To clarify the circumstances, in June 1926, emissaries were sent to the Tashtypsky district - Mikhailov (from the Communist Party) and Saltykov (from the state security organs)<sup>8</sup>. Following this, persecution of the God-seer and his supporters began. According to legend, the young man was seized and imprisoned, where he was tortured. But, he did not give up and in the end, he was released<sup>9</sup>. The story of the phenomenon did not end there, people continued to gather at this place until the 1990s. Eyewitnesses even kept a description of these holidays, leaders' head dress - they tied their heads with black shawls, what emphasizes the syncretism of this cult, because dark shawls were sometimes used by Khakass shamans during ceremonies. Before the rituals began, sticks were stuck around the cross in a circle, imitating the border of divine light, then three complete rounds were done. Then they went up to the cross, prayed, put candles, water and products brought for sanctification, which after that were considered to be as sanctified<sup>10</sup>. Leaving, they took a little earth, because it was considered as consecrated and it was scattered in the corners of the houses, fence and outbuildings, believing that it would save from evil forces<sup>11</sup>. Until the 1990s these prayers extremely irritated the authorities. So much so the police came to these events and dispersed the faithful with lashes. The people scattered around the nearby logs and ravines, but as soon as the police and communists left, the faithful continued their prayers. To discourage the flow of pilgrims, this place was even ploughed up<sup>12</sup>.

With the fall of Soviet Union, the time for freedom of conscience and worship came. But, crime has spread throughout the country. Eyewitnesses reported that in 1995-96, a car with racketeers arrived for another prayer. Bandits began to take money and valuables from pilgrims<sup>13</sup>. Then the number of pilgrims began to decline, and after the death of the older generation and the opening of a large number of churches, the flow of believers dried up. Now this place is visited by small number of residents from surrounding villages. In 2000-2001, a new three meters high wooden cross was erected at this place<sup>14</sup>. About 50 meters from this place is a small iron cross. Its appearance is associated with the destruction of the original wooden cross. When the Communists decided to plough the mound, believers moved it to the edge of the field and overlaid it with stones, where it still stands<sup>15</sup>.

Difficult socio-political and economic experiments of the Soviet state led not only to a sharp deterioration in the economic well-being of the population, but also to the loss of old values, not finding new ones, and growing sense of hopelessness. All this was exacerbated by the lack of customary comfort in the face of traditional faiths, because the new state tried to root out all religions. This led to the emergence of a new cult form - Places of Epiphany, with the dominance of Christian elements: symbolism, paraphernalia, worship. At the same time, elements from the Khakass religious tradition exist: worship in the open country, conducting rituals with the obligatory kindling of fires, localization of a holy place on the mound, etc. In the conditions of the state's struggle with all religions, it acquired a form of manifestation of popular religiosity that was not traditional for Khakassia.

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13. *Ibid.*
14. Author's field study in 2006. Sagalakov Nikolay (Inanay) Ananovich was born in 1955 in clan "Yellow" in village "Pechegol".
15. See No. 5.

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## EMERGENCE OF MONEY ECONOMY IN TUVA AT THE TURN OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

M.M.B. KHARUNOVA

### ABSTRACT

*The aim of this paper is to study unique characteristics of commodity-money relations development in Tuvan Uriankhai at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries during the transition from the Chinese authority to the protectorate of the Russian Empire. The author reviewed archival documents and summarised scientific works, to identify political and social and economic background contributing to a slow but steady development of commodity-money relations. This paper also focusses on the conditions that prevented the development of these relations including harmful strategy of the Qing China as it wanted to keep its colony closed.*  
**Keywords:** Uriankhayskiy Krai, Tuva, China, the Russian Empire, the protectorate, noyons, trade, monetary relations, Tuva, Russian peasants, merchants, prospectors.

From 1757 to 1912, Urianghai Region (Tuva) was under the rule of Qing empire. Low level of development of productive forces, underdeveloped exchange of goods, and lack of single market hindered the process of the development of commodity-money exchange in traditional Tuvan society, whose economy was based on nomadic pastoralism. Barter prevailed in Urianghai Region right up to the October Revolution; there were neither trade fairs nor markets. Buddhist monasteries were meant to be a place for exchange of goods.<sup>1</sup> In lieu of money, one squirrel pelt, *torbak* (a yearling bull), one sheep, or *bash* (a brick of tea)<sup>2</sup> were in wide use as the main money equivalent, introduced by Chinese merchants.

Exchange of goods and computation of national taxes, revenues and expenditures were done in *bodo* equal to 1 head of big-horned cattle, or 8 sheep or goats.<sup>3</sup> Money was not used even for payment of different tributes. For instance, *alban*, the equivalent of Russian *yasak*, as V.I. Dulov writes,

was collected from population by the Chinese authorities only in furs, no other product or money was accepted to pay *alban*.<sup>4</sup> *Unduryug* (a tax for benefit of *noyons* (local princes), the rate of which was not fixed, was to be paid with furs, livestock, skins, and other animal products.<sup>5</sup>

Qing China, in their State interests to be about having Tuva as a game reserve providing China with furs, kept Chinese and Mongol merchants out of Tuva. Article No.84 of the Code of the Chinese Chamber of External Relations ordained: "No merchant was allowed to go with goods to Tannu-Urianghai Mongols [population of Urianghai Region]... And if Urianghai Mongols have extra goods to be exchanged, they can exchange them in the town of Uliasutai..."<sup>6</sup> However, *arats* (ordinary herdsmen) were not allowed to cross the Mongolian border. Only Tuvan officials were allowed to go to Uliasutai and bring Chinese goods. Article No.85 of the Code did not permit credit trade with Tuvan officials. According to V.I. Dulov, this article prevented trade in Tuva via Tuvan officials who could become agents of Chinese trade companies.<sup>7</sup>

Due to such a policy of China, there was no well-organized group of merchants in Tuva because the trade was carried on solely via *noyons* who kept competitors out of the market. Even in 1926, the Tuvan People's Republic had 53 Chinese, 25 Korean, 25 Russian merchants and only one Tuvan merchant.<sup>8</sup>

Beginning from the latter half of the nineteenth century, commercial and usurious activity of Russian and Chinese capital in Urianghai Region led to a gradual disappearance of natural economy. Under the terms of the Treaty of Peking (1960), duty-free trade was allowed all across the borderline between China and Russia (art. 4). Russian merchants were allowed to "sell and buy various goods... for money or exchange goods..." (art. 5).<sup>9</sup>

Russian agrarian colonization, increase in gold exploration and trade laid the groundwork for the emergence of money economy. An increased demand for Tuva's raw materials, livestock, and furs increased the interest of Russian merchants in the introduction of money in Tuva. The development of money economy was speeded up by Russian colonist farmers who were familiar with it.

Russian colonization in Urianghai Region went in three stages: (i) starting in 1837, gold mining in the upper Systyg-Khem, (ii) starting in 1869, foundation of trade posts on the Khemchik and Yenisei (iii) starting in 1885, Russian agrarian colonization.<sup>10</sup> Among Russian settlers were also sectarians (Old Believers) who came to Urianghai evading religious



oppression in Russia. "Agrarian colonization at the turn of the twentieth century caused by agricultural crisis in Russia went hand-in-hand with Old Believers' idea which made them move to Tuva in search of seclusion, peace, and the Promised Land".<sup>11</sup>

Russian merchants and gold prospectors held an interest in having a special border commissioner for providing assistance in the promotion of Russian trade in Tuva. On December 30, 1885, Alexander III granted the request of the Minister of the Interior Durnovo to establish a border military district.<sup>12</sup> In April 1906, Irkutsk Military Governor-General Alekseev asked the Minister of Interior: "Would it be recognized well-timed, conformable to political context, to settle the question on the institution of the post of a special border commissioner, as a substitute of the currently existent post of Usinsk border official, who could defend Russian interests in aforesaid region [Urianghai Region] up until the settlement of the border issue". February 1, 1913 saw the institution of a "new post of Usinsk border commissioner for relations with native authorities of Urianghai Region, performance of judicial and administrative duties in respect to Russian nationals residing in the region, and examination of questionable matters arising between the latter and the Urianghais".<sup>13</sup>

Subsequent political events—the 1911 revolution in China, collapse of Qing dynasty, and aggravation of the international situation on the eve of the World War I—led Nicholas II to take the decision on the establishment of protectorate over Urianghai Region.

"The procedure of declaration of His Imperial Majesty's order to rulers and people of Urianghai Region about the establishment of Russian protectorate over Urianghai Region is an accomplished historical fact confirmed by the full range of measures and actions undertaken by the Council of Ministers of Russian Empire and a number of executive acts subsequent to the inscription of His Imperial Majesty Czar Nicholas II "Agreed" on the report by the Minister of the Interior of Russian Empire S.D. Sazonov, of April 4, 1914, on the need of the urgent positive solution of the "Urianghai question" by placing the population of Urianghai under protection of Russia. The procedure was finalized on November 29, 1914 with the inscription of His Imperial Majesty Czar Nicholas II "Successfully" on the report of Irkutsk Governor-General, of October 29, 1914, presented by the Minister of the Interior of Russian Empire S.D. Sazonov".<sup>14</sup> Shortly after the establishment of Russian protectorate, the city of Byelotsarsk (today, Kyzyl) was founded at the confluence of the Big and Small Yenisei (the Bii-Khem and Kaa-Khem rivers).<sup>15</sup>

There were difficulties in the development of money economy in Urianghai, which stemmed from the fact that the major part of the population did not want to get involved in money relations because the majority of people were poor. They did not need money as payment medium for the reason that they were used to barter. In the 1830s-1850s, Russian merchants told about slump in trade in comparison with earlier times, which was due to the impoverishment of Tuvans.<sup>16</sup>

Russian Resettlement Administration, founded in 1913, tried to convert barter trade into money economy with the creation of special shops in order to protect native Tuvans from the predatory commerce of the merchants and to increase money turnover. But as Shkunov, Head of Russian Resettlement Administration, wrote in his 1915 annual report: "The trade with the Soyots [Tuvans], as the evidence from practice showed, can be almost without exception barter, and, cash trade, as it was planned to do by my predecessor V.K. Gabaev, is impossible because in this case it is necessary to have an extra person charged in buying goods brought by the Soyots and accompanying them to the shop so that they buy something for cash, and, in addition, such a going from one place to another discourage the Soyots to come again".<sup>17</sup>

Remoteness of Urianghai Region from industrial clusters and lack of routes of communication also hindered the development of money economy. The question of construction of roads in Urianghai was raised both by Chinese and Russian authorities. In 1902, a Mongol *churgaan* (minister) ordered the governor of Khemchik, it being the case that there is potential to begin construction of a railroad, the construction thereof being requested by the Supreme Roads Authority, "to investigate thoroughly all the roads, the ones being built and designed, their length and stretch".<sup>18</sup> But nothing was further done.

The question of timeliness of road building in the upper Yenisei area, along with other road issues in Asian part of Russia, was considered in 1906 at a meeting on the communication routes in Siberia held in Irkutsk. However, it should be mentioned that this question was raised as early as 1896.<sup>19</sup> The report on the construction of a road to Urianghai submitted to the Head of Resettlement and Land Use Administration in Yenisei Guberniya summarized: "... the establishment of a stable and regular communication with eastern Urianghai is absolutely indispensable by the reasons of economic significance of the latter and in view of related and consequential political requirements because exploration of natural resources of this region is possible only with Russian colonization put on

a solid footing and strengthening of Russian domination.<sup>20</sup>

The first stage of the construction of Usinsk highroad had been finished by 1917.<sup>21</sup> The builders managed to drive this highroad until the village of Verkhne-Usinskoye. From there to Urianghai Region until the city of Byelotsarsk ran an unformed dirt road. This route as such without being repaired survived from 1917 up until 1932.<sup>22</sup> This route became the main commercial artery connecting Tuva and Russia, making a significant contribution in the development of nascent economy of Urianghai (Tuva). The supervision of the movement of goods between Russia and Urianghai was the responsibility of Urianghai customs post, located in the city of Byelotsarsk, founded on June 22, 1915.<sup>23</sup>

After the 1911 upheavals in China, with the weakening position of Chinese merchants, Russian commercial capital became dominant in Tuva. In 1915, of 86 Russian trading stations 29 were engaged exclusively in trade; 15, in addition to trade, acquired plots of arable land and livestock; 13, complementary to trade, raised stock.<sup>24</sup> M.P. Tatarintseva notes that in 1914 there were 256 localities populated by Russian in Tuva, mainly trading stations and homesteads, including 44 villages. In 1915, 326,000 *desiatinas* (land measure equivalent to 2.7 acres) were recorded to have been developed by Russian colonists. In 1915-1917, Russian settlers in Tuva amounted to about eight thousand people.<sup>25</sup>

The trade by barter between Russian and Chinese merchants gradually began evolving into money trade. Gradually, local rich people got involved in money economy. They began to accumulate their wealth not only in the form of livestock but also in money. As Yu.L. Aranchin writes in 1928, "when valuable possessions of a *bai* (rich herdsman) *Azhykai* were being confiscated, so many bars of silver and gold and expensive jewelry were seized in his autumn herding camp alone, that one needed 12 carts to take them out of the herding camp".<sup>26</sup> Lamaseries, possessing enormous wealth in the form of livestock, sold to Russian merchants for cost, and took keen interest in accumulation of money.<sup>27</sup>

I.V. Dulov identifies the following economic developments as prerequisites for the emergence of money economy in Tuva: Russian agrarian colonization of Tuva, growth of gold mining, and emergence of specific branches of stock-raising such as maral (Siberian species of red deer) husbandry. One more thing, in his opinion, to contribute to the emergence and development of money economy in Tuva was the change of the pattern and economic trend in the trade of Russian merchants with Tuvans. ... "An increased demand for Tuva's raw materials, livestock and

animal products, as well as furs, in the Russian and World markets—this demand being increased especially in the days of such events as Russo-Japanese war and World War I—made Tuva's raw materials, as Mongolia's ones, come in top place in trade turnover of Russian merchants not only with the Tuvans but also with the Chinese. ... It was more convenient for merchants to buy Tuvan raw materials for money".<sup>28</sup> One more thing, in his opinion, to give rise to the emergence of money economy in Tuva was the arrival of Russian peasant immigrants, who were familiar with cash economy, and, as settlers, they had to buy many things they needed for their households at the place of their settlement.<sup>29</sup>

Geopolitical position of Tuva, which was an area of political and economic interest of two neighboring empires (China and Russia), contributed to expansion of the currencies of these states in the turnover of money of this region. In circulation were golden and silver rubles, Chinese *lans*, and Hamburg silver.<sup>30</sup> A letter of the Privy Councilor of the Urianghai Region V. Grigor'yev to Irkutsk Governor-General regarding barter trade stated that silver bullion, previously bought from Hamburg, was brought in Urianghai every year until 1914. Next, it was mentioned that in 1915, along with other goods, 180,000 rubles were brought in Urianghai.<sup>31</sup>

As can be seen from the above, the turn of the twentieth century witnessed the emergence of money economy in Tuva, which was an undisputable advantage for economic development despite the fact that barter still held dominant position in economy of Tuva. A broad range of socio-economic and political factors, such as mass arrival of Russians to Tuva, agrarian colonization, development of gold mining, further drawing Tuva into political orbit of Russia (establishment of Russian protectorate over Tuva), contributed to a slow but steady establishment of money economy in Urianghai Region (Tuva). Certain difficulties in the development of money economy were caused, above all, by a deep rooted self-subsistent economy of Tuvans, corrosive policy of China focused on keeping its furthestmost northern province isolated, difficult transport accessibility and remoteness of the region from other industrial clusters.

In spite of all these difficulties, money economy of Tuva progressively developed, replacing barter economy. However, it is not until the time of the Tuvan People's Republic that Tuva had its own national currency, which definitely replaced not only barter trade but also all kinds of quasi-money and bonds used as payment instrument.

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## KHAKASSIA AND INDIA *HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL LINKAGES\**

K. WARIKOO

### ABSTRACT

*This paper reflects upon this author's experiences of travels in Khakassia bringing to light certain commonalities of traditions and beliefs still prevalent in this Siberian region and India. Indian Vedas, Shamanism and Tengrianism of Eurasia have so many commonalities. One can find traces of ancient Vedic doctrines in the traditional rituals and practices of the Siberian people even today. Khakass people rever mountains, lakes, beruza (birch) and pine trees. Beruza is held sacred in Siberia, in the same way as is done in India. Smoke of incense burnt in a bowl is waved/touched by the people, a practice common in India. That the concept of three worlds, third eye and trident are embedded in ancient stones of over 2,000 years old and which were and continue to be revered in Khakassia, Altai and Tuva, has direct resemblance to the tradition and cosmic philosophy prevalent in India even today. There is need for collaborative research to study in depth various aspects of ancient history, culture, race movements and archeological remains in India and Khakassia, to unravel the common roots/sources of Indic and Siberian cultures.*

India and Eurasia have had close social and cultural linkages, as Buddhism spread from India to Central Asia, Mongolia, Buryatia and far wide. Buddhism provides a direct link between India and the people of Siberia (Buryatia, Chita, Irkutsk, Tuva, Altai, Urals etc.) who have distinctive historico-cultural similarities with the Indian Himalayas particularly due to common traditions and Buddhist culture. Revival of Buddhism in Siberia is of great importance to India in terms of restoring and reinvigorating the lost linkages. This paper reflects upon this author's experiences of travels

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\* Based on excerpts from author's VIF occasional paper *Siberia and India: Historical Cultural Affinities*. <https://www.vifindia.org/paper/2020/august/06/Siberia-and-India-Historical-Cultural-Affinities>.

in Khakassia bringing to light certain commonalities of traditions and beliefs still prevalent in this Siberian region and India.

There is wide scope for developing economic and cultural interaction between Eurasia and India, as the two regions maintained cultural contacts since ancient times. Archaeological evidence supports the concept of unity of the Eurasian region and the link of Russia and Central Asian states with India into a complex of cross-cultural bindings. Indian Vedas, Shamanism and Tengrianism of Eurasia have so many commonalities. One can find traces of ancient Vedic doctrines in the traditional rituals and practices of the Siberian people even today.

Covering an area of 61,900 sq. kms. in eastern part of Siberia, the Republic of Khakassia of the Russian Federation is situated in the valleys of the Abakan and Yenisei rivers. Besides occupying the Minusinsk Basin, it also occupies part of the Chulym-Yenisei Valley. Khakassia has its borders touching Krasnoyarsk Territory in the north and east, Republics of Tuva and Altai in the south and southwest and Kemerovskaya Oblast in the west. Khakassia is known as the 'archaeological Mecca' due to it being a repository of archaeological sites and rich historical and cultural heritage. From ancient times, Khakassia maintained trade and cultural relations with Russia, Mongolia, China, Tibet and Central Asia.

Khakass people rever mountains, lakes, *beruza* (birch) and pine trees. On the outskirts of Abakan, a small museum housed in a *yurt* has a big ancient stone locally known as Old Mother Stone, which has a mark of third eye and trident. This stone is venerated by Khakas people, particularly the women who come to seek its blessings for bearing children. Several dolls, milk etc offered to the stone. Believed to be over 2,000 years old, there are three segments visible on the stone denoting three worlds - sky, earth and below the earth. About 30 to 40 per cent of Khakas people still follow/practice Shamanism. This author witnessed the performance of a Shamanist ritual in Abakan (in August 2009). Khakas shamans (both male and female) who were dressed for that occasion in flowing robes laced with threads and bird feathers, were dancing/going around a fire citing verses/rhymes and softly beating their drum. Some Khakas participants even put some flour in the fire. Small bands of cloth (red, blue and white) were tied to a big *beruza* tree. *Beruza* is held sacred in Siberia, in the same way as is done in India. Smoke of incense burnt in a bowl is waved/touched by the people, a practice common in India.

On a visit to Kazanovka village open air museum, one found so many rock carvings. Victorina, Director of this museum pointed to a hill top



near the bank of Askis river, that about a century ago had a big stone. People used to visit this place in large numbers believing that this stone had healing powers. There was a cave under the stone having two small stones. This stone was stated to have been destroyed during Khrushchev's time as idol worship was anathema to the Soviet communist ideology. It is believed that Magnashev family, whose family deity was this hill top stone, killed themselves after the destruction of this stone. In Khakassia, as in parts of Indian Himalayas, each clan has its own family/clan deity/stone, which is revered by them. Victorina also took us to one semi-white stone lying in a big steppe land which is believed to have healing powers. This author saw a number of men and women coming in their cars to seek blessings of the stone. They removed their shoes and went around three times and hugged this stone offering money at its feet. Victorina explained that the stone, believed to be over 2,000 years old, has three eyes which have become somewhat invisible due to vagaries of nature over this long period of time.

In view of the foregoing there is need for collaborative research to study in depth various aspects of ancient history, culture, race movements and archeological remains in India and Khakassia, to unravel the common roots/sources of Indic and Siberian cultures. That the concept of three worlds, third eye and trident are embedded in ancient stones of over 2,000 years old and which were and continue to be revered in Khakassia, Altai and Tuva, has direct resemblance to the tradition and cosmic philosophy prevalent in India even today. Similarly the practice of treating lakes, springs, mountains, beruza trees sacred in Eurasia is quite similar to the Indian tradition and practice. Siberia is a corridor through which cultural and civilisational interaction can be reinforced to form a cultural axis between India and Russia.



Mother Stone near Abakan, Khakassia



People pay reverence at the stone near Abakan, Khakassia, Russia



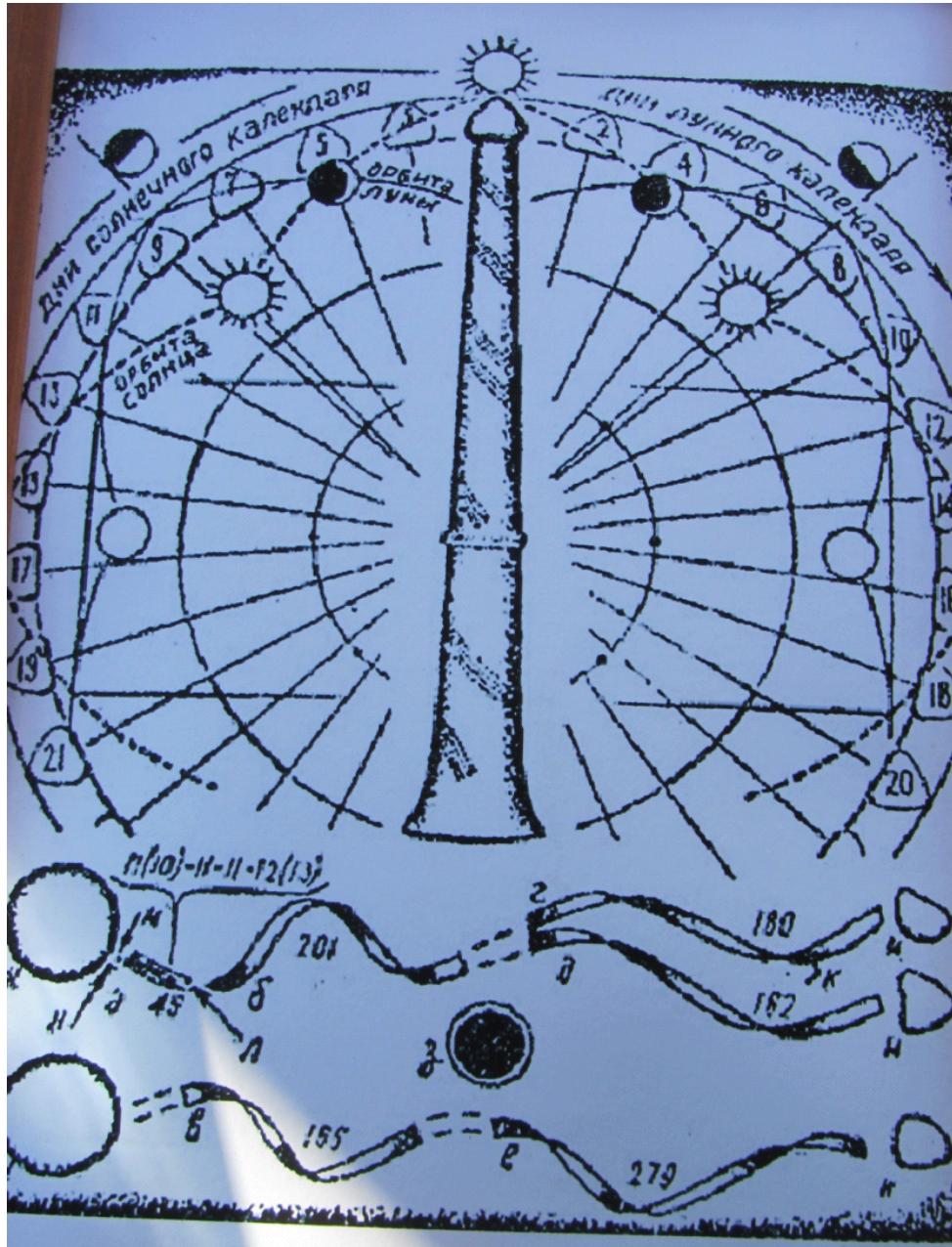
Ruins of an ancient fire place in Khakassia



Khakass people tying ribbons to *Beruza* tree in Abakan



Stele at National Museum, Abakan, Khakassia



Drawing of Ancient Pillar with symbols of Sun etc. found in Khakassia

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## TRANSCENDING STEREOTYPES OF GENDER AND NATIONAL IDENTITY: DERVLA MURPHY'S SIBERIA

SINDHU JANARDHAN

The complex and nuanced images of Siberia that emerge from Dervla Murphy's *Through Siberia by Accident: A Small Slice of Autobiography*<sup>1</sup> set this work apart from the numerous other travel-accounts of this region. Part travelogue, part self-writing, part history, her work occupies a unique position in the genre of 21<sup>st</sup> century women's travel writing, as it does also in terms of its intelligent and sensitive engagement with the troubled terrain of post-Soviet Siberia. An unusually intrepid eco-traveller, her original plan was to travel by bicycle to Ussuriland, in the Russian Far East. This was, however, impossible after a few mishaps resulting in injuries rendered her three-month sojourn in eastern Siberia inevitable.

The critic Susan Bassnett observes that women's travel writing of the late twentieth century tends to focus more on the relationship between the individual and the societies through which she travels; she specifically mentions ecological questions, world poverty and the future of the planet as the dominant themes of Murphy's other travel works<sup>2</sup>. Bassnett further notes that works like Murphy's "are firmly rooted in everyday experience and offer down-to-earth portraits of how they as individuals dealt with both physical hardship and social conscience"; and while self-reflexively asserting her gender identity, Murphy does not lay any claim to special status or exceptionality<sup>3</sup>. *Through Siberia by Accident: A Small Slice of Autobiography* reflects these observations to a nicety. Undertaking this strangely occasioned journey at the age of 74, without even a basic grasp of the Russian language, Murphy is at ease with her own self, body and identity; she locates herself as a middle class Irish Catholic woman travel writer and grandmother, with the experience of many journeys and travel-accounts behind her, with an injured knee that seriously affects her mobility. Her positioning within the genre of women's travel writing of the twenty

first century is an indicator of the extent to which women travel writers have evolved in terms of independence of selfhood and identity; the motif of 'escape through travel' that dogged many earlier illustrious and intrepid women travellers, together with the attributed challenge of having to fashion an identity through travel<sup>4</sup>, cannot be associated with Murphy's work. However, Murphy's awareness of her gendered identity as a female traveller does inform her work in different ways. Primarily this awareness manifests itself in the context of physical vulnerability and fear of violence (including sexual violence), which is a factor that women travellers continue to be up against, and was more challenging in her particular circumstances while in Siberia; she describes herself as "old and muggable"<sup>5</sup> while passing through central Moscow after dark; in the Old Town part of Severobaikalsk, she comments: "Lucky Siberia! Is there any town now, in Europe, where two elderly women would feel completely safe walking through unlit woodland at night?"<sup>6</sup>. Soon after this, a Siberian woman friend expresses horror at the risk Murphy had taken, pointing out that crimes and violence against women had increased in the region in recent years<sup>7</sup>. These contradictory images of public safety for women in Siberia lend a certain complexity and objectivity to her travel account. The overarching stereotypes of Siberia in Russian history as well as to the outside world, have always been associated with its Arctic cold, its penal colony history, its bleak lonely inimical expanses which carried exile, punishment, hard labour and untold human suffering as part of its cultural identity. Those few Russian women who travelled to Siberia in the 19<sup>th</sup> century did so by choice as Decembrist wives, although they were given the option of renouncing their marriages and staying in Russia. Amongst the very few Western women who travelled to Siberia by independent choice in the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Swiss Ella Maillart and Mrs. Alec-Tweedie come to mind; their travel and related written work was presumably subjected to the gendered expectations that surround travel and travel writing as predominantly the realm of the masculine. Dervla Murphy's 2004 journey forms a sort of continuum with these in terms of her independence; what sets it apart is the conspicuous absence of her self-construal in relation to the act of travel itself as a gendered feat that challenges the male-dominated terrain of travel and travel-writing, together with its connotations of adventure and heroism. At the same time, Murphy is disarmingly self-conscious about her physical appearance, utilitarian choice of attire (which manifested itself in the buying of a *shapka* meant for men), which she observes is in stark contrast to the meticulous



and almost compulsive attention paid to clothes and grooming by the women she meets in Siberia. She amusedly recounts the puzzlement of the other women around her:

“Russian women of every generation and class attach great importance to dressing well so of course my utilitarian garments were puzzling. Why did this woman from a rich country look like a destitute pensioner? ... I explained that in my view clothes are mere necessities, to be handed down by friends, or bought in charity shops, their only function to cover the body adequately according to the season.<sup>8</sup>

This ‘distancing’ from the feminine aspect of Murphy’s travel-self can be understood not so much as a deliberate projection of a more ‘masculine’ identity that requires any outward semblance of femininity to be suppressed, but as an individual choice.

One of the most important features of Murphy’s travel account is its sensitive engagement with the historical stereotypes of Siberia which dovetail into the region’s present day realities, in terms of its extremes of topography, its troubled post-Soviet socio-economic terrain, questions of national identity and lingering Russian cultural (often binary) images of its ‘hinterland’. At different stages in her travel, she adds her own experiences and impressions to these historical images, thereby creating new constructs of Siberia. Carl Thompson’s observations on the writing style of the famous travel writer Jan Morris apply remarkably aptly to Dervla Murphy’s work, under present discussion: “... a distinctly impersonal mode of travel writing, in which the focus is overwhelmingly on the place being visited rather than the narratorial self ... (her) perspective on the world, seems to be shaped most profoundly not by gender, but by class and nationality, working in tandem with the author’s historical moment”<sup>9</sup>. In her Author’s Note, Murphy clarifies that she uses the term ‘Siberian’ to refer to the European Russians who have been settled in Siberia for generations, and not to the indigenous tribal communities such as the Buriyat, Sakha, Tungus, Lamut and others<sup>10</sup>. This specificity gains significance in the context of Russian national identity, which has long been contested between its European and Asian moorings. Russia’s leaning towards Europeanisation was initiated in the 18<sup>th</sup> century by Czar Peter the Great. Czarist expansion and later Sovietisation brought most of Central Asia into Russian domain. Historically, Siberia came to be a penal colony, to which political dissidents, criminals and the refuse of Europeanised Russian society were exiled for life. Given Russia’s vastness and location, with only the Urals to demarcate notional geo-political boundaries from

Siberia, as also political policy as it was practised over the centuries, a hierarchical, not to mention imperial, attitude was fostered by European Russians towards all things Siberian. This attitude seems to tinge present-day Siberia and Russian Siberians, with indigenous populations being accorded the lowest status of all. In the Foreword, Murphy illustrates this through the words of a Russian friend who, at the start of her travel-plans, “explained that many Russians regard Siberia and the Russian Far East as dangerous territories, mainly inhabited by criminals, bears, wolves and mosquitoes carrying deadly diseases such as Kozhevnikov epilepsy”<sup>11</sup>. Murphy makes it clear that her knowledge of the existence of these prejudices did not colour her own perceptions of Siberia as she experiences it. In her voyage down the Lena river, she assesses commonly held mental images of Siberia “...awesome, yes, in the sheer extremity of its extent and climate—but more than slightly sinister, having been a place of punishment for 500 years and mind-numbingly monotonous with either too many trees or “too much snow”<sup>12</sup> against her own impressions, which reveal unexpected and diverse natural beauties.

Murphy’s travelogue entails a revisiting of the history of each Siberian town she passes through in order to comprehend the complexities of its present situation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. She understands the politico-economic-social relations between Russia and Siberia (from earliest times to the present) in terms of near-colonial power dynamics, although she rejects the idea of ‘conquest’ that precedes most European colonial history: “... Siberia is somewhere else -- its own place, not belonging (except politically) to Russia or (except geographically) to what we think of as ‘Asia’”<sup>13</sup>. Her reasoning is that the geographical terrain of Russia blends amorphously into that of Central Asia and Siberia, making early Russian expansion into the sparsely populated northern and eastern regions inevitable. Notwithstanding 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century Czarist Cossack expansion and considering Siberia’s long exilic history, most early Russian settlers were often themselves seeking refuge from political persecution and their impact upon native tribal populations was minimal, mostly manifested in the latter’s change from a nomadic life to settled agriculture. There was, according to Murphy, a unique socio-cultural exchange and borrowing of ideas relatively free of assumptions of ‘superiority’ between the native tribal Siberians and the Russian settlers which cannot be instanced anywhere in Western European imperialists’ colonial history<sup>14</sup>.

Conquest apart, Russian ‘colonial’ power over Siberian native populations is particularised by Murphy in the context of fur trade: such

vast numbers of fur pelts were demanded as tribute/levies by Russians that only the near-extinction of the hunted wild animals could diminish the business. The initial stages of her journey through Siberia are marked by a sharp-eyed examination of the impact of BAM (Baikal-Amur Mainline) culture on the cities and towns through which she passes via the Trans-Siberian Express. She meets many Russian Siberians who grew up with the “triumphalist”<sup>15</sup> rhetoric of Soviet notions of progress and development (of which BAM was a prominent motif in Siberia) who are now faced with the antithetical forces of new capitalist Russian politics. Murphy’s interest in the impact of Soviet-inspired BAM culture as well as post-Soviet transition to capitalist culture in Siberia is foregrounded in ecological concerns, particularly centred on Lake Baikal. The apparently “minimal” damage to the fragile unique Siberian ecology was inevitable, widespread and permanent<sup>16</sup>; Murphy explains that this was compounded by the peculiarities of Russian domination in Siberia, where scarce cultivable land rendered agriculture difficult and unprofitable (unlike other European colonial possessions), and pushed Russian concentration towards industrial development that was dismissive (colonial-style) of native ecological epistemologies of conservation and environmental preservation<sup>17</sup>. However, she notes that Soviet collectivisation of agriculture, with its annual quota system of production, did hit Western Siberia worse than other regions<sup>18</sup>. Murphy’s image of Irkutsk reveals how European cultural notions overlaid Soviet Russian development of this city: “Within a few years Irkutsk was being referred to as ‘the Paris of Siberia’—another of those absurd analogies...which are intended to flatter, but in fact demean(s). Everywhere is *itself*, nowhere is the ‘X’ of ‘Y’”<sup>19</sup>. Her sensitive distancing from Eurocentric notions lends her writing of these regions a unique quality, setting it apart from the heavy colonial legacies that burden Anglo-Western travel-accounts in general.

Murphy’s work relates, throughout her journey, to the abiding concerns of Russian Siberians regarding the pressures exerted on national identity as well as to the images of Siberia as a whole in the post-Soviet phase, which she accesses in her everyday interactions with locals. Her description of the new regime is inimitable in its accuracy of perception: “The new mongrel authorities (foreign corporations crossed with indigenous mafia)”, she avers, “quite often turn rabid”<sup>20</sup>. In the BAM town of Tynda, the family who hosts her comments on the rising cost of living/travelling in the now-capitalist Siberia, which makes journeying within/outside the country unaffordable for most, problematising the idea

of Siberian exile (fraught as it is historically with notions of national/cultural identity) in a 21st century manifestation: "For many, living in Siberia is still permanent exile, like it often was in the old days, but now for economic reasons"<sup>21</sup>.

In Simon Franklin's analysis of national identity in Russian culture, he points out that music enters the discourse of national identity in two ways: firstly, music that is construed as official emblems of identity; secondly as innate spontaneous expression of qualities peculiar to the nation<sup>22</sup>. In relation to post-Soviet Siberian cultural production (specifically pop music), Murphy emphasises the ironical supplanting of *samizdat* literature/music (with its ideological rejection of all outside cultural influences as non-Russian) with the pressure to conform/imitate current popular Western forms, these being now associated with success and wealth<sup>23</sup>. The impulse towards a 'pure' Russianness which was fostered by the anti-Western ethos of Soviet times is now rendered irrelevant and decadent by the move towards capitalist (read Western/American) culture. Murphy's observation of such changing cultural allegiances can be contextualised in relation to Franklin's demonstration that music can be understood not as a source for but as a product of discourses of national identity<sup>24</sup>. Elsewhere, in Sakha (the older name of Yakutsk), commenting on the economic future of the city, she quotes a tentatively-expressed native opinion of the post-Soviet scenario because it tallies with her own impressions: "We're out of the Communist hell but far from the capitalist heaven, so "maybe this is limbo?"<sup>25</sup>. The Heaven<>Hell binary that has historically shaped Siberia's image both within the country as well as in Russia (as notably critiqued by Diment and Slezkine), continues to be part of everyday perceptions of Siberia, as Murphy's interactions with locals reveal.

The transition from Soviet ideology to a capitalist free market in Russia has also meant that a confrontation with the forces of globalisation and corporatisation has been inevitable in Russia, and by extension, its ripple effect is being experienced in Siberia. Both these factors have created new forms of 'colonial' Russian control in Siberia; foreign investors and Russian political authorities collude to maximise their profits while forwarding the idea of 'fast development', often ignoring the glaring lack of basic amenities. For Murphy, this is illustrated by a local (named Feodor) who points out that residents of Yakutsk have long suffered from an acute water shortage, despite living next to the ninth-longest river in the world<sup>26</sup>. In the global market context, new Russia has had to contend with

multinational corporations (predominantly American) in its negotiation of a new way of life. As Feodor reveals, Siberia has emerged from Soviet repression only to continue to be an exploited resource in the grand narrative of Russia's rejoining the global field of development for profit<sup>27</sup>. The country as a whole is in this sense caught in the crossfire of Russia's engagement with global power play, and what emerges in Murphy's writing is that this does not bode well for Siberia's natural resources. Siberia has borne the brunt of Soviet definitions of progress and development for seventy years, by and large the ecological fallout being irreversible damage and loss, as also testified to by Valentin Rasputin in his 1991 history *Siberia, Siberia*.

In terms of cultural impact, new Russia (and by implication Siberia) has had to grapple with the influence of American patterns of consumption and lifestyle (especially on the younger generations who have no memory of the Communist era) complicating the age-old question of national/cultural identity, which had hitherto been polarised between the European and the Asian elements. Murphy's food shopping trip in the little village of Neryungri illustrates this conundrum tellingly:

"Surveying the wide range of food industry goods which had been pushed as far as Neryungri, it struck me that Snickers, given its revoltingly obvious etymon, must hold the world record for brand name vulgarity. No wonder it has been "adapted by Russians who resent the consumerist tidal wave; *Snickerizatsiya* (Snickerisation) is now a scornful synonym for Westernization"<sup>28</sup>.

The difficulties of negotiating these new cultural influences have also translated to forms of intra-racism within Siberia that once again reflect the historically hierarchical relations with Russia. Murphy's experience while buying bread in a tiny Neryungri shop testifies to this development: "When I pointed to myself and said 'Irska' she pointed to herself and said 'Ukraine!' Then impulsively she lent (sic!) across the counter to shake my hand. I got the message; we were fellow-Europeans in this godforsaken Asian outpost of Russia's empire"<sup>29</sup>. The question of diversity in ethnic/national identity had been answered in earlier times with the imposition of a monolithic Soviet citizenship, which "proudly proclaimed 150 different nationalities within its borders at one point"<sup>30</sup>. In the words of Hubertus F. Jahn, "For the Bolsheviks, what really mattered was social class, not national identity"<sup>31</sup>, and "... Soviet Patriotism was an ideological construct, providing a hybrid national identity for a multinational empire, without a specific historical tradition or a particular ethnic aspect"<sup>32</sup>. Murphy's host Feodor (himself a native Sakha) expresses doubts about

the so-called racial integration that had been forwarded as a positive motif of Soviet development through the instrument of collectivisation; in his view the removal of the uniformity imposed by Soviet citizenship has resulted in overt forms of racial prejudice and violence in striving to establish a 'new' Sakha identity: "Anyone looking like a Chechen or Central Asian – a Muslim – is resented, distrusted, often attacked by the skinheads or the police"<sup>33</sup>. Elsewhere, in a Severobaikalsk classroom, a school teacher named Tanya tells Murphy that one class of eighteen comprised of eight different nationalities (Armenian, Azeri, Belarus, Buriat, Georgian, Tatar, Ukrainian, Russian) was rife with racial tensions, and the fact that they were all "Grandchildren of BAM did not automatically forge bonds strong enough to counter racism"<sup>34</sup>. The collapse of Soviet identity has now polarised Siberians in new ways that do not easily admit of reconciliation; it has led, as Murphy's experience shows, to dangerous forms of 'us' and 'them' intolerance.

The forging of a new cultural/national identity for Siberians has also meant a troubled re-engagement with Russian Orthodoxy. In Franklin's view, historically Christianity was introduced partly as a device to facilitate the very process of nation-formation and state-formation, and to provide a spiritual focus for national identity in Tsarist Russia<sup>35</sup>. Religion in any form had been, by and large, eschewed in the Soviet era; but for many Siberians, religion in various forms (familiar traditions as well as imported fad cults) has been a way of filling the ideological vacuum left after Soviet collapse. Murphy's visits to various churches and monasteries show up the different aspects of a resurgent faith that has, not unexpectedly, linked itself with both nationalism and religious bigotry. While for some individuals brought up in the Soviet atheist ethos, religion in some form may offer solace for "'an empty inner space'"<sup>36</sup>, for others it has been complicated by the entry of foreign proselytising Protestant missionaries, American evangelicalism (Eurovision)<sup>37</sup> and other self-styled sects of institutional Christianity, some bordering on fanaticism and violence. Murphy categorises Siberian public response to the resurgence of 'Holy Russia' into three separate and violently opposed factions:

"The Soviet-moulded ecclesiastical establishment at present in control occupies Camp I. The Orthodox Church Abroad, intent on restoring Holy Russia as was and steadily gaining support within Russia, occupies Camp II. The intelligentsia wing, uncompromisingly opposed to any reunion of Church and State, occupies Camp III. Each camp distrusts and detests the other two and at intervals ... hostilities break out. ...it's all very Christian"<sup>38</sup>.

In Severobaikalsk, Murphy is witness to a baptism, which (according to her friend Vera) has become a fashionable practice not always linked to personal religious fervour, but aligned to “a way of showing how *Russian* you are, nationalism replacing the Soviet *Union* of many different faiths and races”<sup>39</sup>. As Franklin puts it, while the relation of religion to national identity has had a powerful resurgence as a cultural issue, as a matter of representation, even of debate over cultural form<sup>40</sup>, the modern post-Soviet cultural expression of religion (in relation to national identity) is nevertheless a continuing source of tension<sup>41</sup>. Shamanism, which dates back to pre-Christian Siberian culture, is also making a return to 21<sup>st</sup> century Siberia, illustrated in the example of Ksenya, a Sakha who cannot relate to Orthodoxy<sup>42</sup> and this admixture makes the religious resurgence even more complex.

The everyday images of Siberia that can be gleaned from Murphy’s work find particular and memorable expression in her experience of a bus journey to Neryungri. The chapter that records this eventful journey is titled “One Day in the Lives of Thirty Two Bus Passengers”; the overt resonances of Solzhenitsyn urge a reading of the journey’s exigencies as a reflection of the stoicism attributed to Russian Siberians in their relation to the everyday texture of life. Catriona Kelly traces the peculiar historical circumstances by which Russian stoicism to *byt* (everyday life, among other connotations) and to adversity in particular, became identified as a national characteristic<sup>43</sup>. Although Kelly questions the over-generalised view that Russians have a unique relationship with everyday life<sup>44</sup>, she remarks the self-denying “willed “ascetism” (sic!)<sup>45</sup> necessitated during the perpetual shortages of the Soviet era. This historical perspective can easily be construed onto the “amazingly cheerful”<sup>46</sup> stoicism with which the bus passengers meet the five different breakdowns they had on the way, some at night, in sub-zero temperatures, along impossibly difficult and lonely terrain. Murphy notes that “No one complained or seemed angry or impatient; the most evident reaction ... was half-amused resignation”<sup>47</sup>; marvelling at the tenacity and inventiveness of the two drivers who repaired the bus each time, Murphy remarks, “These Siberians, so emotional and volatile in so many situations, phlegmatically trooped back to their seats”<sup>48</sup>. In her view, there is much to be said for “Siberian laidbackness, generating a communal atmosphere of calm resignation”<sup>49</sup>. In other aspects of everyday life in Siberia, two motifs that form running skeins throughout Murphy’s narrative may be observed; one is the peculiar quality of the silence in Siberia which she finds aloof and intimidating<sup>50</sup>,

and the other is Siberian hospitality, which in her experience is inescapable and “implacable”<sup>51</sup> in its ubiquitous generosity.

In Putin’s regime, foreign policy has projected the new Russia as a Western country, and as part of a common European heritage<sup>52</sup>. The history of polarised debate on Russia’s European and Asian moorings of national identity dates back to the search for a uniquely Russian identity, situated in the Westernisation brought about by Peter the Great. The highly Europeanised Russian patriotism of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century (Pushkin, Ryleev) gave way, eventually, to a violent and revolutionary redefinition through class struggle in Soviet times. During both these eras, Siberia remained “a key metaphor for power”<sup>53</sup>, projected “as a cipher for a more generalised Russian space”<sup>54</sup> proving Russian Tsarist power of ‘conquest’, and later, of Soviet triumph of progress and development. In both eras, Siberia was produced by discourses of ‘conquest’ aligned to different ideologies, but retaining a hierarchical relationship with Siberia, as a constructed space, throughout. Siberia, in Murphy’s travel account, once again is partially reverting to its older image as the always-already unwieldy territory of Tsarist and Soviet times. In the words of Grigori, a BAM citizen, although Russian history has been dominated by Siberia, present-day political authorities of development feel that “Siberia will make Russia poor”<sup>55</sup>. As a consequence of Russia’s relative withdrawal of interest (implied or actual) from development politics in Siberia, Grigori sees hope, rather than otherwise, in the unlikely phenomenon of “Siberia’s decolonizing itself”<sup>56</sup>. In the words of Franklin and Widdis, the ‘problem’ of Russian national identity is constituted by its uncomfortable position “on a fault “line between ... geo-”political and ethno-cultural criteria of self-definition”<sup>57</sup>. Siberia has been, and continues to be, both a geo-political territory and a culturally-inscribed space in Russian history and current experience, an observation amply illustrated in Murphy’s travelogue.

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SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO :**

**Prof. K. WARIKOO**

*Editor and Secretary General*

Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation

B-6/86, Safdarjung Enclave

New Delhi - 110029 (India)

Tel. : 0091-11-41651969

E-mail: [kwarikoo@gmail.com](mailto:kwarikoo@gmail.com)

**Website: [www.himalayanresearch.org](http://www.himalayanresearch.org)**

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**HIMALAYAN RESEARCH AND CULTURAL FOUNDATION**

B-6/86, Safdarjung Enclave, New Delhi-110029 (India)

Tele: 0091-11-41651969

E-mail: [kwarikoo@gmail.com](mailto:kwarikoo@gmail.com) Website: [www.himalayanresearch.org](http://www.himalayanresearch.org)