

## ROCK PICTURES OF SAYMALY TASH

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### *Summary*

Kyrgyzstan is rich with such a kind of monument as rock pictures. They are met almost everywhere in Kyrgyzstan, in all its regions. One of the largest and most significant among them is Saymaly-Tash. It is one of the largest stocks of Central Asian rock pictures. According to its pictures number, plot diversity and chronological extent, location in mountains of high altitude and hard reached and solitary places and other characteristics, it is a unique phenomenon of world importance.

Saymaly-Tash is located in the mountains of Fergana range at the height of more than 3000 meters above sea level. It is a kind of gathering of hundreds of thousands of rocks on the surface of which different pictures are beaten out.

For the period of its investigation we have revealed, copied, described and pictured about 10 000 rocks with pictures. They notably differ from each other with their picturing style and plot content as well which points to their different background of time and difference in production, ideology and other ways of life of people having left them.

The earliest pictures, III – beginning of II millenium B.C., are united with the so called geometrical or bitriangle style. By this style there were beaten out the pictures of riding on chariots and horse-drawn vehicles, single animals and anthropomorphic images. To this ancient group by its style of representation pictures of Bronze epoch refer. Stylistically they differ not so much from petroglyphs of the earlier group.

The group of early pictures of I millenium B.C. of the earlier Iron epoch stands out quite obviously. Pictures lose their geometricity and other stylistic peculiarities of the first group pictures. They become more realistic. Pictures plot is also changing. There appear the pictures with the elements of Skith "animal" style.

Great numbers of pictures refer to the I millenium B.C, i.e. to Hun, Sarmathian and Turkish period. These pictures are of schematical and the so called line style. They are significantly simplified stylistically and topically. Perhaps some part of pictures refer to the later period, but they are very hard to be distinguished to the separate group.

Thus, Saymaly-Tash is a monument of fine arts, being a source of the data of not only one historical period but several as well. The beginning of its existence refer to the time of Eneolithic and the Bronze Age. Its golden age falls to the early Iron century, not a few of the pictures being left in the period of the Early and developed Middle Ages. Unfortunately one can distinguish the group of the modern pictures. This monument presents us the picture of the development of rock fine arts on the extent of more than four thousands of years and the peculiarities of the development of peoples mentality during such a long period of time. On the other hand we see a complex picture of different cultures interrelationships – land and animal cultivating cultures. But single pictures not characteristic to Tien-Shian Centaur, elephant-like and other animals, perhaps indicates the more complex displaying of people understanding or the existence of their more distanced relations and interinfluences.

Saymaly-Tash is an undoubtedly colossal source of the information of many sides of peoples way of life and especially spiritual culture of Tien-Shian and Fergana population since the epoch of the Eneolithic up to the Middle Ages.