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**TÍTULO:** Petroglifos de Karakiyasay: Composiciones de escenas, imágenes y estilística.

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**RESUMEN.** El artículo presenta los resultados del análisis figurativo y estilístico de los petroglifos de Karakiyasay ubicados en el territorio de Uzbekistán en las laderas del sur de la cordillera de Karzhantau. Este complejo con pinturas rupestres data de la Edad de Bronce y de la modernidad etnográfica. En la actualidad, hay el doble de petroglifos en los grabados rupestres de Karakiyasay en comparación con estudios anteriores de M.M. Khuzhanazarov. El análisis estilístico realizado en el artículo abarca no solo imágenes individuales, sino también composiciones de trama. Este enfoque holístico nos permite identificar grupos estables de imágenes y gráficos relacionados con diferentes tradiciones estilísticas, que pueden indicar la estabilidad de ciertos motivos figurativos.

**PALABRAS CLAVES:** petroglifos, edad de bronce, composiciones de trama, imágenes, estilística.

**TITLE:** Petroglyphs of Karakiyasay: Scenes compositions, images and stylistics.

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**ABSTRACT:** The article presents the results of the figurative and stylistic analysis of the Karakiyasay petroglyphs located in the territory of Uzbekistan on the southern slopes of the Karzhantau mountain range. This complex with cave paintings dates back to the Bronze Age and ethnographic modernity. Currently, there are twice as many petroglyphs in the rock engravings of Karakiyasay compared to previous studies by M.M. Khuzhanazarov. The stylistic analysis carried out in the article covers not only individual images, but also plot compositions. This holistic approach allows us to identify stable groups of images and graphics related to different stylistic traditions, which may indicate the stability of certain figurative motifs.

**KEY WORDS:** petroglyphs, bronze age, plot compositions, images, stylistics.

## **INTRODUCTION.**

Karakiyasay - a unique place with rock paintings, located on the territory of Uzbekistan. Figures are marked on the rocky protrusions of the crest of the southern buttress of the western peak of the Karzhantau ridge 17 km from the city Gazalkent in the Bostanlyk region. The main cluster of groups of stones with petroglyphs is located on an area of about 1 sq.km., at altitudes of 2100-2300 m above sea level.

Groups of rocks with rock carvings are found in the Karakiyasay gorge at an altitude of 1700 m above sea level, and above the main cluster of petroglyphs - at an altitude of 2600 m above sea level. This complex with rock paintings was discovered in 1974 by the Pskem archaeological detachment.

In the 1980-1983, M.M. Khuzhanazarov, who recorded 90 stones with 1015 images [M.M. Khujanazarov, 2011], created a subject-thematic and stylistic classification of rock carvings, considered some questions of the semantic interpretation of petroglyphs of Karakiyasay. Currently, these data are relevant, but do not contain all the new information in terms of the number of images

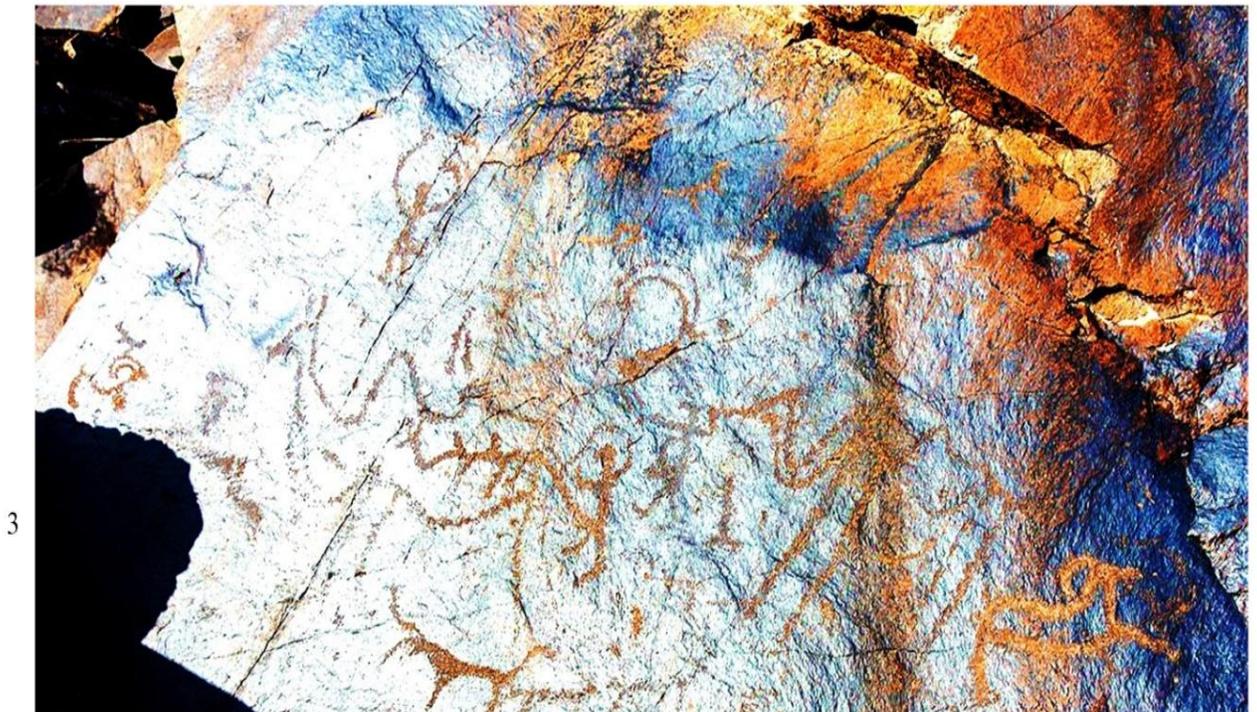
found (at present, with the help of modern digital photography and reconnaissance in the upper reaches of the Karakiyasay, about 180 stones with separate images and plot compositions are recorded) and on quality (in the course of comparing M.M. Khuzhanazarov's sketches and the data obtained by us, many subject compositions were supplemented and corrected, which was the subject of new guesswork and preliminary conclusions (Figure 1)).

We also revealed some discrepancies that relate to the statistical data indicated by M.M. Khuzhanazarov in his study. Firstly, it is not entirely clear how the images of Karakiyasay and Hodzhikent are compared, which are often used by the author. Secondly, the obtained data on anthropomorphic images, which are given in our work, account for 20% of the total number of analyzed figures, and M.M. Khuzhanazarov they make up only about 7% [M.M. Khuzhanazarov, 1995]. Thirdly, the total number of stones with dozens of later tamga-like images of mountain goats is practically not subject to full accounting, in view of the poor preservation and ambiguity of images even with the help of modern digital innovations, but judging from the statistical data, M.M. Khuzhanazarov managed to roughly calculate them and designate them, which also causes discrepancies with our statistical data. In this connection, we single out in our work the so-called "core" with plot and figurative compositions and "periphery", which does not carry a plot component, but are numerous dozens of hardly discernible schematic images of a mountain goat. Of course, this does not mean that this layer of images is not of interest for research, but within the framework of our work it is muffled.

## **DEVELOPMENT.**

Methodologically, the authors of this article have applied new approaches in the study of petroglyphs, not only individual images but also the subject compositions have been considered - multifaceted and syncretic images requiring the same multidimensional approach.

**Fig. 1. Composition with the participation of man and two-humped camels: drawings M.M. Khuzhanazarov [5] (1), T. Agzamkhodzhaeva [6] (2) and modern digital photography (3). Firstly, when comparing with the photograph obtained by us, it is clearly seen that the entire composition is reversed than that of M.M. Khuzhanazarov's side, and secondly, the previous sketches do not reflect the fullness of the figures depicted.**



### **Methods.**

Rock paintings are one of the most difficultly dated archaeological sites; the most difficult questions in their description are questions of semantics.

At present, the technique for studying rock carvings implies interdisciplinary methodological synthesis that meets modern requirements of science. In this connection, the semiotic approach to rock art, in which each image is regarded as an indivisible unity of the content plan and the expression plan of the pictorial language (what is depicted and pictured) became relevant. Such a method of research involves identifying the dynamics of the development of the image and artistic style of rock paintings in time.

Of great importance is the analysis of multi-layered monuments [I.V. Abolonkova, M.A. Taliagina, 2015; “Handbook of Rock Art Research”, 2001; “The Figured Landscapes of Rock-Art: Looking at Pictures in Place”, 2004] with petroglyphs (palimpsestics) and comparison of rock carvings with archaeological [O.O. Shishkina, 2015] and ethnographic materials of the area.

A semiotic approach to rock art can be realized with the help of two directions:

1. Identification and classification of images and plot compositions of rock carvings (content plan) and determining their stylistic features (expression plan) for each group of images. This approach is oriented to the identification of stable groups of images and plots, taking into account their stylistic fulfillment.
2. Definition of stylistic traditions (an expression plan) for the whole complex with rock paintings and the identification of animal images, anthropomorphic creatures and other images (content plan) within the framework of the revealed stylistics of performance, taking into account the whole variety of figures of plot compositions. In view of the low informativeness of the anthropomorphic images, the schematic nature of their image, the researcher's main attention should be focused on the identification of species of animals and their mutual reciprocity in a particular stylistic tradition, which is also evidence of certain patterns in the development of rock art.

Other methods were used in the work: description, comparison, analysis and synthesis of the results obtained. The results of the analysis are summarized in tabular terms.

### **Results.**

In the framework of the method described above, about 120 stones with petroglyphs were analyzed and all the figures revealed on them were also conventionally divided into 4 groups: animal figures, anthropomorphic figures, chariots, signs / symbols.

Analyzing the stylistics of the petroglyphs of Karakiyasay, four basic stylistic traditions of depicting figures were identified: silhouette, contour, linear and Scythian-Siberian animal style, which, as a rule, "coexist" almost on all stones with petroglyphs and often make up single meaningful compositions.

At the same time, we noticed that linear images are the most numerous and often fill empty spaces between figures, executed by silhouette and contour stylistic methods, and also are represented on individual stones that were not previously filled with other images. Therefore, we can define them as the latest rock carvings of the Karakiyasay, which is also confirmed by the results of studies on the nearby monuments of rock art (Saimaly-Tash, Karatau, Tamgaly, etc.).

Analysis of the palimpsests testifies to the assignment of rectangular silhouette images to the earliest petroglyphs of the rock carvings of Karakiyasay, because of their overlap with contour images. In this case, the rectangular silhouette style should be distinguished from the Scythian-Siberian animal style, which was singled out in a separate group with its inherent features. Contour stylistics of images also organically "coexists" in many compositional scenes with silhouette and linear technique. In this regard, we can assume that such a "coexistence" of styles may indicate the following:

- 1) Reflect the specific semantics of the depicted animal (e.g., color, suit).
- 2) To prove the simultaneous creation of petroglyphs by representatives of various ethno-cultural communities and, consequently, the commonwealth of stylistic traditions.
- 3) Indicate the different nature of the deposition of rock paintings (reflection of the change in style over time), etc.

Typical images of the Bronze Age by all researchers are images of a wild bull and chariots, made in a "bit triangular" and rectangular image style, silhouette drawing, high skill of small-scale knockout [M.K. Kadyrbaev, A.N. Maryashev, 1977]

As M.M. Khuzhanazarov, on Karakiyasay they were recorded 5 chariots, which is a unique fact for the territory of Uzbekistan. Pointing to the unity of pictorial devices, M.M. Khuzhanazarov attributed them to the second half of the II - beginning of the 1st millennium BC. [M.M. Khuzhanazarov, 1990].

The image of the bull is not numerous for the petroglyphs of Karakiyasay. There are clearly several images of the bull. The style of the images is usually silhouette.

In the representations of the ancient man, the bull was associated with the producing male principle, the male deity or its attribute [E.G. Davlet, M.A. Davlet, 2005].

The image of the mountain goat is the dominant plot of Karakiyasay. Less common are images of a horse, a two-humped camel, a bull (cow), an arch, a deer, etc. Particularly noteworthy is the special depiction of horns in artiodactyls, often exaggerated in size. A.P. Okladnikov, ascertaining their sacred significance, relates them to one of the earliest cult objects.

Anthropomorphic images occur both in the environment of animals, and without them. In view of the schematic images of the image of man in subjects of semantic unity, we took into account the stylistics of the animal depicted next to it (Table 1).

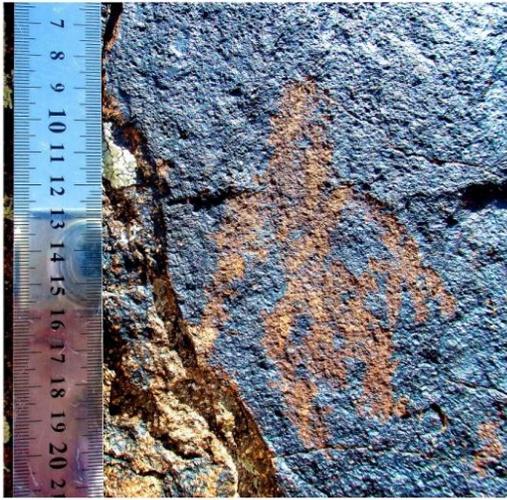
**Table 1. Anthropomorphic images.**

Image Style	Sun-headed	Erotic scene	Ritual dances	The man with the bow	The man with the tail	Disguises	Anthropomorphic image in the skin of an animal	Man with sword	A man standing on the back of an animal	A man riding a horse, a camel	A man leading a horse, a camel	Single images	Anthropomorphic images	Total number of images
Silhouette	2	-	5	7	1	-	2	-	2	1	2	4	20	46
Contour	-	-	5	14	-	2	-	-	-	1	2	-	13	37
Linear	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	10	-	1	51	65
Scythian-Siberian	-	-	-	4	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	3	8
Total	2	2	10	25	1	2	3	1	2	12	4	5	87	156

As a result of the analysis of plot compositions with human participation, the following groups were singled out:

- Single images of a person (Fig. 2.1-2).
- Group anthropomorphic images without participation in scenes of animals.
- Group anthropomorphic images with participation in animal scenes (Figure 2.3).

**Fig. 2. Images of a man in front (1), an archer with bent knees (2) and the confrontation of a man armed with a bow and mountain goats (3).**



1



2



3

During the analysis of animal figures, we obtained a rather mottled picture of their species, imprinted in rock carvings (Table 2).

**Table 2. Images of animals.**

Image Style	Mountain goat	Arkhar	Two-humped camel	Horse	Deer	Dog / wolf	Feral carnivores	Bear	Bull / cow	Wild boar	Porcupine	Scorpion	Snake	Unclear images	Total images
Silhouette	53	1	5	20	2	14	2	1	8	3	1	-	-	32	142
Contour	44	1	-	3	-	10	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	13	73
Linear	180	1	12	23	2	17	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	42	278
Scythian-Siberian	23	5	-	3	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	7	41
Total	300	8	17	49	5	41	2	1	10	4	1	1	1	94	534

We give some statistical results. Of the 720 images analyzed, 534 occur in animals, more than half of them are a mountain goat (300 images), 49 images of horses, 41 images of a dog / wolf. Unfortunately, 94 images of animals can not be accurately identified and will be further investigated in the future. Anthropomorphic images accounted for one-fifth of all analyzed images. When comparing the plot compositions in each stylistic tradition of performance, the following features were singled out.

*Silhouette style.*

1. Often there are "scenes" that show the diversity of species of animals in the form of multi-tiered chains, located by the author evenly, along the entire plane of the stone. Animals are executed with detailed drawing of features of figures and are presented dynamically, in movement.

2. Anthropomorphic figures depicted next to animals in a silhouette tradition are more often found in archaic semantic scenes (for example, two images with dots-dashes around the head, so-called "sun-headed" creatures, scenes of ritual dances, taming animals, etc.) are recorded.

*Contour style.*

1. In the plot compositions, the animals of the contour style are repeatedly depicted in front of figures of animals of silhouette style or a chain one after another. One figure of a camel is depicted with a fruit inside (Figure 1.3).

2. Anthropomorphic figures, singled out in this technique of execution, although linear, but, as a rule, are depicted in motion, often with a stick, whip, etc. Two faces are fixed.

*Linear style.*

This tradition is schematic and conditional, its purpose is not the image of all external features inherent in any particular animal, but its designation by means of a conventional sign.

1. Characteristic plot compositions with a large number of figures of animals and people. There are scenes of hunting, single tamga-like petroglyphs. About 60% of all images of animals of this style are the figure of a mountain goat.

2. In this stylistic tradition, the image of a person is encountered much more often, it is depicted as with upturned and lowered hands, with a bow in the hands, etc. Two erotic scenes are recorded.

*Scythian-Siberian animal style.*

The time of the developed stage of animal style is determined from the finds of Central Asian Saka burial mounds - VI-IV centuries BC. [Ya. A. Cher, 1980].

1. Animals are depicted both with straight legs and with bent legs, the outline of the frying shell is prominent, some figures are large, more than 20 cm and are located on individual stones. In this style, the largest number of argali is represented - 5 images. Figures of animals and contour, and silhouette.

2. Two anthropomorphic images are represented with a Scythian type bow in their hands (similar bows, the size of a human figure, are not found in other stylistic traditions).

The group of symbols / signs in most cases is represented by round-shaped signs, with a point in the center or without it, with numerous radii from the center (the number of radii reaches 15). There are images of crosses, dots, lattices, a circle with outlines of a mountain goat inside, etc. In two cases a linear image of an animal's figure on a circle and once on a person's circle is fixed.

### **Discussion.**

The plot images of "chariots and bulls" are found on many monuments of rock art of Central Asia (for the territory of Uzbekistan chariots are a rare image on petroglyphs, despite the fact that now there are more than 150 locations with rock paintings), but they meet other images and subject compositions; for example, when describing rock carvings of the Karzhantau ridge to the period of "chariots and wild bull", the so-called "cross-cutting subjects" of a camel and horses, signs, hunting scenes were additionally identified [M.K. Kadyrbaev, A.N. Maryashev, 1977].

In describing the rock carvings of the Tamgaly tract, chariots, sun-headed deities, dances, signs, wild and domestic animals [Maksimova, A.S. Ermolaeva, A.N. Maryashev, "1985], etc., are distinguished. Such "selective" classifications do not reflect the entire variety of images of the monument, they practically do not pay attention to numerous scenes with people and animals. Very often, images of animals are "torn out" from the general composition for description in the above way.

In this regard, we examined in more detail scenes involving human and animals within the framework of figurative and stylistic analysis (if individual animals can be represented as "letters of the alphabet", then the scenes are already "words"), and here, with the similarity of the plots, scenes can be compared, both with each other, and with mythological texts and archaeological sources. We must admit that archaeological findings in the highlands are, as a rule, very rare and sometimes

cannot be correlated with rock paintings (if the stone canvases were not used as a stone box or gravestone, etc.).

Palimpsests and a step-by-step examination of images on the same stone, but with varying degrees of patina, can also help in the preliminary assignment of drawings to earlier layers, and on the materials of a large number of monuments, to reveal a certain kind of "stylistic cultures" of rock paintings.

Based on these data, it will be possible to compile a relative chronology of such "cultures" of the nearest territories, using the entire set of methodological tools.

Summarizing, an imaginative and stylistic analysis of rock carvings of animals and scenes with human participation allows us to describe in more detail images on stone monuments that are considered in the context of all the figures depicted, recreate pictures from the lives of ancient hunters and pastoralists, and use the findings to reveal semantics. Therefore, such an analysis can reveal stable groups of plots, but stylistically belong to different time periods, that - most likely - testify to the cult character of petroglyphs.

## **CONCLUSIONS.**

Consideration of the whole variety of images and scenes, taking into account the stylistic features and the plot organization of compositions - is an integral part of the complex study of rock art.

The rock carvings of Karakiyasay, like the pages of one large stone book, which we still have to read and understand, are evidence of a person's deep connection with the surrounding natural environment, now virtually lost, a reflection of his life, religion and worldview.

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