

Steppes Deer Stones

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ABSTRACT The paper presents the data of all the known deer stones found in the territory of Kazakhstan beginning from the middle of the XIX century till date. The characters of the stones and their location are described in the paper. Attempts have been made to determine the origin of these steles through the peculiar features of images on deer stones. The paper focuses on the study of deer stones. They are the least studied monuments made of stone in the territory of Kazakhstan. The paper presents their general description and classification, which points out anthropomorphic monuments, and stones with various images (signs). Researches related to deer stones in Kazakhstan have a rather long history, but the accumulation of data continues, as each year new stelae with engraved images are discovered. Unfortunately, the majority of them are replaced. Thorough and detailed copying of the statues provides a significant informational source for objective reconstructions.

INTRODUCTION

The territory of Kazakhstan contains a large number of funerary monuments and memorial rites (from the Stone Age to the late Middle Ages).

This paper explores the deer stones. Deer stones are ancient monuments of monumental art, stone stele with a certain way of stylized images of deer and other animals, including goats, pigs, horses, carnivores. There are anthropomorphic and mixed style of stone stele (Volkov 2002).

Deer stones are found in the Altai, in Tuva, Transbaikalia, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, China and elsewhere. Information about stone sculptures of Dzungaria and attempts to interpret them can be found in the writings of the early 20th century travelers. For example, G.E. Grum-Grzhimailo (1950) described “Two, set upright large fragments of phyllite which were found in the mountains of Bogdol. There deers were clearly stamped. These were the famous “stone stelae”, with some of them scattered throughout the vast expanse of the whole of Central Eurasia from the borders of Poland to the boundaries of the Old Sayan and Altai; so far to the east, however they have still not been found, and no doubt we must see all the interests of this discovery.”

Nevertheless, for many years, more detailed information about the monumental sculpture of the ancient nomads of Xinjiang has been hardly accessible to the researchers because of poor

knowledge of these sites in China (Khudyakov et al. 2002).

Savinov (1994) wrote that they occupy an intermediate position between the monuments of the eastern (Transbaikalia, the Sayano-Altai) and the western-eastern regions deer stones of Kazakhstan and the mountain regions of Central Asia, which unfortunately aren't published.

The founder of the scientific study of deer stones should be considered the remarkable Russian traveler and scientist G.N. Potanin. He was the first to define the range of research areas from which the problem of deer stones later developed: classification, chronology, and semantics. The first and natural attempt at classification was undertaken on the appearance of the monuments.

On this basis GN Potanin divided deer stones into two types, hewn and roughest, highlighting especially peculiar shape with sloping tops' group of stones. Addressing the issues of semantics, GN Potanin connected drawings on deer stones with space Orion constellation (Savinov 1994).

Of great importance in the study of deer stones was the work of Volkov on “deer stones of Mongolia” (Savinov 1994). During his studies in Mongolia, Volkov gave the previously selected appropriate name types: I type – pan-Eurasian (no images of animals); Type II – sayano-altay (with realistic images of animals); Type III – Mongolian-Transbaikalian (with ornamental and stylized images of deer) (Volkov 2002). This

classification of Volkov became generally accepted in the scientific field of the Central Eurasian space (Savinov 1994).

The pictures of rectangular form of the shields with keen edges were whipped on the deer stones and rarely on separate plates in the Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age in Central Asia from the Sayan to Transbaikal. There is a difference of opinion among researchers connected with the identification of these attributes in the scientific literature.

Some jewelry, weapons, tools and components of clothes which were present on deer stones and other archaeological materials, are real objects which are considered to have been used in the era of their creation. There were different opinions as to the “grid” of figures which filled governmental rows of oblique lines forming a “Christmas tree” pattern. Initially, the researchers did not even try to compare these military attributes, which whipped on deer stones, with real objects that were found during excavations of funerary monuments (Devlet 2013).

The question of prototypes of deer stones with images of deer Mongolian-Transbaikalian style remains open. The immediate predecessors of these images in the subject series, originating from the territory of Central Asia and southern Siberia, were not known. In this situation, Savinov (1994) thought it rational “to expand the range of possible parallels stylized the image of a deer on deer stones of type I - more distant and indirect, beyond their spread.” He noticed such kind of parallels “predominantly in the circle of Western cultures.”

The purpose of this paper is to build a new concept to study “deer stones”. Some modern scholars, who have engaged in the problems of stone stelae and their interpretation, follow outdated methods and trends.

Extensive materials obtained during the field research in Mongolia, require further comprehensive treatment. Particularly, important will be the study of a series of copied “deer” stones, identification recorded on them realities and the search for similarities among the detected objects of material culture Skotovo Central Asia rows Late Bronze period and Argens-mayemirskogo time (co Heff II - 1st third of the I millennium BC). All carried out research aimed at creating Danie cultural and chronological scheme study of ancient and medieval history not only of the Mongolian

Altai, but also the adjacent territories (Tishkin et al. 2016a).

Objectives

The main goal of this work is to turn the scientific world’s attention to correct presentations made by young archaeologists about the purpose of the stone steles and decryption of the drawings. In the near future the researchers need to fully explore the deer stones in Kazakhstan to conduct a comparative analysis.

Works of Margulan dedicated to the ancient monumental monuments of Central Kazakhstan have unquestionable source-value, particularly in view of the fact that news monuments have survived to our time. Analysis of knowledge of menhirs in the works of Margul makes evident the need for their research focused mapping so Zdaniyasituatsionnyh plans and other types of documentation in accordance with the requirements of modern field techniques. No less important is the dating of scientific method and already on the basis of the results of all these studies the researchers can elaborate a typology of menhirs, after AH Margulan, and study it in the context of scientific problems. The researchers add that the study of the feasibility of “simple” menhirs do not promise researchers sensational finds due to the likely significance of these monuments to their ancient societies because of the construction labor intensity of the process, which required a collective effort (Ermolenko et al. 2014).

OBSERVATIONS AND DISCUSSION

On the territory of Kazakhstan, there are deer stones in small quantities, with only a few copies of the piece included in the scientific revolution. Among them are deer stones from the Koyshoky. Stela of Koyshoky tract is localized in central Kazakhstan, Zhanaarka District Karagandy’s area. Dimensions of dug stele are 170-160 x 35-40 x 15-20 cm. It has its high narrow face to the east and is inclined in the same direction. Near the stele traceable accumulation of stones, which refers to one of the several hard rocks are differentiated structures arranged on the north-south. The total length of the strip buildings is up to 23 m, width about 3 m. One of the structures was excavated. In turn, it is tape-like, with a

beveled top stone-fractured dirty pink medium-grained Biotite granite (Ermolenko et al. 2014).

In the foundation of the semantics of the deer stones lies the image of an armed warrior. Besides deer, these steles depict different kinds of weapons, shields, belts, as well as earrings, necklaces, mirrors, and other items. The human faces on these steles are characterized extremely rarely and generally, more often the person is designated by three oblique stripes. In morphological and chronological indications, they are divided into several types: simple earrings, bow burn, chisel, suspended to the belt, and complex, decorated beaked deer pictures and various other animals. Often they are applied by solar signs.

In the valley of Aksuat between settlement, Zhartas and the Border Gate Kondyurin on the southern slope of Mount Zhaksy Arganaty, there are three sanctuaries with deer stones from the early Iron Age. These monuments were called Oyshilik 1-3 and were researched in 2010 by a group of scientists led by Samashev (Samashev et al. 2010).

In the territory of Kazakhstan, deer stones were available in significant amounts. During the historical development of the stele era, some ancient nomads were killed by their followers in the later periods of our time. This is primarily due to the religious beliefs of tribes in the middle and late middle ages. Then came the penetration of Islam into the territory of modern Kazakhstan. Over time, Islam has not only gained the status of a state religion, but it has influenced the destruction stone sculptures as the cult of polytheism. There are other versions of events concerning the destruction of stone steles in Kazakhstan. An example is the frequent wars that took place almost the entire period from the early middle ages until recent times on the territory of Central and Eastern Kazakhstan and Zhetisu, leading to their destruction.

It should be noted that the center of deer stones culture was the territory of modern Mongolia. The researchers can ascertain, using the method of diffusionism, that the steles to the west lost their characteristic features gradually as is inherent in the Mongolian-Zabaikalian type. On the territory of Eastern Kazakhstan, some elements remain, but on the central part the steles have pan-Eurasian type.

This research reflects only a part of the research carried out on the territory of Kazakhstan where researchers have discovered and documented evidence of the practice of the cult of worship of ancestors and the leaders of the early

nomads. One of these manifestations are “deer” stones. The scientific literature has formed a stable point of view on these sculptures, as discussed above for the implementation of the idea of a warrior hero. To some extent, this is true. However revealed numerous “deer” stones show a more diverse and substantial slice representations of the ancient nomadic societies. They are good markers reflecting a different attitude to the ancestors. There are obelisks with the attributes of the chiefs and leaders, as evidenced by the parameters of sculpture and image zones, armaments, parts of clothing, jewellery, etc.

Most scientists who research deer stones think that the human faces on these steles are characterized extremely rarely and generally, as more often the person is designated by three oblique stripes or circular marks. Firstly, the parallel lines in ancient times meant natural, that is, people may die a natural death; and, secondly, the number of lines may depend on the status of the warrior. It is possible there were a lot of fierce warriors, warriors who fell from the hands of the enemy, as a result of which the tribe, in a bid to honor their spirit, erected stone stele as the guardians of their tribe steppe.

In the end, many researchers recognize knocked short parallel lines as anthropomorphic symbolic signs (for example, coloring or basic details of persons), carrying an extra meaning. So it remains to be seen in the further comprehensive study of “deer” can her. The treatment of most of the captured images can be found corresponding during archaeological excavation and there, for reconfirming finds of ancient products, as evidenced by the already submitted parallels (Tishkin 2013).

Perhaps the most important and difficult stage of field work is photographic images. Multiple photographs should be implemented at all stages and in different lighting conditions: natural oblique light, scattered light, when the faces are in shadow. Very effective are photographed pictures with artificially created light.

Often, for the highest quality image capture methods result in the “Deer” stones have to be used together. Only in this case it is possible to obtain an accurate image rendering that affects the productivity of the comparative analysis and interpretation as integral compositions and some of its elements. Largely based on the drawing, researchers at recreating the costumes of Central Asian nomads, as well as typological study of weapons and military equipment era (Tishkin et al. 2016b).

CONCLUSION

Accordingly, the detected deer stones are of the pan-Eurasian type, except for Koyschoky in Kazakhstan which revealed about five steals. Unfortunately the series is too few for us to make any generalizations. It should be noted that none of the deer stones necklaces no image-tiaras tape weapons. The information for studying deer stones isn't enough. During the field seasons, there is need to pass a large exploration route in the border areas of the eastern and south-eastern regions of Kazakhstan. In the future, one needs a comprehensive study of the stone steles and cemeteries located in the immediate vicinity. Such researches will provide answers to many questions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In this paper, the authors investigated minor monuments in the territory of Kazakhstan. Therefore, the researchers can only hold a general comparative analysis and pre-determine the affiliation to the early nomadic cultures. All this suggests that the materials for the studying of deer stones is not enough.

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