

ELEMENTS OF ARCHAIC MUSIC REFLECTED IN PETROGLYPHS AS A PHENOMENON OF CULTURAL HERITAGE, THE ORIGINAL SOURCE OF MATERIAL AND SPIRITUAL CULTURE

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Abstract

This article examines the process of forming a culture, the main characteristics of the emotional and spiritual attitude to the world, and the transition of emotions into the artistic and sensual imagery sphere. The necessity of researching petroglyphs, as the earliest sign systems, was revealed and substantiated; they reflect the initial stage of the formation of ancient art. For the first time, the model of the ancient ritual ceremonies was directly related to the religious beliefs found in the petroglyphs, with their semantic filling, which allowed to reveal the cosmogonic functions of ritual melodies in the process of perception of the world.

Keywords: *Petroglyphs; Ceremonial music; Ritual melodies; Shamanistic ritual; Structuring core of culture*

Introduction

The purpose of our manuscript is to study the most important components of the cultural heritage of petroglyphs and shamanic ritual culture, which is why we are considering this subject within the research field of history and the theory of culture. The study of rock paintings and ritual culture in the context of ethnographic, folklore, philosophical, psychological and, above all, musical heritage, has still not attracted attention.

A complex and specific sound palette in many cultures was used in shamanistic rituals by specially trained shamans, suggesting some connection between tones of a certain frequency and individual chakras that affect the state of consciousness. As an important component of culture, shamanistic ritual, as a specific genre, required the presence of spectators. Approaching theatricalized ideas, having a certain dramatic structure, combining canonical and improvisational elements, the ritual ceremony demonstrated the origin of musical thinking itself and the subordination of all kinds of sound and musical activity to the ritual.

The magical effect of music attracted the attention of a person from deep antiquity; the magic felt in “immateriality” generated some assumptions about its special, unearthly origin.

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“Being a spiritual and emotional experience, music conveyed a complete picture of the world in the unity of feelings and thoughts, while appealing to feelings, it created a model of the Universe in the system of emotional images” [1].

Reflecting the connection of times, music, like Eternity itself, acting on the world, dissolving its boundaries, conveyed a sense of belonging to the Universe and its Mystery. Distinguished by an amazing internal integrity and syncretism of life spheres, music did not allow “...to separate the real things from the mythological, the material from the spiritual ones, practical, daily, logical and rational ones from the sensitive and emotional ones” [1].

The spiritual value, correlating with ritual, ethical, cosmogonic features, expressed “...the original harmony of the system: Sound–Culture–Space, finding expression in artistic, cosmogonic, material, spiritual, and practical activities” [2].

The way of life, the specificity of spiritual views indicates the initially high status of music. Aesthetic feeling was one of the highest manifestations of spirituality, musical art, as one form of human activity, close to “...religious knowledge of the world, the ability to reproduce and discover the beauty of man and nature, gave the broadest opportunities for their creative knowledge” [3].

During the time of the primitive communal system, the scenes of hunting, wars, labor processes and ritual ceremonies were reflected in the pictorial activities of the ancient man. Natural conditions generated vivid emotional experiences, the desire to fix them with the means at hand. The stylistic richness of cave paintings, plot compositions that give an idea of the creators’ artistic taste of the surrounding reality, testify to a complex worldview, rich imagination, syncretic musical creativity among the tribes living in the III-I millennium BC. The proof of this are works by Margulan [4], Sher [5], Bernshtam [6], Akishev [7], Maximova [8] and others.

A variety of petroglyphs reflecting archaic representations, magical rituals, cult, mysterious actions, are found all over the world: Kazakhstan (Tamgaly), Altai Mountain (Kuyus), Mai valley, tributary of the Aldan, Shiveet-Khairkhan rock, Suruktah-Khaya rock in Yakutia on the Tocco rivers, Gobustan in Azerbaijan, Khakass-Minusinsk hollow in Alta in Finnmark county (northern Norway), Spain (Altamira cave), Algeria, Tassilin-Adjer mountain plateau in the Sahara, France (Caves de Font-de-Gaume, Montespan and others), Siberia, Don (Kostenki), Zalavruga in Karelia (Russia), Italy, England, Germany. The expanses of Kazakhstan literally abound in rock graphics, bearing coded information. While being sacred concentration centers of the spiritual culture of ancient communities, they represent the sanctuaries, “...open-air temples, with the magical properties of the consecrated place” [9].

Representing “...encryption keys, known only among a specific socio-cultural community of a specific historical epoch” [10], petroglyphs, which differ in artistic and sensual imagery and emotional expressiveness, do not cease to amaze the imagination and speculate.

According to sacral ideas, the world was endowed with creative and generating power, the interaction of the objective state of the world and the subject of its spiritual development with creative practice manifested itself in artistic thinking. The specifics of work, the way of life itself, the natural conditions, have influenced the sound characteristics of music, the appearance of specific types of musical instruments, distinguished by a certain timbral richness of the sound scale: “from low overtones to “thick”, chest sounds with hoarse, falsetto sounds–high and strained” [11, 12]. Defining the semantic orderliness of the universe, the harmonious connection between man and the Universe, music did not transform the world, but recreated harmony, being the subject of aesthetic perfection.

Hunters, shepherds, shamans were the first musicians, then began the stage of differentiation of professions, which led to the separation of syncretism of labor activity, gradually tools began to acquire profiled properties, which led to the replacement of universals with experts: musicians, narrators, masters of musical instruments. In turn, they influenced the formation and crystallization of instrumentalism, the extraction of overtones, microtonal

vibrations as an independent type of artistic creativity [13], which gave sound a special and refined color [11]. Expanding the possibilities of intentional identification of feelings, increasing the effectiveness of emotional expression, a musical instrument was not a momentary explosion, but always an art, an act of communication.

Musical instruments were used in hunting to lure birds, animals, brilliantly imitating their voices, imitating song, calling birds, animals, females, luring a male, a calf, calling a mother; in the sphere of work, the purpose was to promote work and family welfare. As the basis of the instrumental ingredient of worship, musical instruments were an integral part of the ritual act "...contributing to the development of musical form, of performance skills. As a result, the shamanic ritual became melodic and aesthetic" [14].

The vocal-poetic and instrumental creativity of the shamans, as a model of true improvisation, required extraordinary imagination and creative talent. The shaman was a wonderful poet, artist, composer, singer, creator of unique sound-rhythmic music, improviser, a magnificent dancer. Shamanic art brilliantly combined all the qualities. The shamanic melodies used during ritual ceremonies were melodic recitations of small songs of the Saryns; they were characterized by specific onomatopoeia of animals and bird voices, by special types of guttural songs. Shamanic music, subordinated to the ritual act, was distinguished by a variety of intonation types: melodic intonation, melodic recitation, shamanic ritual with kobyzy, tambourine, asatayak, singing, verbal communication with the participants in the ceremony, and recitative phrases as the tongue twisters were used during the spell of spirits.

The culture of ancient rituals, represented by an impressive volume in petroglyphs, conveying the spontaneous dialectics of multidimensional life, made it possible to trace "...the peculiarities of musical thought, determine the specificity of culture, the nature of its outlook and aesthetic nature" [15], "...harmonious universe, order, life, stability" [1]. Features of perception [16], possessing sacred meaning, became the basis of artistic creation [17].

The methodological setting of this work is the study of ritual musical culture, the ceremonial context in the complex of principles of historical, ethnographic, structural, semiotic, comparative analysis, reflected in petroglyphs. When describing music as a representative of the picture of the world, we relied on materials from the works of American scientists Chianis, the works of French researcher Combarien, Russian researchers Zemtsovsky, Macieuski, Kazakh philosophers Ayazbekov, art historians Mukhambetova, Amanov, Utegaliyeva and others, pre-revolutionary works of Levshin. We considered these aspects in the context of musicology, ethnography, cultural studies, philosophy, folklore, cultural history, philology, based on the works of Terner [18], Radin [14], Emsheimer [19], Eliade [20], Brudnyiy [21], Bernshtam [22] Valikhanov [23].

In identifying the symbolic nature of rock art, we used a semiotic approach, which allowed us to determine the construction, establish the semantic content of the gestures (semantics), and determine the effectiveness of gestural communication in the ritual associated with emotionality. An integrated approach, including musicological, informational-communicative, semiotic, semantic, psycho-physiological components, has contributed to reveal the logic of using pictorial language in petroglyphs, comprehending the psychological, technical and methodological possibilities in creating artistic images. The research materials of petroglyphs were the works of Margulan, Maksimova, Hygene, Hoopwood, Beardmore, Baypakov, Maryashev, Dosbatyrova, etc.

Literature review

Thanks to the petroglyphs with images of ancient instruments, covering distant times, we can tell about their structure, about the music played. All the developing capabilities of instruments that influence the formation of musical thinking required "...creating and

cultivating various instruments, changing a number of typical characteristics, improving performance techniques, improvisational abilities” [24].

The motive of artistic creativity are ritual scenes depicting shamans with musical instruments, such as corn, kobyz, dabył, daulpaz, assatyak, uskirik, widely used in ritual practice. Along with the transcripts of Medoev [25], Samashev [26], Baypakov [27], Kadyrbaev and Maryashev [28] and others, we will try to present our view of individual pictorial artifacts, to consider the role of religious and ideological traditions in shaping musical culture.

An attempt to decipher petroglyphs is given in Dosbatyrov’s work [29], who considers the pictorial artifacts in the aspect of the genesis of circus art, as acrobatic elements, which are the basis for the oldest sacred acts. This version has a basis to exist, but we believe that the music that accompanied the vital process of humanity was paramount. Occupying a special place, due to its spiritual nature, in the context of ancient cosmogonic ideas, music has become an organic part of a single life space, a mysterious phenomenon of human existence.

A sign character, especially music, characterizes elements of traditional culture. A necessary means of communication is the presence of a language: “any system that serves the goals of communication between individuals can be defined as a language” [30].

Baiburin identified three “languages” of traditional culture: verbal (as a combination of verbal and written texts); operational (as a system of rituals, ceremonies, technology, and etiquette in their action); subject (as a subject complex) [31], this also includes the fourth “language”– the musical one– which includes sounds, homemade styles, tunes and musical genres [32]. According to Konen, under the musical language we understand “a set of artistic techniques and means that make up the unique specifics of music” [33], confirming the opinion of Asafev [34]: “...musical language is similar to verbal one, because of being a communicative system developed for the transmission of special information” [35].

Music genres that convey certain meanings, concentrating clusters of vital, cult meanings, have visible, tangible features–remarkability. “The values and meanings of magical reputation are fixed for conventional signs (archaic styles and melodies used in ritual practice). “The music of the rituals is directed to the “numinous” recipients of the Upper World and provides “communication” with the sacred recipients of the Lower World” [36].

A ritual that relates to the original sources of human culture, being the earliest syncretic sign system with deep meaning [18], can only be revealed “in a specific historical and temporal context, in the ritual process” [17]. The ritual consisting of structural layers of meanings: the upper level (“common sense”), the level of everyday consciousness expressed in verbal language (superficial, well known) and the person in charge of the ritual (having esoteric knowledge, using several languages), is an important point of cultural focus.

Structural semantic features of the ritual are discussed in detail in the work of Emsheimer [19], in the studies of Eliade [20], Lehtisalo [37], and Divaev [38]. There is the structure of ritual, its semantics in the metaphysical space, which allowed determining the significance of the sacred nature of ritual music in culture, to identify the connection with the material world of humans and the intangible world of spiritual entities, to determine their meaning, “beyond the empirical experience of transcendental realities and forces”.

The ritual “preceded the emergence not only world religions, but also national religions” [39], playing a certain role in culture. It became common in nomadic religious traditions: ‘...the necessary need to know the Universe with its wonders, the question of life and death in man’s relationships with nature gave rise to shamanism” [23].

There are many works devoted to the study of the phenomenon of shamanism from different angles: Kirchenr examines the semiotics of sacral religious ideas of shamanism [40]; Eliade [20] revealed features of the archaic technique of shamanistic ecstasy; Willard and Park, Metraux considered totem dances, shamanic rites, household and religious rituals, which played a huge role in the development of musical culture [41, 42]. Shamanic ritual music was the

structuring core of the culture, having a completely unique role, a high degree of harmony, being an artistic value and satisfying the aesthetic needs of an ethnos [17]. Bourdon, throat singing, the richness of forms, melodies, rhythms, tones and their modifications, were introduced into the experience of the higher being, into the ideological foundations, were directed “towards the revelation of the soul and the divine spirit” [43].

While being one of the types of archaic musical culture, accompanied by various instruments, the sacral rite of shamans was a vivid universal exponent of culture. The shaman, as the ancestor of all artists, the demiurge of culture, was able to see the unmanifest part of the universe, to communicate with the spirits of the ancestors. Magical practice was his prerogative. The leading themes in musical creativity, modeled in rituals and rites, were universality, harmony of the world order, Space, Society, whose multidimensionality was determined by aspects such as being, spiritual activities in the context of historical, ethnogenetic, cosmogonic, religious and other generalizations. The ritual ceremonial scene, reflected in a sufficiently large factual material of rock paintings, testify to the versatility of ritual music as “a key world-modeling element that can significantly determine the picture of the world”. The conceptual description of the world picture, the peculiarities of the world view with the inherent connection between the upper, middle and lower worlds, are given by Ibraev [44] in various types of traditional activities. As a spiritualized Universum, the form of creative consciousness is seen by the world of Ayazbekova: “...in the formation of musical culture, the harmony, spirituality of the Space, generated by music, was the source and beginning of all other harmonies, integrity and sustainability of traditional culture” [45].

Results and discussion

Evidences of the musical instruments, ritual songs and dance performances

The “duality” of the world, represented by vertical and horizontal space, was determined by the material-being factors and the spiritual and creative principle. The role of harmonization of the Space belonged to music, carried out with the help of certain functions: “cosmogonic, demiurgic, life-creating, protective” ritual; “there was nothing in life that could not be known, everything was subject to the laws of a single, cosmic” [46].

Musical instruments acted as an intermediary between the world of people and the world of gods–Space; their anthropological construction testified to the connection with cosmic harmony. The deck and two pegs on it, which regulate two strings, mean the Upper World. The Slotted part of the kobyz, like the two halves of the brain, represents the Middle World. The lower world is the bottom part of the kobyz, is nothing but water–Chaos. The contact between a bow and two strings, as two types of energy–represents solar and lunar energy, male and female [47].

Rock paintings with various musical instruments are found in Saimaly-Tash, Chulak Mountains, Tamgaly Gorge, valleys of the Terekty River, Khantau Mountains of the South-West Balkhash Region, on the rocks of Yakutia on the Tkoko River, in the Minusinsk Basin, Khakassia’s Chaatassy, Ukhtasar Mountain Armenia, in an engraving of Tuschibek necropolis in Western Karatau, Mangyshlak, etc. Of particular interest are images of the archaeological complexes of Tamgaly and Kulzhabasy, researched by European scientists Hoopwood and Beardmore, who believed that “these areas in southern Kazakhstan contain thousands of petroglyphs dating from the Bronze Age to the present day, creating a unique record of human activities” [48].

Musical instruments, without losing their signal purpose, were used for hunting and military campaigns. Sounds of dabył, dangyra, dauylpaz, shyndauly, kepshika, shin, were intended to raise the spirit of warriors before battle, creating a sound effect; they are distinguished by the power of sound, which inspires fear in the enemy.

One of the most brilliant museums of rock art is Tamgaly Gorge, the oldest sanctuary listed as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. “The dense and coherent group of petroglyphs, with sacred images, altars and cult areas, together with their associated settlements and burial sites (which) provide a substantial testimony to the life and beliefs of the pastoral people of the Central Asian steppes from the Bronze Age to the present day” [49].

In our work, we have based ourselves on the archaeological works of Okladnikov, who builds his theory on rock paintings, on the ritual and ceremonial character of the shamans [50], the works of Hermann, Emsheimer, Samashev and others. The most brilliant petroglyphs in their expressiveness and compositional solution are the petroglyphs on the banks of the Tokko River in Yakutia, on the Suruktah-Khaya rock (Fig. 1), which depicts a cult ritual. The bright petroglyphs in their expressiveness and compositional solution are petroglyphs on the bank of the Tokko River in Yakutia, on the Suruktah-Khaya rock (Fig. 1), which depicts a cult ritual. In the center is a shaman’s figure. In one hand, he holds a tambourine decorated with the image of the sun, represented here in the form of a solar sign. There is another instrument, resembling a kobyz, used in ritual ceremonies, along with a no less mysterious figure, in whose hands there is also an object resembling a dombra. The heads are crowned with horns, which are an indispensable attribute of shamanic ritual.

We find the similar images in the Kuljabasy petroglyphs (Fig. 2). According to Samashev, the shaman was captured performing the ritual and ceremonial action, playing the ritual song to the accompaniment of musical instruments in the form of an ocarina.

This drawing is distinguished by elegance and compositional completeness, being evidence of the birth of musical genres formed in ceremonial practice. Hermann thinks that “We can postulate that Tamgaly was a place of worship for the sun” [51].

Images of shamans with various musical instruments are also found on the Colombian Plateau (Fig. 3). In a work “The Indian Rock Art of the Columbia Plateau”, James D. Keyser gives a detailed description of the ritual rite [52], striking in its scale, gigantic scenes depicting a huge number of animals figures, the impressive professionalism of the ancient artists, the ability to use the exhibition site, a different texture of stone.

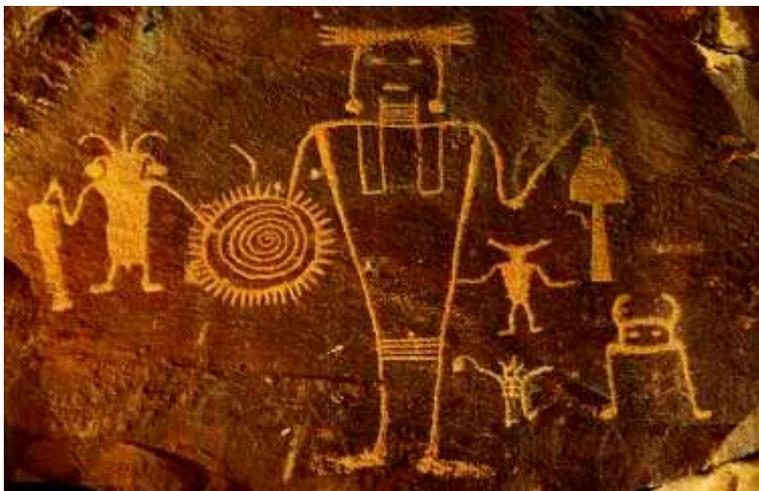


Fig. 1. Suruktah-Khaya Rock near Tokko River, Yakutia

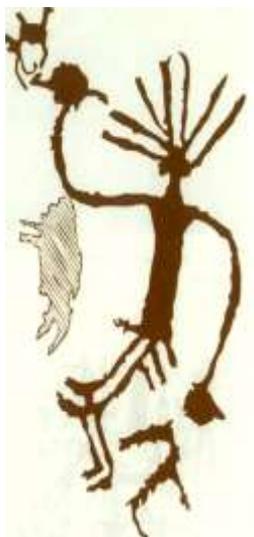


Fig. 2. Kuljabasy petroglyphs



Fig. 3. Petroglyphs found near Colombian Plateau

Functions of ritual instruments

Kobyz, asatayak, dabyl, dangyr were indispensable attributes of the ritual. The effect of the action was enhanced by the accompanying music. A special role belonged to the kylkobyz, which is distinguished by the special character of the sound, the mysterious and magical timbre of which literally fascinated, hypnotized, gave the music a “mystical”, “wierd character” [53]. Sounds produced as a result of light shaking, tremors of asatayak, gave rhythmic movement which served to drive away evil spirits. The loud beats a tambourine, daulpaz, dabyl, meant to intimidate, to scare away evil spirits, were replaced by the mysterious sound of kobyz, which attracts spirits– aruah, its magical effect.

By gradually increasing the intensity of the musical accompaniment, the expressive performance helped the shaman enter an ecstatic state. Music was the most effective means to help the shaman enter trance, as a link between worlds, being the most important component of the ritual, and artistic means symbolized the fight against evil. The emotional and figurative structure was embodied in musical compositions, in artistic images, in rhythmically clear

sounds: “The shaman, having taken kobyz in his hands, ...began to play it, began to sing and began to gently swing, and then to make various body movements.

With the rise, the voices sped up and became harder to move. He was beating, spinning, stretching and bending like a frantic one. Sweat poured hail from him...” [54]. Extracting overtones, micro tonic “vibrations”, tones, overtones and even microtones, the shaman brought a special, sophisticated flavor to the sound.

Solar signs

The well-being of society and the whole society depended on the sacred meaning of the rite of lighting. According to Amanova:

“...the separation of syncretism of labor activity, the division of labor, the transformation of universal instruments into profiled ones, the replacement of universals by specialists (musicians, narrators, masters of musical instruments) led to the formation, crystallization of instrumentalism as an independent kind of artistic creation” [55].

The petroglyphs of Tamgaly, in the cave paintings of the Chu-Ili mountains, depict shaman figures that perceive the world around us as a single, integral space and participation of their own lives in the existence of the Universe; solar signs and a halo of sunrays indicate this (Fig. 4 (A and B)). The worship of the sun was born in Neolithic times.

Solar signs were used as protection, guardian symbols, foreshadowing the victory of good over evil. The sun personified the power that creates life, hence the circularity of the most ancient dances: a circle as a symbol of the sun, light, life, reflecting the “good”, the good beginning of the moral ideals of antiquity. In the mountains of Karatau there is a multi-figure composition (Fig. 5) depicting people holding hands, performing choral songs, circular dances “...as a desire to show the movement of the heavenly deity of the Sun” [28].



Fig. 4. (A-B). Shaman tambourine with solar signs. Archeology, Ethnography and Ecology of Siberia Museum of Kemerovo State University

Struchkova believes that “...the functioning of a circular round dance in the form of a vicious circle is associated with the cult of worshipping Heaven and Sun. Being a dance-mysterical form of hymn singing, it is an expressive means creating an artistic image of a solar deity” [56]. The author considers the significance of the circular dance of the osuokhay to be a special form of ritual behavior in the rites of the vertical and horizontal directions.

The interpretation of the solar sign showing the shape of a circle is reflected in the dance songs of various nations. The hands of the shaman in a rounded form are the ‘solar circle’, plastically reproducing a cosmogonic motif, symbolizing the sun as a symbol of life.

The image of a figure of a sun-headed deity, alternately beating a tambourine, hanging on a belt, is also in the Tamgaly Gorge (Fig. 6) [57].



Fig. 5. Karatau: Archers and the image of people singing in chorus

Petroglyphs from Arpauzen (Fig. 7) [25] represent a group of people, in the center of which is the figure of a shaman with raised arms, symbolizing the appeal to the supreme deity ‘Tengri’, ‘aruahs’ (spirits). Asking for blessings before the upcoming battle, the shaman, surrounded by warriors, performed a ritual dance. With a Asatayak in his hands, the movements are filled with expression, vivid imagery, striking in their expression and peculiar technique.



Fig. 6. Tamgaly “Sun-headed deity”



Fig. 7. “The battle of tribes”

Samashev [26] believes that these are two groups of masked characters, performing a military dance “directed” by the central figure of the priest, with a rod in his hand, demonstrating strength and power to each other.

A whole series of ritual dances under the leadership of shamans is depicted in Tamgaly petroglyphs (Fig. 8) [57]. All participants of the composition move in circles, covered by a single impulse, perform well-developed movements, filled with expression and courage, as a symbol of a single will, having tremendous educational value, inspired for feats. The awesome sounds of daulpaz were a signal, a battle cry, and a call to act and win. Carrying out the ritual of appeasing the god, praising him, the shaman called upon Tengri to support the soldiers in the upcoming battle.



Fig. 8. Tamgaly ‘The ritual dance’

Functions of other ritual attributes

Each attribute of the ritual had its own function: a tambourine and kobyz acted as a means of transportation to other worlds; a headdress, a ritual mask, and a ritual cloak hung with konyrau bells, made up the aesthetic aspects of the theatrical and entertainment side of the various forms of shamanic art. Being endowed with supernatural power, with the help of which the shaman foreshadowed the future and moved into the other world, acting as a soothsayer, doctor, hypnotist, and artist, he represented a whole dramatic mystery, accompanied by playing various musical instruments, singing, dancing ecstatically. Forming a peculiar language of magical symbols, bearing in itself “a mystical beginning, the shamanic rite was a theatrical act with one actor” [58].

Distinguished by a “high degree of dramatization”, the action involved the presence of the costume, outstanding performing skills, and improvisational abilities combining ecstasy and dramaturgical initiation. Special susceptibility, aggravated by the worldview, the ability to think in sensual images, to control the sphere of the subconscious, to have “...an artistic type of thinking and behavior allowed the shaman to skillfully combine rhythm, word, music, dance, which was spectacular and dramatic’ [59].

The movements of the anthropomorphic characters found on the petroglyphs in the mountains of Kuljabasy (Fig. 9) are striking with emotionally expressive plastic. The choice of the location is not accidental. Ritual ceremonies, and sacrifices “around the sacred circle, with the participation of a large number of people” are performed here [26].



Fig. 9. Petroglyphs of Kuljabasy.

The shaman image

Being a universal man, the shaman, along with the magic and acoustic effects of musical instruments, attached great importance to reflex and associative reactions aimed at raising the patient's mood, relieving arousal with calm, relaxing sounds, harmonizing the patient's condition, simultaneously using the suggestion and hypnosis.

The shaman could only be the elected person, who knows how to own ecstatic practices (An excerpt from the Altai epic “Maadai-Kara Kara-Kul”):

“When the evening fog fell,
 Seeing through the earth shaman
 Appeared, tambourine behind
 Hung big birch bark.
 Then the great Kam Tordoor
 Began to circle over the fire.
 Clothes rustle on him
 A tambourine thumps like thunder
 To the aid of the spirits, he calls...” [4].

One of the engravings “The Ritual Dance of the Shamans” depicts a cult scene: baksys with a tambourine in hand, performing a dance in front of the sacrificial horses; along with them are figures of heavenly gods and dancing people [4].

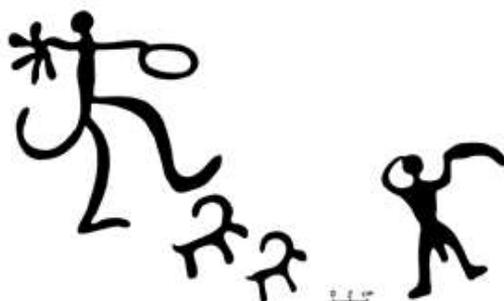


Fig.10. Petroglyphs of Sary-Arka

The petroglyphs of the Altai Mountains (Fig. 10) depict the moment of sacrifice [60]. Of particular interest is the figure of a shaman with a long tail, hands in a horizontal position, one hand with spread fingers, in the other hand a tambourine; a number of animals, spellbound by a magical dance, are gently reaching him for slaughter. The dance theme is peculiar to many monuments of rock art. The expressive plasticity, the virtuosity of dancing figures striking the imagery of artistic expression, represents a certain sequence of practical actions constituting a functional, structural unity.

Conclusions

The comprehension of ritual culture is based on the study of ritual as the fundamental basis of culture, which is the source of genre ideas and diversity, and linguistic and stylistic forms. The ritual, accompanied by music, which was considered sacred and with magical properties could affect the human psyche, the elements of nature; early forms of culture as a cult were formed in its depths. The scientific novelty of this study is due to the specifics of the problem, the breadth of coverage related to the laws of the development of actual music in ritual culture, its social significance, originality and artistry. These are reflected in the petroglyphs considered by us on an interdisciplinary basis, the development of shamanic creativity with the formation of vocal-instrumental directions and musical thinking. Culture has been translated through iconic systems and various cultural languages: verbal, folklore, music and traditions. We explored the semantics of petroglyphs found on all continents and the worldview of their creators through the prism of shamanic art, as a sign-communicative system revealing the originality of the artistic traditions of ancient tribes. The depth and expressiveness of the cave paintings, hidden behind apparent simplicity, directly related to archaic beliefs, with the oldest ritualistic rites, amaze with the spatial compositional decision, the strong emotional power and the ability of creators to live harmoniously with nature, to feel part of the universe.

The study of the picture of the world of cave paintings, reflecting the ritual culture, made it possible to use new approaches, to reveal the internal patterns of its composition and structure associated with the oldest religious ideas. The “logic” of the rock paintings, which convey the “grid of coordinates” with which this nation catches the World, Space, world order, testifies to the origin of musical, dancing, poetic, and dramatic forms. Music as an integral component of almost all rituals, thanks to the specificity of its language, as well as narrative and poetic ritual texts, preserves the ancient semantics and meanings.

A certain musical conceptual sphere took shape in the process of culture development, in which ethnic elements were fixed, forming the features of the musical language of a distant era. Musical instruments, reflected in the cave paintings, were conceived as a micro model of the space and were a connecting thread between different levels of sacral space.

Understanding and deciphering the cultural significance of the semantic codes of petroglyphs can be achieved through immersion in culture. Possessing amazing stability, being an independent entity, cave paintings contribute to understanding the diversity of sounding matter, through which a person “embeds” and “enters” into the world of feelings and spiritual values, reflecting the foundations of the life philosophy of distant ancestors. Being a semiotic system, petroglyphs convey the peculiarities of perception, reproduction of artistic and aesthetic information, allow us to define the role of music as the eternal “accompaniment” of life. Being an information field and a way of transition to other dimensions and levels of matter, cave paintings are valuable means of understanding material and spiritual culture, being a creative, constructive, form-based comprehension of the world. Due to the petroglyphs, the world of the structural-symbolic system of ritual music, features of the ritual context, opens up before us. Considering the sacral nature of ritual as an archetype of culture, we tried to identify the role of music, which occupied a special place in ritual culture due to its spiritual nature, richness of styles, performing diversity. The ritual ceremony, aimed at restoring balance, world order with the help of a peculiar language, expressed certain ideas, helped to come into contact with otherworldly forces of the higher, middle, underground worlds; their cultural and social conditionality was undoubted. Ethnic features of ritual ceremonies crystallized on the attraction of centuries, at their base much older than a certain nationality, a nation; in a relatively “pure” form they reflect important features of ancient culture, general tendencies of musical formation and musical thinking.

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