

guidance. The centre for the Inner Asiatic rock carvings is the Sayan mountains, i. e. Uryangkhai (Tanu-tuwa) and the South Siberian district of Minusinsk. According to TALLGREN'S map the nearest rock picture to that of Quruq-tagh is situated some 700 km. to the north of it at Kurchum in southern Altai. To the southwest none has been found nearer than Ladakh 1300 km. away. To the east, a group of rock carvings which I studied in Lang-shan lies about 1700 km. away (Bergman 1935 a, Fig. 6). The nearest is situated about 360 km. to the SSE and was discovered by Dr. HEDIN in 1901.¹

The Quruq-tagh rock carving therefore occupies a most important geographical position, forming a link between rock pictures at tremendous distances.

The main features of the topographical position which might have any bearing on the carving are the following: proximity to water, vegetation and good hunting grounds. The water now washes the very rock, the vegetation is luxurious but, as the valley is narrow, insufficient to feed any large herds. The hunting in Quruq-tagh is good. Another important feature is that a road or at least a path passes the place. Most of these characteristics are also typical for the rock-pictures in N. Mongolia and S. Siberia. If we turn to the subject-matter of our petroglyph we also find analogies on many other Asiatic rock pictures.

As already mentioned, the animal representations form the major part of the Quruq-tagh petroglyph, and most of the figures no doubt represent wild animals such as ibex, antelope, deer, i. e. members of the local fauna. It is somewhat uncertain if the camels are meant to be wild or domesticated, especially as the eastern Quruq-tagh is one of the few places where wild camels exist. As the humps are drawn very high, indeed, exaggeratedly so, and wild camels never grow fat enough to develop anything like erect humps, the pictures most likely show domesticated camels. Only one or two of them have a rider.

Most of the horses have riders. Among the confusion of separate figures without any obvious connection there may be a couple of real scenes: the two riders with dogs (or colts?) following, the mounted man driving two horses (below the trees) and the two men each clutching the tail of a goat-like animal. There are no love scenes such as abound on e. g. Scandinavian rock pictures, only one man is ithyphallic, and only one has his sex marked in the same way as several figures of the Sulek engraving (Tallgren 1933, Fig. 11; this part of the Sulek rock picture shows several analogies with the older facies of our petroglyph though the number of men and beasts are in inverse proportions).

The trees are possibly the tree of life or the tree of the world, the hands, the feet,

¹ It is situated in the Kalta-alaqan-tagh about 140 km. SSE of Charkhliq and is published in Hedin 1905 Vol. 3, pp. 189—191, Figs. 154—157, and consists of a few hunting scenes with various animals. The hunters carry bow and arrow, and are partly on foot. According to HEDIN the figures are naturalistic and executed with an iron chisel. Most of the pictures have contour lines only. HEDIN ascribes them to some Mongol hunters, or, though less plausibly, to pilgrims.