

figures, animals and geometrical signs executed in a true primitive way (Cf. Benveniste Pl. V). It is not possible to determine in all cases whether the various types of figures are contemporary or whether they are the results of successive use of the spots as sacred places. In many instances the Buddhist stupa carvings seem to form the primary element of the compositions which has attracted people and inspired them to make additions. These carvings are often labelled as pilgrims' pictures. On the other hand there are also rock pictures in Western Tibet lacking the Buddhist elements (e. g. Tucci, Fig. 21) which are of the same type as the older parts of the Quruq-tagh petroglyph.

FRANCKE gives an explanation of the meaning of recent rock pictures in Kashmir-Ladakh which totally differs from the generally accepted interpretations of at least old rock carvings. The many bucks, e. g. on a rock surface at the village Donga near Shimsha Kharbu about midway between Srinagar and Leh, are said to be offerings to the mythical pre-Buddhistic King KESAR, made in gratitude for the birth of children (Francke Pl. 9).

Through the good offices of Mr. HENNING HASLUND-CHRISTENSEN I have come into possession of a photo of this rock carving. On the left-hand part of the large boulder the photo clearly shows two more bucks than appear in FRANCKE'S reproduction. (The figures are not filled in with white colour on either picture). This proves that the people still embellish this rock with carvings of the same kind as those already existing. On this petroglyph only the Buddhistic stupa symbols may be of some age. The present inhabitants of the Donga village are Mohammedans and have nothing to do with the carvings.

In another case FRANCKE calls an ibex representation "the old big stone-buck, personification of the rock".

According to my belief not all of FRANCKE'S buck figures must necessarily be connected with human fecundity. When two goats are depicted, one of them with a small goat within, denoting pregnancy, this is better explained as a prayer for increase in the stock of goats.

A carved hand FRANCKE calls a sign of Wednesday.

As is evident from the description given above, our Quruq-tagh engravings come down to modern times, maybe the present century. The "stratigraphy" shows that the highest level must be of a certain antiquity. The origin of the art is no doubt very old, but in our case the earliest part must have been made by a people well acquainted with the use of metal tools. To give any more precise date would be hazardous. One could, of course venture the guess that the carving was started by some Huns coming from Northern Mongolia, where they probably practised this kind of art, and that it was continued by some people associated with the southwest, e.g. the Tibetans, and also by the Mongols.

It is still too early to base any conclusions on the distribution of rock-carvings in