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“VETRA NE KHAMBHA”
MEMORIALS FOR THE DEAD

BY
EBERHARD FISCHER AND HAKU SHAH



GUJARAT VIDYAPITH
AHMEDABAD

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Vetra ne Khambha—Memorials for the Dead

Wooden figures and memorial slabs of Chodhri, Gamit and Vasava tribes, South Gujarat (India)

BY

Eberhard Fischer and Haku Shah



PREPARED BY

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Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad, India*

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FOREWORD

It is a pleasure for me to publish this second volume of the series "Art for tribal rituals in South Gujarat" which covers again an important aspect of the artistic and religious life of some tribal groups of Gujarat. It is one further out-put of the co-operation between the Tribal Research and Training Institute of Gujarat Vidyapith and the South Asia Institute of the University of Heidelberg in West Germany.

I appreciate very much that again some aspects of the artistic life of tribal communities is documented in the form of a monograph. I am happy that both the authors have found time and energy to produce and this second booklet—both having taken up other assignments then before : Haku Shah has been awarded the Nehru Memorial fellowship last year, Dr. Eberhard Fischer is now in charge of the Rietberg Museum in Zurich, which is a world-famous museum of non-western classical art.

The monograph which is published now, "Vetra ne Khambha, Memorials for the Dead", shows that these tribal populations have a traditional art which is different from what we know through our classical heritage. For some people who look at the plates of this volume for the first instance this art might appear crude and simple, but if one takes a bit more time, the simplicity reveals its own beauty.

On behalf of the Gujarat Vidyapith, I thank Dr. Eberhard Fischer and the South Asia Institute, University of Heidelberg, for collaborating with us. Furthermore, I extend my thanks to the Lordmayor of Zurich for having consented that Dr. E. Fischer could spend some time again in Ahmedabad to supervise together with his colleague, Shri Haku Shah, the printing of this monograph. We hope to publish more monographs soon in the series "Art for tribal rituals".

The blocks of the photographs which were taken by the two authors, have been prepared and printed at the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad.

RAMLAL PARIKH

INTRODUCTION

The following presentation is a further result of the co-operation between the Tribal Research and Training Institute at the Gujarat Vidyapith and the South Asia Institute, University of Heidelberg. The purpose of this joint venture is the documentation of village arts and crafts, especially in tribal areas of Gujarat.

This monograph, *Vetra ne khambha*, on wooden figures and memorial slabs, is the second published result of our research work on tribal art of Surat District. This documentation is on the same line as the earlier one (*Mogra dev*, tribal crocodile gods, 1971) : We have tried to give as much information as possible about the location, the stylistic features, the making and function and the local significance of these rather unknown pieces of tribal art.

For a detailed description of the methods employed, for information about our field-work and the aims of our research we may refer to the "introduction" in our previous booklet, published in this series (Fischer-Shah, 1971 : 7-12).

We tried to describe the monuments we found in tribal areas as detailed and as exactly as possible. We want to make the reader aware of all the remarkable formal qualities of these unpretentious pieces of art which otherwise might not be realized, because most of us have trained our eyes to see classical or realistic forms only. — It is very possible that the reader will find some chapters dry, clumsy in style and somewhat long-winded : We might be excused because we felt the urgent need to give an example of pure documentation avoiding all forms of romantic literary style, still common when folkart and handicrafts are described.

We may point out that with this monograph tribal artists of India are mentioned for the first time by name and with pieces of their work,

including information which shows their individual style and its change—due to outside influences or age. We believe that these tribal artists preserve one of the traditions of Indian art which is too often neglected but which may in the future have its useful impact on modern Indian culture.

We thank all who have supported us and who have helped that this documentation could be published.

EBERHARD FISCHER AND HAKU SHAH

Zurich and Ahmedabad
November 1972



A: THE WOODEN FIGURES

I. THE VISUAL ASPECTS

Location

We found wooden figures with human features, largely worked in partial relief, on wooden poles or boards, mostly in the Chodhri villages of the Valod and Buhari area, and to a lesser extent in the neighbourhood of Mandvi and Vyara. They are apparently absent in Songadh and the environs of Uchhal and Nizar, which means in the area where wooden memorial slabs and carved poles of the Vasava and Gamit are predominant.

The wooden figures are erected vertically in the ground. They are almost always close to the sites of ancestor worship and appear mostly in small groups. However, one came across them embedded in the same row as the *khatru*-stones as well, or even placed along with them under a *ghumat*-dome, an example of which may be seen at Kanjod near Valod. As a rule these figures are set apart under a small shelter—a roof made out of twigs and palm leaves resting on four corner posts. The rear and side walls are covered with branches or leaves. The front wall is often missing or is sometimes like a door made out of green, interwoven twigs, leaned against the shed. It is swung to the side whenever one wants to see the figures. Under such a shelter can be found one or several figures which often vary in appearance or age. Next to them lie objects like small earthen pots, pieces of gourd and fragments of a fishnet. From the figures hang miniature articles of daily use, such as red cloth, a mirror, a rolling pin etc. Isolated figures without these accessories are also found. Flat wooden plates with more or less quickly and roughly inscribed or only painted figures are sometimes found on spots of waste-land, where several fields adjoin. Surrounded by small clay figurines (if these were not washed away by the monsoon-rains), they are the remains from the *bhagtai*-ceremony (see a later monograph).

Form (See plates 1-10)

An obvious general characteristic of all wooden figures of this area is the fact that all of them have been worked out of a single block of wood, mostly rectangular in shape, with the sides notched at the upper third, forming a set-back. This by itself gives the rather simplified contour of a figure, the body being separated from the head by a drawn-in neck. On such a figure-slab, the lower part can show the body cut in relief, while the upper section is formed into a fully sculptured head.—In other cases, however, the upper part may be flat, shaped like a disc, and may have only a horizontal crescent moon incised, while the lower part may have one or two complete figures chiselled in as a relief, the heads of which can even project into the upper part.—Finally, some specimens of double figures exist as well.

To show the variety of forms and of stylistic possibilities, a few examples are described in detail. Some of them are remarkably expressive and well carved, although it must be mentioned that they do not represent an average quality. Most of the figures to be found in this area are crude and roughly made. It seems that these figures are generally manufactured by ordinary carpenters or by the local *bhagat*, priest and not by wellknown artisans. This explains why we were not able to receive more information about the persons who had made them.

(a) Figures with a sculptured head in Kalamkui

In Kalamkui near Valod, there are two similar looking figures which have been set up on the spacious ground for ancestor worship. They both have large sculptured heads which project above a body carved in relief. They have been executed with a few sharp strokes, giving the figures edged contours. The square-shaped head has a forehead cut away at an angle, and the cheeks taper slightly towards the chin, which is small but broad and lies under the two horizontal chip-cuts of the mouth. The eyebrow-ridge is horizontal and deep set; the fillet-like, somewhat trapezoidal, slightly bent nose rests at the edge of the eyebrows. The eyes are recognizable as deep shadow spots only.—The body is squarish. The front is cut out in sharp-edged relief and lies under the protruding neckless head. The arms are horizontal stumps lying under the upper edge of the block. The body is made out of two small trapezoids, set one over the other with the two smaller sides touching. The projecting fillet-like legs have both feet turned to the right. Both figures have white pieces of cloth hung on them (which indicates that they represent men).

Another equally impressive figure found at the same spot has a disc-like head with a horizontal eyebrow-ridge starting from the contour-edge of the face. The lower half of the face underneath is recessed. The nose, however, as a continuation of the forehead, is a small, straight, vertical strip which starts at the centre of the eyebrow-ridge. The mouth, eyes and ears are not shown. The body, with its attached leg and arm stumps, is carved in relief as a more or less elongated rectangle, slightly raised above the main surface. Below the figure, the block rises by a step to the level of the relief.

Yet another figure, no less imposing when viewed within the limitations of the material and techniques used, seems to have been worked out of a cylindrical block (which is exceptional). The elongated, egg-shaped head is separated from the body. The two eyes have been drilled as irregular holes. The nose forms a thin vertical strip and the mouth is only a tiny projection. Although the body was weathered, a similar figure found at the same spot had a small body carved in relief, consisting of several fillets chiselled in the pole.

The last example of this type of figures—like all the others from Kalamkui—is again cut from a square block, the top edge of which is rounded to the sides. The head is separated from the body by a deep and broad setback. The eyes are chip-cuts which extend almost upto the nose and have a sharp angle at the eyebrow-ridge, whereas the lower edge is cut at a slope. Nose, mouth and chin are not depicted in detail, and the face ends in a sharp vertical edge. The body is made in the same style. At the height of the hips two chips are taken inwards from the outer edge, while the legs are parallel to the edge of the block and are slightly raised above the rectangular relief area.

A common, (stylistic) factor for all these figures with sculptured heads is that they have been composed from flat surfaces, chip-cuts, holes or right angle fillets. None of them is elaborately carved, giving details (like wings of the nose, lips, philtrum or eyebrows), or tries to establish natural proportions.

(b) Figures in flat relief from Kalamkui

The thin board on which the figure is depicted is a low relief and has in its upper third an indentation on both sides; the upper edges are curved. In this oblong-oval upper part a horizontal segment with a serrated curve is depicted. On the lower rectangular part of the board a standing figure is shown in relief. The head is a simple

circle in which two eyes and a stronger mouth-slit have been cut in as straight, short chip-cuts. The head is connected by a fillet-like neck with the rectangular body, from which protrude the slightly slanted arms and legs. Both the feet are turned to the left.

Most of the figures, including those described above, do not show any sexual markings. As a variation, the head can be seen with the mouth on one side—two short fillets framing the opening—and the hair falling down as a plait on the other, indicating a female head in profile.

An unusual, high relief figure is shown in full profile, the head extending on a long neck into the upper part of the board, with a thin concave curved line just above it. The oval head is affixed to the neck at an angle towards the right side. The neck is an elongated curve of the body from which the arms hang down straight, while the legs are on the same axis with the contours of the body. The lower leg, with the knee slightly bent, seems to depict walking. This was to our knowledge the only figure seen in complete profile and in such movement common in dancers and clarinet-players, as shown on memorial slabs (see pg. 25 f.) and on crocodile poles and posts (see Fischer—Shah, 1971: plate 22-25).

(c) Figures in flat relief from other places

A figure erected in the region of the village Buhari (near Valod) has the following particularities: The arms are bent at the elbows. The eyes are drilled in as circular holes. The nose is comprised by two parallel grooves and the breasts are cut out as two elevated circles.

Another figure from the same place which has been installed here only recently has a prominent, deeply chiselled-out head, and a body, made up of thin fillets, sitting on top of a tiny horse. The rider's legs nearly touch a non-existing base. This figure—no doubt—represents a mixture of wooden pole-like figures and wooden memorial slabs (see samples pg. 25 f.).

A simple figure from Kakrapada (near Mandvi) is cut out of a flat sector-shaped board which has triangular chip-cuts in the upper half of the sides. A small figure is scratched in the front, showing a circular head with many projecting short notches, two small horizontal eye-cuts and a longer vertical nose-groove. The body is formed by two parallel notches and is joined directly to the head. The arms are two slanting cuts, whereas the legs are irregularly long extensions

of the body-lines, terminated by short horizontal notches turned to the right.

(d) Double-figures from places near Valod

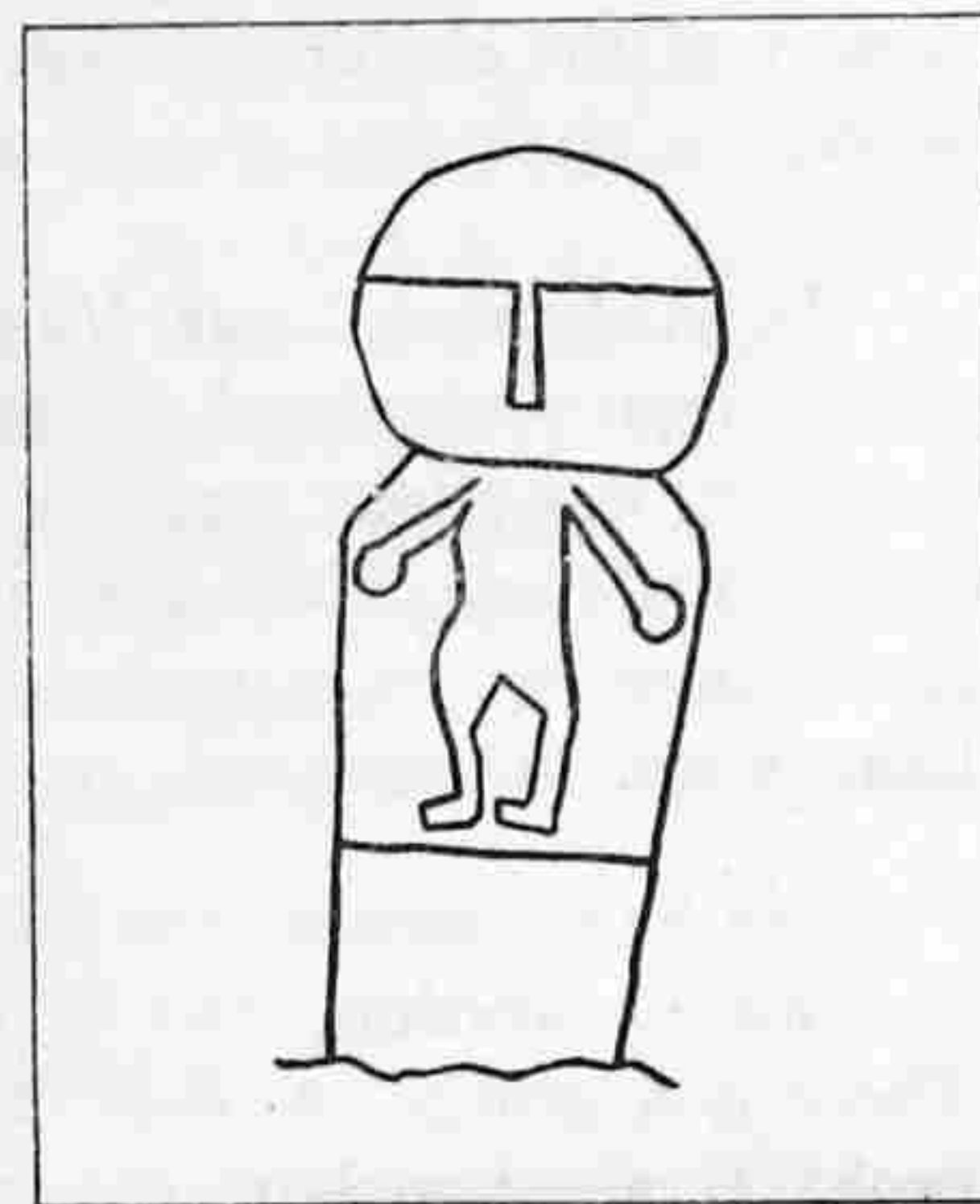
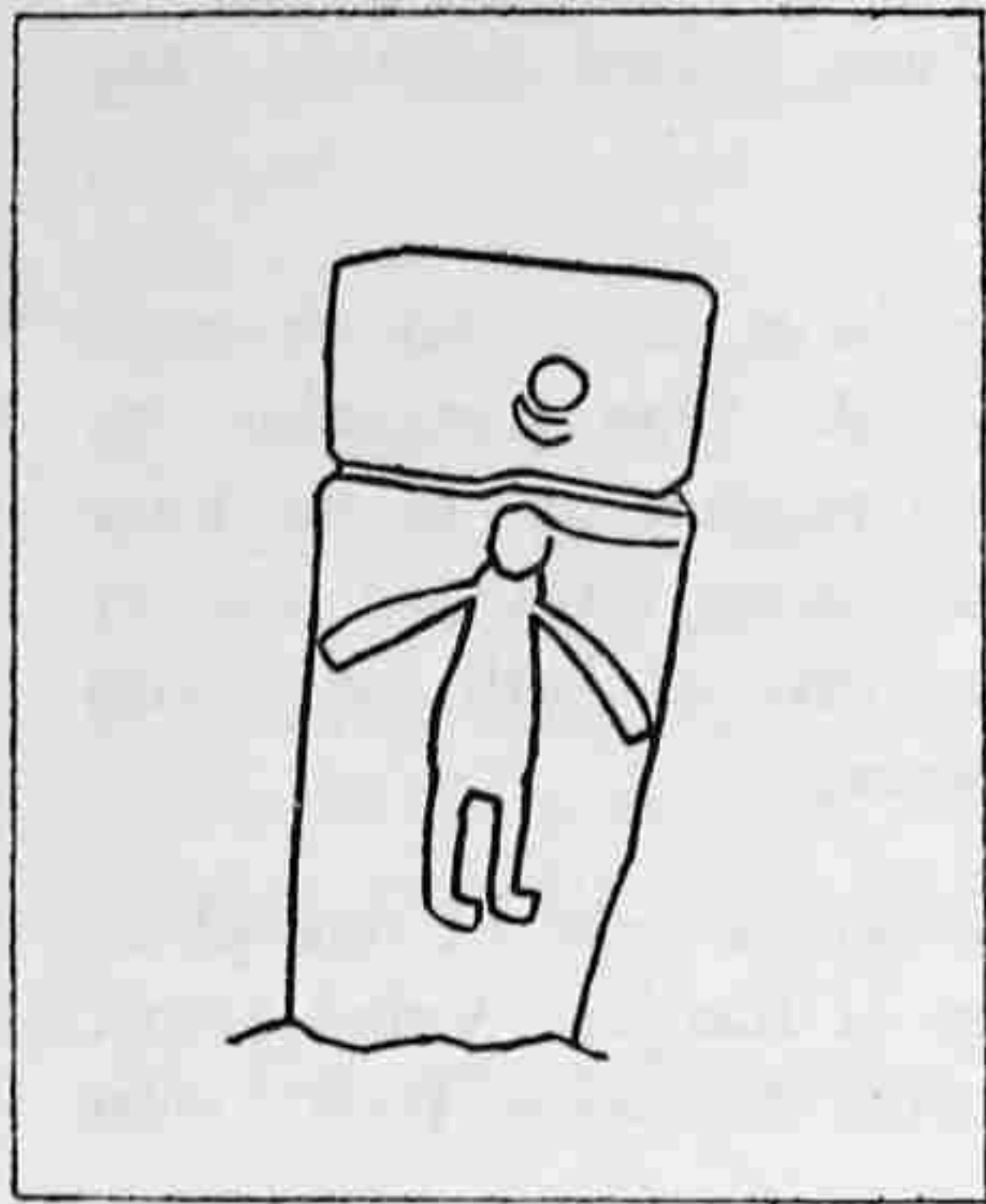
Altogether, two figures depicted on one board are quite rare, but this type seems to be rather common in the villages of Kumbhia and Kosambia (near Valod), where we found such figures at several places of ancestor-worship. They were all cut in relief on wooden boards. Ordinary, single-figured wooden boards exist there as well. In most cases the head of the larger figure protrudes into the disc-shaped upper part of the board, whereas the smaller figure stands under the armpit of the dominant one. The figures are turned towards each other, i.e. their feet point together.

In Kalamkui (near Valod) as well, we have found an example of two figures depicted in relief on one board. One is standing on the base, the other one on a socket which reaches up to the knee of the first one. Both their heads are on the same level, the smaller figure, however, having a smaller head. The arms of both the figures hang down unconnected, parallel to each other.

We have come across sculptured double-figures only at one place of ancestor worship, that is, near the village of Kanjod (Valod area). There is a group of four figures of one and the same style, most probably all carved by the same person.

Of these two are double-figures which are nearly identical. A rectangular block is mounted by two roughly cylindrical heads. The large base consists of a socket, separated by a step from an even, undecorated square which is roofed by a horizontal, deeply carved chip-cut, the upper edge of which is serrated, leaving a gap in the centre. The upper half of the block forms an erect rectangle filled up by a pair of large, elongated hexagons which stand on points. They are made by slightly asymmetrical chip-cuts, that is, the chisel-cuts from inside are by far more slanting than the ones from outside. In the other example these hexagons are exchanged by a vertical axis ending in short horizontal chip-cuts. The upper edge of the block is vertical, the heads separated by a furrow. These heads—one smaller and more slender than the other—show the same features. They are of an irregular octagonal section, looking like cylinders with a hemisphere on top. The eyes are made by thin horizontal chip-cuts, the nose is engraved as a triangle, and the mouth is a horizontal chip-

cut with a sharp upper edge which is again serrated. No chin or neck is indicated. Over the eyes, at the temples small ornaments consisting of two triangles are cut in. All these figures are newly made from a light, whitish wood. They show no signs of paint, but are still fully covered with red cloths and miniature articles. They are said to be made by the local carpenter whom we tried in vain to contact.



II. THE MAKING OF A WOODEN FIGURE

Preparations

A wooden figure was to be installed at Khanpur, a small village near Valod. The spirit of a deceased woman, a *vetra* had to be invoked and placed into such a wooden statue. This was the work of the Chodhri *bhagat*, priest Ramsih. Other men from the village were present to help him. The carpenter Hirji Aka, a Chodhri as well, had been called from the village to prepare the wooden image, whereas the articles needed were purchases from the market in Valod or collected in the village itself.

A man was sent to Valod to buy at the bazar the following materials: a small wooden comb, a piece of glass with a paper frame, a ready-made *tika*, forehead-mark on a piece of paper, glass-bangles, a necklace with small black glass beads, a square piece of red cloth, *sindur*, vermilion, *agarbati*, incense-sticks, one coconut, two red flags, some light food for breakfast, and a square log of teak wood. Most of the articles were already tied together and sold as a set by the merchants in Valod. Some Hindu and even Muslim shops keep these articles ready for sale.

From the village itself they collected : some more *sindur*, red powder, a little ghee, a bottle with country liquor, a *thali*, a brass plate, a towel, some rice grain, a rather dry *morva*-leaf (similar to basil-leaf), some *khakhara*-leaves and a small chicken.

Carving the wooden figure (See plates 11-20)

The carpenter had brought his set of instruments with him, i.e. a saw, a larger and a smaller chisel, an axe, an adze, a pencil and a wooden board to be used as a support.

The carpenter selected a long, planed batten square in shape to prepare the *vetra*-figure. He sat down outside the farmstead in the corner of a field, a place which was even and in the shade of some trees. He spread out a gunny-sack to sit on. The tools were placed in a row in front of him. Then he started to saw the part from the batten needed for the figure. He asked Ramsih *bhagat* to sit down opposite him and, fixing the batten between the soles of their feet, they divided it. The carpenter guided the saw and held the batten with his left hand. Without measuring, he sawed a short groove in the upper part of the batten. He turned the log and sawed another groove opposite to the first. With the broad firmer chisel he rounded the upper

edges of the log and then, with the same chisel, he cut down, towards the groove from the upper part of the batten. For this, he had placed the batten on the wooden support and fixed it to the ground with the calf of his stretched out left leg, the right leg being bent at the knee. The adze served as a mallet and was grasped very near to the heavy ironhead. Only for smoothing the surface or to round an edge the carpenter used his flat right hand for hammering on the chisel.

When the upper part of the batten was shaped like a disk, he placed the wood along the support straight in front of him and drew with the pencil a simple line-figure on it, the head of which fell in the upper disc of the log. While doing so he exclaimed: "*Jamsih bhagat nakhi apto a*, Jamsih bhagat was (formerly) writing (i.e. drawing) this for me." Ramsih bhagat exclaimed that he, too, draws the figure on the board for some carpenters, but that Hirji Aka can do it himself quite well.

Some distance apart from the arms, parallel, to the pencil-line, the carpenter cut two notches; then he followed the straight body line with the same chisel. After this he cut out a horizontal base for the figure, into which only one of the body contours ran; the other one ended slightly above. While cutting these notches, the carpenter had placed the block parallel to top of the supporting batten, fixing it with his right toes and left calf. He turned the block on its side and, striking the chisel only with his right palm, he cut away small chips from the side of the block down to the notches, loosening the chip by making many small strokes, one next to the other. Then he cleared the surface of the relief, working over it smoothly with the chisel.

In order to carve the head of the figure he changed over to the more narrow mortise-chisel; he cut along the neck and the head and made two strips parallel to the arms and of the same diameter. On top of the head he cut in a slightly curved horizontal notch. The carpenter cut off the surrounding wood to the general depth of the relief. Then he chiseled in a second notch parallel to the horizontal one and deepened the space above, leaving a small round island in the centre. This time the carpenter remarked: "*Tukra thai gono*, it has become very small." For a short while the carpenter took again the firmer-chisel, just to shorten the one protuberance of the head and to smoothen the relief-surface. Then he used again the mortise-chisel with which he cut out the space between the two legs, making it just as broad as the chisel. He did this by making many

small strokes one near and parallel to the other and then deepening the space with a second series of chisel-strokes. He was carefully aware not to destroy the legs at the sides and to leave some interstices at the base, from which he cut off a small chip, to separate it from the second leg. Thus he got two feet. The carpenter uttered: "*E bau kapali kam*, this work is very head-breaking", and everybody consented.

He cleaned the surface of the relief-ground, using again the firmer-chisel, with which he planed over it, taking hold of its handle near the blade. Furthermore he cleaned some of the relief-corners and edges, cut a short notch into the small protuberance at the head and after checking the work once more, he asked the bhagat: "*Ramsih bhagat ahen j rava dau ka?*, Ramsih bhagat, should I keep it like this?" The bhagat nodded as a consent. The carpenter handed the wooden figure over to the bagat.

III. INSTALLING THE VETRA-FIGURE

(See plates 21-28)

The wooden figure was taken to a field, where it was fixed by Ramsih, the *bhagat*, priest, into the ground with lumps of earth. Two red flags were attached to roots and stuck next to the figure. There were about ten men from the village watching, some taking active part, but no women were present.

A man called Anchho brought a *thali*, brass plate, from his house and twisted a towel to form a beater for a drum. In the meantime the *bhagat* mixed *sindur*, vermilion, and ghee in the lid of a small bottle in which the ghee had been brought. The mixture was applied on the relief-figure with the *bhagat's* right forefinger. The colour was too light, so he added some more *sindur* and gave a second layer to make it look darker. Thakro, one of the watchers, remarked: "Nowadays the market-people cheat us. Instead of *sindur* they sell us *sindur* mixed with flour to get more quantity." When somebody said that colour should be applied all over the wood, the *bhagat* exclaimed: "Are you mad?" and he coloured only the relief-figure,

The necklace with the small black beads was tied around the neck of the figure. After this the *bhagat* took the bangle and the other articles which were already bound together with a red string and knotted these on to a longer string, to which the black comb was tied. The head of the figure was covered with the red cloth and kept in place with the red string, the comb hanging at the backside and all the other small articles on the right side of the figure, near the neck.

One red *tika* mark was fixed on the forehead of the relief-figure and the other applied to the small circle above the horizontal line. During this operation some *agarbati*, incense-sticks, were lit and fixed into the ground near the figure. Some men made a small fire nearby and brought two burning branches from there which were placed in front of the figure. Doing this, the *bhagat* uttered sequences of words which nobody could understand, while his companion drummed on the *thali*, beating it continuously in a slow rhythm. Then the *bhagat* counted some rice, which he lifted with the forefinger of his right hand. For quite some time, he got only even numbers which meant negative answers. Thakro interrupted by suggesting that they use coins and he even went and threw two five paisa coins into the bowl near the *bhagat*, who, however, continued counting the grains on his

finger-tip. He tried about 10 to 15 times without success. Eventually, he picked the rice with forefinger and thumb, and on the second try he got three grains. Earlier, sometimes he had lifted up larger amounts of rice, and while he had counted an even number, we could easily count an odd number. Quite often, too, one grain dropped from his finger in the process of being lifted or counted.

All odd number grains the *bhagat* threw on the wooden figure, altogether three times, rejecting the even numbers which were thrown back into the bowl. One could see that he was quite relieved at getting the right number of grains three times. When it took so long, he said: "*Nam thi, amuk tamuk. Amtho j chadi jato a ka*, (Vetra's) name, this or that. Without it, (how can she) descend? *Kaha namano padvo*, whose name should be there? *Banavi jato a*, she makes a fool of me!" Someone suggested to name the *vetra* after the jungle or the sea, and the *bhagat* inserted *jangli vetri* or *rani vetri* in his chanting at once.

Before picking up the grains of rice, the *bhagat* had uttered sequences of words, but while counting and picking up the grains he was quiet. When it took so long, the drummer chanted: "*Jag re jag, wake up, wake up!*"

After this, Ramsih took off his shirt and sat down crosslegged. With his right hand he took the *morva*-leaf, which he placed in front of the wooden figure, keeping it there for a short while. He then placed the leaf for another brief period over the burning sticks on which the carpenter had poured some ghee, and finally lifted it to his nose and smelled it. This was repeated several times, accompanied by slight trembling of his body. After a while he started to shake more vigorously, turning his head in a circular motion, uttering an inarticulate hum-hum, hum-hum. Sometimes he interrupted it by chanting phrases in Gujarati (and not in Chodhri-dialect) like: "*Pavan hathe nikli aveli chhe hu re ma*, o mother, with the wind you have to come" and "*bhog apine jati revani chhe, bhai*, o brother, after giving offerings, (she) is going away" and finally "*jangli vetri no to barobar api devano*, forest-*vetra* (ghost), her offering should be done properly."

After some time, the people brought some water to relieve the *bhagat* from his trance. Part of the water he drank, and part of it he spat out again. Then the *bhagat* offered some *chhakh*, ritual libation, again uttering (the common) phrases which contained requests not to be harassed by her, "here nor there", from now onward. The coconut was broken on a stone, the liquid sprinkled over the *vetra*-figure, while the two parts were placed on its left side. The chicken was brought,

and the *bhagat* said: "Cut the head and go!" Two men held the turbancloth of the *bhagat* spread out between the *vetra* and the chicken, which was placed on the ground. One man stood on its wings and with a sickle cut off its head. Blood poured out of the chicken's body and was collected in a small leaf-bowl held by the *bhagat*, while some drops from its head were sprinkled directly on the *vetra*. The blood in the bowl was mixed with wine and partly offered to the *vetra*, partly drunk by the *bhagat*, who stood in front of the *vetra*, facing her. Some wing-feathers were placed near the *vetra*.

In the background the chicken was prepared. It was first thrown into the fire to burn off all the feathers and then it was cut. The entrails were washed and roasted, and the two halves of the chicken were dipped in water and baked in the hot ashes. Turned over from time to time, they were then taken out and divided onto several leaves which were distributed to the men. Country wine, i.e. sugar-cane liquor, was served afterwards.

Shortly before, when the heart and liver were ready, they were broken into two pieces and one part was picked up by the *bhagat*, who offered it bit by bit, crumbling it with his right thumb and two fingers. In the left hand he had a leaf-bowl from which he slowly poured wine on the ground in front of the installed *vetra*-figure.

IV. DENOTATION AND SIGNIFICANCE

The majority of the wooden figures have been erected for dead woman and are called *vetra* or *vetri*. Only a few have been put up for dead men and are called *bhut*, ghost. These terms are for the spirit as well as for the material representation, the wooden figure.

When the souls of the particular deceased are installed in these wooden figures, they become their permanent resting place. Every figure belongs to the soul of a particular deceased person. The word *vetra* can therefore be preceded by the name of the dead person, e.g. *amba vetra*, the *vetra* (ghost or figure) of the woman Amba.

For the designs on the figures, mostly in low relief, the following terms are used according to the Chodhri carpenter Hirji Aka of Khanpur: (a) *chandlo*, moon or *tila*, forehead-mark, (b) *modhu*, mouth or face, (c) *chhedo* or *chotalo*, hair, (d) *gho-gho*, neck, (e) *boko*, stomach, (f) *gand*, buttocks and (g) *pag*, legs.

The informants were unable to offer any explanation with regard to the relief figure cut on top of the basic figure, i.e. the board. If two figures were chiselled (like in Kanjod) or if a large and a small figure were shown in relief, it is said to represent "mother and child". Kakadia *bhagat* from Kanjod said: "If both of them, i.e. mother and child, die together, then both come together (i.e. are represented in one carving). But if only one of them dies, then there will be only one figure."

This is explained in the same way by Posla *bhagat* from Golan: "The *vetra* with two heads has been installed for a mother and her child. Both must have died."

All wooden figures are erected for the more prominent dead or for those who have died in unusual circumstances. This is explained by Maniyo, the *bhagat* in Ranveri: "*Je hatia hoy te bhut thay*, whoever is true (i.e. is a fervent worshipper) becomes a *bhut*-ghost. The wealthy people become *bhut*. *Mal milkat*, with goods and wealth (one becomes *bhut*). . . Formerly there were more of them. Nowadays there are less (i.e. *bhuts*). Today there is none. A retarded or a mad person will become *bhut*. Is not that so? Wealthy persons, strong believers and mad people become *bhut*".

Mostly however, these figures represent women who have died during pregnancy or childbirth. The souls of these women will not enter the usual *khatru*-stone, but demand special treatment, i.e. the setting up of wooden figures. Otherwise they would harass the villagers in

the form of unfriendly ghosts. Without being told specifically, it is not possible to distinguish the male from the female figure, except by the kind of objects hung on them.

So says Kakadia *bhagat* of Kanjod: "An ordinary woman who has died and does not want to be installed as a *khatru*-stone becomes *khavis bhut*; that means she has to be installed in wood. Everything (she wants, i.e. comb, bangle, mirror etc.) has to be offered to her.//* If the pregnant woman dies, she becomes *vetri*. When a pregnant woman has died, we install *khuto*, a wooden pole, on the very day when the *khatru*-stone is erected. The *khuto*-pole is installed alone and the stone is set aside. //Some people install a *khatru*-stone together with the (wooden) *vetri*-figure, figure, while others may only erect the wooden *khuto*-pole. For *khavis bhut* we usually install only a *khuto*-pole. *Ghumta ma ghalvu pade*, under the *ghumat*-dome (the wooden figure) has to be placed.// I have done it myself in this way."

It is concluded from this statement of the old *bhagat*, that particular souls of deceased persons desire to be installed in wooden figures and not in a stone with a painted figure. One can suppose that this is told by them to the *bhagat* during the *khatru*-ceremony. We arrive at this conclusion on the basis of Manyo of Ranveri's following statement: "A *bhut* is installed the same way as a *khatru*-stone. . . . (In such a case) no *khatru*-stone is erected; they only install *bhut* (i.e. wooden figure). Whose *khatru*-stone is not installed, has to get a (wooden) *bhut*. *Atkave ne ke: mare bhut banavu chhe*, (he, *jiv*-soul) stops, says: 'I want to be made *bhut*'. *Dakhlovalo*, the one who sees the sum (during the grain-oracle) finds out whether he (the *jiv*-soul) wants to be *bhut* or *khatru*. In *dakhla*-oracle (this) will come: *lakada ma ave*, (the soul will only) come in wood. . . . The same *shhakh*-verses and rituals will be performed for *bhut* as for *khatru*."

But when a pregnant woman has died, it is clear from the beginning that the slightly more expensive wooden figure with all the miniature articles is needed. Posla, *bhagat* of Golan, says: "If a pregnant woman has died, we have to install a *vetra*-figure for her, even if she does not *nade*, harass.// I have done this. The *vetra*-figure will be installed eight or fifteen days after the death has occurred."

Manyo of Ranveri explains the reason for the erection of the wooden figure for a particular group of people: "*Manah chhuta ni thay, bandhayalu j mari jay*, a person who does not become untied, but

* The sign // indicates that a question had been asked.

The sign . . indicates some omission. Explanations are given in brackets ().

remains tied. A pregnant woman (when dead) is never relieved (i.e. not 'untied'). She will become a *vetri*."—The ghosts of dead men may also be installed a second time in wooden figures. During the death-ritual such a spirit has been installed in a *khatru*-stone, but unsatisfied with this situation, the spirit might start to wander around and harass people. This is found out by the *bhagat* who insists that the wondering spirit is considered a *bhut* and is put to rest in a wooden figure and is given offerings from time to time. Kakadia *bhagat* from Kanjod had some information regarding this: "All bad persons become *bhut* (after death).// If a *bhagat* becomes a *bhut*, it can't be taken as a symptom that he was bad, but rather that he has spent his life in doing these (ritualistic) things. // I myself have installed many *bhagats* as *bhuts*. Recently I installed Nathia as a *bhut*.// *Bhut etle lakada ma j re*, a *bhut* stays only in wood. It doesn't remain in stone. *Bhut* can only stay in *sag*, teak-wood, not in any other kind of wood. The wood must be carved as a figure. . . He (i.e. the ghost) may become anything (i.e. may be seen in any form). Only when it is installed (as a wooden figure) does the *bhut* settle down.// When someone is in trouble the people may go and question (the *bhagat*) to learn the reason. The *bhagat* will find out (and say): '*A falano bhut thailo chhe*, that person has become a *bhut*'. Only when a figure has been erected can the person get well (i.e. the person, formerly molested by the ghost, has no difficulties anymore)."

This was confirmed by Posla *bhagat* in another interview. The occasion was a visit to Kelkui's large ancestral ground when he offered a coconut and wine to a newly installed wooden figure, next to which was a stone. The *bhagat* said: "*Me banavelo*, I made it. I installed this stone and the figure. Twenty days ago (this happened). He (i.e. the deceased) was with me; he was *hangath*, of my age-group. He was my colleague (as a *bhagat*). *A chitra mara hath na*, that painting is (made) by my hand.// Both the paintings (on stone and on wood) are my work. He (i.e. the deceased) became *bhut*. That is why he had to be installed with a wooden figure as well."

The installation of a wooden figure takes place either immediately after the death during the death ceremonies or later at the request of a *bhagat* who has found out that a particular soul is not satisfied with a stone and suddenly desires a wooden figure instead. The person who has to be protected from the negative influence of the angry ghost remains at home, while the *bhagat*, along with the others, erects the figure. Emphasis must be put on the fact that the small wooden figures called *vetri* are left behind by the *bhagat* somewhere in the fields

after the *bhagtai*-ceremony (see Fischer-Shah, 1972: 14 f.), while the large *vetra*-and *bhut*-figures are placed near the ancestral grounds.

Ramsinh, the Chodhri *bhagat* of Khanpur near Valod said: "If *vetra* harasses, this *vidhi*-ritual is done (as documented above).// He (i.e. the patient) remains at home.// Why should we take him along? See, all these people have gathered (just now when the *vetra*-figure has been erected). It is always like this. Other people, the neighbours and the relatives come and watch."

The figure is chiselled according to the instructions of a *bhagat*, for which the carpenter uses the following tools: *karvat*, saw; *farhi*, chisel; *vindhano*, smaller chisel; *kuhado*, axe; *pencil*, pencil; *vanhalo*, adze and *vaghodio*, wooden base (support).

When the wooden figure is to be installed, the following objects are required to be hung on the figure: *kahanki*, comb; *arhi*, mirror; *chandlo*, red tika-mark for the forehead; *bangadi*, bangles; *kidiyu*, a necklace from black small glass-beads; *katko*, red cloth.

The *bhagat* requires the following articles for the performance of the ritual: *sindur*, vermilion, *agarbati*, incense sticks; *nariel*, coconut; two red *dhaja*, flags; some *chevdo*, cereals; ghee, butter-fat; *daru*, liquor; *margu*, chicken; *chokha*, rice; some *khakhara*-leaves; a *thali*, brass plate and *rumal*, towel as musical instrument.

A number of such figures stand under a *chhapari*, roof. Posla *bhagat* says: "Such a roof has to be made for each and every *vetra*, when the rain starts. It serves as a protection for the wooden figure (i.e. where the ghost resides.)"

On a number of figures the following objects are found: *jal*, fishing net, *tadi*, pot; *dobadi*, calabash-ladle; *sagadi*, firestand for pots; *savandi*, broom.

As declared by the *bhagat* it seems that these objects have been desired by the dead person. Most of these objects have supposedly been personally used with pleasure by the dead woman during her lifetime. Posla *bhagat* explains: "*Jal*, fishing net, is there. This indicates that she (i.e. *vetra*) liked fishing. That is why it has been given."

B: THE WOODEN MEMORIAL SLAB

I THE VISUAL ASPECTS

Location

Wooden memorial slabs were found mainly in the hilly and forested areas of Songadh, Uchhal and Nizar, as well as in the villages of nearby Maharashtra. In other areas they were almost totally absent. In these primeval forest territories they were found chiefly in the villages of the Gamit, Kukna and Vasava tribes.

The wooden memorial slabs stand mostly isolated, seldom in groups or in rows. They are always erected on sites which are clearly visible, near cross roads or on mounds along the road-side leading to the village. Here, they are often under some kind of shelter like a roof on poles or a small hut with a thatched or even tiled roof; sometimes, however, they are protected only by a white cloth against dust and wind. Proper shelters usually cover only one slab, while the others have their own roof or have to make do without one, even if all of them stand in one and the same row. Holy spots of the Gods are almost never found in the immediate vicinity of these slabs; even sites for ancestral stones are often found elsewhere. With the one exception of Devlimadi near Songadh, we never came across these slabs near the sanctuaries of Gods or near wooden crocodiles, but found them always at the roadside in the proximity of the villages.

Form

The large rectangular slab with a rectangular section has a carved front with a decorated top or head. It may be carved on the narrow side strips as well but generally has a flat back. The base of the slab is buried in the earth while the slab stands vertically. As a rule, the slabs are rectangular, covered with a top-head. Seldom do the ends of these heads simply taper to a centre point. Usually, the head takes on a variety of forms. It is often arched in the form of a

semi-circle, sometimes in the form of a triangle or a trapezium, or of a circle in which further individual outlines may be carved so that in some unusual cases it appears that actual baroque rocailles have been copied. In some other cases a semicircular head is topped by an ornament which has the form of a crescent or a flame, or the rectangular back, which in section is only half of the thickness of the slab, is raised to cover the disc-like ornament. In all the cases the composed heads with their ornaments and the slab are worked out of a single wood-block. Only very rarely, some minor details of the relief-work, such as projecting noses, are attached to the slab with nails.

The front of the memorial slab is decorated. As a rule the surface is composed of several segments arranged one above the other with horizontal running bands. Most commonly the sun and moon are found in the upper part of the slab (or even carved in the head-part) whereby the sun may be shown lying over, as well as under, the crescent moon. Generally, below is represented a rider on horseback, sometimes with another smaller figure which leads the horse by the reins. Under this may be shown a cart pulled by a pair of bulls, in which a group of people are sitting, or perhaps a group of musicians with such instruments as drums, clarinets and rattles, or a dance troupe in action. This lowest segment may also be omitted or may instead show a simple, large trapezium or a large, standing hour-glass form. Sometimes a coiled up or stretched out crawling snake can also be found here, while even a crocodile is carved in one of the examples at this place.

Instead of the rider, a standing figure, mostly recognizable as a man by the clothing, can also be depicted. Only in one case was there shown in the centre a person holding a child. Further, above this scene a bird, free or encaged, or a seated or standing Ganesha may be shown. The sides are mostly flat or have carved simple ornaments like geometrical rosettes. Here the name of the commemorated dead as well as of the carver himself may be chiselled. Moreover, there are slabs in which the side surfaces are divided into vertical sections in which figures or animals are cut in simple relief, mostly worked in a rougher way than the reliefs from the front panel. In some cases the figure of the attendant still having the reins of the horse in his hands, is placed on the side panel instead of the front.

A peculiarity of the slabs of Uchhal and Nizar should also be mentioned. Just above the base, or next to the head of the rider in the front relief, or under the rider's right arm, a rectangular hole is often chiselled out of the slab, which is covered again with a matching

piece of wood. This spot is often hardly visible because it lies buried under the thick layer of vermilion. In the hollow a black, egg-shaped pebble is inserted. In other slabs we found a similar stone lying at the base of the slab on the cleared ground or also leaning against the slab. In the villages surrounding Songadh one would probably find such a stone buried under the slab.

On the whole, the slabs differ so much from each other that it would not suffice to present them only in such a generalization. In spite of all the variations, careful scrutiny shows that always some slabs have something in common: the same motifs or similar expressions, techniques etc. This means that these slabs are examples of the workmanship or personal style of a carver or a local group of carvers. Other slabs again seem to be individual pieces—or at least, we haven't found corresponding samples from the same hand. Below we attempt to describe a few of the most beautiful, impressive or interesting examples; we have placed the pieces of individual carvers first, following the unique ones.

Memorial slabs made by Holio Posalio (See plates 31, 43-46, 55, 56)

Altogether there are nine memorial slabs which we have seen and which are unanimously known to have been made by one outstanding carver. Some of them are signed with the name of "Holio", others can be attributed to him because of the composition, the selection of motifs and their style. Many of the slabs can be found in the village of Kadavidabhi, the present domicile of the carver Holio Posalio, as well as in the nearby Navagam, in Gavan and Vadpada. There is also enough information from the inhabitants of these villages to indicate that the slabs have been carved by Holio himself (See plate 29).

The slabs in question are always thick and large with a rectangular cross-section. Four fifths of the front of such a slab makes a vertical, rectangular relief-space, while the upper section forms a slight oval. This upper part is half the thickness of the slab and is chiselled out of it, towering behind as a rectangle and possibly having rounded corners as well. The back of the slab is always flat and without ornamentation, but the side-panels mostly have segments with less deep reliefs.

The frontal relief-space is divided into several, rectangular segments of different heights which are separated from each other by elevated frames. The motif of a cart pulled by two bulls, may often be found on the base. Over this carriage, there is a group of standing

figures. Then, on top of these motifs, we find the largest, horizontal field with the figure of a rider on horseback, holding a drawn sword in one hand and the reins in the other. A small figure leads the horse. On top of the horse, there is a field with oblique parallel jags or a relief-segment with a sitting bird. In the latter case, there is no carriage depicted on the base of the slab. On the oval head-part of the slab there always lies a moon crescent, over which a circular sun is carved.

All the reliefs of Holio Posalio are rather flat. The relief-ground of each is uniformly smoothed, and the surface of the relief is also plain, while just inside the face the surface is slanting towards eyes and nose. At the hip and at the ankles of some figures such slanting or modelling cuts can also be seen.

All figures on the front side of Holio's slabs are depicted en face, the horse in profile. In the side-panels of several, however, are found small rectangular vertical fields with motifs like dancing men, a man with a musical instrument or with a gun, a deer, a sitting bird or a bird in a cage. The *dobadiya*, player of the clarinet, is here depicted in profile so that his instrument can be seen better.

The memorial slabs made by Holio Posalio date from different times, and vary in preservation and in details. Two memorial slabs made by the same carver but produced at different periods of his life will be described. One can be found in Vadpada and the other in Navagam. They demonstrate the two extremes of this carver's style and give an impression of his field of variation.

(a) Memorial slab from Vadpada (See plates 31, 48)

This wooden slab has the following measurements: Height 129 cm, breadth 32 cm., depth 10 cm.—The slab is not signed, but all informants interrogated in Vadpada agreed that it was carved by Holio Posalio (see pg. 49 f.).

The slab stands upright at the dusty highroad (Uchhal/Navapur to Nizar/Taleti) outside the village of Vadpada where this road is crossed by a small, local jungle road. Behind the crossroad the forest begins. The block is very dusty and the sides are corroded by the weather. However, in spite of some vertical flaws, the condition of the slab is still good. But we should mention that there is some danger that the slab will be damaged or even destroyed by the traffic on this narrow highroad.

The base of the slab is properly fixed in the ground. Just over the earth, after an indented frame, a group of four standing figures is depicted. They are represented in a simplified way, with short legs and foot-stumps, slim, rectangular bodies over which high oval faces appear. The arms lie horizontally and are joined to each other. Only the outer ones hang down, one slanted the other one bent at its vaguely marked elbow. The faces are distinguished by their long, triangular noses, which break out of the thin foreheads. The eyes and mouths are only indicated by deepenings around the noses. After a strap which is divided by two horizontal chip cuts, comes the largest rectangular segment with the depiction of the horseman. The legs of the horse end on top of, but separated from, the indented frame which enshrines the rider. The animal has a barrel-shaped body and four thin, slightly bent legs with marked trammels and hoofs. The long tail hangs down, the head is thin, the mouth is open and the ears appear as two right tips. The rider is shown only as an upper body with two arm-straps and a big, pointed oval head. The right arm lies horizontally and in its hand, which has visibly marked finger-groove, it holds a drawn sabre, whereas the other arm hangs down obliquely to the neck of the horse. Between the mouth and the neck of the horse reins can be seen. A small standing figure also reaches for them with his right arm bent upwards. The thin, rectangular body of this attendant figure ends in a blunt, globular head, and the base of the body is divided into two legs. The left arm hangs down.

The rider's face is similar to the faces of the group of standing figures. It is shaped like an oval, standing on a point. The nose is cut as a vertical grated strap, at the upper end of which the eyes are shown as protruding cylinders. The forehead—the space between the eyes and the top of the head—is very narrow. Hair and ears are not depicted, or at least they are not visible any more. Nor can a mouth be seen but it might have been chiselled out as a square hole which is now corroded and filled up with dust.

In a flat rectangle over the horseman and separated from it by a decorated strip, there is a seated bird represented with two thin short legs, and a closed body-form. Its tail hangs down, its head is crowned and its beak bent, giving it the appearance of some kind of peacock or ginea-fowl. On top of the bird, again separated by the strip, there is a segment of about the same size which is hatched by diagonal jags, giving the impression of a dotted field.—The head-piece forms a reclining oval of half the thickness of the slab with a small crown-like emblem on the top. The centre of the oval is filled with sun and

crescent which are outlined by simple chip-cuts. The recessed part of the slab's top is undecorated and has rounded corners.

The two side-panels of this slab are ornamented. Their reliefs are not so deep as the reliefs on the front side, and the figures look as if they are stretched, thin and long, to fit better into the vertical segments. In the base segment of the east panel there are two figures. One of them has his arm hanging down, while the other one shows his elbows and probably beats a drum (which is now corroded). Over them there is a larger figure in the middle of the segment, holding in one of his hands a tool with a helve, most probably an adze or an axe. In a small segment over this figure a pecking bird is depicted.—In the base segment of the opposite side panel (oriented towards the east) there are two men, one of them having his one arm bent upwards and holding a long stick in the other; thus the stick is erected between the two men who are most probably shown as dancers. On top of them, a man is depicted whose thin body ends as a globular head and who has thin legs. In front of his head there is a strip, bent almost in a circle perhaps depicting a calabash clarinet. In the segment over it, a big musket with the barrel turned upwards is shown and over this again—in another segment—a deer, represented as a slightly slanted barrel with four straps hanging down as legs and a small head with two antlers, one of which has two branches. The upper most segment is hatched with parallel jags.

The particular qualities of this memorial slab, which can in no way be appreciated by just describing the single motifs depicted, are the uniformity of the monument and, in the figures, the successful simplification of the outlines to rectangular and circular basic forms—whereas other lines are kept irregularly soft and slightly flowing. The single motifs always have sufficient space in their segments, but equally fill them. The surface of the relief is smooth and even, while the edges are bevelled—perhaps by the weather or by use. The means of manufacture are simple, and the motifs are few; however, they are used in such a way that the sculpture looks neither clumsy nor boring, but is of rustic sensibility and—if such an aesthetic comparison is allowed at all—it remains one in some way of the most beautiful examples of the art of the Baule tribe on the Ivory Coast in West-Africa.

(b) Memorial slab from Navagam (See plate 55)

The measurements of this slab are: Height 160 cm., breadth 25 cm., depth 12.5 cm. and depth of the relief about 2 cm.

The slab stands on a mound on the other side of the river near Navagam, the border-line between Gujarat and Maharashtra, beside another somewhat smaller slab, made by the same carver.

The two memorial slabs stand erect under a scaffolding of poles which has formerly carried a roof. Now-a-days they are only protected by an enormous tree, under which there is a small sanctuary with many votive figures made out of clay.

On the slab itself an inscription in Gujarati letters which connected with a line in the upper part says: "Shinga Resma Vasave . . . 1. 2. 19". The inscription refers to the decease and is not signed by the artisan. Information from the bereaved (see pg.), the carver's notification and, last but not least, the art of composition, tell that it has been made by Holio Posalio.

The slab is well preserved. The front has formerly been coated with a layer of *sindur*, vermilion, and the surface is still smooth, whereas the side-panels show work in sharp-edged relief. One side is slightly corroded.

The rectangular slab with a circular head-plate half as thick as the slab is rather thin but particularly high. Therefore almost all the relief-segments of the front surface are vertical rectangles. At the base, over a segment which is not ornamented, there is a bullock-cart depicted in an almost square segment. The two bulls are depicted in profile one on top of the other, over and under the horizontal shaft; they have thick bodies and four thin strip-like legs. The yoke lies vertically between their thick necks and the tip of the ears and horns. The shaft consists of two bars, beginning at the strengthened part of the rectangular section of the cart. The two disc-like wheels which have no spokes and are shown as full circles are placed at the two long sides of the cart. Within the cart a small man is shown who stretches out one arm. Over this segment and separated from it by a fillet with two zigzag bands and indented frame-edges there is a group of three standing figures. The bodies of these figures consist of shoulder-triangles on top of rectangular bellies with slightly swelling hips and straight legs. The feet can be recognized as tops. The arms are missing. Within the almost circular heads the noses are depicted as fillets; besides them are the round, protruding eyes.

There is hardly enough room for the rider on a horse in the narrow central segment. The tail of the horse touches the edge of the slab and its head even laps through the frame-work on the other edge. The hoofs of the horse with their heavy fet-locks are sepa-

rated from the base only by a cleft. All the four legs are slightly bent; they are shown as equally broad straps, distributed in equal distances under the belly; only the last back-thigh is slightly strengthened. The head of the horse, which is about half as broad as the head of the rider, hangs down as a bent cylinder with two triangular ears. It is connected with the neck by the reins. Only the upper part of the rider with his rectangular body, is shown. One of his arms is horizontally stretched out and holds a sabre, the other one falls obliquely down to the reins. This arm is bevelled at the spot where it touches the neck of the horse so that one gains the impression that the reins lie behind the neck of the horse and are grasped there.—The head of the rider is slightly shifted on the body, but shown without a neck-connection. It is a pointed oval and broad at the temples. The central, triangular nose is flanked by two big, circular eyes, the contours of which have been cut out of the relief. The mouth is only shown as a small square hole. The forehead is narrow and no head-gear is depicted.—In the same relief-segment under the head of the horse a small attendant is represented as a clumsy figure with a rectangular body, a globular head and one arm erected to reach the reins of the horse while the other one hangs down. Because of the narrowness of the segment, this attendant-figure takes the place of the lower part of the side frame of the segment.—In the same segment, beside the head of the horseman, there is a rectangular hole which is covered with a small matching plate; because of the different layers of *sindur*, vermilion, the spot is hardly visible anymore.

On top of the central segment there is a field with parallel jags. Over this, the head-piece shows a nearly circular disc crowned by a small knob in front of the upper part of the slab which stands behind the disc like an arch.

The bottom halves of the side panels are ornamented with narrow vertical relief-segments. On the one side a man carrying a gun, two men embracing each other as in a row-dance, two men with a ceremonial stick between them and a clarinet-player (in profile) are depicted. Further, there is an inscription of five lines in Gujarati letters.

The particularities of the figures on the side-panels are the long bodies with short legs and arm stumps. Generally a vertical line is cut along the hips to pronounce the short abdomen and the long rectangular chest.—The faces are often broad with short foreheads, remarkably large, round eyes and slender noses. The deepening under the noses (philtrum) may be accentuated by a thin vertical jag across the face as if the carver wanted to give the impression of a thin moustache.

On the whole, this memorial slab is—stylistically—less balanced and also made with less precision than the memorial slab from Vadpada. However, the somewhat coarse and unrealistic figures with their heads, slim bodies and pop-eyes have their own fascination.

Further memorial slabs from Gavan and Kadavidabhi which are made by Holio Posalio show that his art of composition and expression varies between these two possibilities. Sometimes his figures are clumsier, but sometimes the face of a rider is still more expressive (i.e. on a slab in Kadavidabhi) because of the eyebrows being indicated as two slightly bent jags and the ears by small attached bulgings.—There can hardly be perceived a clear tendency of his stylistic development by analysing the few pieces which we have found; even with the help of the chronology given by the carver himself, it is not possible, although, successively the eyes and the ears gain more importance and the later works are made with more haste. On the other hand, they show more details and more persons with instruments or tools. The corporality, as well, looks more differentiated than on the older ones.

Finally, for the sake of completeness, a peculiar representation of a pair of musicians on one memorial slab from Kadavidabhi has to be mentioned. The upper body of one man is formed by a triangle with hanging down shoulders, whereas his correspondent has a slim, rectangular body with horizontally attached arms.

Memorial slabs made by Tinmauli (See plates 33, 52)

In the village of Mohini (Uchhal area) we found two memorial slabs made by Tinmauli from the village of Chichpada, and in Navagam (border to Maharashtra) we found a further one, also made by him. His name as a famous carver was mentioned quite often to us in this area and it is very probable that there are many more memorial slabs made by him in the Uchhal area. Tinmauli is a “modern” carver within the local tradition, but his memorial slabs are more realistic than the works of other artisans and they are notable by their many inscriptions. They also have notations such as “Shri Ohm” or “Shri Rama”. Further Hindu influences show inscriptions like “*paratiyabhai savargavasi*, brother Paratiya stay in heaven” and the U-shaped (vishnuite) sign on the forehead. All the same, Tinmauli’s slabs are impressive. As example we shall describe one of his memorial slabs in Mohini.

The slab stands at the entrance to the village on a mound beside the road. It is installed there under a shelter of poles, covered with tiles.

One enters the shed through a door made of bamboo-canes. A second memorial slab which is carved by Tinmauli as well stands under another shelter beside it. The slab is 147 cm. high, 30 cm. broad and 15 cm. deep. The relief-work is 7 cm. deep. The slab has an inscription, indicating that it was made in 1957 by Tinmauli from Chichpada for Kothiyo. Thus the slab is comparatively new. It is kept in a good condition with a very thick layer of shimmering vermilion-oil-mixture, and is partly covered with a white cloth.

The slab is slim and high, rectangular in section, the upper corners are rounded, and a small ornamental top is carved out as a head-piece. The front is divided into three segments of about the same size. Over a band with protruding hemispheres three female figures are carved. They are all of the same size, have large oval heads with high foreheads showing no hair, the central parting of which however can still be seen clearly on other figures of this sculpture. Over the eyes there is a horizontal eyebrow-jag. The noses are long and heavy, the mouth is hardly visible and the ears are small lumps. These rather large heads are placed with short necks on small bodies with hemispherical breasts. The figures wear short skirts, ending over the knees. The legs are shown with bulges and the feet project. The arms seem to lie on the shoulders of the neighbour-figure, the short arms of the two outer figures hang down obliquely.

After a rather large vacant space there is a broad fillet, on which the foot of the rider's horse is placed. The horse is vividly drawn, the two front legs step out, while the back legs are shown standing on the ground with their hooves. The saddle and the rider's two feet which hang down under the belly of the horse can hardly be seen under the thick coating of vermilion. The horseman, however, is only shown with his rectangular upper body, on which the arms are fixed at right angles to the shoulders. One of his hands holds up the sabre and the other one the reins. The head which is placed by a very short neck on the body is a long oval with a high forehead. (It is possible that the headgear or the hair is covered by the vermilion coating as are all the other details of the face which are hardly visible).

The horse is led by a small figure which stands under the head of the horse and holds the reins with one raised hand.

Over the horseman there is a horizontal band with an inscription and in the lower left part of the uppermost segment there is a circle with an indented edge into which a well modelled face is carved. On the right side, slightly elevated within a segment of a circle, with the straight line on top, appears another head.

On the side panels are further reliefs. Unlike the fully plastic deep reliefs of the front side, the ones on the side-panels are flat and only slightly elevated. They show scenes with active persons, e.g. a man churning butter or two dancers, one of them swinging a ritualistic stick and the other one a rattle in his raised hand. Mostly, these side-panel figures are shown in profile and in movement. The butter churner e.g. has pulled one of his shoulders back, while the other arm is held in front. The churning stick is shown in a large earthen pot and is twice-fixed to an imaginative wall which corresponds with the frame of the panel.

The other reliefs made by Tinmauli are similar. In Navagam, however, he has carved 1958 according to the inscription—a small cart with two bulls under the group of three figures. The bulls are shown on top of each other, but the cart is depicted in profile with two wheels side by side. Four small figures are sitting in the cart.—The side-panel of this slab shows a churning scene as well, but the other motifs are a cow, a clarinet player, a drummer, two people dancing and a long inscription of seven lines.

The figures from the front side of memorial slabs made by Tinmauli hardly differ from each other, while the riders, however, have in all three cases special kinds of headgear, e.g. a bulge-like turban, or a kind of cap or the hair with a parting, i.e. no headgear at all. Another feature is remarkable: Tinmauli's segments of the front sides have no side-frames, that is, the deep relief-grounds are drawn to the side-edges and the figures are shown in a kind of 3/4 modelling.

Memorial slabs of Jaterio Suthar (See plates 49, 57)

In the villages of Gavan and Karod (both Uchhal area) we found pieces of work made—according to local informants—by an artisan with the name of Jaterio Suthar, the carpenter Jaterio. He is supposed to live in Marod, a village nearby. The slabs we came to know have all been made only a few years ago.

(a) Memorial slab in Gavan

This slab has the following measurements: Height 132 cm., breadth 33 cm., depth 18 cm. and depth of the relief 4 cm.

The slab stands upright together with other memorial slabs under a crumbling shelter at the roadside on a mound. It is cracked lengthwise, but in other respects it is still well preserved and on its front is coated with vermilion.—The slab is for a small girl (see pg.48)

and was installed about three years ago. It has been carved by Jatherio, the carpenter from Marod village, according to information given by the *sarpanch*, headman of the village.

The slab has a rectangular cross section and a large vertical-rectangular relief front followed on top by a somewhat deformed circular head-piece in which are carved a large sun with a face and over it a small moon crescent. The main relief field is framed by two rows of big, irregularly pyramidal knobs. The base is vacant; in a large segment over it a large trapezoid is cut. It stands on its narrow part and is covered with jags. In its centre a square hole is cut out and covered with a wooden plate, the surface of which matches with the decoration of the environment. Over this there is a broad horizontal fillet, on top of which the horse and rider are depicted. The horse stands firmly with his four legs on the ground, his bent head touches the side-band which at this point is left open to give space to the motif. A small man, as broad as the knob-band and replacing it, stands under the head of the horse, but does not hold any reins. The rider sits with the upper part of his body on the horse; he holds a sword in one hand and the reins in the other. The rider's head is spherical, and the triangular nose is remarkably large. The eyes are no longer visible, but most probably they are small and covered under the thick crust of vermilion. The ears are made as half-circles with inside hollows, and are attached to the sides of the head. A sickle-shaped thin headgear is separated from the forehead by a jag.—On top of the rider there is a group of five men, who are all hold hands with each other. They are uniformly depicted; all of them have short legs with the feet turned outwards, a strap as a belt and a broad, v-shaped upper body with armstumps and round heads, into which only the triangular noses have been carved.

Jatherio's relief-work is rather high; sometimes the contours are sharply angled, while sometimes, however, the surface of the motifs is modelled or obliquely carved as it is done for the inside forms. The means are sparse but the results expressive.

(b) **Memorial slab in Karod**

This slab has the following measurements: Height 166 cm., breadth 30 cm. and depth 13 cm.

The slab stands together with a group of other slabs outside the village of Karod under a large tree. The slab in question has a shelter on four poles and is well preserved. It was erected only a few years ago for a woman called Jiru who was stabbed by her husband,

It is coated with vermilion, but some spots are painted green or silverish with oil-colour. The assembled informants have attributed the slab to the carpenter Jaterio from Marod.

In motifs and style this slab resembles very much the one from Gavan. It has the same frame of knobs through which the head of the horse breaks together with the small attendant figure; however, here the large trapezoid is placed on its broad part and the group of figures on top of the rider is divided into two looser rows of three persons each. The side panels are underdecorated as well.

A second slab in Karod is very similar, but slightly rougher and less well proportioned. There are two rows of attendant figures, one with three and one with two figures, this being the only remarkable difference between the two local slabs made by Jaterio.

II. INFORMATION CONCERNING THE MAKING AND INSTALLING OF A WOODEN MEMORIAL SLAB

The following texts are mainly parts of informal talks which we had in the village of Karod (Uchhal area) with the *sarpanch*, headman of the village, the *bhagat* of the village and the one son of a woman called Hiru. Some more information has been collected in the village Kadavidabhi (in the adjacent parts of Maharashtra) from the wood-carver Holio Posalio and in the village of Jamkadi (Songadh area) from the *bhagat* and wood-carver Radatia Jethia. All these talks have been translated from a tape. The information has been analysed and cut into informative units, most of which are given below. They are not arranged in chronological order. Some more information can be obtained from the account from Vadpada (see pg.49 ff). Since we have not seen the production nor the installation of a wooden memorial slab, we abstain from comments and give the communications even if they are contradictory.

Introductory and general remarks

The *bhagat* of Karod-village (Uchhal area) has told us how he was called to another village to install there a wooden memorial slab. That slab was already made by a local carpenter. The information, however, shows that for the making of the slab a craftsman as well as a *bhagat* is needed. This *bhagat* says: "I installed a (wooden) *khambha*, memorial slab, in the village of Vavadi.// It was made for a woman who had been killed by a cobra-bite. That had happened in the village of Bilbara. They (i.e. the family members of the deceased) called me. // Bilbra is about seven miles away from Vavadi. // Eight, ten, fifteen days after the death has occurred, they will install the *khambha*, memorial slab. // When I arrived there, the *khambha* had allready been carved. .. The carpenter had been working outside the-house, // under a tree in the field. // From the jungle a tree will be cut. . . // *Bhagat's* work is the first work (temporarily as well as from the point of significance). // He has to offer *shhakh*, libation. Only then, the tree can be cut and the *dingo*, log, can be brought (to the place for carving). // (For that libation) the other *bhagat* (from the village itself) had come. He must have done the offering (at the tree in the jungle). .. (When the carving of the wooden slab is completed) the *bhagat* had to *nishan*, sign it. // Yes, certainly, *pavan*, wind (i.e. trance) was there, when I signed the *khambha*. // Six or seven days are needed to repare and install a *khambha*, memorial slab."

Cutting a tree

Usually, the memorial slab is carved from a fresh, unseasoned log of teak-wood. The tree is selected in the forest and cut after a short ritual (compare Fischer-Shah, 1971:20 f.). During this procedure all the relatives of the deceased, including the women, may be present. The *sarpanch*, head man and the *bhagat* of the village of Karod record how this happened when the *khambha* for the woman Jiru was made: "About five years ago, we installed the *khambha* for Jiru. The work was done within seven days. // (For cutting the tree in the forest) many people came along with us. // All together, we were about thirty. From here (i.e. the village) we went in the forest. There was one bullock-cart and the others were walking. // In the cart sat the driver and the *bhagat*. // In this cart, were women as well. They were singing songs. // O yes, *pavri*, a clarinet, was there, as well as *baleti*, rattle-sticks. When we were to make a decision (which tree was to be cut down) we had to keep in mind that on this *ning*, piece, figures have to be drawn (i.e. the log must have a large diameter). // We all selected the tree and then it could be cut. // No, not one person selects (the tree). Everybody can choose. *Badhana dil ma avevu joiye*, it should come in everybody's heart (i.e. it should please all). Then only (i.e. after general agreement) the tree can be cut. Before the tree is felled, the *bhagat* performs the libation. // A coconut is needed as well as *sarbat* of *sakar*, a sweet drink; sugar cane, *agarbati*, incense-sticks and *choka*, rice-grain are also needed. // For us Vasava-people, liquor should also be there. // At that moment, a chicken is not needed. But milk should be offered. . . While the tree is felled (by some men), all the other people dance (in the jungle). (This happens as well) when they lift the log and take it away. // Nobody laments, they only sing."

The wood-carver Holio Posalio from Kadavidabhi (near Navagam in Maharashtra) gives information about the qualities which a tree must possess to be suited as a working-block for a memorial slab. Holio says: "*Ubho nilo joje*, (the tree) should be straight and green. *Huko ning kadhata udi jay*, a dried thing (i.e. tree) may break or crack (when the carving takes place). *Char hath lakhadu hidho joje, bijo vanko chale*, four hands (long) the wood should be straight, the rest can be bent."

Furthermore, the carver Holio is of the opinion that a *bhagat* has not to be present at this stage of the working process; the wood-carver is able to perform the libation himself. This might have been the case in the above-mentioned example as well. Holio says: "For deciding

upon a tree (for the working-block) and for felling this tree, the *bhagat* is not needed. I myself will go. I have to offer *shhakh*, libation. At that time (i.e. when the tree is selected and cut) *dah, bar gavaha lok reto*, ten, twelve villagers come (along)."

That a *bhagat* is needed, is imputed by the *bhagat* of Jarod when he says : "The carpenter and the *bhagat* stay together from the very beginning.// Both of them offer *shhakh*, libation (before felling the tree). First of all, the *bhagat* has to offer libation.// Afterwards, the carpenter will offer. The carpenter will offer (only) *shhakh* of milk...//He leans his *vanhelo*, adze, *vindaho*, chisel, and *karvat*, saw, (against the tree which is to be felled and receives the libation).// And then and there we offer *shhakh*."

Carving the memorial slab

The carving of a memorial slab takes place outside the village at a suitable place, generally in the shadow of an old tree. The carpenter (or wood-carver) and, most probably, the *bhagat* remain there for the period of work. Food and beverages are sent from the village. Men from the village come to the place of work, while women, however, seem to be forbidden to watch and to be present at the actual working site; they remain in the village and only indirectly influence the carving.

About the atmosphere at the working-site the *sarpanch*, headman of Karod says : "We brought that log and placed it under a *mahuda*-tree. That is about one phalong (i.e. ca hundred meter) away from the village.// (That place) was on the fields of the deceased. Where they want to work, there they work.// No, the *bhagat* doesn't tell them... (For Jiru's *khambha*) our carpenter was Jateria from the village of Marod.// He got the food from our house.// We have to give him food. Where the *khambha* is carved, *mota loka he mukam rehe*, bigger (i.e. more important) people stay there. They give *man*, honour, respect (to the carpenter?). They offer *agarbati*-and *dhup*-incenses all the day long. //At night (the men) sleep there. They stay only there; everybody sleeps there, everybody eats there.// Only when all the work has been done, they go home. Till then, they don't (leave the place).// We can't say 'no' to anyone who comes (to the working-site) and we have to spent *kharch*, wealth (at such an occasion). Whoever comes, will be fed. We can't say: 'You can't come!' We have to give food to everyone who comes. *Benu*, sisters (i.e. all women) are not allowed there. //Nathi, no (never). *Jaya sudhi tayar thai jay, tyan sudhi bailok ne nathi avava deta*, till (the *khambha*) is ready, womenfolk are not allowed to

come.// When felling the tree, they can be present and later (when the slab has been carved) they can come. Their part (during these days) is the singing. *Padva lage tyare be git gay*, when (the tree) falls, they also sing. *Ghade tyare be git gay*, when (he) carves, they also sing; *ning kadhe tyare be git gay*, when (he) draws figures, they also sing."

The *bhagat* from Karod supplements this information : "*Bhagat kayam bese*, the *bhagat* sits there permanently. Two men have to sit there. A *bhagat* has to be near the carpenter."

Another peculiarity is mentioned by the same informant : it seems that water is not allowed at the working-site and is substituted by milk (and more probably, by liquor). The *bhagat* says : "Before beginning to carve, the carpenter offers *shhakh*, libation (to the working-block).// His *shhakh* is milk. Milk is needed all the time. Only when we bring *jiv soul* (or stone), *shhakh* will consist of liquor.// *Pani re*, water is forbidden (by ritualistic concepts). That is why they (carpenters) have to offer *dudh*, milk, always when a libation is to be done."

The *sarpanch*, headman of the village of Karod describes the working methods of a carpenter such as Jaterio from Marod whom he himself had observed. To us this description seems more or less true for most carvers of this area. The *sarpanch* says : "They (i.e. the carpenters) start to make *ning*, the figure. First of all, they *chitri le*, draw everything.// With the pencil (they work).// *Chitar badhoj tayar kari de*, every design is ready with the carpenter (i.e. the carpenters have fixed ideas of what to draw). Nobody has to tell (i.e. to a carpenter what he should draw).// Whatever is his *yadi*, list (i.e. repertory), that he will carve. //(At the working-site) *bhagatlok, sutharlok, 'bhagat-folk'* and 'carpenter-folk', are there. Why should we tell them (what they should represent)? They know everything—why should we speak? They (i.e. carpenter) only draw. They alone make the memorial slab ready."

The same informant contradicts himself at another instant by saying : "When the carpenter starts (drawing the details of the relief) he asks whether something special should be drawn.// If there was a serpent-bite (the reason for the death of the person to be commemorated) the serpent has to be drawn; if there was stabbing, the axe has to be drawn." At this moment, the *bhagat* interrupts the *sarpanch* and says : "Whosoever has been affected (i.e. has been killed or died) should be depicted. But the snake (or the reason) has not to be drawn. / But is there not a snake shown on a *khambha* in Karod-village? / Is it there? Where? "

This *bhagat* had the opinion that only the deceased person has to be depicted on the memorial, not any symbol or sign for the reason of his death or for the actual cause. Not to contradict, the *sarpanch* continues with the following statements: "Whoever died will sit on the horse (i.e. will be represented as a rider). // Man or woman—all deceased will be shown on the horseback. If a man is drawn, he will have a sword in his one hand and *ras*, reins, in the other. At the bottom, they place the *gitvali*, (female) singers. On this location the *chaker-noker rahene*, servants stay."

The representation of women as singers or as attendants, sitting in the bullock-cart, is remarkable in so far as all informants used to point out that these figures represent individuals, members of the family of the deceased. From a memorial slab in Sakerda-village, e.g., the *bhagat* Radatia Jetia says:

"On this horse (carved on the memorial slab) sits Bhilia Ukadia, who died unhappily about 45 years ago. In front of his horse stands his brother Jethia and in the cart are his daughters, Nandali and Jotari, and his wife Revali."

That individuals are represented by these "attendant figures" is illustrated by the *sarpanch*, head man of Karod. He describes how the female relatives of a deceased person let the carver of the memorial slab know in which way they themselves wish to be shown. The *sarpanch* says: "The women speak in the house. When we go home (from the carving-site), they tell us (what they think about the memorial slab). One of the women will ask the carpenter (through her husband) to *padave balia*, put on a necklace (i.e. carve one figure with a necklace as her 'portrait') Whatever they wear in the ear, they will request the carpenter to draw (on the memorial slab). If in one woman's ear is a *motiya*-earring, it should be *peravjo*, worn, in the *khambha*. If there is *kanto*-(lit. thorn)-nosering in the nose, it should be worn there (as well)."

Finally, there is one good observation by the *sarpanch* of Karod about the actual drawing of motifs on the slab. He says: "He (i.e. the carver) starts at the base (of the slab with the drawing). But first (of all) he draws the sun and the moon, and then only he goes on (drawing the other motifs)."

This seems quite possible; when the *bhagat* Radatia Jethia drew the different motifs, while we could observe the same order carving a wooden crocodile (see Fischer-Shah, 1971:22f): He, too, drew first the sun and moon and then turned the working block to carry on with other motifs like a pair of riders.

Collection of the soul-stone

The wooden *khambha*, memorial slab, is placed over a small soul-stone (see pg. 26) in the environment of Songadh. The *bhagat* Radatia Jethia explains how this is done: "My father was put *jiv*-soul, in this *khambha*, memorial slab. From the spot where the deceased has died, my father has taken a stone. At that spot my father has stroked the stone (with a sickle): if the stone breaks, the stone can't be used. If it gives sparks, the *bhagat* says: '*Andar ena jivano kai to bi vaso chhe*, it has life, even a small part of it is (visible) there. My father brought that particular stone here and the *khambha* was placed over it. The *khambha* is the guardian of the *jiv*, soul.'"

Another form of installing a *khambha*, memorial slab together with a stone has been reported by a young, anonymous informant near the memorial slabs of Khodada village (Nizzar area). The young man says: "A carpenter from my own village, Khodada, the Vasava Jaterio Verji, has made this *khambho*. He has carved it within one day. The father of Bhartyo, who has been drowned, has spent the money for it. When the *khambho* has been installed, a *murgi*, hen, has been put *jivti*, alive, under the memorial slab. (On the slab) *chhokra no mukh kadhlo a*, the boy's face is made. // (Around the slab they have hung, still visible *limbu ne doru*, lemon and thread (i.e. means against the evil eye etc.)."

The *sarpanch*, headman of the village Karod, however, has given the most detailed description of how a soul-stone is used together with the memorial slab, a custom prevalent in Vasava areas. The *sarpanch* says: "When the carving of the *khambha*, memorial slab, is done, the *bhagat* goes there (i.e. where the death has occurred) in the early morning hours and brings it (i.e. the *jiv*-stone). // Where ever the person has been killed, from the very spot the *bhagat* will collect a stone which is called *jiv*. // There is always stone (to be found). // *Bhagat*, carpenter, men and women went (to the place where Jiru was bitten by the snake) and brought the *jiv*-stone . . . All the relatives and other people (from the village) go there together and bring (the soul-stone) and see *jiv* life (i.e. the sparkling of the stone when hit with a sickle by the *bhagat*). // When they start to dig out the stone from the ground, the women begin to cry. Otherwise they sing. Whosoever is from the house (of the deceased) might lament. The *jiv*-stone is wrapped in a new cloth and placed on to *arti*, a brass dish. Some rice-grains are sprinkled over it. Women sing all the way (home). A thread is tied around the cloth (with the stone). // The cloth is about that long (i.e. one metre). // Other things (i.e. like vermilion) are applied later on only. //

(At that spot) first the *jiv*-stone is washed with water, then with milk and finally wrapped in a cloth and tied with the thread. It is placed in the *thali*-dish. // The *jiv*-stone is to be carried to the *khambha*, memorial slab, and both of them are carried in a bullock-cart to the house of the deceased. // The memorial slab stands upright. // The *jiv*-stone remains in the *thali*-plate. // The *bhagat* sits in the cart and three, four or five women ought accompany him. Small girls were (formerly) sitting (in the cart with the *bhagat*). The *pavri*-clarinet player might sit in the cart as well. And then they carry the *khambha*, memorial slab, into the house. // The *bhagat* carried the *jiv*-stone into the house. // The singing is there. Now they (i.e. women) will lament again, when they (i.e. *bhagat*) sit with the *khambha*. For one day and one night they play *tamaso*, a dance-drama. The following day they install the memorial slab. The *tamaso*, dance-drama starts at night. *Songaria*, groups of singers, are there; dancing and playing is there. The women do not sing when the *tamaso* dance-drama is performed. In the *tamaso*-drama they show the *gando*, madman, or the *chhakto*, irascible man, the bridegroom or the (lascivious) woman. // No, a witch does not appear in this *tamaso*-drama."

The ritual by which the soul is inserted into the stone has not been described by our informants. However, from the above mentioned details we can conclude that *khambha*, the memorial slab, as well as the *jiv*-stone (which is never called *khatru* by these Vasava informants!) are carried together in the house of the deceased and a ceremony as well as a dance-fast takes place before the memorial slab is installed at its actual site.

Installing the memorial slab

The *bhagat* decides upon the site which is suitable for installing the memorial slab. The slab is taken together with the stone to that place and receives there some offerings. This, at least, can be concluded from the following statement of the *bhagat* of the village of Jarod. He says: "All (i.e. men and women) can go and see the site (i.e. where the memorial slab will be installed). // The *bhagat* is the one who goes there and cleans the ground. He checks whether the spot is suitable or not. The real seeing (i.e. selecting) is done by the *bhagat* (and all the villagers just accompany him). That morning (i.e. when the memorial slab is installed) some people will remain at the *khambha*, while others go to the river to take a bath. // Men and women go there during the early morning hours. After drinking tea (together), they (i.e. the men) will place the *khambha* in the bullock-cart and drive to the site (where it shall be installed). // The *jiv*-stone remains in the

thali-plate. // We had about 150 people with us (i.e. when Jiru's *khambha* was installed). // A ditch was made and the *khambha* was placed in it upright. Now we had to wash it with water and milk. Then we rubbed oil on it and at the end we applied *sindur*, vermilion. After that had been done, we worshipped. // By saying the name (of the deceased) we worshipped. At this instance nobody laments. All the women are singing. After we have (i.e. the *bhagats*) worshipped, everyone will come, one after the other, and will give *shhakh*-libation to the *khambha*.

Then the *jiv*-stone has to be brought. In the *khambha* there will be a *dagali*, hollow, which is *kochi ne*, carved out. In this the *jiv*-stone is inserted. // That hollow can be called *gabadi* as well.

// (For Jiru's *khambha*) the following items were offered (i.e. placed near the *khambha*): *motiya*-earring, *kanta*-nosering and *farko*, cloth. Finally *punj* was offered."

The ceremonial as well as festive character of such a deed is described rather taciturnly by Bogo Rupo, a Vasava from Navagam (Uchhal area, border to Maharashtra): "Dagad, stone is (made) *jiv*-soul-stone. One hole is *vindh*, cut (in the memorial slab). *Bhagat dagat thev*, the *bhagat* puts the stone (in this hole). *Patli thev*, (he) puts a (small) wooden board (over the hole). *Randa mara*, he makes it plane. // First (they) wash (the stone) with water, then (they) wash with cow-milk. *Bhagat puja patri*, the *bhagat* worships and places the stone in the hole. The goat is being cut at some distance (from the erected slab) and then (the man who has installed the slab) *bhandar de*, gives a feast. (He) *jevan de*, gives a dining. // *Tyaj varsala pandra dihe thovla*, within fifteen days after his death (the wooden slab of Reshmo Jivo) was installed."

The upkeep of the memorial slab

All memorial slabs have to be worshipped once a year. They receive a new layer of *sindur*, vermilion, and—most probably—a libation of *shhakh*. The wood-carver Holio Posalio from Kadavidabhi says: "Each year all the family members of the deceased have to worship him. They can do it alone (i.e. without calling a *bhagat* or other villagers). If they omit it, *kai to bhi thokare pade*, some sort of hindrance may occur."

The *sarpanch*, head-man of the village of Gavan (Uchhal area), Jola Chandia, explains this. He says: "The family members can worship (the memorial slab) any day before the rain has started. It can be done at *divali* or *holi* (i.e. Hindu festivals). The *khambha*, memorial slab, can be worshipped four or five times a year. It can be done on any day. *Sindur*, vermilion, and *mitu tel*, sweet oil (i.e. eatable oil) have to be applied together."

III. DENOTATION AND SIGNIFICANCE

Memorial slabs are generally referred to as *khambha*. However, the term *palia* which is common in Gujarat is understood as well but hardly used.

There are terms for the different motifs depicted on the slabs. The carver Holio Posalio calls the sun *dis*, day, and the moon *chand*. The pronouciation of these two words varies in this area—the sun e.g. may be called *di* or *dih*, the moon *sand*, a term used in the Uchhal area. For Radatia Jethia—and probably also for Tinmauli—the sun corresponds to Rama, the Hindu heroe and the moon to Lakshmana, his younger brother. By Holio Posalio, the rider is called *marelo te*, the one who is dead, whereas another informant from Navagam used the expression *mari takle*, the one who is killed. In other villages, the rider is simply referred to as *manah*, man. The horse is always called *ghodo*, horse. We have never come across a special term for “rider”.

The figures carved on the front of a memorial slab—generally as a group of standing persons—are called *majur*, workers or *jivda*, beloved persons (i.e. relatives of the deceased). Both expressions were used in Navagam, whereas the informants of Karod used the terms *gitvali*, female singers and *chakernoker*, workers. For the different figures on the side panels which are shown with various instruments or tools, Holio Posalio uses the following terms : *gitariya*, singers, *hanvario*, dancer with a ceremonial stick, *pavroko*, clarinet-player, *dhol ghoryo*, drummer, *dhupariyo*, carrier of incense, *jhanjhivalo*, peson with rattle, *nachvavala*, drama player, *tarvarvalo*, sabre-dancer, *chhutar*, carpenter-carver.

“Being represented” on a slab was called *rahevu*, to remain. In Karod e.g. the informants said *chakernoker rahene*, unskilled workers stay there.

The birds depicted on the slabs were generally interpreted as *mor*, peacock, or as *popat*, wild parrot—both motifs and terms are most common in Gujarat—or as *panki*, bird; the motif of a bird in a cage was called by Holio Posalio *popat pinjaru vatki*, parrot in a cage with a bowl.

In Navagam the large trapezoid field on the bottom of the memorial slab was called *palli*, board; in Karod, however, a (specific) term was used, i. e. *khokho*, place of the heart (?). Radatia Jethia said *ghar*, house for this place.

The different rosettes were always called *ful*, flower; only Radatia Jethia used the term *tara*, star for a small rectangle and *mota tara*, large star, i.e. evening star, for a larger one.

Inscriptions are termed *nav*, name. By the *sarpanch*, headman of one village of Uchhal area the (rare) depiction of a *Ganesha* was interpreted as *marut*, which is a Gujarati term for Hanuman. This shows that even nowadays the different representations of Hindu Gods are not well known or discerned by villagers.

Very little information could be obtained about the meaning of such a slab for the person depicted. The most relevant statement is from Posalio, the carver from the village of Kadavidabhi. He said : “*Ghoda var betho kidho*, (we have) made him seated on a horse. *Deva gol gio*, (the dead person has) gone to the gods’ kindred.”

Often, however, we could get information about the reason for the installation of a specific slab; some statements are given below.

An informant in the village of Gavan said : Miro Hukio was bitten by a snake. The *khambh*, memorial slab, was made by Holio *suthar*, carpenter. That happened more then 25 years ago near *kotardu*, a small river.”

Holio Posalio said about a slab in Kadavidabhi : “I don’t remember the name of the dead person. But I know, that *vaghda e katelo*, he was eaten by a tiger.”

In the village of Khodada in the area of Nizar, we were told : “Last yar, *Bhartyo Pankya’s* son drowned in a small river. The boy was only three years old. About two weeks ago, his *khambho* was installed.”

An informant in Gavan said : “Eight years ago, Chhega Movalia fell from a tree and died. It happened in his own field.”

An anonymous informant in Karod said : “Ukadio Mango’s slab was installed here more than 25 years ago. This man died by some accident : He fell down from his bullock cart which was heavily loaded with firewood. That happened near Khandbara. He was operated on immediately, but within eight days he died. His brother Khantaria, who lived at that time in the village of Dhuli, has installed this *khambho* (in Karod). Khantaria expired this year.”

Bogo Rupo, an informant in Navagam told this story : “Reshma Jiva was sleeping in his field. (It was a hot day and) he had covered his face with a cloth and fell fast asleep. His own relative, Chiptya Jiva, went there with an axe to cut off the hands and the nose of Reshma. This happened eight years ago. (Heavily wounded) Reshma was carried to Nandurbar in Maharashtra, but there (in the hospital) he died after three days. That Chiptya was imprisoned for five years;

then he was set free. Within fifteen days after Reshma's death, his *khambha* was installed."

About the other memorial slab in Navagam, Karma Sidia said: "Shinga, the son of Reshma, was sleeping in his house. (The story took place) four years ago. Somone came unseen and stabbed him. The knife cut into his stomach, his face and all over his body. Shinga couldn't speak and he died after a day. Seven days after his death the *khambh* was installed. The murderer was never found."

Jatu, the wife of Jethia Rupa, in Navagam informed us: "My husband Jethia was killed ten years ago. We have installed a *khambho* which was beautifully carved by Tinmauli from Chichpada. You must go and see it; it stands on this side of the river (i.e. within Maharashtra), not far away, (outside the village). Kuthudia killed my husband. He was drunk. They have put him into jail for five years. My husband was killed just here (on the verandah where we are sitting)."

It should be concluded that all the memorial slabs in wood are installed for persons who have died a sudden, unexpected or violent death. Mostly, this death was caused by snake-bite, by accident or by murder. It should be noted that all wooden memorial slabs—with no exception according to our information—were installed after the death of somebody who was killed. None was erected within the lifetime of a wealthy man who died an ordinary death.

There is hardly any connection between the cause of the death of the commemorated person and the representation on the memorial slab. The only exceptions are slabs for persons who were killed by snake bite. Here the snake can be depicted. The reason may be that in the same area small boards or poles exist on which only snakes are shown. Never, in fact, are the instruments of the murderer or the cause of the accident shown. But all informants did not consent to this observations. Nevertheless, there are some indications for mnemotechnical symbols: On a slab in Uchhalmahal, erected for a man having fallen off a fast-going train over a bridge into a river and having drown immediately, a crocodile is represented on his memorial slab, which can be interpreted as a sign for his death in water. Furthermore, on the side-panels of some slabs, rifles are chiselled in. These, probably, were formerly informative motifs which have degenerated to mere ornaments.

The deceased person is not portrayed on the slab, i.e. there are no specific signs that personal charactersitics have been transposed

into the rider's features. On some memorial slabs, having been erected for a woman, even a male rider is depicted, e.g. for Jiru in Karod. As an exception to this, the rider on a memorial slab made by Holio Posalio in Kadavidabhi shows hardly visible female breasts. We might point out that sexual features, the primary as well as the secondary ones are generally only slightly indicated, hardly visible or are missing altogether, except for (all men's) moustache.

Below, we will record in detail the story of the memorial which has been carved by Holio Posalio for Gangji in Vadpada (see also pg. 28 and plates 29-31). The information has been given mainly by the sister of the deceased, Sharaja, and by Gangji's son. This informal interview is slightly shortened and the order of some parts has been changed. It tells how Gangji, a Vasava, about 25 years ago was stabbed to death by a Muslim, who wanted to have his wife Shaka. The talk of our informants was very vivid because all of them were rather drunk—a marriage was being celebrated in the village. The atmosphere was tense because of the presence of the Muslim-merchant of the village. After this talk, which was recorded on a tape, we had to leave the village at once.

The informants in Vadpada said: "Gangji is my brother. (He is) Bhima's brother... (His) father's name is Kanthod. (We are) brothers and sisters. My sister died, my brother (Gangji) was *mari takyo*, stabbed to death. Three brothers are (still) there. Four brothers were there, and two sisters where there, but one died and (the other one am) I. Only one (myself) remained. Brothers are all younger (than myself).

The first woman we brought (as wife for Gangji was) from Vasava-people... We are Vasava (as well). We are Vasava and that woman was a Vasavi.// She was from the village of Daliamba. (In fact) we are (originally) from Daliamba (as well). Mother and father are from there. We (and Gangji's future wife) were from the same village. //That woman fell ill and that is why she died. She had belonged to another husband (before she married Gangji). (We) snatched her from that man and brought her here (to the village of Vadpada). There was some fight in the market, they broke off the fight and ran away. Then they lived here.

//Saka is from Daliamba (as well). My father searched (for a new wife for Gangji) and he arranged the marriage. We made a great wedding-ceremony and brought her (to Vadpada). That was (really) *paki laggan*, a complete marriage.

//Gangji was tilling his land. (One day) the woman (Saka) ran away with the Muslim. She stayed with him (i.e. the Muslim) for five years. And (then she) came back. Then the Muslim brought a knife of this size (i.e. of full arm length). At this place (the informant points) to her waist) it was stabbed (into Gangji's body). That night was a *holi*-festival night. Everybody had danced or danced (still). He (i.e. the Muslim) 'finished' my brother when the moon was there (i.e. about three o'clock in the morning). He (Gangji) was fast asleep (after having danced and drunk that night). The *holi* was fired (i.e. the *holi*-fire had been celebrated). He (had) said : 'You all sleep. I will also sleep.' And in this way it happened. Otherwise, if Gangji were awake, he would have 'finished' him (i.e. the Muslim). (Gangji) was a strong and sturdy man. Young. His daughter was this size (she points to a fifteen-year-old girl). That girl lifted a pestle and she started to beat him (i.e. the Muslim). Beat him like anything! (The Muslim) ran away and fell down on the floor (when he reached) the (police?) bungalow. There he was caught. He gave (first) the name of our (local) *suthar*, carpenter (as being the murderer), but (finally) he was caught.

//(Gangji) could not speak after he was stabbed. And when I (i.e. his sister) went there, Vajir Miya (i.e. the Muslim) had already finished him. There only, in this (neighbouring) house it happened. //Well, five years she (i.e. Saka) had stayed (with the Muslim), then returned (voluntary to Gangji) and my brother would not leave her. // Vajir Miya was with the police. He was doing service there. He looked like an old hag. And (when he stabbed Gangji) twelve months had passed (during which Saka had lived again with Gangji). At that moment (the Muslim killed Gangji).

// Many years have passed (since Gangji was stabbed). (At that time this (grown up man) *than khato*, has eaten my breast (i.e. was nursed). I took him in my arm when I went there (where Gangji had been stabbed). Seven children have been born after his death and in the same year, in which he (Gangji) was killed the *khambo thevlo*, the memorial slab was installed. (That was) the same year, when he was killed.

// All our *jatvala*, community people, erected the *khambo*. We installed the slab with the money (received) from his daughter, who was given (as a bride) to Chichpur. The same year when he was killed, she was sent (to her husband's place and the bride-price was received). // (The memorial slab) was made by *Holio suthar*, carpenter. (He is) from Kadavidabhi. // There he is living (and he is) still alive.

// (He worked) in Kadavidabhi. He carved (the slab) in the field. In our *number* (engl. expression used for a plot of land)... Our people called the *bhagat*, priest, the *hovario log*, dancers, were brought as well. The wooden log was brought from our *kup*, area in the jungle which has been cleared for fields. The landlord gave it (i.e. the permission to cut the tree). The tree was hewn down and then—how much time it takes to make (i.e. carve) nose, mouth and all the other parts! // I was there, my brothers were there, *bhabhi*, brother's wife was there, when the tree was cut. We got the log and *khambo ghadalo*, the memorial slab was made. // (Our) landlord was good. He gave us the tree. We decided, the land-lord said : 'Take whichever (tree) you want'. We selected the tree. And in the cart we brought *katko* the log (near to the village). Then the carving started. *Hidho, khano, pano*, food, feast, water—everything had to be there, at the field (where the memorial slab was carved). Formerly (i.e. shortly after the memorial slab was erected) it was *haro*, beautiful, but now it has *lachkad pichad*, decayed, lost its beauty.

// At night (before the slab was erected) it (the slab) was *ubho keylo*. placed upright. Then all the singers sang. (After that) it was taken there and installed. (That day) we went for *bhandara*, feast. We took a goat and everything (edible and drinkable) with us. The feast was *duniyal deyno*, given to the world (i.e. everyone was invited and could participate). // All our people came when the *khambo*, memorial slab, was installed. *Dhol*, drum, *pavri*, clarinet, *jhanjh*, rattle—all instruments were played. *Bhadu vaihi ne thevlo amaha*, we installed (the memorial slab) by playing everything. When we Vasava-people installed this slab we called others as well. Bhil-people will (come and) bring their *vaju*, musical instruments. // *Hovario ghum muke*, the dancers fall into a trance. All our people gathered and had a feast. // Only Vasava (ate) together, no other people.

Dhunta he te akta ne te jagu e thambh to a, the man who goes into a trance shows where (the place is to install the slab). // We didn't put a *khatru*--stone. We installed only *khambo*, a memorial slab. . . We said: 'Install it here or there', but the *hovario*, the dancer in a trance, said: 'No, no', and they installed it (where he said) at the roadside.

// (When the slab was installed) we gave 20 to 25 Rs to the carpenter.

For about four or five days he had to work. It takes time to make (i.e. carve) everything! *Nakso kadhta var lage he, chitara ne*, to make the carving, the painter takes time.

//The carver is paid according to the size of the slab.

// The Muslim Vajir (i.e. the murderer) should never return to this area! He might return to kill a woman. That is why he should be kept in prison. In that way we informed (the judges). He should never return to this village. Even if he dies, he should be kept there, not here. He was ready to kill everyone of us... He was ready to kill my other brother as well. (But) my own husband was a servant in the Police Department (at Uchhal). He got it written (that the murderer will not be released). Everything (he got sanctioned by the authorities) and (the case is) finished.

The murderer (finally) was sentenced to twenty years in jail. He died there. His son also died. His daughter died. (The informants laugh.) His *jamai*, son-in-law, also died. The house is gone. Empt. Nothing remained.

.. Sometimes, when we are sleeping, he (Gangji) comes in the dream. (Then we have to worship his memorial slab). We need coconut, *sindur*, vermilion. Each year (we regularly) worship. No, no cock (has to be offered). Formerly (i.e. at the installation of the slab) a goat was given, but not now-a-days.

If we worship *khambho*, the memorial slab, we get *bargat vadhe*, increase of our wealth."

C: THE MEMORIAL STONE

I. THE VISUAL ASPECTS

Location

We have found memorial stones especially in the plains of Vyara and Valod, while we saw very few in the environment of Songadh. Some quite different in style were found in near Maharashtra. In Mandvi, Uchhal and Nizar, we found very few i.e. they are more or less absent in the mountain and forest regions. Most of such memorial stones have been installed for the Gamit population.

These memorial slabs made of stone are often erected on the ground where the ancestor-stones are installed. Usually, they replace one or a number of these small stones or pebbles which are natural or only slightly painted. They are standing together in one and the same row as e.g. in Dumkhal or in Kanjod near Valod. In some other cases they might stand alone or in pairs at the edge of the field or in a grove as in Madav or in Magarkui near Vyara. Sometimes these stone slabs are erected in the vicinity of village sanctuaries, especially near those of wooden crocodile-gods, like in Singhpur near Songadh or in Andarvadi near Vyara. Very seldom they are placed directly near famous sanctuaries which are generally visited by large groups as is the case in Devlimadi near Songadh where we found several stone slabs.

Form

These monolithic memorial slabs are made out of a rough quartzite stone, often intermingled with particles of lime. In cross section, such a slab is more or less rectangular, in vertical section mostly pentagonal with a point or a small half-disc on the top. Often the upper edge is so corroded that its original form cannot be recognized anymore. Backside and side-panels are always untreated or only slightly smoothed and levelled. On the front, a rider is chiselled, filling most of the space. The rider swings a sabre in his right hand whereas

the left holds the reins of the horse. Under the rider, there might be another picture-field; in this case, there is a cart depicted with persons sitting in it. Always on top of the rider or beside him, a sun and moon are carved; and in some cases there might also be a pair of wings underneath. Also, there might be shown some decorative, space-filling forms like rosettes or flowers arranged in pairs. In some slabs the name of the person represented is inscribed in Gujarati letters.

Individual memorial slabs

First, we will describe two simple memorial stones which look very much alike. One can be found in Kalamkui near Valod, the other one in Devlimadi near Songadh. No doubt, they have been carved by the same artist, even if they differ slightly in motifs. In both cases, a small rider is shown with a sword and a small, round shield. He wears a turban and large ear-rings, and has a carefully carved saddle, stirrups and reins. The barrel-shaped body of the horse is shown as a reclining oval, onto which is applied a slightly bent neck, with a drooping cylindrical head. The two ears are shown as tips, hollowed inside. The bridle lies across the mouth of the horse and fringes the neck. The body of the horse is covered with chip-cuts: the neck shows simple oblique parallel grooves, the body a fish-bone pattern which is interrupted by vertical grooves. The ornament ends with a zig-zag band and might represent a saddle-cloth. The back of the horse is decorated with spherical tassels, the tail hangs down slightly bent. All the four legs are placed under the barrel as equally thin fillets with bent knees. They stand properly on the base-line.—Beside the horse, a small male figure is shown, holding the reins in his hands.—In the slab from Kalamkui, under the base-line, a bullock-cart with two figures sitting in it can be recognised, whereas the other slab shows a large tenon with which the slab was formerly inserted into the ground.—Over a horizontal upper edge, on top of one of the riders (i.e. in the Devlimadi specimen), there is still a small half disc in which sun and moon are shown. Such a top-piece is probably broken off from the other slab.

A stone-fragment in Devlimadi shows small figures and a peacock which is pictured by simple line-grooves; most probably this slab was made by the same mason as the two slabs mentioned above.

A memorial stone, the motifs of which are most interesting and well carved can be found in Kanjod, in a grove of trees near the Vanasthali Ashram. At that site there are a number of stone slabs, most of which are standing in a row and are rather simple, similar

to each other and less ornate. One, which stands apart is delicately carved. It shows a rider with a couched lance holding his horse with reins. The horse is decorated with feathers and seems to step forward; the thighs are shown realistically with swelling contours. Over the breast of the horseman, strings are crossed and a dagger is stuck into his belt. His face is distinguished by a bolt moustache, the eye-brow-edges are sharp and lie horizontally. The nose is given as a triangle, the eyes are grooved in hollows.—A small attendant leads the horse; he stands in the relief space between the mouth and the left leg of the horse, which steps forward. On top of the rider, a chain is chiselled in high relief as if it were hung around the stone; this chain consists of two strings, and has a lock in the centre. Such silver necklaces are still worn by Gamit men of this area.

That a silver chain (and other ornaments) are placed around the *khatru* stone during the actual death-ceremony, has been observed in a Chodhri village (and shall be reported later. See also Fischer—Shah, 1972: 7).—It might be interesting to point out, that fragments of slabs made by the same mason can be found in Dumkhal as well as in Ranveri (both villages near Valod).

Another extraordinary slab, which, to some extent, reminds us of some wooden memorials of this area, can be seen in Singhpur near Songadh. It is rather narrow and has a large relief-front with a rounded upper-edge. On it, two riders are pictured, one on top of the other. On the bottom of the slab, a bullock-cart with four persons sitting in it, is represented. The small attendant is pictured on the side-panel, holding the reins in his hand. The relief of this slab is not very high. The two horses are almost identical—as if they were made by stencils—, this being a good example for the fact that the personal “handwriting” (selection of motifs and style) of the carver can well be distinguished.

II. DENOTATION AND FUNCTION

The memorial stones are called *khambha*, like their counterparts made of wood.

Stone slabs are raised for remembrance of important persons, these being represented as riders in the middle of the slab; less prominent relatives, however, are pictured as small figures sitting in the cart below. One of the stone slabs in Singhpur e.g., is a memorial stone erected about 50 years ago for Chamario Mochido and for his younger brother and his own wife who are both said to be represented sitting in the cart.—Noku, Tetiya's sister, says about another

slab in Singhpur: "Twenty years have passed. My brother has installed this *khambho* (for himself). I also helped. Our father had told us to install the *khambho*. The stone was brought from the river Jankhari. *Ami ho neva geli ka*, I also went there to fetch it (i.e. the slab). Tetiya made the decision and two carts went to bring the stone."

Installing such a large stone slab, means many expenses such as giving a great feast and paying for the slab (see the information of Rama Tetiya, pg. 57 f.). Therefore, it often happens that an important and rich person erects such a stone for himself during his own lifetime. This conclusion can be drawn from nearly all information. One gets the impression that the death of any person might be taken as reason for the installation of a memorial slab on which also other individuals—dead or still alive—may be represented, including the head of the family who is paying for the expenses and is still alive. This slab substitutes the *khatru*-stone (or pebble) which otherwise is to be installed for the deceased person during the death ritual. When a person died for whom a memorial slab had already been installed (or for which the figure has already been carved on such a slab), his *jiv*-soul is called and installed in this slab; no *khatru*-stone is needed. This, at least, has been told by Ira Kika, the *sarpanch*, head-man, of the village of Dumkhal, saying: "We have three *khambha*. One is of Surakyo Kathio, the second for Bhilo Chandio and the third of Dungo Bonio. All the slabs were installed more than thirty years ago.—On one stone, the dead person is represented sitting on a horse, while the other family members are seated in the cart. One of them is the wife of the deceased man. She was still alive when the *khambho* was erected. *Mari jay pache khambha ma bhagat jiv vale*, after her death, the bhagat forms the *jiv*-soul in the memorial slab. There exists no separate *khatru*-stone for her or for any of the family members depicted on the stone."

The function of such a slab is no doubt to commemorate a specific person and the feast for which this person has spent wealth when the slab was installed. It seems to us, that these customs show a similarity with the so called "megalithic feasts of merit". Opposite to the wooden memorial slabs which are erected for persons which were killed or died of a sudden, unexpected death or by accident, the stone slabs are erected by wealthy persons to commemorate their existence.

A rather different function of such a stone-slab has been mentioned to us in Phulvadi, a village of the Nizar area. An anonymous informant said: "At *divali*, the Hindu new-year festival, the tiger comes to our *khambho* at the *kali chauda*, black fourteen days. At

that time we offer a goat there and rub the blood on the stone. The goat is eaten at the feast that night.//If this is not done, the tiger *dekha de*, shows himself; he kills (then) a goat or takes somebody away."

In the same region—which altogether is remote from the centre of our research area—, in the village of Gorasa, we saw a flat stone slab, on which a dog was pictured. We were informed that a dog had bitten a girl who died from it and this stone slab was erected for her. This stone is the only one which was installed for a person who had died by an accident; in all such cases, wooden memorial slabs were erected. In the villages of this area (i.e. near the town of Nizar) no wooden slabs could be seen. Furthermore, this is the only example on which a dog is carved.

Finally, it should be mentioned that these stone slabs are chiselled by specialists who belong to other ethnic groups than the persons who erect them and are commemorated through these stones. Like that, the memorial stone in Dumkhal near Valod is sculptured by a mason called Gatadi Mahudi from the village of Bandhavpada near Vyara—according to the information of the Gamit informant Ira Kika.

The following is the slightly shortened report by Rama Tetiya in the village of Madav near Vyara. The informant is the grandson of Saradhiya Jateria for whom this memorial slab was installed in the year of Vikram 1992, i.e. 1932 A.D. (plate 59).

Rama Tetiya said: "My father is Tetya Saradhiya. His father is Saradhiya Jateria, for whom this stone slab has been erected. The persons depicted on the stone-relief are the following: My grandfather, who made the stone (i.e. ordered it), sits on the horse, my father, my grandmother and my brother Narsih sit in the cart.// When the stone was made, my grandfather was still alive. He himself ordered the stone.// My brother had died, but my grandfather and my grandmother were both alive. At that time I was only 17 years old. The stone was brought from the river-bed of the area behind Chikli-village and was erected here. Two *bhagats* from the village of Chikli searched for the stone-slab with the help of the *tankara*, stone-masons. They were two *bhagats* and they took *pavri*, a clarinet along when they went to the river-site. Five men and the *tankara*, masons accompanied them.—// These were two *tankara*, masons. They wander here and there (i.e. belong to a group of gipsies and are specialists in stonework). (At that time) they were staying at the village of Umariya.

Manchu from Vaghjari had located them and from there we brought them to Chikli.

//After deciding upon the stone-slab, *tadini shhakh padi*, palmwine offering was poured (on the stone). This *tadi*, palmwine, was taken in a *matinu kochu*, earthen vessel. The *pavri*-clarinet was played, the *khokhadi*-sticks were hammered on the ground (when dancing), *tadi* was poured on the ground and drops of it were sprinkled on the stone. They brought coconut, betelnut, rice, flowers and incense. They placed the *pavri*-clarinet and the *khokhadi*-sticks at the stone and the worship was done. Then *chala*, rice, was applied (on *sindur*, vermilion on the stone slab?) and at the end *chhant*, rice was sprinkled over everything.//The *bhekkhad*, stone-rock, could not be lifted (i.e. before this ceremony had taken place). And before the ceremony took place, we decided upon the fees of the *tankara*, masons. They told us (that they expected) 16 Rupees but we decided on 13 Rupees. The stone had to be *char hath ankela*, of four hands' (1 yard's) breadth; and we told them, that the stone had to be ready by Sunday. We gave them food at daytime and *tadi*, palmwine, at night. We were sitting (with them) all the time. I myself stayed there (with the others at the working site). We had to prepare the food and we had to fetch the water for these people. They carved *murtia*, (idols) figures. *Dada dadi ne Narsinhbhai gadi ma*, grandfather, grandmother and (my) brother Narsinh in the cart; *ghoda var mara bapaji behadvanda*, on the horse my father will sit (i.e. a contradiction to the above mentioned statement). We told (the masons) that they have to make (i.e. carve) the sun as well. Eight days they worked. *Tankara tanke*, the masons carved. At night they didn't work. People danced (at the working site) at night. They fell in trance. Even persons from *dhunava*, outside, fell in trance. // Women were not present.

Many more people came on that Saturday. At twelve o'clock they had started (from Madav-village), at night they arrived (in the village of Chikli). On Saturday morning we lifted the stone. But before (that could happen), we offered a hen, we offered *shhakh*, libation, and we drank the *tadi*, palmwine. There were (by now) about fifty people with us. We slanted the cart and lifted up the stone. *Hath pahelo ani (ai) lagavelo*, my hands were the first to touch it (the stone). Over the *khambho*, memorial slab, we placed a *dhotiyu*, man's waist-cloth. It was new; its length was five yards. Five people from my family touched the stone and it was lifted and placed on the cart in a standing position. It was not tied.// It was not covered with grass.// In the cart were the *hankaro*, bullock-driver and two unmarried girls. They sat on grass, they might even sit on the stone,

but only there, where no figures could be seen. The girls were Tetya's daughter Moti, and the girl Divali who is from my uncle's house. *Kunvari pohiel chanla koela, balje hal pan chanla koayel*, a red mark was made on each of the unmarried girls as well as to the bullocks. —The *bhagat*, priest, sprinkled rice over the cart. Many people fell into a trance. Then the car moved. The *chhongariya*, group of singers led (the procession); then the *bhagat* and the *pavri*-clarinet-player were followed by the cart. And behind them came all the family-members and the other people.

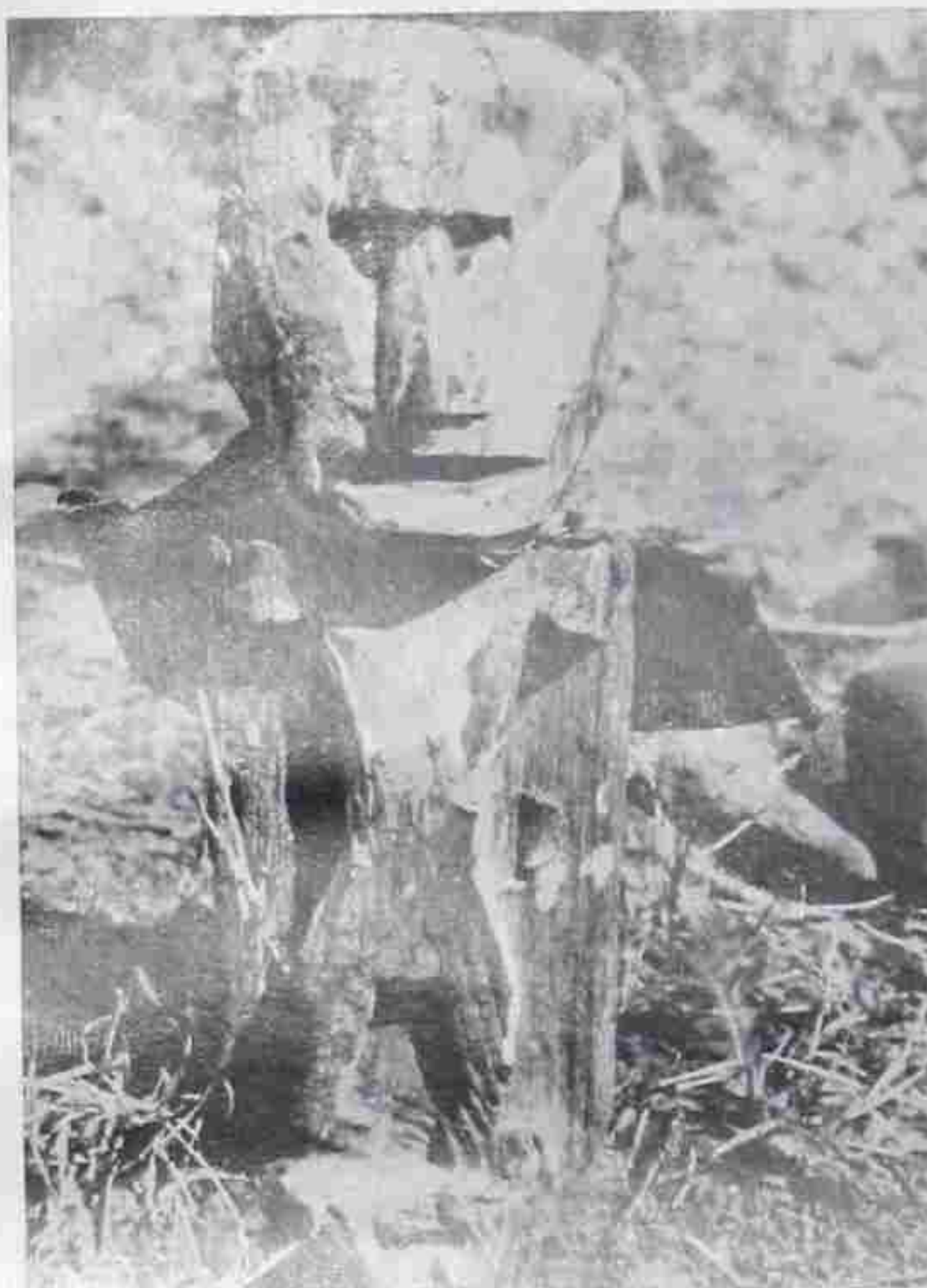
//(During this procession to the village of Madav) we stopped after each village we had passed through, and *punj*, worship, had to be done.// (That was done) by the *bhagat* only.// There were three villages (on the way), and three times the *bhagat* had to offer *punj*. When they came nearer to the village (of Madav), the *pavri*-clarinet-player blew louder and the people shouted. Madav-people could hear it and they were to come and fetch us. My mother's mother said: '*Khambhavalala ne lagie, chala apa jateha*, the slab-people have arrived, let us go there'. They (came and) offered rice (which is sprinkled over the cart). We all went outside the village. There we installed a flag, cut a hen, offered *punj* and danced. The *bhagat* and the *chhongaria*, group of singers, were served with rice and *dal*, pulse, for their dinner. The *chhongaria* were singing the whole night. Everybody remained awake (that night). In the morning at about six o'clock the next work began.

(This morning) the stone was given a bath. (It was still standing) in the cart. *Bhagat* was there and all the people sang. The *bhagat* squatted near the stone. He offered *punj*. He fell into a trance and all the family-members started to cry and weep. . . . Everybody came to the *bhagat* to embrace him.// First I embraced him, then Saradhiya and then Saradhiya's wife.// Men and women embraced the *bhagat*.

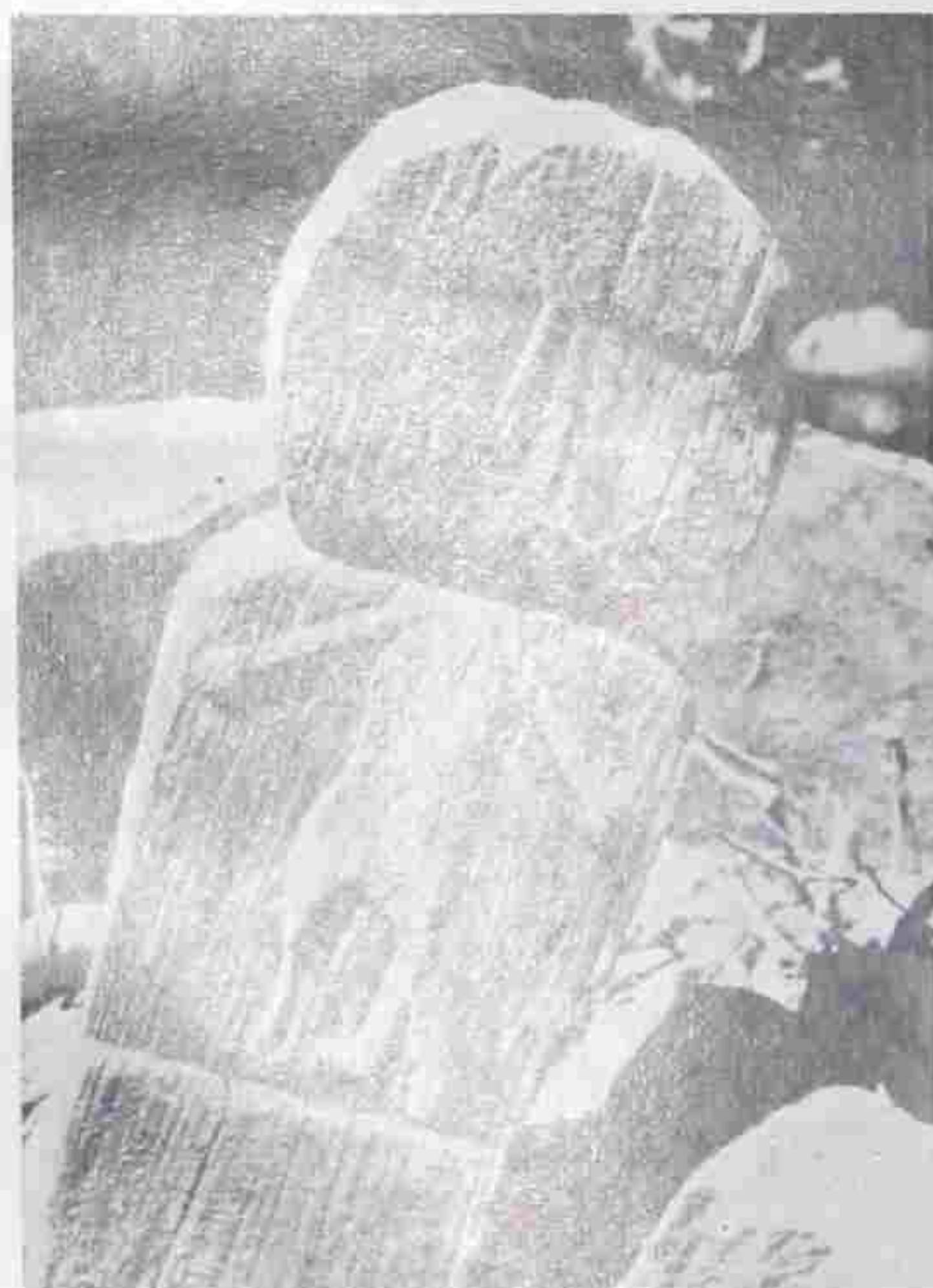
My grandfather said: '*Amahe rana ma j tho no he biji jaga e nai*, it (the slab) has to be installed in our field and nowhere else.' There a site was cleaned and they dug a deep furrow in which they placed one and a quarter rupees and rice grains. We all lifted the stone. It was shifted there. It received a bath. *Shhakh* was offered and a big ram was cut nearby. *Palo*-vegetable was fed to it (i.e. the ram) and its throat was cut with *dhariyu*, a sickle (with a long handle which is used to cut branches as fodder for goats). The ram's *kaleju*, liver, was roasted in the fire. The *bhagat* took it (afterwards) to the memorial slab to offer it there. *Gos*, meat, and *khichado*, rice boiled with pulse, were distributed (as a meal) to everyone. Lamps were lit, flags were offered, incense and betelnut were placed in front of the memorial slab, and now everyone left the stone and enjoyed the feast."

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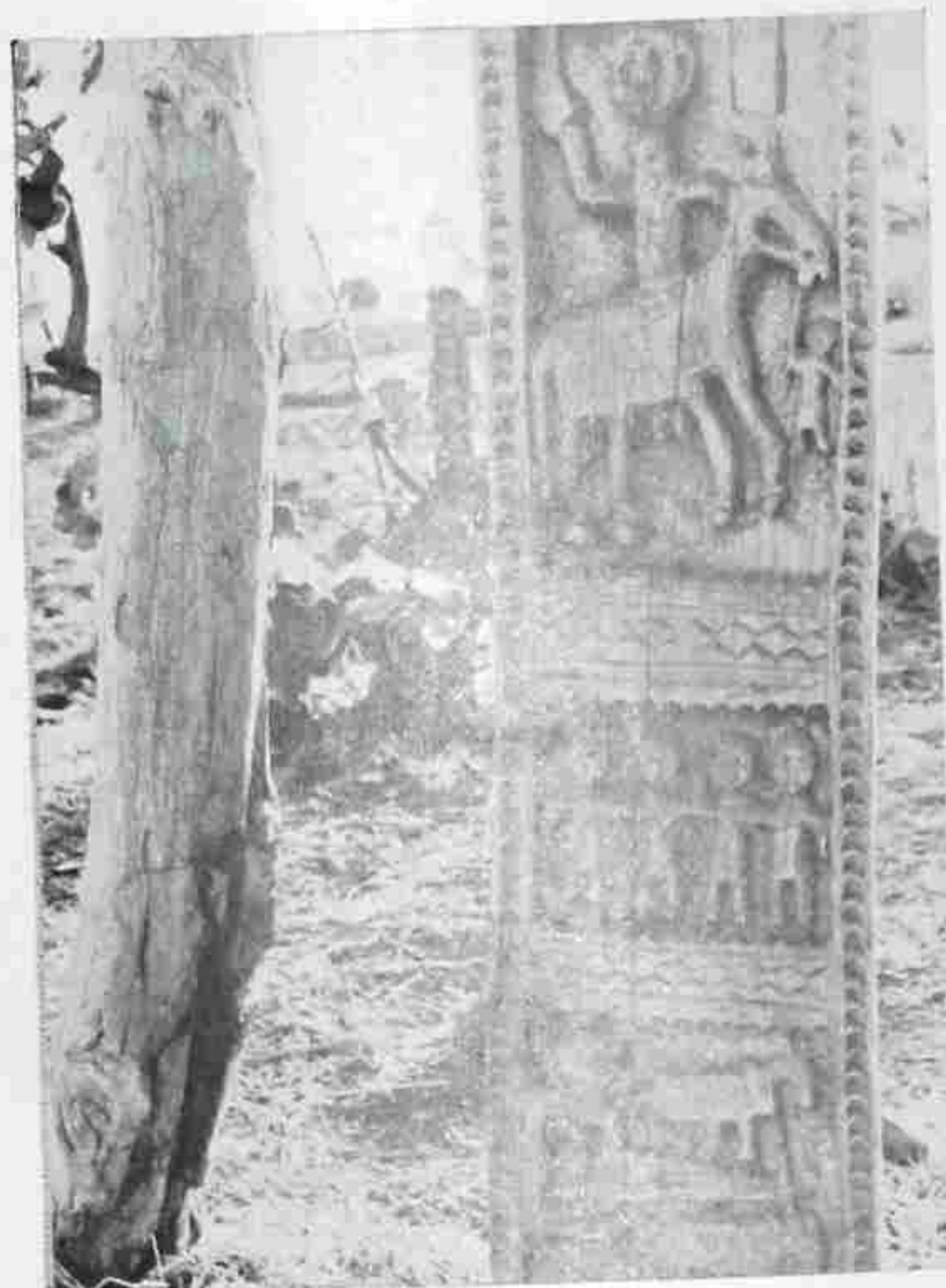
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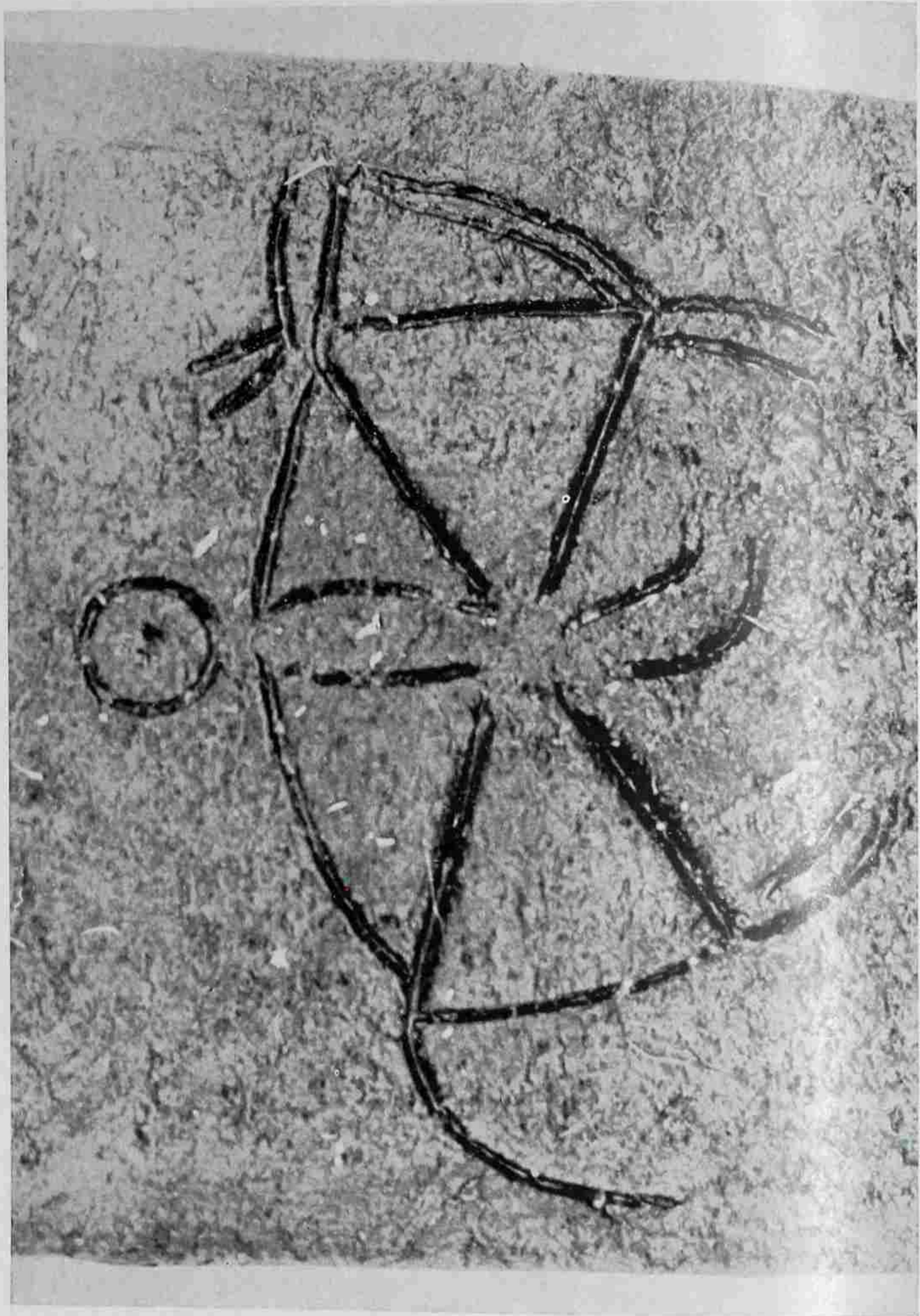
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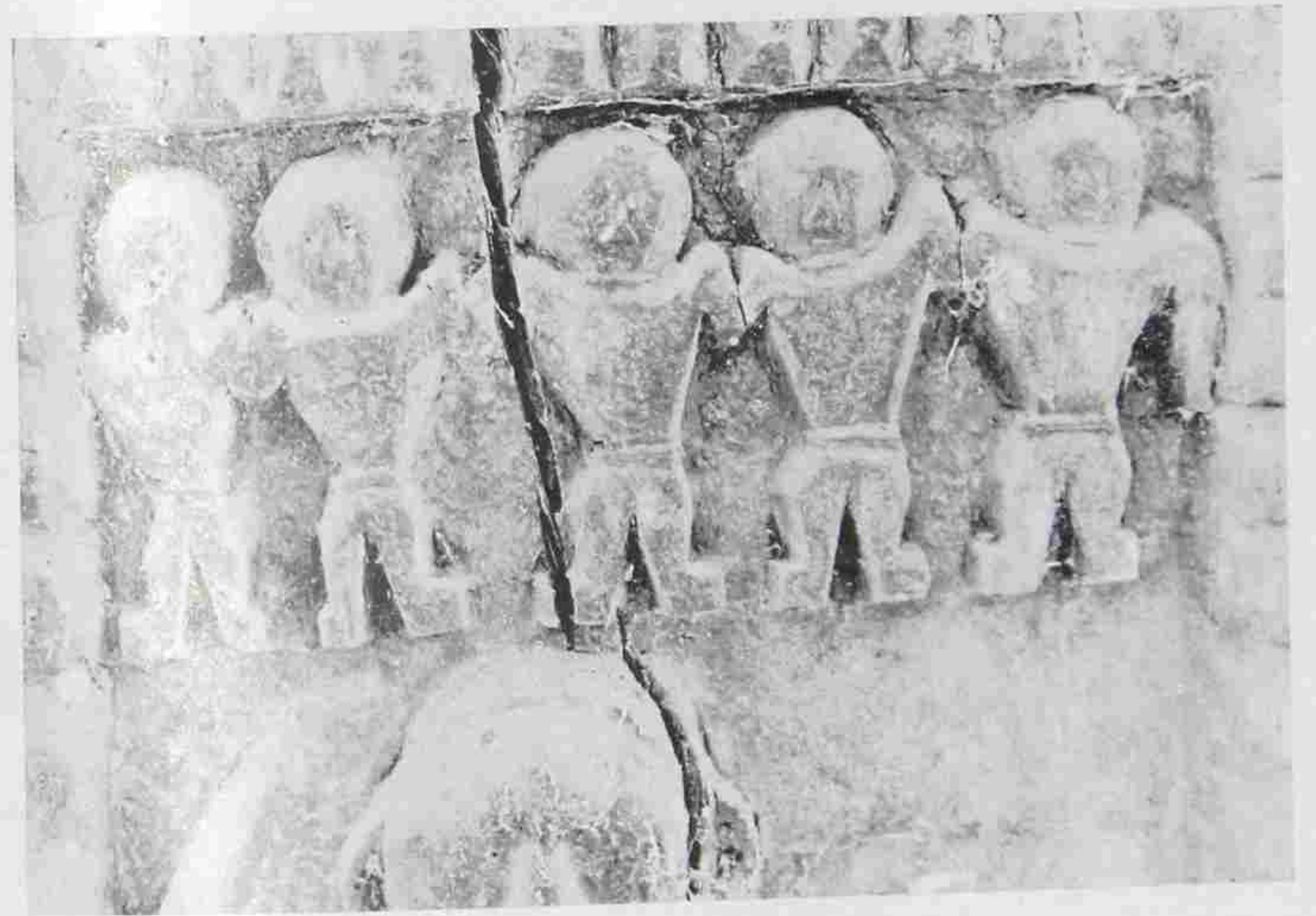
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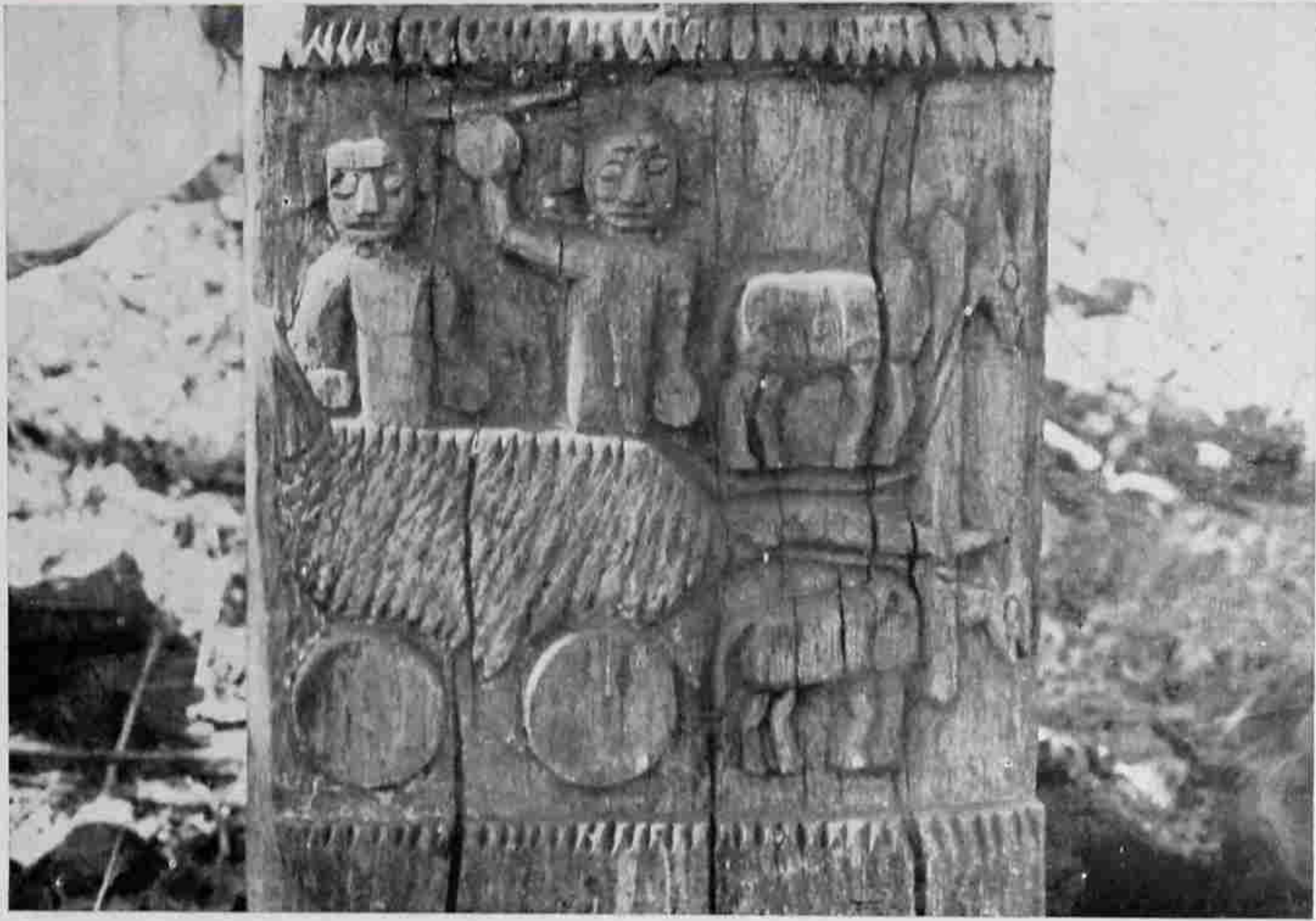
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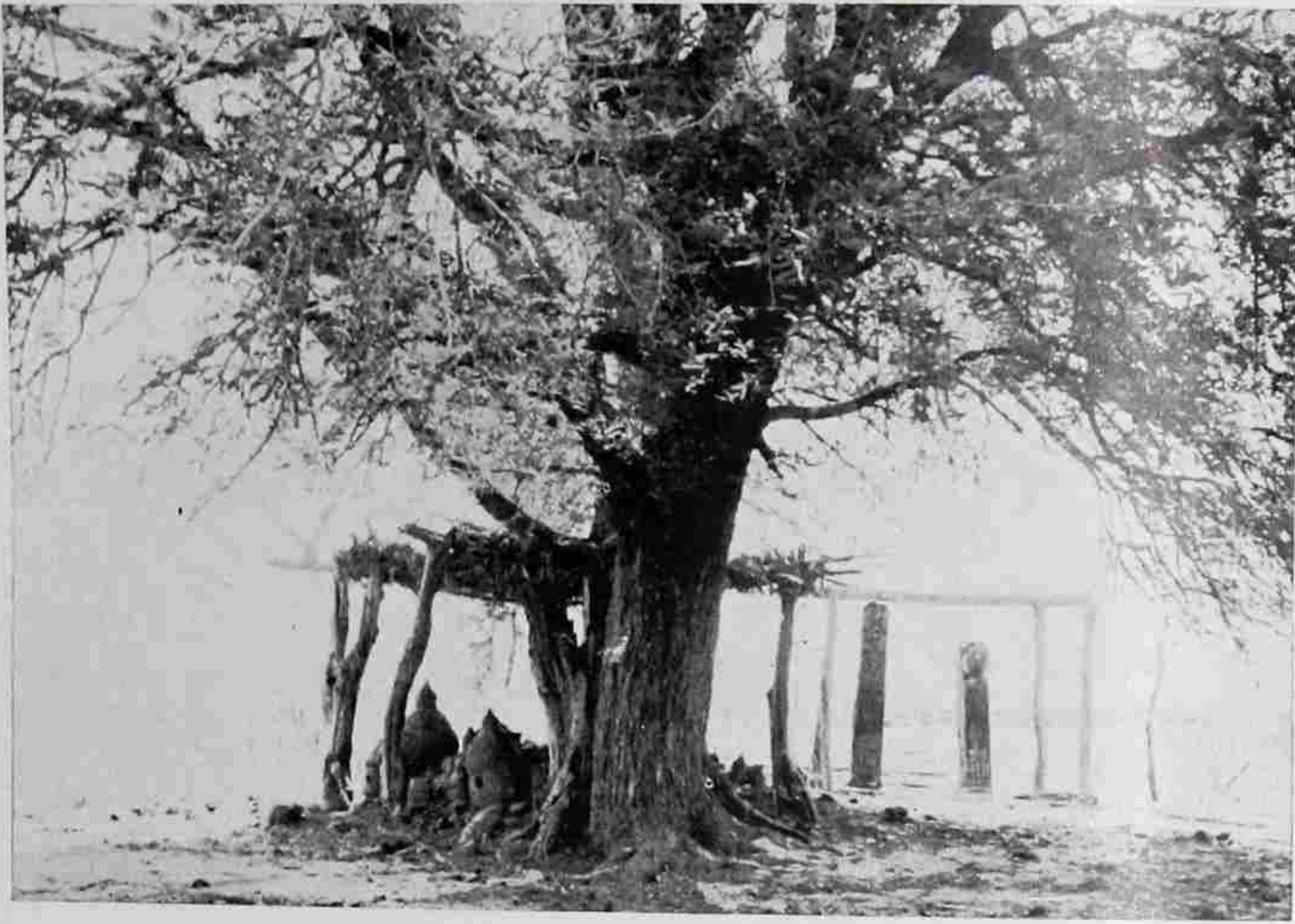


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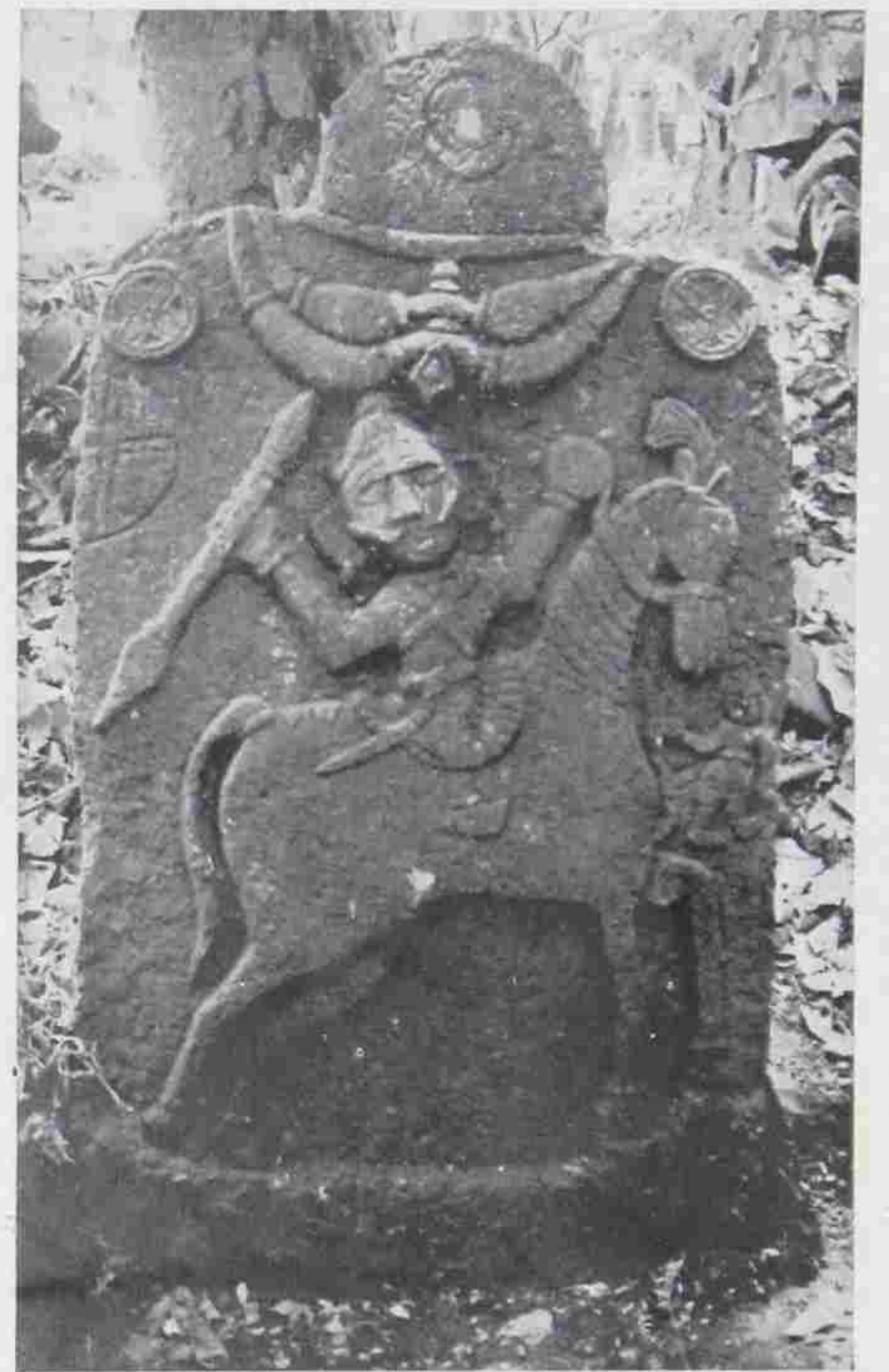
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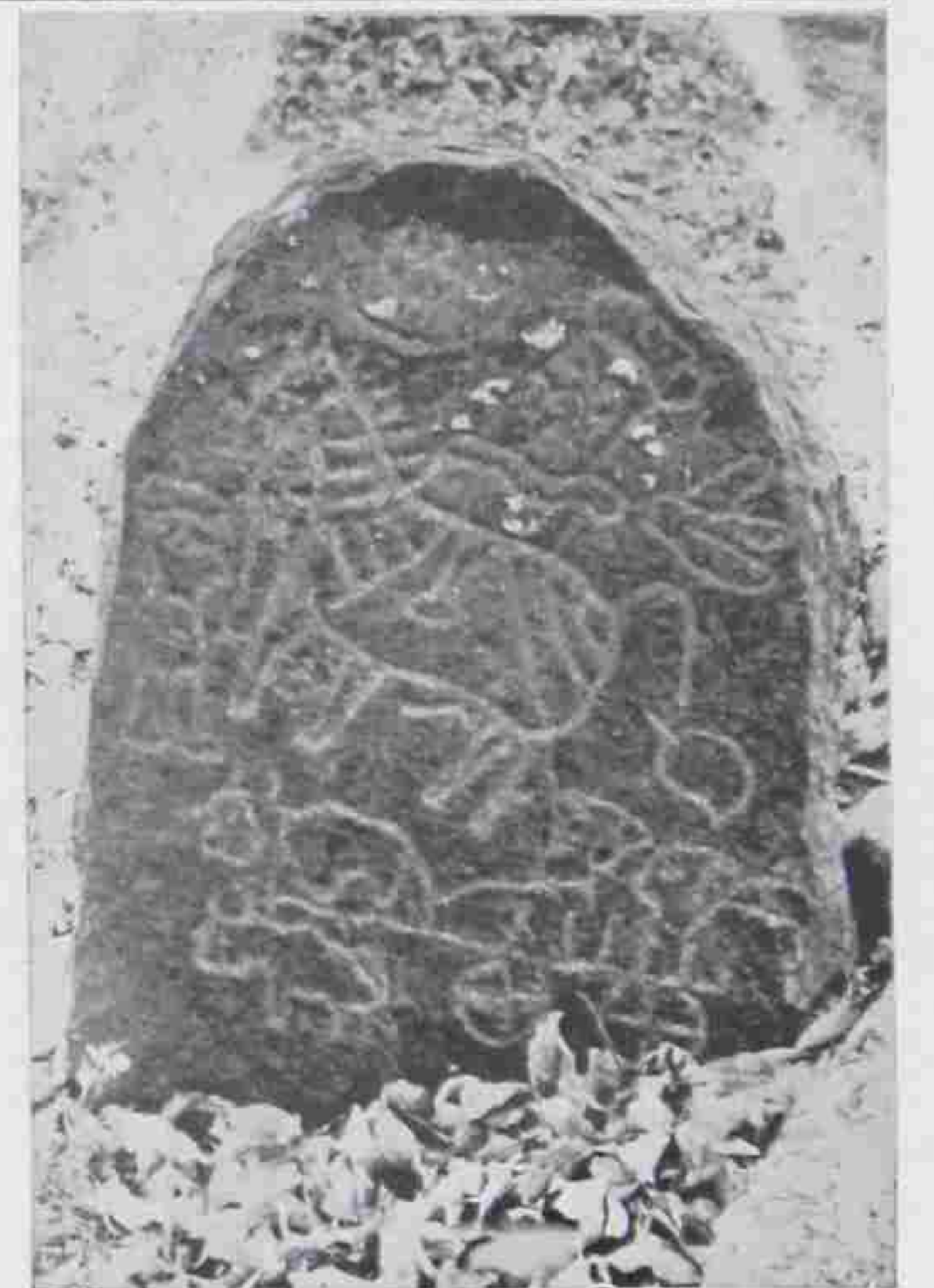
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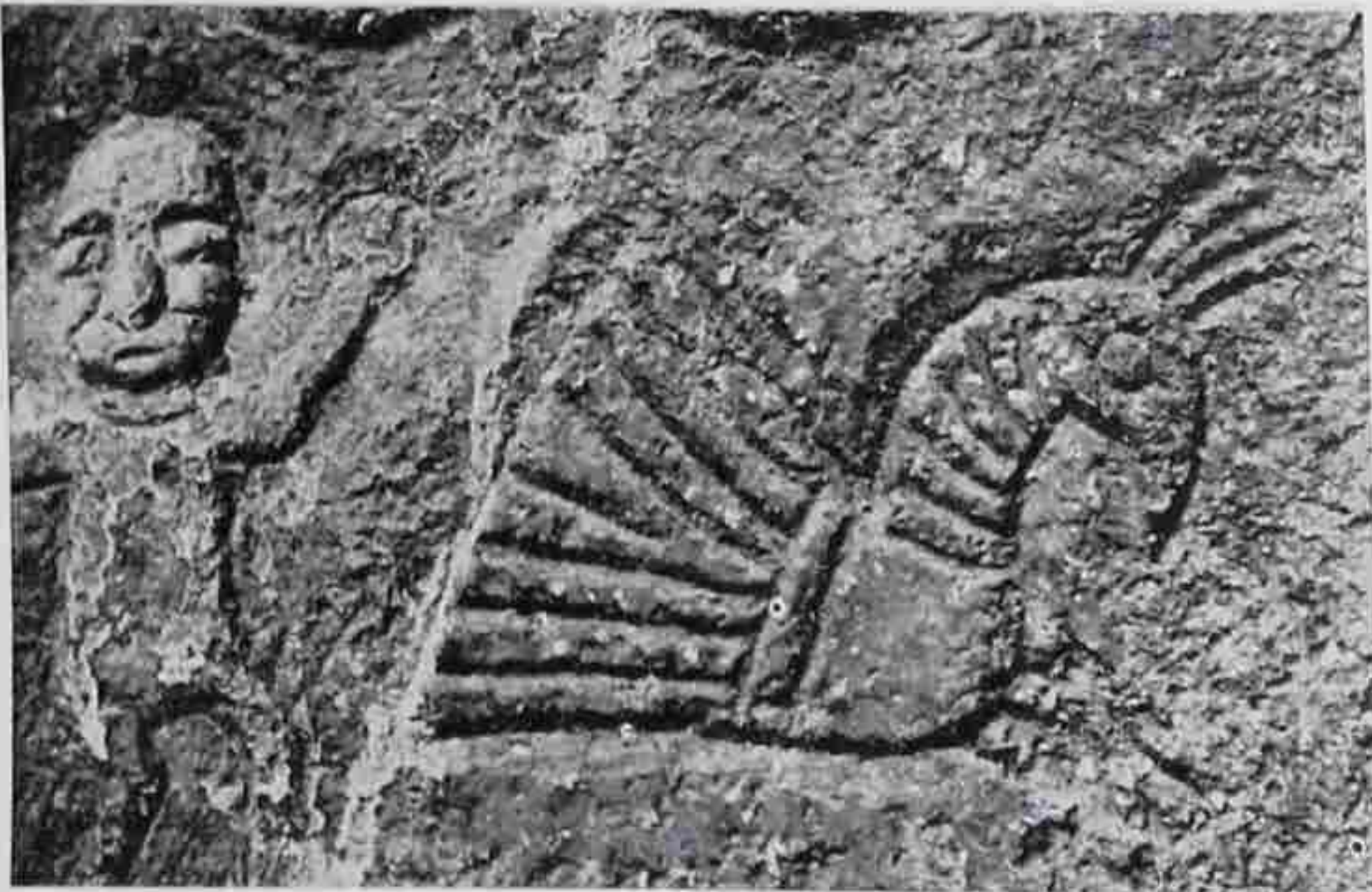




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