

The expeditions of the A.Kh. Margulan Institute of archaeology

The A.Kh. Margulan Institute of archaeology is renowned by its legendary expeditions well known now that set the ground for the large-scale and even epochal researches. The people that led the first Kazakhstani expeditions left a bright trace in the science of the country, in the destiny of the Institute and archaeologists who became today the acknowledged specialists themselves.

Under the leadership of the well-known scientist A.Kh. Margulan beginning from 1945 there worked the first archaeological expedition – the Central-Kazakhstani one. Its researches became the starting point for the studying of the Begazy-Dandybayev culture. The expedition detected, investigated and studied the stopping places of the Neolithic and Eneolithic epochs, the settlements and burial-grounds of the Andronov and the Begazy-Dandybayev cultures, the burial erections of the 1-st millennium B.C., the kurgans of the Turkic times, the medieval town sites and settlements.

In 1957 there upon the territory of Saryarka began the researches of the team for the study of the monuments of the epoch of the early nomads headed by M.K. Kadyrbayev as part of the Central-Kazakhstani archaeological expedition. Of a special significance was the material obtained in the course of the researches made upon the burial-ground Tasmol. As a result there by M.K. Kadyrbayev was singled out the Tasmoly early-Scythian archaeological culture.

The Ili archaeological expedition (further the Semirechensk one) headed by K.A. Akishev was organized in 1954. Already in the first season the expedition discovered a great accumulation of the kurgan burial grounds of the epochs of the Scythians and Usuns, the summary of the materials of the excavations of which served as the basis for a serious monograph, there were introduced into scientific circulation the unique materials from the researches of the kurgans Besshatyr.

In 1957 there was organized the team for the study of the monuments of the Stone age in the region of the ridge of the Lesser and Great Karatau head by Kh. Alpysbayev. The scientists managed to detect the Shelsk-Ashelsk places and monuments of the Myustyer period. The classics of archaeology of the Stone age of Kazakhstan one can name the Paleolithic stopping place after Shokan Valikhanov on the right bank of the Arystandy River. The lower-Palaeolithic monuments were found in the lower reaches of the river Shu. There by the well-known Kazakhstani scientist A.G. Medoyev were found the stone tools of the Siberian Paleolithic period near the Northern part of Balkhash Lake. Of big importance for the studying of the lower Paleolithic period of Kazakhstan is the stopping place Koshkurgan which has the reliably dated stratigraphic context. It was proved that there in Southern Kazakhstan exist the monuments of the lower Palaeolithic epoch.

Of crucial importance for the archaeology of the Bronze epoch of the Eurasian belt of the steppes were the researches of the Zhezkazgan metallurgical centre, in which the greatest role was played by K.I. Satpayev as president of the Academy of Sciences of the Kazakh SSR who rendered great support.

One of the objects of the Southern-Kazakhstani archaeological expedition was the Otrar oasis. The result of the works made by the Southern-Kazakhstani archaeological expedition was the research, cartographic works and the chronology of the great group of the ancient town sites and settlements in the Otrar oasis, upon the Northern slopes of Karatau, in the valley of Syr Daria. The systematic planning and detailed study of the oasis and its hydro-technical erections was undertaken by the Otrar archaeological expedition under the leadership of K.A. Akishev. During the 40 years there were studied the sites of the former cities Otyrar, Kuiryktobe, Kokmardan, Altyntobe and others (headed by academician Baipakov K.M.).

Of high importance not only for the archaeology of the early nomads of Kazakhstan and the whole Great belt of the steppes of Eurasia but for the whole studies of the culture of the nomads was the discovery by K.A. Akishev and B. Nurmukhanbetov of the burial ground not plundered by the black illegal archaeologists at the kurgan Issyk, the finds from which subsequently were used for the creation of the state symbols of Independent Kazakhstan. The unique artefacts of jewellery art being a testimony of the high level of development of the ancient nomads were discovered accidentally in 1988 in the Kegen district of the Almaty region – Zhalauly.

In the first years of Independent Kazakhstan there on the territory of the new state the archaeologists could continue the works: from 1992 there operated the Kazakh-Russian expedition, which carried out the joint works on the territory of Russia and Kazakhstan within the framework of the programme “The Paleo-ecology of ancient man and the initial mastering of the Eurasian continent”. From 1995 up to 2000 there by the expedition together with the International Kazakh-Turkish university named after Kh.A. Yassau and the Kazakh state national university after al-Farabi was implemented the project named “The Palaeolithic period of the arid zone of Kazakhstan: the periodicity and chronology”, the result of which was the discovery of new sites pertaining to the early, middle and late stages of the Palaeolithic period, the new data obtained which characterize the processes of peopling by ancient man of the territory of Central Asia in Pleistocene.

There in 1993 worked the Kazakh-French expedition for the studying of the rock paintings of Kazakhstan with the participation of specialists from the Institute of archaeology, the Institute “Kazproektrestavratsiya”, the National centre of scientific researches of France. The main task of the expedition was the preparation of materials of the Corps of petroglyphs of Kazakhstan.

There in 1997-1999 in Eastern Kazakhstan worked the international expedition with the participation of the workers from the archaeological mission of France in Central Asia and the scientific-research centre of Italy named *Ligabue*. The main task of the expedition was the studying of the monuments of ancient nomads of Kazakhstani Altai, the result of which was the opening of the kurgan of the representative of the nomadic elite with the lens of permafrost (Berel), the studying of the kurgans of the early-Scythian epoch (*Meierner*) (headed by the doctor of science (history) Samashev Z.S.).

Good results were achieved by the Kazakh-American expedition, the main purpose of which was the

elucidation of the processes of evolution from settlement to urbanization in the Talgar region which embraced the period from the Scythians to the middle ages.

The largest expeditions that worked in the last years, embraced the territory of the whole of Kazakhstan: the Semirechye complex archaeological expedition (K.A. Akishev), the Southern-Kazakhstani complex archaeological expedition (K.M. Baipakov), the Central-Kazakhstani archaeological expedition (Zh.K. Kurmankulov), the Kazakhstani newly-built archaeological expedition (L.B. Erzakovich), the Western-Kazakhstani archaeological expedition (Z. Samashev), the Northern-Kazakhstani (M.K. Khabdulina), the Eastern-Kazakhstani archaeological expedition (Z. Samashev), the Turkestani archaeological expedition (E.A. Smagulov), the Saryarka archaeological expedition (A.Z. Beisenov), the Register of archaeological monuments of Kazakhstan (V.A. Groshev), the Merke archaeological expedition (A.M. Dosymbayeva), the Almaty newly-built archaeological expedition (B. Nurmukhanbetov). In the 1990-s there by the endeavours of these expeditions were embraced 115 archaeological monuments.