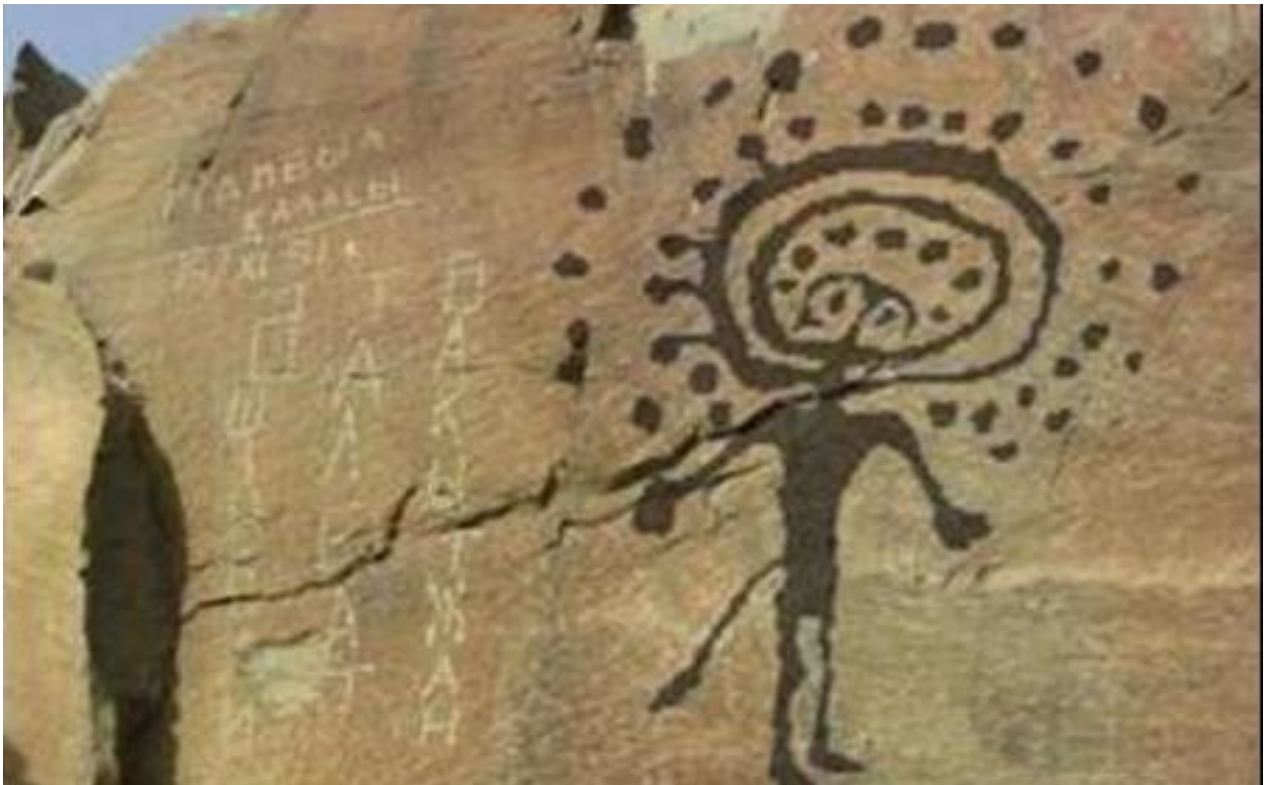


Tamgaly – the monument of archaeology

The unique beauty of mountain area Tamgaly is located in 170 km north-west from Almaty. Tamgaly is truly ancient art gallery, where both certain animals, people and whole scenes from the lives of the ancient people are depicted on the pictures. This is the most famous center of 50 petroglyphic drawing centers of Semirechye of the Balkhash basin. There are 5000 paintings in Tamgaly. They are dated from XIV century BC, VI-VIII AD, from the Bronze Age to reclamation of the Great steppe by Turkic people.

The petroglyphs are located on a large territory with the size of 3km x 10km. The most significant part of it is concentrated in the area of 250mx500m, there are about 2000 petroglyphs. The most unique compositions and images relate to the period of the mid-second millennium BC. These are mostly sun-headed deities. According to the scientists, sun-giants of Tamgaly are one of the most ancient anthropomorphic images of God.



The theme of Tamgaly drawings.

The theme of Tamgaly drawings are various: people, animals, horsemen, scenes of hunting, hunting for wild animals, from people's lives, sacrifice and ritual dances. There are images of chariots, tamga, prayer inscriptions, scenes of ritual dances, images of mighty camels and bulls embodying the images of ancient gods. Rocks of the canyon and narrow valley of Tamgaly kept the value of sanctuary for people who left their trace in the history of Kazakhstan, places where ritual ceremonies were held, magical rites, worship to gods and spirits of ancestors were performed. Ancient artisans used materials and location of the stone drawings, accurately assessing their orientation relatively to the cardinal direction and the Sun. At daily movement of the Sun depending on the day and angle of incidence of sunlight, different drawings are allocated at different time. Location for petroglyphs were chosen so that from one place you can see some drawings. There are some places in the valley of tract, where drawings can be seen simultaneously as whole groups, combined into complex compositions from the rock.



First petroglyphs on the rocks of Tamgaly were discovered by photographer A.A. Popov from the group of researchers under the guidance of the first professional archaeologist of Kazakhstan, Anna Georgiyevna Maximova on September 19, 1957. The scientific expedition held excavations of the ancient burial grounds of the tract Karakuduk of Bronze age. In the next few days, A.G. Maximova and A.A. Popov explored the main locations of Tamgaly petroglyph site and made images of the most valuable compositions. Short observations of those days in A.G. Maximova's diary conveyed a sense of emotion and understanding of the made discoveries. The first publication "Petroglyphs of Tamgaly" by A.G. Maximova in 1958 was the origin of a half-century history of the monument's research. In 1977-78 the research of the monuments of Tamgaly was continued by other scientists under the guidance of A.G. Maximova. The research of Tamgaly territory and location scheme of the main concentration of petroglyphs was made for the first time. By the end of 1980s, due to publications of scientific articles and albums of petroglyph images, Tamgaly became widely known and increasingly attracted the attention of local and foreign experts. In

1990-1994 scientific research of the monuments of Tamgaly acquired multifaceted character and developed in close interaction with the objectives to preserve and conserve petroglyphs. The State program “Conservation of Tamgaly petroglyphs” was approved, the structure of database was developed, forms of field descriptions of petroglyphs were prepared and more than 3000 images were recorded. The work done allowed revealing deeper and substantiating cultural and historical significance of Tamgaly petroglyphs. The fame of Tamgaly petroglyphs appeared in 1995-2001 has resulted in uncontrolled flow of tourists, which became a real threat to the existence of monuments.

In 1998 with cooperation of Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Kazakhstan a comprehensive program of research and conservation of Tamgaly was initiated. In the same year a justification for inclusion of Tamgaly complex in the Tentative List of UNESCO World Heritage from Kazakhstan was prepared. In 1999 The World Heritage Committee of UNESCO identified Tamgaly as one of the priority sites of the country for nomination in 2001-2002. In August 2001, Premier-Minister of Kazakhstan I. Tasmagambetov and CEO of UNESCO K. Matsuura visited Tamgaly and gave high assessment to the cultural significance of the monuments and the efforts which Kazakh specialists undertake to save Tamgaly with the support of UNESCO. October 5, 2001 by the special Governmental decree of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Archaeological complex of Tamgaly received status of the monument of state importance. The boundaries of its protected zone have been defined.

October 14, 2003 by the special Government decree №1052 at Ministry of Culture of Kazakhstan, a state historical-cultural and natural reserve – “Tamgaly” museum with a total area of 3,8 hectares was created in Tamgaly, Almaty region. The complex of the monument includes burial monuments, petroglyphs, places of worship, which create a single sacred territory used by many people for more than two thousand years. In 2004 petroglyphs of archaeological landscape of Tamgaly were included in the World Heritage List of UNESCO.

Petroglyph gallery of Tamgaly is treasure of world value and is under of UNESCO's protection. Since 2006, UNESCO has been taken an active part in the fate of this monument and provides support for its conservation. One of 10 multimedia encyclopedias created by «RGB-Studio» LLP in the framework of the State program "Cultural heritage" and included in "Collection of multimedia encyclopedias" was devoted to the State historical-cultural and natural museum reserve "Tamgaly".

Used materials: Information from Institute of Cultural Policy and Art History of the Republic of Kazakhstan