

"Kara-Egize" Petroglyphs of Batken: past, present and future.

On December 7 and 8 in Batken State University (BATSU) was held a round table **"Kara-Egize" Petroglyphs of Batken: past, present and future**, visit to the museums "Aigul Too" and "Kuzgu Tash", a trip to the complex of petroglyphs.

Expert of Aigine CRC Sadyr uulu Zhumagazy presented a report **"CRC Aigine projects on petroglyphs of Kyrgyzstan"** at the round table.

The main ideas presented in the report:

Scientific study of petroglyphs began in the late XIX century. In the 80s of the XIX century N.I. Veselovsky for the first time provided information about petroglyphs found here, in the Western Tenir-Too. In the 1890s V.V. Bartold wrote that he saw petroglyphs in Chok-Tal, Cholpon-Ata, Juuku and Naryn. In the summer of 1902 topographer N.G. Khludov while photographing the Kogart mountain saw the famous Saimaluu-Tash petroglyphs. He wrote that "besides drawings, images of people and animals were engraved". The Tashkent circle of amateur archaeologists sent a group led by N. G. Poslavsky, who noted that "horses and people were drawn on thousands of stones". In 1906 the research work was undertaken by the local historian N.G. Malitsky.

After the establishment of the Soviet government, almost 40 years later, in 1937, the Frunze Kyrgyz State Pedagogical Institute sent a team led by B. M. Zima to study the petroglyphs. The researchers copied 40 images of the petroglyphs of Ak-Olong (Issyk-Kul) and Chiyim-Tash (Talas). Ten years later, in 1946, Zima organized the next study on the Saimaluu Tash complex. On the basis of this study, Zima wrote a dissertation for the degree of Candidate of Sciences, where he paid much attention to primitive society. Need to mention the following positive aspects of this work: the presence of a list of literature on rock paintings, as well as extensive use of sources on ethnography, art, philosophy. But in the work only 80 images from Saimaluu-Tash were cited and comparisons were made with complexes remote from this area (Karelia, Spain). The narrative is verbose, the content of the subjects of petroglyphs is not analyzed.

In the 40-50s of the last century, V. I. Racek and A. P. Okladnikov studied, described and presented an interpretation of the images in the Ak-Unkur cave in Sary-Zhaz. They noted that the drawings were made in two types, red ochre and black ink. Creation period, late Neolithic-early Bronze Age, or early Middle Ages. Determination was carried out in this way:

1. Based on Neolithic tools found in the area;
2. Compared to stone carvings elsewhere, not at Tenir-Too.

There is a great contribution to the study of drawings by ordinary initiates rather than specialists (archaeologists). Much work in this area was done by teachers-local historians N.D. Cherkasov, V.M. Gaponenko, Y.N. Golendukhin, A.P. Maryashev. Within 30 years N.D. Cherkasov created a museum in school N10 in Bishkek from monuments found at the Chumuch hydroelectric power station, in Kara-Suu, on Issyk-Kul, namely in Chok-Tal, Kara-Oy, Cholpon-Ata, Boom. In 1956-1957 V.M. Gaponenko organized student treks to the Kyrgyz and Talas ridges. In the

summer of 1967-1968 Y. N. Golendukhin worked in Saimaluu-Tash. However, his ideas about "sundial", "agricultural chronicle", "natural altitude observatory" are contradictory. The teacher N.D. Maryashev and archeologist M.K. Kadyrbaev published an interesting article and monograph.

Here I would like to draw attention to two points. **First**, scientists studying rock paintings or petroglyphs, for some reason, according to B. M. Zima, cite only 80 drawings from Saimaluu-Tash and very distant comparisons. K. Tashbaeva in Ulan Bator recently (August 18-19, 2023) in accordance with this "custom" in her report "Petroglyphs of Saimaluu-Tash in the gallery of ancient epics" pointed out that the customs and rites given in the epics "Rigveda" and "Avesta" were engraved on the drawings of Saimaluu-Tash before the publication of the epics themselves. **Secondly**, it is necessary to mention the acceptable experience of ordinary enthusiasts, teachers, natural scientists, intellectuals spreading the culture of petroglyphs among the people.

To make up for the **first** shortcoming mentioned above and to strengthen another pillar of national identity - petroglyphs as a national treasure, the staff of the Aigine Cultural Research Center has connected the world of drawings with oral literature (Manas and small epics) and with art, artistic creation. We plan to make the culture of petroglyphs an integral part of the national culture. We want to deepen the initiative of ordinary citizens, which is the **second** achievement, to recognize, study and disseminate petroglyphs in the Kyrgyz language. Therefore, we have presented a brief translation of the work of Upula Zhushupakmat, which has been ignored by professional archaeologists as a non-specialist linguist. In order to save time, we left the following brief information booklets to Mr. Abdinabi Kadyrov, candidate of historical sciences, head of the historical and cultural museum complex "Aigul-Too":

1. **UPULA ZHUSUPAKMAT** (Lutfulla Dzhusupakmatov) **Ancient maps of the Earth in pictograms of Southern Kyrgyzstan** (3 pages).
2. **History of the study of petroglyphs.**
3. **Requirements and main stages of transforming petroglyphs on Tenir-Too** (4 pages).
4. **Religious meaning of the Tenir-Too petroglyphs** (5 pages).
5. **Artistic features of the Tenir-Too petroglyphs** (4 pages).
6. **Calendars "Secrets of petroglyphs 2022-2023."** (a set of reports is provided by researchers explaining the features of the petroglyphs Murdash-Bashi, Tergen-Tash, Saimaly-Tash, Ornok, Ala-Bash, Ak-Bulun).
7. **Petroglyphs "Kurgak-Koo" at the mouth of Turgan** (Ak-Bulun village, Ak-Suu district, 2 pages).
8. **Kyzyl Choku - a holy place and blessing** (Kyzyl-Tuu village, Ton district. Description with pictures, 8 pages)

Sadyr uulu Zhumagazy also handed over the books "Message of Water" and the National Guide on Preservation of Sacred Places and Pilgrimage Practices and Rituals published by Aigine CRC, as well as his book "Salt uluk". Until today, Aigine has published 7 books in Kyrgyz language containing histories of more than 1200 sacred sites in 7 provinces. Due to the actions of short-sighted local officials and people pursuing private interests, letters and reports were

sent to provincial and district leaders regarding the protection of the sacred sites of Kegeti and Archa Mazar.

The event was organized by the Cultural Heritage and Humanities Unit of the University of Central Asia. Partners: Batken State University (BatSU), Historical and Cultural Museum Complex "Aigul-Too", Museum of Nomadic Civilization named after Kurmanjan Datka.