

Research of monuments

The gain of Shu and Talas valleys and interfluvium of these two rivers by Russian armies at their movement to Central Asia, joining to the Russian empire has defined the occurrence of researchers in this area, including those who were interested in history and archaeology. The works devoted to archaeological monuments and ancient architectural constructions began to appear.

Thus, in 1864 the artist M.S.Znamensky has made some sketches of ruins of Akyrtas and its fortifications. This monument made of huge stone blocks has at once drawn the attention to the mysteriousness of its appointment and original layout. Several years earlier geologist D.L.Ivanov has made its description and has made sketches of the most interesting ornamented blocks. The orientalist P.I. Lerkh who has visited Akyrtas in 1867 has defined it as a Buddhist monastery.

In 1889 in Ungerlisai hole near to Kuyuk pass a “tomb” has been excavated; the skeleton wrapped up in a silk fabric and five bronze mirrors were found in it. The silver vessel and two coins have been found in other “tomb”.

In 1890 the orientalist Y.F.Kal has conducted research of monuments of Aulie-Ata district and has collected data on barrows and watchtowers. He also has conducted an excavation of one of the big barrows of Zhetytobe burial ground.

Important role in studying of history and archaeology of Southern Kazakhstan and Zhetysay was played by V.V.Bartold who in 1893-1894 has made a scientific trip along Chimkent-Aulie-Ata-Merke-Pishpek-Issyk Kul-Vernyi route. In the report published in 1894 he provided a summary of medieval written sources about the region and has prepared a historical essay and has described the most interesting monuments of archaeology and architecture, including Talas and Shu valleys: Taraz ancient settlement, Akyrtas complex, Tyumekent and Kulan ancient settlements. He was leading the Turkestani archaeology study circle created in 1895 in Tashkent. Representatives of regional administration, teachers of educational institutions, military men were members of this circle. Among them were V.A.Kallaur, V.P.Lavrentyev, N.P.Ostroumov, A.A.Divayev – researchers of the monuments of Talas and Shu valleys.

A great role in studying antiquities was played by V.A.Kallaur who has left a rich scientific heritage His numerous articles devoted to localization of the medieval cities, characteristics of ancient settlements, burial grounds and stone sculptures. He paid much attention to monuments of architecture. And he is the one who discovered the ancient-Turkic runic inscriptions.

V.P.Lavrentyev has made a register of “hillocks” –sites of ancient settlement in vicinities of Aulie-Ata. The description of Aulie-Ata building in the beginning of XX century was left by the known collector of antiquities, A.I.Dobrosmyslov.

After revolution of 1917 expedition has made excavation on shakhristan and necropolis of Taraz. Excavations provided remarkable samples of medieval ceramics and shown that under building of Aulie-Ata there are remains of a medieval city with powerful cultural stratifications. The site of ancient settlement was located at a crossing of the Talas River and was the largest among the similar monuments of Talas valley. Archaeological materials and their analysis have allowed M.E.Masson to prove that these are the remains of taraz – one of the big cities from an epoch of the Middle Ages.

In the post-war years the expeditions of G.I.Patsevich and L.I.Rempel have collected an extensive and interesting material about the ancient sites of ancient settlement, cartography in area territory.

In the post-war years the works on studying of history of development of architecture were conducted by Administration on architecture affairs at Ministerial council of Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic under the direction of architects T.K.Basenov and M.M.Mendikulov. Ruins of Akyrtas have been studied.

In 1956 Dzhambul archeological expedition of Institute of history, archaeology and ethnography of C.C.Valikhanov of Academy of Sciences of the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic led by A.G.Maksimova for studying of monuments of the Dzhambul area and preparation of the Archaeological map of Kazakhstan has been organized. During its work the known monuments of area

have been surveyed, revealed new ones and the data on them were prepared which have later entered the Archaeological map of Kazakhstan.

In 1958 one of the groups of expedition under the direction of M.K.Kadyrbayev excavated a rare for the south of Kazakhstan and Zhetysu “Barrow with ridges” (barrow with moustaches) in Talassky area left by tribes of Tasmolin culture the basic region of distribution for which was the Central Kazakhstan. During its excavation the unique material characterizing the architecture barrows was received; findings of samples of arms, ceramics and jewels of “polychromatic style” were made.

In 60-70th the archaeological expedition headed by N.A.Alpysbayev worked in the area; it discovered unique sites of paleolith in Karatau Mountains. Finding of stone tools of the lower paleolith epoch were of global significance. Works on studying of paleolith monuments were continued by Z.K.Baimagambetov.

From 1974 and till now Aktobe Stepninsky ancient settlement is being investigated by archaeological expedition of the Kazakh state university (now it is Kazakh National University by Al-Farabi) headed by U.H.Shalekenov. in addition to Aktobe ancient settlement the expedition groups studied monuments of early nomads and ancient settlements of Shu valley.

Used materials:

- 1. Treasure of ancient and medieval Taraz and Zhambyl region / K. M. Baipakov, G. A. Kapekova, D. A. Voyakin, A. N. Maryashev.*