

## Ulytau

Ulytau takes a special sacred place in the history of Eurasia nomads. It is a geographic landmark where the greater unity of Kazakh people was attained, a natural temple, connecting three Kazakh zhuzes in a single state. Geological chronology of this mountain group coincides with the rhythms of history of Kazakh people. So people honor this place as sacred and call mountains Ulytau – Great mountains.

The dimensions of Ulytau are as follows: its highest point is 1,134 meters; occupied space - 3 876 332 hectares; stretches for 350 km from east to west; 210 km – from south to north. There are 21 dams, 91 springs, 21 lakes in the vicinities of Ulytau; it is a place with plenty of water and feed for four types of livestock. Although it is seemed that its ridges are limited in size from the outside, but they have powerful base under it. Major rivers flow to all four corners of the world: the Great Siberian river Ob, flowing into Arctic Ocean, here Terisakkan takes its stream, flowing into Yesil and Yesil flows into Ob. Rapid rivers Karakengir, Sarykengir flow to the south to the river Sarysu. The Zhaksykon river flows to the east and debouches into the lake Tengiz. Karatorgai, Sarytorgai and Ulyzhylanshyk flow to the west, irrigating Turgay lowland.

Vicinities of Ulytau can be compared to a historical museum under the open sky. The mazars are seen from afar, at a distance of a day journey- witnesses of age-old mysteries, closer - elegant mausoleums burial grounds immersed in eternal rest, remains of spectacular buildings that have survived after historical upheavals. Mysterious stone statues of soldiers in full combat gear are frozen in the deep silence and are hung with five types of weapons. Incomprehensible writings to contemporaries and intricate ornamental patterns call to understand and unravel the hidden secrets.

History of Ulytau rooted in hoary antiquity. One of the first and most significant monuments is Tanbalytas, located in the lower reaches of the Sarysu. This stone is a stele with the images of generic characters and located near the salt lake Karakoiyn on the way to Zhetykonyr sand and washed by spring waters. The signs-tamgas of thousand generations are carved on it, you can see the tribal tamga of Argyns “eye”, tamga of Naimans “perch”, tamga of Zhalayrs and Tarakty “comb”, tamga of Shapyrashty “the Moon”, tamga of Ysty “skimmer”, tamga of Konrat “rift”, tamga of Adai “arrow” and tamga of Zhagalbaily “axe”. It is difficult to specify all generic characters. The rock stands as a symbol of the unity of all Kazakh tribes, the symbol of their integrity, because this place was consecrated by

an oath of unity and cohesion. It is material evidence that Kazakh nomadic tribes were united those days and became a single nation.

Archaeological and historical research suggests that active vigorous life, full-blooded culture and art full of imagination developed in this region since ancient times. There is compelling evidence of metallurgical production of high level on the territory of Ulytau that reached a fairly high level. Famous Arab geographer Al-Idrisi wrote that skilled craftsmen created items of gold, silver, copper in the vicinities of Ulytau and merchants sold jewelry to caravans following the route of the Great Silk Road with great benefit. Those were merchants from Shash (Tashkent) who knew the value of good things. The caravan was carrying jewelry to eastern and western people.

Skeletal remains of people and animals found during archaeological excavations are also interesting pages of unread history. It is known that the height of a horse in the Roman Army reached 136-140 cm and there were horses in the vicinities of Ulytau, whose height reached 150 cm. It is also known that ancient doctors made trepanation of the skull when they treated patients. The skeleton of a young man was found during the excavations of the burial ground Karabie, there were clearly visible traces of surgical intervention on his skull, which give evidence of the medical art people learned in the Kazakh steppe in X-III centuries BC.

The ancient Iranian epic tells the story of the famous leader of Turanians Afrasiab who died on the north of the country in the area called "Brass Castle". According to historical testimony of Makhmud Kashkari, "Brass Castle" located on the bank of the river Syrdarya. Based on this data, academician A.Margulan comes to such conclusion: "Brass Castle coincides with the ancient mine of Dzhezkazgan by its name and location. Makhmud-Kashgari gave historical information about the location of Dez-ruin".

Historical facts gave evidence that in VIII century, settled and nomadic tribes of Uisuns, Oguzes, Kanlys, Naimans, Adais and Argyns lived on the vast territory, from the lake Inzhu and Kharchuk slopes to vast Balkhash steppes, Kulyndy steppes, on fertile pastures along the full-flowing rivers Yesil, Irtysh, shores of the Caspian Sea in the district of Khoresm and Abeskun. They formed the state Desht-i-Kypchak, bordering on the west with Bulgars, on the north with the Siberia, on the east with Mogolistan and Dzungaria and with Khoresm and Karakhanid state on the south. If we describe Ulytau of those times, it becomes obvious that it was not only "the geographical center" of the territory, but the epicenter, starting point of the nomads ethnogenesis.

The true meaning of Ulytau becomes clear. In 1627, “The book to the big drawing” published in Moscow, it included detailed description of the map of the whole territory of Russia and neighboring countries of XVI-XVII centuries. Special attention was given to Ulytau. The book of “Big drawing” is not preserved, but substantive comments to ethnographic names marked on this map are extant. It is obvious by the comments that all geographical features of the Kazakh steppes to the west from Yesil and Sarysu were applied to “Big drawing”. After compilation of this atlas, the changes were added to the whole cartography system.

Karatau, Mugalzhar along with the mountains Ulytau are mentioned as areas rich in tin in “The book to the big drawing”. There is also information that the river Kengir flew from Ulytau in two channels... There is settlement Sunak in 150 miles from Kengir River on the left bank of the river Syr opposite Karatau Mountains. Three rivers flew from the mountain Ulytau. The red clay was on the banks of those rivers... The Kengir River flew into the Sarysu River... The Kengir and the Sarysu are the places of Kazakh Orda.

This information led to organization of numerous expeditions of famous scholars, travelers and became the reason of pilgrimage for adventure seekers. Those places were visited by Russian naturalist N.Rachkov in 1771 and his notes still attract the attention of historians-researchers. Many monuments of Ulytau are connected with the time of the Mongol and Dzungar invasions. Silent lonely grave-mazars, sad mounds, place names and hydronyms gave evidence that the bloody war did not stop there within a few decades.

“Book of fame” by Sharafuddin Yazdi, the chronicler of the court of Timur says: “When Timur arrived in these places, he went up to the mountain Ulytau and spent the whole day there admiring green steppes and greyish mountains. Then he gathered his troops and ordered to construct a majestic monument. The skilled craftsmen carved the date of this momentous event, so the memory about it has not faded in the centuries”.

This stone-monument was installed on the top of Ulytau – Altynshokty. Subsequently, after centuries, it was discovered by academician Kanysh Satpayev. Now it is the exhibit in Hermitage in St. Petersburg.

The history of the land is the history of people. Patterns on the land are traces of human acts. Memorial monuments among all the patterns-signs made by human hands are the most valuable for generations of today and tomorrow. Today, there

are over three hundred monuments only in Dzhezkazgan region, leading their timeline from ancient times.

There is monument Ayakkamy that combines its faith in God and art of the steppe architecture; sacred mausoleum of Alash Khan; a stone dome of Dombauyl after the famous baksy – fortuneteller of Genghis Khan times; mausoleum of Dzhuchi Khan, who strengthened the Mongol power, mazars of Bolganan and Zhubanan, relatives of Genghis Khan, whose names have been preserved in legends, a monument of the prominent knight of Golden Horde Edige Biy, a monument of Akmechet-aulie on the top of Ulytau locally known as the tomb of Tan – elder wife of Asan Kaigy. Each of these monuments is a milestone of spiritual culture, social and historical existence of Kazakh people, masterpiece of art and an indicator of its level.

Ulytau remained natural and strategic center connecting people by its geographical location for nomads since the beginning of historical times up to the formation of the first Kazakh Khanate and the whole period of existence.

Baksy (diviners, fortunetellers) who were mediators between human destiny and the will of high heaven played important role in the religious life. Many sacred graves of baksy were preserved in the vicinities of Ulytau. There is the white tomb of baksy Koilybay in the place of Ashyly river outlet into the river Dulygaly and the tomb of baksy Aidary in the lower reaches of the river Sarysu. There is the tomb of famous baksy Tokbak who received the gift of the healer and soothsayer on the banks of Kengir. The tomb of girl-baksy made of pine planks tower, which is located on the north side of Ulytau strikes with its integrity and elegance.

If we turn to the closer in time events that took place on the slopes of Ulytau in its vicinity, the narrative will be longer, in its social and historical value, they are no less tragic and no less impressive. In this regard, it is appropriate to quote the prospector and historian with a world name: "Antiquities of the southern half of Central Asia due to their luxury and grandeur eclipsed the modest and pallid monuments of its northern half, while the last ones deserve almost more attention by antiquity and plurality than the first".