

## New Investigations at Begazy Burial Ground (To Study Kyzylarai-Begazy Monuments)

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**Abstract:** One of the cultural and historical monuments nominated by the Republic of Kazakhstan to the World Heritage List of UNESCO is the megalithic structures of Begazy-Danbybai culture. Architectural structures most consolidated in Begazy burial. This article is dedicated to the review and analysis of the work carried out at Begazy burial and its surroundings, with reduction of the results of work on the creation of the state historical, cultural and natural Kyzylarai-Begazy reserve-museum.

**Key words:** Begazy burial • Begazy-Danbybai culture • Kyzylarai-Begazy reserve-museum

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### INTRODUCTION

Begazy burial – one of the significant monuments of the Late Bronze Age of Central Kazakhstan. Archaeological investigations at the region of Kyzylarai-Begazy mountains have been carried out by restoration work on Begazy burial and full inspection of the monument located place during the last ten years. So the work was conducted at Begazy burial and it's neighborhood by A. Margulan Institute of Archaeology on initiative of Department of Culture of Karagandy oblast. +The main part of this many-sided research is reclamation, conservation and restoration works at the burial. These works have completed at the present time, except the burial territory arrangement. In spite of main works on conservation and restoration at the burial, there was carried out prospecting research at Begazy neighborhood, as the result of that were tens of monuments find of stone, bronze, early iron age and middle age, also there was conducted excavation work at some objects [1].

The first written information about Begazy burial found even in the publications of the early twentieth century. Thus, an article of N.Konshin "On Ancient Monuments of Semipalatinsk oblast" was published in 1903 [2, p. 19].

The first scientific research on the archaeological work was undertaken in the middle of the last century under the leadership A. Margulan [3].

Field work was conducted for the study of the burial ground until 1952. During this period of time under the supervision of A. Margulan was excavated 18 mounds-fences of the Andronov historical and cultural community and 6 rock mausoleums of the Late Bronze Age. The data obtained from Begazy burial and other reference monuments of Saryarka was isolated to the specific Dandybai stage in the periodization of ancient history of Central Kazakhstan in the candidate dissertation by K. Akishev in 1953 [4, p. 9] and later A. Margulan, analyzing the complex of materials from a number of Late Bronze Age monuments in this region, identified their affiliation to an independent archaeological culture of Begazy-Dandybai [5, 6]. It should be noted that by that time highly informative materials of such bright monument like barrow 11 of Dandybai burial ground, investigated by M. Gryaznov in Karagandy oblast in 1933, have already entered into scientific use and these data have also played an important role in the selection of a new culture.

After the archaeological investigation of 40-50-ies of XX century on the territory of Begazy burial the work on further studying of the complex, including activities for

the conservation, preservation and restoration of unique architectural structures were not accomplished. According to this, after a half-century from the date of completion of the initial archaeological work the technical condition of the burial in the beginning 2000's was registered as emergency: Andronov fences was destroyed much including unexcavated sites, significantly were damaged the mausoleums, as well as the numerous small stoned burials of Kazakh time [6, p. 109-112].

#### **Conservation and Restoration Work on Burial Ground Begazy:**

The circumstances at the burial has been changed dramatically since 2003 due to the initiative of the Department of Culture of Karagandy oblast, developed a regional "Silk Road" Program, upon which there has been implemented a lot of projects with social and scientific importance, including a project on rehabilitation of Begazy burial. Since 2007, the project has been funded by the state program "Cultural Heritage" on "Monuments of Begazy-Dandybai and Tasmola cultures". The main purpose of the adopted program was the preparation of Begazy burial for museumification works and then conducting these activities. According to the goal there were formulated the following objectives for the research group:

- Study and definition of the burial structure;
- Instrumental topographical survey of the terrain and the burial ground,
- Total remediation of burial of debris, including primarily the impressive strata of the old dumps, "skillfully" planned by bulldozer in due time on the territory of the monument;
- Drawing up an action plan on Conservation and restoration of monuments and holding them.

Following a number of years of preparation, research works by A.Kh. Margulan Institute of Archaeology there has been begun conservation and restoration work at the burial since 2007 [7, p. 58-60].

Administratively the burial ground is located on the territory of Shabanbaibi rural district of Aktogai region of Karagandy oblast.

The burial ground is located at the foot of the same name mountain on the right bank of the river Karatal and takes plot with a total area of 10 hectares. The bulk of the burial objects is a chain in the direction of SW-NE. Although this burial ground is known as the Late Bronze

Age's monument, within the burial are monuments from different periods, including 50 oval, round, rectangular fences of the Andronov historical and cultural affinities, 6 rock mausoleums of Begazy-Dandybai culture, burial structures with stone and earthen embankment and more than 200 stone graves of Kazakh period with dimensions 2,5×3 m, up to 1 m.

Existing emergency on the burial was primarily due to two factors: natural-climatic factors and the human factor.

Before the start of restoration work, discussions were held about the process and methods of conservation and restoration work, in the end the research group came to the general conclusion that the restoration of the burial ground monuments should take place under Sheet objects composed by expert archaeologists and reflected in the scientific publications of those years. Restoration work was carried out on 6-rock mausoleums of Begazy-Dandybai culture, restored all excavated Andronov fences and burial constructions of Kazakh time [8, p. 275].

Nowadays much of the conservation and restoration work largely completed.

Work on the creation of natural, historical and cultural reserve "Kyzylarai-Begazy". The work was begun on creation of the state historical, cultural and natural "Kyzylarai-Begazy" reserve-museum on the territory of Aktogai region at the initiative of the Department of Culture of Karagandy oblast in 2008. In this regard, the work was held by A.Kh. Margulan Institute of Archaeology and N.P. Ogar, a researcher at the Center for Remote Sensing and Geographic Information Systems "Terra", in order to develop Natural-scientific study of the project [9, p. 402].

Researchers of A. Margulan Institute of Archaeology performed field work on searching and fixing archaeological monuments according to the developed methods of field prospecting. On identified sites were drawn plans, accompanied a detailed description, carried out photo fixation and taken GPS coordinates.

Characteristic of the natural landscape, topography, flora and fauna has been prepared by the staff of the company "Terra".

After the necessary survey work the prime condition was determination of boundaries and territory of the projected reserve-museum. It was taken into account that the outer limits should be set on the basis of its historic boundaries of the cultural heritage sites and natural landscape boundaries, including cultural landscape of preserving historic places.

Work on the creation Natural-scientific study, including the handling of scientific data, preparing and submitting reports has been completed in early 2009.

Then Natural-scientific study and other materials on the projected reserve during 2009 and early 2010 passed a number of important agreements in such agencies as the Committee of protected areas, the Ministry of Culture and Information, Ministry of Environment and others [9, p. 402].

The question of the creation of the historical, cultural and natural “Kyzylarai-Begazy” reserve-museum is based on the following:

- The current status of the cultural heritage of Kazakhstan is characterized by a feasible set of measures on provision of the preservation and further development of the centuries-old tradition;
- Historical and cultural heritage of Kazakhstan should be considered in several aspects, such as the restoration of significant historical, cultural, archaeological and architectural monuments of national history.
- Among the priorities of “Kyzylarai-Begazy” reserve-museum will be included particularly important aspects - research, preservation and use of historical, cultural and natural heritage of Kazakhstan, Karagandy oblast.

Functional activity of “Kyzylarai-Begazy” reserve should be viewed in several ways, namely:

- Reserve-museum as a center of preservation, use and promotion of the historical and cultural heritage;
- Scientific-research value of the reserve-museum;
- The role of the reserve-museum in the socio-economic policies of the local administrative authorities.

Reserve-museum as a center for the preservation, use and promotion of the historical and cultural heritage. This aspect is, perhaps, expresses the very essence of the reserve and requires special consideration. In the context of the preservation and enhancement of historical and cultural heritage sites can be used the following levels of museumification:

- Cultural Landscape;
- Regional Ensemble;
- Accent.

Thus, the cultural landscape level of museumification is expressed in using the full range of historical and cultural heritage sites and natural resources of the region.

We should pay particular attention to the immovable monuments on which an outdoor museum can be formed. The ultimate result of landscape planning is a program that determines the main directions of natural resources, management activities and their corresponding basic landscape functional areas on the reserve-museum.

Regional-ensemble level of museumification. The objects to museumification are allocated museum and exposition areas, which form the basic framework of the tourist route. As intended territory of the Kyzylarai-Begazy reserve-museum is proposed allocation of 4 exposition areas, namely:

Archaeological exposition area – Kyzylarai-Begazy archaeological complex. At the reserve there are numerous and vibrant archaeological sites. The main part of the monuments is combined into five major groups (clusters) in the compactness of its location. There are 150 locations, uniting 571 objects. In chronological order, monuments belong to the periods of the Stone Age, Bronze Age, Early Iron Age and the middle Ages [9, p. 404].

There are archaeological monuments of different periods of history on the territory of the proposed reserve, as noted above. Stone Age is represented by 4 locations (sites). In all five clusters are recorded Bronze Age monuments, concentrated in the river and streams valleys. Locations of bronze monuments are 25, there are eight simultaneous monuments and the rest - as part of multitemporalburials. There are mainly fences and barrows with fences, also settlements, petroglyphs.

Begazy burial complex is a key, but not the only advantage of the territory of Kyzylarai-Begazy archaeological complex. Monuments of the early Iron Age are represented like barrow graves, barrows with “mustache”, petroglyphs, also found the settlements. There are frequently met barrows built of earth and stone, having a height of 0,15-3 m and more. Also, there are about 116 locations of monuments of early Iron Age. 101 of them are simultaneously monuments, the rest are concerned to the multi-temporal burials.

In addition to the ancient monuments in the territory abound medieval monuments, which have a different shape. Some barrows are built of cut stone and, as a rule, have an anthropomorphic sculpture or stone slab on the east side of the mound. Others - the ancient Turkic memorial fences with a square or rectangular shape, built

of slabs established anthropomorphic sculptures on the east side. There are also structures, built of earth and stone with several sculptures in the central parts.

Historical exposition area. At the suggestion of Aktogai district akimat, during field work in the list of discovered objects has been introduced by a particularly important historical monuments.

Among these are the objects associated with the biography of some prominent figures of Kazakhstan, who were born here; Tribal wintering of A. Bukeyhanov; Tribal wintering of A. Naymanbaev; Tribal wintering of A. Ermekov;

The ruins of many wintering grounds of late 19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, which are traditionally associated with a large and diversified family of Bukeyhanovs, located in the Mount Zheltau. Here, north of Mount Zheltau, on the right bank of the river Zhinishke is located family cemetery Bukeyhanovs' family – known to many Taldybeit cemetery.

For the first time the plans of these monuments have been drawn up, have been made the description, photographic images, have been taken coordinates. It should be noted – the work done has once again demonstrated blatant advantage of archaeological techniques and generally “archaeological approach” in the search for and identification of such objects.

In general, the monuments of the historical and cultural heritage in the territory of the proposed reserve seem sufficiently important and unique, requiring the organization of special measures for the comprehensive study, protection and use in their location.

Ethnographic exposition area. Location of “Kyzylarai-Begazy” reserve-museum in three rural districts will attract attention to the ethnography of the Kazakh people. A necessary condition for promotion of cultural and historical heritage is also the preservation and display elements of the material and spiritual culture. Based on local traditions in the core activities of the reserve- museum can be arranged the production of various souvenirs, demonstrating skills and crafts.

Thus, in the village of Shabanbai Bi in the network of the project “Eco-tourism and public awareness in Central Kazakhstan” has been begun development of applied art, namely, the production of the felt. Manufacture of felt – a complex process that requires certain specific skills. From the earliest times household items and clothing produced of wool, but with the development of ecological tourism in Kazakhstan, Souvenir felt products receive an additional boost. Ecotourism promotion plays an

important role in the preservation and revival of vanishing knowledge, traditions and crafts. One of the ways to support and revive the local culture is attracting of tourists interested in buying local craft articles, as well as attaching to the traditional arts and crafts.

According to the project within the framework reserve-museum is planning an establishment and operation of the Museum of history and nature, which will be located in the administrative building.

These measures will show and culture and history of the people of Kazakhstan. It must be noted that attraction tourists to the organization of theatrical performances, cooking allows initiation to the traditional culture of the Kazakh people.

**Natural Exposure Zone:** The natural conditions of the territory are not less unique, especially there are beautiful, aesthetically valuable landscapes of Saryarka differing original natural stone “sculptures” and a variety of landforms, soil types. Forest vegetation is predominantly found in the floodplains of the numerous streams in the valleys, along rivers and on rocky slopes of Kyzylarai, steppe and desert-steppe vegetation is represented in most of the proposed reserve-museum. Area is decorated with pine, aspen and birch mountain forests and massive amounts of feather-grass steppe valleys.

It should be noted the richness of the local flora and fauna. There are more than 500 species of plants, 20 species of them are rare, including the four are on the list of the Red Book, 6 are endemic, 3 relict boreal and 7 plants with a shrinking habitat. Fauna of the area includes about 300 species, there are listed in the Red Book of argali and 18 species of birds. All of this testifies to the high conservation value of areas.

Demonstration of landscapes of Central Kazakhstan can be accomplished using the resources of existing Karkaraly National Park. Its proximity should positively influence the activities of the proposed reserve, as in the course of operating activities and in the development of tourism, including for the setting up the general tourist routes.

*Accentual museumfication level* – which demonstrates the individual archaeological sites, accented link in the overall chain of objects of museum display and carry a special semantic meaning as part of the exposition in the open.

Thus, the area of the reserve- museum for the organization selected on the basis of analysis of placement of monuments of history and culture, natural

and aesthetic value of the landscape with the further prospect of tourism development. According to the number and value of objects of history, archeology and culture area is different, so to save them, the further research and organization of visits is necessary the structure connected directly to the protection of historical and cultural heritage in the status of Historical and cultural reserve-museum.

Scientific research and security value of the reserve-museum. Here for the reserve are offered the following areas:

- The continuation of research activities. At a number of promising sites of Archaeology is necessary to conduct studies to determine the cultural and chronological affiliation and get a new material on the history of the region and the country as a whole;
- Security activities are to preserve historical and cultural heritage of Kazakhstan, as well as land reclamation, restoration and conservation work on immovable archaeological monuments of reserve-museum. It is important to organize the protection of the monuments themselves, with the establishment of security boards, identifying the security zones, etc.;
- Educational activities, expressed in conducting training courses and lecture programs by specialists of the reserve-museum, organizing joint educational programs with local schools, promoting local lore.

The role of the reserve-museum in the socio-economic policies of the local administrative authorities. The organization of the reserve- museum will open new jobs indirectly related to the main activities of the reserve. Besides, the opening of the reserve-museum will positively impact on the development of infrastructure in the region, as well as will help attract new financial investment in the economy. The leading role in the organization of the reserve-museum plays educational tourism, able to attract extra-budgetary funding.

The development of tourism in the reserve-museum of “Kyzylarai-Begazy” implies the existence of several tourist routes, for the development of that may be taken into account the following aspects: The need to visit all the areas of exhibition of tour groups; Taking into account available features of topography in the region; Consideration of a modern infrastructure; Taking into account the preferences of the target audience, which can be people of all ages and social groups.

Elaboration of specific routes refers to the activities of the reserve-museum, the work is yet to come, but on the basis of the above provisions, it is possible to offer the following options: basic, which includes admission to all exhibition areas and additional, thematic. Development of different variations of tour routes will take into account the preferences of different groups of tourists, which will have an increasing interest in the reserve.

## CONCLUSION

Thus, work on creating natural scientific study to some extent has already shown urgency, complexity and great importance of the tasks that should be decided by reserve.Kyzylarai-Begazy State Historical, cultural and natural reserve-museum in case of timely discovery will act not only as a traditional custodian of the historical and cultural heritage of Kazakhstan, it will be an important focus of multidisciplinary research, the local center of the current and dynamic measures for the protection and use of monuments of nature and history. Exactly the kind of tasks should be assigned to it.

Magnificent monument of antiquity Begazy burial nominated by the Republic of Kazakhstan to the World Heritage List of UNESCO [10]. This situation once again reinforces the urgency of a comprehensive study and preservation of the monument as well as many other important objects like Kyzylarai-Begazy.

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