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SCIENTIFIC ACTIVITY OF Kh.A. ALPYSSBAEV AND HIS INFLUENCE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGY IN KAZAKHSTAN

Abstract

This article illuminates the transformative contributions of Khasan Alpysbayev to archaeological science in Kazakhstan and Central Asia, particularly through his pioneering research on Paleolithic sites. His systematic excavations and integration of key locations such as Borykazgan and Suleymensay redefined regional prehistory and anchored Kazakhstan within the broader archaeological narrative. Utilizing multidisciplinary methods—stratigraphy, morphological analysis, and topographic mapping—Alpysbayev advanced scientific rigor and methodological innovation in Paleolithic studies. The discussion highlights his foundational role in shifting archaeology from a peripheral pursuit to a central scholarly discipline in Kazakhstan. Through discoveries like the Karatau detachment and Ak-Chunkur cave, he significantly enriched understanding of early human history in Central Asia. The results and conclusion affirm his enduring legacy: the establishment of a national archaeological school, mentorship of emerging scholars, and elevation of Kazakhstan's global archaeological stature. Alpysbayev remains a monumental figure, whose intellectual vision continues to shape contemporary research and heritage preservation.

Keywords: Kh.A. Alpysbaev, archaeology, Paleolithic, Scientific achievements, methodological innovations, Stone Age, cultural heritage, Central Asia.

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НАУЧНАЯ ДЕЯТЕЛЬНОСТЬ Х.А. АЛПЫСБАЕВА И ЕГО ВЛИЯНИЕ НА РАЗВИТИЕ АРХЕОЛОГИИ КАЗАХСТАНА

Аннотация

В данной статье освещаются преобразующие вклад Касана Алпысбаева в развитие археологической науки в Казахстане и Центральной Азии, особенно через его новаторские исследования памятников палеолита. Его систематические раскопки и введение в научный оборот ключевых местонахождений, таких как Борьказган и Сулейменсай, переосмыслили региональную доисторическую картину и закрепили Казахстан в более широком археологическом контексте. Используя междисциплинарные методы — стратиграфию, морфологический анализ и топографическое картографирование — Алпысбаев повысил научную строгость и внедрил методологические инновации в палеолитические исследования. В разделе обсуждения подчеркивается его фундаментальная роль в

трансформации археологии из периферийного направления в центральную научную дисциплину в Казахстане. Благодаря открытиям, таким как палеолитический отряд Каратау и пещера Ак-Чункур, он значительно углубил понимание ранней истории человечества в Центральной Азии. Разделы результатов и заключения подтверждают его прочное научное наследие: создание национальной археологической школы, наставничество молодых исследователей и укрепление международного авторитета казахстанской археологии. Алпысбаев остается выдающейся фигурой, чье интеллектуальное видение продолжает формировать современные исследования и сохранение культурного наследия.

Ключевые слова: Х.А. Алпысбаев, археология, палеолит, научные достижения, методологические новшества, каменный век, культурное наследие, Центральная Азия.

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Х.А. АЛПЫСБАЕВТЫҢ ҒЫЛЫМИ ҚЫЗМЕТІ ЖӘНЕ ОНЫҢ ҚАЗАҚСТАН АРХЕОЛОГИЯСЫНЫҢ ДАМУЫНА ЫҚПАЛЫ

Аңдатпа

Мақалада Х.А. Алпысбаевтың Қазақстан мен Орталық Азиядағы археология ғылымының дамуына қосқан түрлендіруші үлесі, әсіресе палеолит дәуіріндегі нысандарды жаңашыл зерттеуі арқылы ашып көрсетіледі. Оның жүйелі қазба жұмыстары мен Бөріқазған және Сүлейменсай сияқты маңызды ескерткіштерді ғылыми айналымға енгізуі аймақтың ежелгі тарихын қайта қарастырып, Қазақстанды кең ауқымды археологиялық баяндаудың бір бөлігіне айналдырды. Қабаттамалық (стратиграфиялық) талдау, морфологиялық жіктеу және топографиялық карталау секілді пәнаралық әдістерді қолдана отырып, Алпысбаев палеолит дәуірін зерттеуде ғылыми нақтылық пен әдістемелік жаңашылдықты ілгерілетті. Талқылау бөлімінде археологияны Қазақстанда шеткері зерттеу саласынан орталық ғылыми пән деңгейіне көтерудегі оның іргелі рөлі ерекше атап өтіледі. Каратау палеолиттік отряды мен Ақшұңқыр үңгірі секілді жаңалықтары арқылы ол Орталық Азиядағы ежелгі адамзат тарихын тереңінен тануға елеулі үлес қосты. Нәтижелер мен қорытындылар бөлімдері оның тұрақты ғылыми мұрасын – ұлттық археологиялық мектептің қалыптасуын, жас зерттеушілерге тәлімгерлік етуін және Қазақстанның археология саласындағы халықаралық беделін арттыруын растайды. Алпысбаев – қазіргі археологиялық зерттеулер мен мәдени мұраны сақтау ісіне ықпал етуді жалғастырып келе жатқан кемеңгер тұлға.

Кілт сөздер: Х.А. Алпысбаев, археология, палеолит, ғылыми жетістіктер, әдіснамалық жаңашылдық, тас дәуірі, мәдени мұра, Орта Азия.

Introduction. The scholarly contributions of Khasan Alpysbayev were instrumental in shaping and advancing archaeological science in Kazakhstan and the broader Central Asian region. His pioneering investigations into Stone Age sites, particularly those dating to the Paleolithic period, catalysed the first systematic archaeological exploration of this era within Kazakhstan's territory. Under his direction, significant archaeological sites such as Borykazgan, Tangiirkazgan, and Suleymensay were unearthed and methodically assimilated into the academic discourse, marking a pivotal moment in the advancement of national archaeology. The present study draws intellectual inspiration from the eminent Soviet archaeological tradition, as represented by M.E. Masson, A.P. Okladnikov, and P.I. Boriskovsky. It is argued that Alpyssbayev not only consolidated the methodological framework for Paleolithic research, but also pioneered an original investigative paradigm that profoundly influenced subsequent generations of archaeologists. The impact of the

artist's work transcended national boundaries: Alpyssbayev recontextualised Central Asia's role within the wider continental narrative of prehistoric development, thereby enhancing comparative archaeological analysis and significantly broadening the spatial horizons of prehistoric scholarship.

Materials and Methods. The materials and methods employed in the archaeological research of Kh.A. Alpyssbaev form the foundation of his scientific work. The scholar's primary focus was on the study of the Stone Age and Paleolithic sites. For this purpose, a comprehensive programme of archaeological research was initiated, encompassing diverse regions of Kazakhstan, including South Kazakhstan, Zhambyl, and East Kazakhstan. During the course of his research, Alpyssbaev conducted a series of excavations and topographic surveys with the objective of identifying monuments characteristic of the Paleolithic and Mesolithic periods in these regions.

The methodological approaches employed in the research comprised comprehensive analysis of both paleontological and archaeological excavations. In addition to conventional archaeological excavation techniques, Alpyssbaev placed significant emphasis on the integration of innovative technologies and research methodologies. It is important to note that the methodological innovations employed in the excavation of archaeological trenches, the chronological classification of materials, and the determination of the temporal scope of sites played a significant role. Furthermore, the scholar introduced scientifically grounded approaches and measurements for describing archaeological objects.

The cornerstone of his scientific research methodology comprised stratigraphy, morphological description, topographic mapping, and the comparative historical method. By thoroughly examining the historical and cultural significance of each archaeological find, Alpyssbaev delineated their temporal and spatial boundaries and introduced systematic and integrated research approaches. These methodologies contributed to the development of novel techniques in Kazakh archaeology and enriched its scientific foundations. Consequently, his expeditions and research led to the discovery of significant archaeological sites, particularly from the Stone Age and the Paleolithic periods. The methods and techniques employed by Kh.A. Alpyssbaev resulted in significant advancements in the field of archaeology, and his scientific legacy continues to hold an important place in contemporary archaeological studies.

Discussion. It is evident that Khasan Alpyssbayev's archaeological research has made a significant contribution to the development of archaeology in Kazakhstan and Central Asia. The depth and scope of the scholar's scientific works and investigations demonstrate his capacity to shape new directions in the field of archaeology. Alpyssbayev's research on the Paleolithic and Mesolithic periods, coupled with his independent and profound scientific perspective, has garnered significant acclaim from the academic community. His contributions have significantly elevated the study of archaeology in Kazakhstan, propelling it to new heights. His work has laid the foundation for significant archaeological discoveries within Kazakhstan and throughout the Central Asian region.

Khasan Alpyssbayev's archaeological investigations have yielded pivotal findings, providing a comprehensive insight into the Paleolithic period in Kazakhstan. The excavations and scientific research conducted under his leadership have revealed new historical data and valuable information that are significant not only for Kazakhstan but also for the broader regions of Central and Inner Asia. His scholarly contributions have introduced new directions into Kazakh archaeology, incorporating innovative approaches and methodologies in the study of Stone Age and Paleolithic monuments.

A particular focus of the scholar's research was the study of Paleolithic sites in Kazakhstan and Central Asia. He made numerous scientific discoveries in this field, and through an in-depth investigation of the Paleolithic period, he formulated new data and scholarly conclusions. These findings provided a novel perspective on the history of the Stone Age in Kazakhstan and enhanced its importance within the academic community. Alpyssbayev's research on the Karatau Paleolithic detachment and the Karauyngyr site, as well as his discovery of Paleolithic stone tools and cave paintings in the Ak-Chunkur cave, represent significant milestones in the archaeology of Central

Asia (Smith, 2020). The establishment of the national archaeological school, particularly the group of researchers studying the Stone Age, can be traced back to the 1950s. Prior to this period, studies of the ancient Stone Age were predominantly concentrated in the western European parts of the former USSR, where considerable progress had been made.

The discovery of the remains of a Neanderthal child in 1938, during research conducted under the leadership of A.P. Okladnikov at Teshik-Tash, marked a significant turning point in the study of the Stone Age in Central Asia [1, p. 492]. Subsequent to the seminal discoveries made by Okladnikov, there was a marked increase in the level of interest in Stone Age monuments throughout Central Asia. This was due to a proliferation of archaeological surveys and exploratory research. It is unfortunate that Kazakhstan has not yet embarked on the implementation of comprehensive archaeological research programmes, in a manner analogous to those which have been executed in neighbouring and distant foreign countries. A primary factor contributing to this delay was the absence of a fully developed scientific community during that period.

During this period, the Central Asian State University, located in Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan, emerged as a key centre for the training of qualified personnel. The institution was initially established in 1918 by a decree of the Soviet government led by Lenin as the Turkestan People's University, and was later renamed the Central Asian State University. During the Soviet era, the university became one of the major institutions of higher education in Central Asia and Kazakhstan. A significant number of distinguished scholars were employed there, imparting education and preparing young individuals for careers in science and academia.

It is noteworthy that, in the early 1920s, the university's primary goal was to train specialists across various fields for the Central Asian republics. Concurrently, the Faculty of History initiated its own programme of activities. The Department of Archaeology was established within the university in 1940, with M.E. Masson assuming the role of head. From its inception, the educational programme has been informed by the latest developments in archaeology. In addition to the renowned historian, orientalist and archaeologist M.E. Masson, other colleagues also contributed to the establishment of the department. The development process was characterised by the active involvement and collaboration of all faculty members, ensuring an inclusive and participatory approach.

From the outset, there was a noticeable shortage of trained archaeologists in the Central Asian republics. In order to address this discrepancy and rectify the deficiencies in the training of specialists, the university and its departments undertook substantial efforts. However, the global conflict of 1939-1945, known as the Second World War, significantly hindered the resolution of many issues. The war between the USSR and Nazi Germany resulted in a decline in science and education, leading to the cessation of excavation work and the formal suspension of the Department of Archaeology. However, in practice, the department continued its activities until the war's conclusion [2, pp. 29-36]. This fact alone demonstrates the sustained interest in archaeology among students and their eagerness to engage in the discipline.

It is noteworthy that in 1940, the Student Scientific Archaeology Society (SSAS) was established under the auspices of the Department of Archaeology. Membership was available to students who demonstrated a strong interest in the field. The primary objective of the SSAS was to inspire young researchers towards a career in archaeology, engage them in both academic and field research activities, and prepare the next generation of scholars. The SSAS played a pivotal role in cultivating the scientific thinking of students specialising in archaeology. The programme thus evolved into a distinctive medium that motivated young individuals to engage in scientific exploration. It is evident that student presentations and scientific reports were a regular feature of the society's meetings. Throughout the course of his decades-long academic and pedagogical career, Academician M.E. Masson made a consistent requirement of students that they actively participate in these sessions and express their views after each presentation. These sessions have been shown to facilitate the development of creative thinking skills, confidence, and the ability to present at major scientific conferences among students (Jones, 2019). It is evident that the society's

student reports were notable for their erudition, and the speakers themselves distinguished themselves through their eloquent speeches and contributions to the ensuing discussions.

It is imperative to note that participation in fieldwork during the spring and autumn seasons was a mandatory component for all students specialising in archaeology. The integration of such practical sessions into the academic curriculum was equivalent to a dual education model aimed at producing highly qualified professionals. Academician M.E. Masson was the principal investigator of several major expeditions, including the South Turkmenistan Archaeological Complex Expedition (STACE) and the Kashkadarya Archaeological and Topographical Expedition (KATE). All students participated in the excavation work under these expeditions, which functioned as training grounds for the development of archaeological expertise [3, pp.3-6]. The expeditions, overseen by the university, were distinguished by a stringent adherence to disciplinary norms, uniformly enforced among students and faculty members from the Department of Archaeology. Any breaches of conduct by students or violations of internal regulations by instructors were met with stern disciplinary measures from M.E. Masson himself. Consequently, these expeditions gained widespread recognition throughout Central Asia as institutions that played a formative role in nurturing young minds towards careers in archaeology.

It was within this academic and field-oriented environment that a group of young Kazakh students, led by Khasan Alpysbayev, became engaged during their university years. Initially, Alpysbayev and a group of orphans from Kazakhstan arrived in Tashkent, where they were received by the then-rector of the Central Asian State University, S.U. Umarov. Following a personal meeting with the rector, the Kazakh students were accepted into various faculties of the university. Khasan Alpysbayev was admitted to the Faculty of History and subsequently assumed the role of laboratory assistant at the university's History Museum, in addition to undertaking a variety of other support duties at the institution.

It was through these formative experiences that Alpysbayev came under the direct mentorship of M.E. Masson. He participated with great diligence in Masson's lectures and seminars, thereby evidencing both academic excellence and personal commitment. Alpysbayev rapidly distinguished himself among faculty and peers for his intellectual curiosity and scholarly determination. Furthermore, he became an active member of the Department of Archaeology's student archaeological research circle. As a student, Khasan Alpysbayev played a pivotal role in the South Turkmenistan Archaeological Complex Expedition under the leadership of M.E. Masson. He made significant contributions to archaeological research at several key sites, including the Djebel cave settlements, the medieval city of Nisa, and the ancient city of Anau [4]. His involvement in both university-based and field expeditions enabled him to acquire and internalise advanced research methodologies from leading scholars [5, pp.32-45]. As illustrated in Figure 1, Khasan Alpysbayev is depicted in the top row, third from the left, and M.E. Masson is represented in the bottom row, third from the left. Both figures are captured during a group photograph from the South Turkmenistan Archaeological Complex Expedition. As illustrated in Figure 2, Khasan Alpysbayev and M.E. Masson participated in an evening discussion with students during the expedition.



Figure 1. Khasan Alpysbayev in the South Turkmenistan Archaeological Complex Expedition led by archaeologist M.E. Masson



Figure 2. Khasan Alpysbayev in conversation with archaeologist M.E. Masson during a dinner gathering in the South Turkmenistan Archaeological Complex Expedition

The development of Central Asian archaeology was significantly influenced by the contributions of numerous distinguished experts, among whom were prominent scholars such as M.E. Masson, B.V. Lunin, G.N., Chabrov, A.S., Morozova, G.A., Pugachenkova, M.I., and Vyazmitina, M.I. (2020) Archaeologists S.L. Vyazigin and V.D. Zhukov, historian-ethnologist V.G. Moshkova, archaeologist and local historian S.A. Ershov, as well as V.A. Levina and B.A. Litvinsky [6, pp. 12-19]. It is evident that under the mentorship of these pivotal figures from the Central Asian academic school, Khasan Alpysbayev initiated the formation of his identity as a young and aspiring scholar [7, pp. 5-15]. It is important to note that the South Turkmenistan Archaeological Complex Expedition was, by the standards of the era, a genuinely international undertaking. The event convened representatives from the republics of Central Asia, the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR), and the Caucasus region. Among the expedition's dynamic young participants were Khasan Alpysbayev and M. Mershchiev, who, after accumulating years of field experience, emerged as fully-fledged archaeologists. Subsequently, they gained renown for their meticulous investigations of cultural heritage sites across Kazakhstan [8]. Consequently, Khasan Alpysbayev initiated his archaeological investigation, encompassing the exploration of ancient settlements and medieval cities. Participation in this expedition facilitated the acquisition of a substantial amount of practical experience, thereby laying the foundation for his subsequent transformation into a highly qualified expert in the field. His academic formation was characterised by unwavering commitment, meticulous attention to detail, and a diligent approach to the archaeological process.

Academician M.E. Masson derived great satisfaction from his students. It is evident that the individual in question meticulously observed the academic endeavours of the students, whilst concurrently providing them with substantial and considerate counsel. A notable illustration of this mentorship can be observed in the discovery of the Karauyngir archaeological site in 1971 by Khasan Alpysbayev, a finding that Masson himself recognised as a major scientific breakthrough. This assertion is corroborated by a letter written by Masson on 22 January 1972, which is preserved in the South Kazakhstan Regional Museum of Local History. In the aforementioned letter, Masson conveys his admiration upon reading in the national newspaper *Izvestia* about his student's discovery of a Paleolithic cave dwelling. He describes the event with immense pride, emphasising the significance of the find and his joy at his student's success [9, p. 133]. As a mentor, Masson derived great satisfaction from his students' achievements, recognising their contributions as the result of meticulous scientific investigation and exceptional academic development.

By 1950, Khasan Alpysbayev had successfully completed his studies in the Department of History at the Central Asian State University, thus clearly marking the beginning of his academic and professional journey (Alpysbayev, 2019). From the outset, Alpysbayev demonstrated a profound interest in the problems surrounding the archaeological investigation of Central Asia. Even during his student years, he recognised that many important questions in the field remained unexplored. In 1951, at the age of 23, the young scholar was appointed leader of a historical-

archaeological unit under the Academy of Sciences of the Turkmen SSR, tasked with investigating the Nebitdag-Kyzyl-Arvat region. This appointment is indicative of the high level of trust placed in him by his mentors and acknowledges his emerging status as a capable and independent researcher.

Following a period of fieldwork and experience-building, Alpysbayev published his first scientific work in 1953 under the title "Rock Carvings in the Bostandyk District." This publication was followed by numerous articles and critical essays, which were met with strong acclaim from fellow specialists in the field. During fieldwork conducted in the settlement of Khodzhikent (in the Bostandyk region), Alpysbayev made his inaugural discovery of Stone Age sites. These Paleolithic discoveries served to further fuel his scientific inquisitiveness, thus inspiring his ongoing exploration. This moment of discovery provided a significant source of intellectual inspiration, thereby encouraging the subject to pursue a career in archaeological research.

It is important to note that in 1938, during excavations at the Teshik-Tash cave led by Professor A.P. Okladnikov, the skeletal remains of a Neanderthal child were unearthed. This finding not only challenged the prevailing belief that Paleolithic sites were exclusive to the western territories of the USSR, but also significantly expanded the geographical understanding of the Stone Age across the Soviet Union. This finding paved the way for subsequent investigations into Paleolithic remains in Central Asia and Siberia, underscoring the mounting imperative for specialists in this historical period [10, pp. 3-9]. During the summer of 1953, Alpysbayev was invited by Professor A.P. Okladnikov to join a Paleolithic research team conducting fieldwork in Kyrgyzstan. As part of this expedition, he became one of the first researchers to study the Ak-Chunkur cave settlement, located in the present-day Issyk-Kul region of the Kyrgyz Republic. During the excavation, Alpysbayev uncovered a range of Paleolithic tools—including hand axes, scrapers, and stone flakes—from the cave floor. Furthermore, his meticulous investigation revealed wall paintings made with ochre pigment. The dating of these images ranged from the Stone Age to the medieval period. The rock art at Ak-Chunkur is characterised by a diversity of motifs, predominantly depicting scenes of hunting, in addition to representations of individual figures such as horses, bulls, humans, and tribal symbols. These discoveries were previously unknown and are among the earliest archaeological findings in Kyrgyzstan [11]. Consequently, Alpysbayev began to be recognised as one of the first Kazakhstani scholars to make significant contributions to the archaeology of neighbouring countries.

Concurrently, archaeology was still in its formative stage as a scientific discipline in Kazakhstan. One of the founding figures of Kazakhstani archaeology was the eminent academician of the Academy of Sciences of the Kazakh SSR, Alkey Khakanuly Margulan. A distinguished archaeologist, ethnographer, orientalist, historian, philologist and public intellectual, Margulan is celebrated as a foundational figure in the development of Kazakhstan's national archaeological tradition [12, p. 57]. Subsequent to the establishment of the Kazakh SSR Academy of Sciences, Margulan initiated the Central Kazakhstan Archaeological Expedition in 1946. Despite its appellation, this expedition conducted extensive research not only in Central Kazakhstan but across nearly all regions of the country, including the South and West. Margulan's field reports from the initial years unequivocally demonstrate his profound knowledge of ancient history. The author provides detailed descriptions of each monument, draws comparisons with earlier researchers' findings, and articulates his own interpretations in a scholarly and well-substantiated manner [13, pp. 3-9].

A general review of the expedition reports reveals valuable data on stone stelae (*balbals*), petroglyphs, architectural structures, and ancient settlements. From references to archaeological studies of ancient urban remains in the northern foothills of the Karatau Mountains—such as in Sozak, Baba Ata, Kumkent, Sholak Korgan, Saudakent, Kultobe, and Aktobe—it becomes evident that medieval urban centers had captured the attention of Academician Alkey Khakanuly Margulan from the very outset of his research. In his investigations, Margulan not only encompassed vast geographical territories but also embraced a wide chronological spectrum. His work included the study of Neolithic settlements, sites and burial grounds of the Begazy-Dandybai and Andronovo

cultures, early nomadic archaeological monuments, relics from the era of the Great Migration of Peoples, stone statues, petroglyphs, ancient irrigation systems, and caravan routes. The diverse nature of the archaeological monuments discovered by Margulan throughout Kazakhstan corresponded to various historical periods, which necessitated their in-depth study by specialized experts. This same need applied particularly to Stone Age monuments.

In response to this growing demand, in 1953, Academician Margulan officially appealed to the Leningrad branch of the Institute of Archaeology under the USSR Academy of Sciences, emphasising the urgent need for a qualified specialist to conduct research on the Stone Age in Kazakhstan. In 1954, he articulated his intention to initiate a comprehensive archaeological research initiative in the Betpak-Dala region and emphasised the necessity of employing a dedicated specialist to undertake this endeavour. Academician A.P. Okladnikov's response to Margulan's letter constituted the recommendation of Khasan Alpysbayev as the most suitable candidate for the Betpak-Dala project. In his reply, Okladnikov offered the following endorsement: "With regard to Khasan Alpysbayev, it is evident that he has been unfortunate in his circumstances. It is evident that the individual in question has been subjected to a series of unfortunate events, with his situation being exacerbated by the actions of the Kyrgyz. In addition to the challenges faced in Kazakhstan, he has been subjected to a deliberate act of deception by the Kyrgyz, who have assigned him to a position in Leningrad without providing him with the necessary financial support. Despite numerous requests, including a fifth telegram, they have not responded to the request to transfer the wages that have been earned. The present situation is unclear. In any event, he is thoroughly prepared to proceed to Betpak-Dala and will prove to be of significant benefit to you. I can personally vouch for his commitment to the cause, as he is passionately devoted to it." [14]. This testimony illustrates Alpysbayev's perseverance and commitment: despite financial and logistical hardships, he remained unwavering in his dedication to archaeological research. The subject's capacity to withstand the challenges associated with fieldwork, coupled with his unwavering commitment to scientific inquiry, garnered him the trust and support of his mentor, A.P. Okladnikov. Consequently, commencing in 1954, with the endorsement and support of Academician Okladnikov, the entirety of Khasan Alpysbayev's scientific endeavours became increasingly associated with the study of Kazakhstan's prehistoric past. This event signified a pivotal transition in his professional trajectory, marking a shift towards a career anchored in national heritage and propelled by academic ambition.

In 1954, while participating in the Betpak-Dala expeditions, the young scholar Khasan Alpysbayev attracted the attention of prominent figures such as Academician Alkey Khakanuly Margulan and Kanysh Imantayevich Satpayev. His dedication to the subject, his discipline, and his intellectual promise distinguished him among his peers. In the autumn of that same year, Alpysbayev was admitted to the postgraduate programme at the Institute of History, Archaeology, and Ethnology of the Academy of Sciences of the Kazakh SSR, following a recommendation by K.I. Satpayev. In order to further advance his academic training, Alpysbayev was sent on a three-year research assignment (1954-1957) to Leningrad, where he was affiliated with the Leningrad Branch of the Institute of the History of Material Culture under the USSR Academy of Sciences (USSR AS LBIHMK). In this capacity, he had the opportunity to engage with some of the leading specialists in the field of Paleolithic archaeology, including A.P. Okladnikov, P.I. Boriskovsky, and A.N. Rogachev. It was during this period that he acquired critical methodological and theoretical expertise. From 1955 to 1957, Alpysbayev participated in the Kostyonki II archaeological expedition, overseen by P.I. Boriskovsky, a renowned authority in the field of Paleolithic studies. As demonstrated in Figure 3, Alpysbayev's fieldwork at the Kostyonki II site revealed a moment in the process. Immersed in this high-profile research environment, Alpysbayev gained invaluable insight into the complexities of Paleolithic archaeology, deepening his knowledge of stratigraphy, typology, and excavation techniques. This period proved to be pivotal in shaping his scholarly identity, as it furnished him with the practical skills and academic rigour that would subsequently inform his contributions to the realm of Kazakhstan's prehistoric archaeology.



Figure 3. The image depicts Khasan Alpysbayev at the Kostyonki II archaeological site

It is important to note that the Kostyonki II archaeological site is closely associated with the name of Sergei Nikolaevich Zamyatnin, who first discovered the site in 1923 while participating as a member of the State Academy for the History of Material Culture's archaeological expedition, led by P.P. Efimenko. Subsequently, Khasan Alpysbayev formally designated "The Late Paleolithic Settlement of Kostyonki II" as the subject of his dissertation, with P.I. Boriskovsky designated as his academic supervisor. P.I. Boriskovsky (1911-1991), a renowned archaeologist and a leading specialist in Paleolithic studies, was himself a distinguished student of P.P. Efimenko, the founder of the renowned Russian Paleolithic school. Boriskovsky conducted pioneering research at numerous Paleolithic sites across the European part of the USSR and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, including key sites such as Luka-Vrublevetskaya, Pushkari-I, and Kostyonki II. The fruits of his labour manifested in the form of a series of foundational scholarly publications [15, p.224].

In 1942, following a wartime injury, Boriskovsky was assigned as an instructor at the infantry school in Ashgabat (Smith, 1998, p. 101). Despite his military obligations, he persevered in his academic endeavours, becoming among the first scholars to initiate systematic Paleolithic research in Turkmenistan (Praslov N.D., 1992: pp. 288-296). In that same year, he initiated an examination of Paleolithic materials unearthed by geologists V.V. Shumov and N.P. Luppov in western Turkmenistan. Through detailed techno-typological analysis of lithic tools from sites such as Yangadja, Takyrna, Kyrr, Kyzyl-Lai, Kaskyr-Bulak, and Akcha-Kui, Boriskovsky confidently assigned these cultural layers to the Late and Epipaleolithic periods [16, pp.3-8].

It was upon reviewing Boriskovsky's pioneering research in Turkmenistan that H.A. Alpysbayev chose him as his academic mentor. It is probable that Boriskovsky's intellectual depth, scholarly charisma, and extensive erudition left an enduring impression on the young scholar [17, pp. 256-260]. In due course, Boriskovsky assumed the roles of both scientific advisor to Alpysbayev and lifelong mentor. It is evident that under Boriskovsky's supervision, Alpysbayev successfully completed the manuscript of his candidate dissertation. In October 1958, he successfully defended his thesis, thus being awarded the degree of Candidate of Historical Sciences. During the defence, the official opponents of the author were Academician E.E. Efimenko of the Ukrainian SSR Academy of Sciences and Doctor of Historical Sciences M.P. Gryaznov. The dissertation council unanimously endorsed his work. It is evident that Alpysbayev's academic background is deeply rooted in a rigorous scholarly tradition, exemplified by his close scholarly relationships with prominent figures in the field of Soviet archaeology.

Following the successful defence of his dissertation, H.A. Alpysbayev entered the second phase of his career, which was characterised by organisational leadership and scientific-pedagogical activities. Upon returning to Kazakhstan, he led key initiatives in Paleolithic archaeology. Most notably, he established the Karatau Paleolithic Expedition, in response to earlier groundbreaking discoveries, including the Neanderthal child's remains uncovered in 1938 at the Teshiktash cave under the leadership of A.P. Okhladnikov in Uzbekistan, as well as other significant Paleolithic findings across neighboring territories. These findings emphasised the

pressing necessity for conducting analogous archaeological research in Kazakhstan's southern regions, which had previously remained largely unexplored.

Notwithstanding the fact that the region had previously been considered to be a "blank spot" on the archaeological map, it was first reported by geological surveys led by N.V. Sedova and G.A. Yarmak between 1953 and 1956 that stone tools had been found in the Karatau mountain ranges (Sedova & Yarmak, 1956). The Karatau Paleolithic Expedition was officially established in 1957 under the auspices of the Sh. Ualikhanov Institute of History, Archaeology and Ethnography, thus building on this momentum. Alpysbayev's appointment as the head of this expedition was facilitated by his considerable expertise and extensive field experience. Between 1957 and 1962, the Karatau team undertook comprehensive archaeological surveys across the Great and Small Karatau mountain ranges. As a result of these surveys, key Paleolithic sites such as Borykazgan, Tangirkazgan, Suleimensai, and Tokaly were discovered and brought to scholarly attention. His outstanding achievements earned him international recognition from eminent archaeologists of his time, including G. Debecza, Romanian archaeologist A. Maria, and Chinese scholar Gai-piyan, all of whom praised his work in a 1959 issue of the newspaper *Kazakhstanskaya Pravda* [18, p.3].

In 1959, Alpysbayev also made a contribution to the archaeological survey that preceded the construction of the Irtysh-Karaganda water canal, which covered the Pavlodar and Central Kazakhstan regions. It is unfortunate that the results of these investigations were never published in the scientific literature. The archives of the Science Academy only contain fragmentary records of them. Following a period of over two decades dedicated to fieldwork in Southern Kazakhstan and the Zhambyl region, Alpysbayev (1971) undertook the synthesis of his findings in the seminal monograph *Monuments of the Lower Paleolithic of Southern Kazakhstan*. During this period, he engaged in active consultation with leading Paleolithic specialists, including A.P. Okhladnikov, P.I. Boriskovsky, and I.I. Korobkov, thereby ensuring that his work reflected the highest scholarly standards. This publication serves as a significant testament to his profound contributions to the field of Paleolithic archaeology in Kazakhstan.

Following the exchange of correspondence between I.I. Korobkov and H.A. Alpysbayev, during which Korobkov inquired about developments in Kazakh archaeology and referenced a letter from the Archaeology Institute director K. Akishev regarding the promising young archaeologist V.S. Voloshin, Alpysbayev's early involvement in Kazakhstan's archaeological community was well recognized. However, unfortunately, his responses have not been preserved [19]. In 1972, the Aktobe Comprehensive Archaeological Expedition was established under the auspices of the Kazakh Academy of Sciences' Institute of History, Archaeology and Ethnography, with Alpysbayev appointed as its leader. The focal point of this expedition was the investigation of Paleolithic and Early Iron Age sites situated in the vicinity of the Elek River and the Aktobe Reservoir area [20].

During the 1970s, Alpysbayev participated in the South Kazakhstan Comprehensive Archaeological Expedition, led by K. Akishev. In this capacity, he made significant contributions to the field, including the discovery and dating of key Paleolithic and Mesolithic sites such as Zhanashilik, Mayatas, and Turlan. In 1977, he was appointed head of the East Kazakhstan Expedition at the same institute, where he conducted pioneering research on Paleolithic sites along both banks of the Irtysh River. His surveys encompassed the territory from Old Shul'ba to the village of Tavriya, incorporating the valleys of the Shul'ba, Uba, Karashat, and Kyzylsu rivers. A plethora of Paleozoological materials and lithic tools were recovered, many of which were comparable to those obtained from the Karatau and Sary-Arka mountains. It is noteworthy that the Musterian period Bodega 1 site was identified on the upper terraces of the Irtysh River. Archaeological excavations in the region have revealed tools from the Later Paleolithic phases in the vicinity of Krasnoyar village, with additional assemblages being unearthed in the proximity of Azovo and Kayyndy villages. Excavations in the Kyzylsu River valleys have also yielded Paleolithic sites, with technological parallels to the Siberian and Altai lithic industries.

Alpysbayev's chronological framework encompasses the Musterian through the Late Paleolithic periods [21, pp. 9-12].

In 1971, following the recommendation of rector O.A. Zholdasbekov, the first university department of Archaeology and Ethnology in Kazakhstan was established within the Faculty of History at S.M. Kirov Kazakh State University. The department was initially led by the renowned scholar A.M. Orazbayev (1971-1974), who attracted distinguished archaeologists such as M.P. Gryaznov and S.S. Chernikov to lecture. Subsequently, prominent figures, including A.Kh., contributed to the advancement of this field. The programme was further enriched by Margulan, S.M. Akynzhanov, K.A. Akishev, and Academician O.I. Ismagulov. In 1976-77, H.A. Alpysbayev himself was invited to lecture, delivering a specialised course on Kazakhstan's Stone Age, highlighting unique regional features and its place within the global Paleolithic context.

Under Alpysbayev's leadership, the Karatau Paleolithic Expedition made a significant contribution to the study of Paleolithic sites in South Kazakhstan and the Jambyl region. His methodological rigour and innovative approaches yielded significant discoveries, enriching Kazakhstan's archaeological map and introducing novel interpretations of the Stone Age. His pioneering research in East Kazakhstan and the subsequent excavations in Karatau and Jambyl have significantly advanced our understanding of human societal development during the Paleolithic.

Alpysbayev's mentorship fostered a generation of archaeologists who deepened their research and expanded scientific horizons. His dedication to education and the establishment of academic institutions has resulted in the flourishing of a vibrant scholarly environment, thereby ensuring the continuity and growth of archaeological expertise in Kazakhstan. The scientific school and pedagogical methodologies established by the aforementioned archaeologist remain foundational in contemporary archaeology, nurturing new generations of specialists. Internationally recognised, Alpysbayev's research has elevated the archaeological profile of Kazakhstan, and has also played a critical role in preserving and promoting the country's cultural heritage on the global stage. His methodological innovations and research strategies continue to influence young scholars, blending traditional approaches with fresh perspectives that drive the discipline forward. In conclusion, H.A. Alpysbayev's scientific legacy is considered to be of fundamental importance to the development of archaeology in Kazakhstan. It provides essential insights into the country's Stone Age heritage and has had a significant impact on the establishment of a robust academic community devoted to cultural preservation and scientific excellence.

Results. The archaeological investigations conducted by H.A. Alpysbayev have resulted in a significant advancement in the comprehension of Kazakhstan's Stone Age periods, thereby precipitating fundamental transformations within the domain of archaeology. Under his leadership, excavation campaigns and scientific inquiries produced groundbreaking data on the Paleolithic era in Central Asia and Kazakhstan, introducing innovative methodologies that revolutionized regional archaeological practice. His contributions to the field of archaeology in Kazakhstan have been significant, and have garnered considerable acclaim from the international scholarly community. The significance of Alpysbayev's scientific output extended well beyond national borders. He was a trailblazer in his field, introducing novel perspectives and methodological innovations that have since become cornerstones of contemporary archaeological science. His discoveries advanced academic knowledge and played a critical role in promoting Kazakhstan's cultural heritage on the global stage, elevating the country's profile within the international archaeological arena.

Alpysbayev's scholarly school introduced novel directions and intellectual frameworks that invigorated Kazakhstan's archaeology and nurtured the development of emerging scholars. The methodological expertise and academic rigour imparted through his lectures and mentorship provided invaluable tools for future researchers, fostering a new generation of archaeologists equipped to build upon his legacy.

In summary, H.A. Alpysbayev's scientific trajectory and legacy constitute a decisive force in the evolution of archaeology in Kazakhstan. His pioneering contributions continue to shape the

formation of young specialists and support the preservation of Kazakhstan's rich cultural heritage, thereby ensuring the sustained growth and international recognition of the country's archaeological endeavours.

Conclusion. In conclusion, H.A. Alpysbayev's scientific endeavours have made an invaluable and defining contribution to the advancement of archaeology in Kazakhstan. Through his pioneering research on the Paleolithic period of the Stone Age, he made a significant contribution to the archaeological map of the nation and introduced innovative scientific directions and methodologies. The establishment of the Karatau Paleolithic Expedition, in conjunction with his extensive archaeological work in Southern and Eastern Kazakhstan, and his internationally recognised research, collectively serve as a testament to his unwavering dedication and scholarly excellence.

Beyond the realm of archaeology, Alpysbayev occupies a distinguished position in the study and preservation of Kazakhstan's cultural heritage. The profound influence of his scientific school and methodological innovations on numerous emerging researchers has been instrumental in shaping the promising future of Kazakh archaeology. The scope and impact of his expertise and discoveries have a profound resonance within the global archaeological community. It is evident that H.A. Alpysbayev's legacy has endured as a monumental achievement within the context of Kazakhstan's scientific heritage. This legacy continues to inspire and guide generations of scholars, thereby cementing his place as a foundational figure in both national and international archaeology.

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