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## History of World and Russian Mammoth Studies

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**Abstract.** The article is devoted to the study of the concept of the mammoth in regulatory documents and cultural practices. The analysis of both Russian and international experience allowed to generalise the existing legal provisions regarding the regulation of mammoths, as well as to determine the role of mammoths in the world and Russian culture, including the culture of the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East. The methodological basis of the study is represented by the comparative analysis of sources and materials, historical-comparative and chronological methods, the historiographic method, as well as methods of philosophical and art history analysis. The study revealed the fact that in the field of legislation and legal regulation of extraction and sale of mammoth ivory in the world, the issue of the status of mammoths is raised only in connection with a discussion of the survival of rare species of elephants. Measures to prevent extermination of elephant population, encompassing a ban on trade, including trade of mammoth ivory, cause heated discussions and are controversial for craftsmen, antique dealers and art collectors. The issue of legal regulation in this area is particularly acute for the Russian Federation, due to the lack of a finalised legal and regulatory framework, both at the federal, regional and municipal levels. The image of the mammoth in the world and Russian culture is embodied in a number of visual practices. These are heraldry, animation, book graphics, sculpture and fine art. Sign and symbolic forms of the mammoth embody religious and mythological characteristics of the animal, demonstrating its significance in people's worldview, as well as indicating of the "living" memory of it in the modern world.

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## Introduction

According to the studies by A. Smirnov (Smirnov, 2005), N.D. Kirillin (Kirillin, 2015) and other researches, most of the world reserves of the mammoth fauna are concentrated in the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation, and 80% of Russian fossilised mammoth ivory extraction takes place in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia): potentially there are more than 500 thousand tons of mammoth ivory, with an estimated cost of about 100 million dollars. Consequently, the mammoth fauna and fossilised mammoth ivory are a significant research and economic resource of the Russian Federation, and indigenous peoples of the North, as well as the ones living in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) in particular, are actively involved in its collection and extraction.

Currently, there are several options for using mammoths' remains. Firstly, skeletal, cadaveric and bone remains are a basis for serious scientific research in the field of archaeology and biology, as well as valuable items for replenishing museum and private collections. Secondly, mammoth ivory is actively used for manufacturing souvenirs and material for bone carving art, which can be promisingly developed in the future.

The biggest challenge in the field of regulation of extraction and commercial use of the mammoth fauna is the fact that currently the Russian Federation does not have legislative basis in this area that would take into account the real experience of people and businesses in this sector, starting with the fact that there is no clear and fair mechanism in the legislation for getting mammoth remains from the population, finishing with the fact that the process of commercial use of mammoth remains for foreign buyers is bureaucratically

complicated and, sometimes, it leads to criminalisation of activities in this area, as well as reduces an opportunity for the Russian Federation to receive economic benefits from selling mammoth ivory. Other significant issues are associated with the fact that mammoth ivory extraction is often carried out using environmentally harmful technologies, as well as the fact that unregulated commercial sales of mammoth remains lead to the risks of losing the samples that are most effectively used for research purposes.

The legislative framework in the field of work with the mammoth fauna is currently actively developing due to the growing interest of international partners in acquiring mammoth remains. The experts also see large potential for the development of bone carving art in the places of residence of the indigenous peoples of the North, where mammoth ivory is extracted. In particular, in 2018, the acting Head of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) A. Nikolaev approved the "Concept for the Development of Collection, Study, Use, Processing and Sale of Paleontological Materials of the Mammoth Fauna in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia)" which is aimed at improving legislation in accordance with the real practice in this field and plan cost-effective, environmentally friendly and accessible for scientific study consumption of the mammoth fauna products.

Thus, the assertion that the mammoth fauna remains and fossilised mammoth ivory are a rare, valuable and unique economic and scientific resource of the Russian Federation, allows to define an analytical review of modern legal and cultural studies in the field of work with mammoths remains as the main theme of the present paper.

### Literature review

It is possible to identify two big groups of studies devoted to the mammoth. The first group includes archaeological studies, where authors describe individual discoveries of mammoths' bones or carcasses, provide analyses' results, etc. (Seuru et al., 2017; Lozhkin et al., 2018; Djindjian, 2015; Roca, 2015; Maschenko et al., 2017). The second group of studies is focused on the potential opportunity for the mammoth revival (Browning, 2018; Piotrowska, 2018; Rohwer, Marris, 2018; McCauley et al., 2017; Okuno, 2017; Campbell, 2016). M. Piotrowska sees the issue of the probable mammoth revival in a taxonomic aspect: if a reborn creature will be a real mammoth or its adaptation to modern conditions on the basis of the closest species (Piotrowska, 2018). D. Campbell in his article argues with Beth Shapiro about the possibility of fossil animals revival and whether revived species be different from their fossilised ancestors (Campbell, 2016). H. Browning considers the issue of animals extinction in general and the possibility of reviving populations by cloning, re-introducing or breeding in captivity, while emphasising the factors that influence selection of the animals to be revived (Browning, 2018).

D.J. McCauley, M. Hardesty-Moore and others within the framework of the study of the potential revival of mammoths and other species of fossil animals, raise an issue that it is biologically possible, but whether it is environmentally feasible – how to restore the ecological function of the revived animals? They offer a number of options, such as revival of recently extinct species, or species that can be revived not individually, but as a sufficient population (McCauley et al., 2017). Y. Rohwer and E. Marris discuss ethical issues that will accompany potential revival of the mammoth, as well as scientific and economic benefits (Rohwer, Marris, 2018). E. Okuno is interested in the political and legal aspect of the extinct species revival, since there is no legal basis for the protection and regulation of extinct species, and the author is trying to create a prototype of such a basis in which revived species are considered from different points of view – as intellectual property, as genetically

modified organisms, as commercial items, etc. (Okuno, 2017).

It is also necessary to mention articles devoted to the study of the mammoth, but not included in the two indicated groups. In particular, the article by N. Tomić, S.B. Marković and others is devoted to determining the potential of the recently opened public paleontological park (the first one in Serbia) in terms of tourist attractiveness (Tomić et al., 2015). N. Farah and J.R. Boyce trace the relationship between the increase or decrease in the level of elephant poaching and the amount of mammoth ivory supplies to the world market from Russia (Farah, Boyce, 2019). S.T. Hussain and H. Floss study the role of the mammoth and the cave lion in the sociocultural world of the *Aurignacians*, comparing the ways of their interaction, their place in the belief system, etc. (Hussain, Floss, 2015). L. Valls Plana, analyses the visual image of the mammoth created at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries in Catalonia, its saturation with scientific and social meanings and its connection with the concept of national identity (Plana, 2016).

Articles devoted to the study of individual northern concepts and northern legislation are also important for the present study, since their methods are useful for studying the images of the mammoth and the legislation related to it.

### Research methods

Comparative analysis of sources and materials, historical-comparative and chronological methods, as well as the historiographic method form the methodological basis of the present study. Iconographic comparative analysis is the leading method in the section devoted to the image of the mammoth in the world and Russian culture, as well as in the culture of the indigenous peoples of Siberia and the North, and the methodology of philosophical and art history research that involves identifying the content of the artistic image of pieces of art by analysing forms, means and visualisation methods, is the leading method. Field study is one of the methods that was a source of data for the present study. The material was obtained as a result of a number of field expeditions carried out by the faculty of the Department of Cul-

tural Studies of the School for the Humanities of Siberian Federal University to the places of compact residence of indigenous peoples of the Krasnoyarsk Krai in the period from 2010 to 2019.

The study is based on the study of the existing research papers describing the history of the legal (statutory) regulation of mammoths in the world and in Russia, and peculiarities of the image of the mammoth in the world and Russian culture. The data from the field studies including those conducted by the faculty of the Department of Cultural Studies of the School for the Humanities of Siberian Federal University are used in the study in the process of assessing the specific features of the attitude to such a historical heritage as mammoth remains in the cultures of the indigenous peoples of the North and Siberia.

#### **Images of the Mammoth in the World Culture**

From the early 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present days in paleontological, archaeological and

geological studies scientists have recorded facts of the geographical area of the mammoth, the structure of its body and lifestyle, and every time it becomes a sensational discovery about one of the most unusual types of animals (Lister, Bahn, 2017). Thus, the remains of an ancient animal found in 1883 in Catalonia became an information opportunity for the public consciousness modernisation: in 1907 a life-size reinforced concrete sculpture of the mammoth was created and installed (Fig. 1).

This city landmark became an object of public education about natural history and allowed palaeontology to go beyond the boundaries of academic discipline. In addition to that, the image of the mammoth became a part of printed images to form public opinion about the connection of the present with the distant past and the paleontological contribution to the world science to strengthen national identity of the Catalans. The rationalisation of the image of the mammoth gave Catalan palaeontology an opportunity to exclude controversial ideas



Fig. 1. The mammoth statue in the Parc de la Ciutadella, Barcelona, Spain. 1907  
(The realistic mammoth statue in the Parc de la Ciutadella. Copyright: Barcelona Connect.  
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<http://www.barcelonaconnect.com/el-born/>)

about the extinct mammal, to contribute the raise in the level of urban mass culture, to reconstruct the scientific look of the mammoth and give it not only a cosmopolitan, but also a modern look in the natural urban landscape (Lister, Bahn, 2017). The image of the mammoth is currently preserved in cultural monuments in several cities, such as: a four-meter six-ton sculpture "Time" in the form of the imperial baby mammoth "Dima" found in 1977 in the Magadan Oblast symbolising the connection of the times for its residents (the city of Magadan, 2013); a sculptural group of seven figures of mammoths (Fig. 2), as if walking at the foot of the Samarovsky glacial remnant (2007-2009, "Archeopark" Khanty-Mansiysk), monuments to the mammoth erected at the place of its skeleton location (1841, the village of Kuleshovka, Sumy Oblast in Ukraine) or in a possible place of mammoths' habitat (2005, Salekhard). The image of the mammoth is of symbolic significance in the territorial heraldry of several settlements, next to which significant archaeological evidences were discovered: Srednekolymsk and Ust-Yansky Ulus (Yakutia), the settlement of Lugovskoy (Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug), the municipality Seedorf (Germany) and commune Prignac-et-Marcamps (Aquitaine, France). The symbolic image of the mammoth signifies strength, longevity, patience and wisdom.

On the one hand, the mammoth images in the world culture mostly correspond to the documentary and scientific image recorded in the photographs and drawings of archaeologists who carefully study the mummified mammoth remains, as well as in the discovered pieces of art of prehistoric people who saw these animals alive. B.A. Alpert (Alpert, 2010), for instance, illustrates the authentication process of an engraved image of the Pleistocene mammoth with cave paintings of the same period discovered by palaeontologist Édouard Lartet in 1864 in France, and it was concluded that the artefacts were authentic and the first painted images were skilfully accurate and unique. On the other hand, modern cross-cultural studies of cave images of the mammoth are repeatedly characterised by a totemic image, which, according to scientists, shamans asked for help during ritual

ceremonies. Studying graphic images in the Mammoth Cave (the length of the studied part is 587 km, Kentucky, USA), L. Kistler (Kistler, 2015) developed the following hypothesis: petroglyphs and pictographs of the mammoth often differ from each other due to the fact that they are associated with shamanistic visions as a form of altered consciousness and represent an entopic phenomenon.

The artistic image of the mammoth occupies a central place in human self-determination, which is confirmed by a number of modern stories about the mammoth in book, cinematic and cartoon art. The cartoon image of the mammoth is vividly represented in *Ice Age* computer-*animated* comedy series (2002-2016), where it is repeatedly interpreted as 'the saviour of humankind' (the mammoth saves a human baby whose parents were killed by people). Respect for the image of the mammoth is implanted through book images. For example, the children's story *Mammoth Pie* by Jeanne Willis (2014) describes a prehistoric meeting between developing carnivorous humanity and an unknown species of a herbivorous ancient animal (Chrulew, 2011) (Fig. 3-4). The vivid visual image of a fat mammoth and hungry cavemen fed up with eating seeds and weeds, conveys the idea of their improvidence: even united and driven by a thirst for quick gain of the mammoth pie, people greatly underestimated the enemy.

As a result, it is possible to reveal an interesting fact that various interpretations of the image of the mammoth are largely associated with the phenomenon of collective identity. The visual image of a distant and unknown ancestor constructed by humankind is conveyed in a number of stable sociocultural characteristics: unification (group, social, territorial, national), the unity of opposites (mythological and real, social and natural), timelessness (the cult of a common ancestor and its actualisation in the world culture).

#### **The history of legal (statutory) regulation of mammoths in the world**

The only area with at least some regulations regarding mammoths is commerce and environmental protection. Even though the

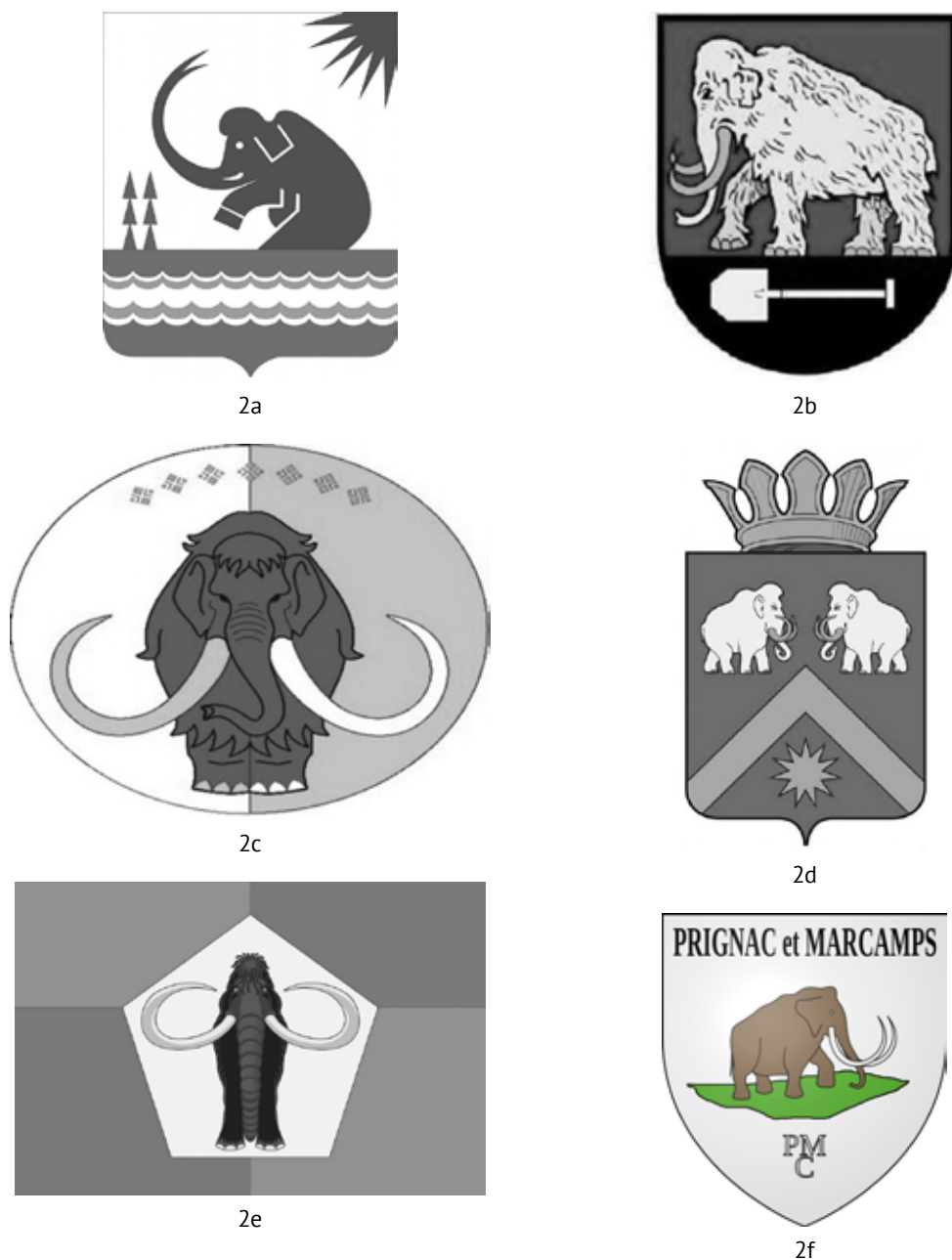


Fig. 2 Images of the mammoth on the coat of arms of towns (from the left to the right: a) the coat of arms of Srednekolymysk, Yakutia, Russia; b) the coat of arms of Seedorf, Germany; c) the coat of arms of Ust-Yansky Ulus, Yakutia, Russia; d) the coat of arms of the Abatsky district, Tyumen Oblast, Russia; e) the coat of arms of the rural settlement of Lugovskoy, Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug, Russia; f) the coat of arms of commune Prignac-et-Marcamps, Aquitaine, France)  
 1a: [https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Герб\\_Среднеколымска](https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Герб_Среднеколымска); 1b: [https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Зедорф\\_\(Цевен\)](https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Зедорф_(Цевен)); 1c: [https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Герб\\_Усть-Янского\\_улуса](https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Герб_Усть-Янского_улуса); 1d: [https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Абатский\\_район](https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Абатский_район); 1e: [https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Сельское\\_поселение\\_Луговской](https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Сельское_поселение_Луговской); Web resource Heraldic Glossary. Section "Coats of Arms and Flags. Mammoth in Heraldry"; 1f: <https://f-gl.ru/геральдический-глоссарий/мамонт-в-геральдике>

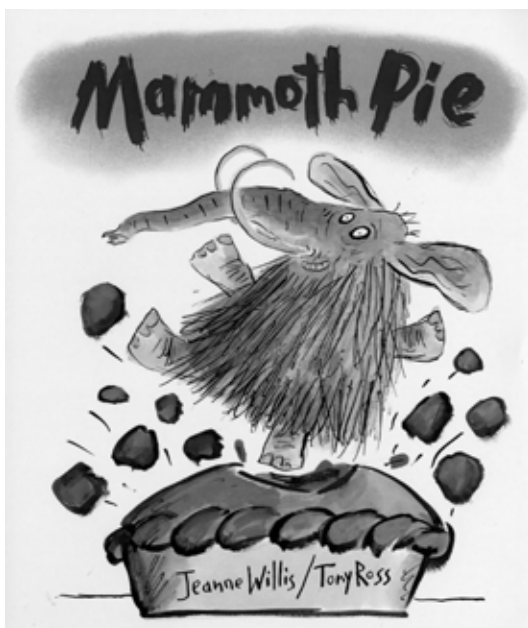


Fig. 3. Cover illustration of Jeanne Willis children's book **Mammoth Pie**. 2014

About the book on Jeanne Willis' website <http://www.jeannewillis.com/index.html>  
<http://www.jeannewillis.com/Book%20Pages/MammothPie.html>

mammoth ivory became a popular trade item in the Middle Ages, and goods made of this fossil material have been highly valued for many centuries, legal support for these processes, nevertheless, was formed only in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It should be noted that particularly close attention to the issue of statutory regulation of extraction and sale of fossil mammoth ivory is largely connected to the problem of the disappearance of rare species of elephants, which are almost exterminated by poachers for commercial gain.

The main regulatory document that legislators can rely on to discuss the status of mammoths today is the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). This Convention was signed on March 3, 1973 in Washington and was further amended on June 22, 1979 in Bonn and on April 30, 1983 in Gaborone. The USSR and the Russian Federation, along with another 169 countries, are parties to this Convention. In 2016, within the framework of the conference held in Johannesburg (South Africa), a special



Fig. 4. **Ice Age** film frame. 2002  
About the film: [https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ледниковый\\_период\\_\(мультфильм\)](https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ледниковый_период_(мультфильм))  
Available at: <https://my-hit.org/film/2212/picture/361910/?s=9>

meeting was convened, and possible changes that presumed the conservation status of mammoths, even though this species of animals is extinct, were considered. This proposal, however, caused serious criticism and the issue of assigning mammoths a protective status was rejected. In a document entitled "Identification of Elephant and Mammoth Ivory in Trade" (Identification of elephant..., 2016), prepared by Israel, it was said that the trade in mammoth ivory is indirectly related to the threat of extinction of rare species of elephants. This conclusion was based on the report, which was discussed by the CITES Standing Committee in 2014 in Geneva. This report declared the relationship between the growth of trade in mammoth ivory and goods made from it with an increased level of poaching for elephants over the past two decades. In addition, document issuers stipulate the fact that on the "black market" they can sell elephant ivory goods as the goods made of mammoth ivory and provide a number of examples of such illegal trade. According to the experts who prepared the document, the situation is also complicated by the fact that there are no effective and quick methods for distinguishing elephant ivory and mammoth ivory, since dishonest merchants often mix them. There were following comments on the document under consideration: firstly, a ban on trade in mammoth ivory can have negative consequences; secondly, difficulties in identifying the ivory origin arise only in relation

to carved goods, in addition to that, there is a detailed guide on distinguishing mammoth and elephant ivory, which experts refer to (Espinoza, Mann, 1992); thirdly, in case of mammoth ivory the regulation of trade is not within the scope of the present Convention. Nevertheless, it was recognised that it is necessary to develop standards in the field of customs control, as well as to contribute the development of expert evaluation methods.

In some countries, there are currently quite strict laws that literally prohibit the trade of not only elephant ivory, but mammoth ivory as well. For example, a number of US states have adopted or are considering such laws. In particular, these are the laws of the State of New York (Senate Bill..., 2013) and New Jersey (AN ACT...), which provide for high fines of up to \$5,000 and imprisonment of up to a year for violators. The new laws introduction is criticised as well, since many well-known companies have legally used mammoth ivory as an alternative to elephant ivory for over a hundred years.

In addition, strengthening legislative measures to combat poaching targeting endangered elephant species could harm Alaskan native artists, since they use mammoth ivory is a traditional material to create pieces of decorative art. Due to the introduction of prohibition on trade in all types of ivory, many tourists refuse to purchase goods of Alaskan craftsmen. All these problems, as well as legislative measures in the state of California, and the impact of new laws on the economy of Alaska Natives, are discussed in the article by Lisa Demer "Effort to Save African Elephants Hurts Alaska Native Ivory Artists" (Demer, 2016).

The Canadian state of Yukon has certain rules regulating mammoth ivory extraction. Thus, a special Paleontological programme was introduced in 1996 (Best Management, 2014), and according to this programme, among other things, there is a regulated procedure for dealing with the discovered remains of the woolly mammoth: it is necessary to provide the discovery for expert evaluation to the Yukon Paleontology Program to determine its scientific value. If the mammoth remains are not of scientific value, then they can be issued as

property or it is possible to obtain permission to export cultural property from the country.

In general, it can be stated that normative regulation of extraction and further sale of mammoth ivory in the world is only at the development stage, and if the issue of the status of mammoths is raised, it happens only within the framework of the discussion of the problems of survival of rare species of elephants. Radical measures to prevent extermination of the elephant population, including a ban on trade in mammoth ivory, cause heated debate and are rather controversial for craftsmen, antique dealers and art collectors.

### **Images of the mammoth in Russian culture**

The image of the mammoth in Russian culture is mostly associated with archaeological discoveries. "The notions of the mammoth in the territory of a region could have developed based on the following sources: living nature, natural mummies preserved in permafrost layers and bone remains of the animal's skeleton" (Zaika, 2014).

The discoveries of the mammoth bones are the most common. However, completely preserved baby mammoths found in permafrost (the Yamal baby mammoth Masha, the baby mammoth Lyuba, and the baby mammoth Yuka) became the most significant for the culture. They not only supplemented the image created by the skeletons and advanced the science in understanding what these animals were like, but they also created the image of a baby that lost its relatives. It especially concerns baby mammoth Dima, or Kirgilakhsky mammoth. Found in 1977, at that time it was the only fully preserved mammoth in the world (until the discovery of the baby mammoth Lyuba in 2007). The mammoth baby discovery inspired various creative people to write short stories, poems and even make cartoons. The most famous cartoon is the 1981 Soviet hand-drawn cartoon of Studio "Ekran" "Mom for the Baby Mammoth".

Some scientists also pay attention to the manifestation of the image of the mammoth in mythological origins. A.A. Tyunyaev writes that Russian fairy tales were composed at the time when our ancestors still hunted mam-



moths, i.e. in the Palaeolithic age (Tyunyaev, 2011). He refers to Academician B.A. Rybakov (Rybakov, 2015), who notes that Russian fairy tales are often characterised by the image of the Serpent (or Chudo-Yudo), and in its description “the fairy tale often mentions trunks, and the Serpent is called “the one with the trunk”. Chudo-Yudo does not bite or claw its opponents, but “beats them into the ground” or hits with a trunk (“it hit them with its trunk”). “It is killed (in addition to the standard fairy-tale sword) with arrows, spears and hot stones, which the main character’s assistants throw into its mouth ... I don’t think it is difficult to recognise the description of the ancient mammoth (or mammoths) in these fairy-tale characteristics of the monster driven into a trap hole or into a cave by the hunters’ fire chain” (Rybakov, 2015). B.A. Rybakov notes that this image reaches us through numerous oral interpretations, that is why it could be so distorted.

As for the images, the image of the real mammoth was not widely spread in the Palaeolithic art of North Asia (Boeskorov et al., 2018). There are no traces of the genetic “memory” of the animal in later periods. During the Holocene, the main source of information about the animal was its bone remains. Their size and circumstances of their discovery led to the appearance of mythical images that combined the features of real representatives of the ichthyo- and theriofauna. Starting from the early Bronze Age, the image of polyterions was deeply enshrined in the art of the peoples of the region; and it was reflected in the image of the mammoth in the myths and shamanistic attributes of the peoples of Siberia.

As for the name of the animal, it presumably derived from the Mansi *mangt ont* (манг онт) (“ground horn”), which refers to how the meeting of the later people with the mammoth took place – discovering its remains in the ground (Vlakhov...). Mansi initially gave the name mammoth not to the animal, but only its tusks – they were known in the North and Siberia for a long time and enshrined in the folklore of many peoples. A. Vlakhov also notes that the word ‘mammoth’ was further developed in culture. Initially, it came into the Russian language in the form of

*tamut* or *tamot* (мамут or мамот) – it was first mentioned at the turn of the 16th and 17th centuries, just during the period of active conquest of Siberia. The word in this form was borrowed in other world languages – compare English *mammoth*, German *Mammut* and even scientific Latin *mammuthus*, created by scientists on the basis of European languages. In the Russian language it was influenced by the old male name *Mamont* (Мамонт) (Мамонт), that was given to baptised boys in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. It appears that under the influence of this name the mammoth got -n-, which is not represented in European languages – this word obviously got there before *Mamonts* became close to *mammoths*.

#### **The history of legal (statutory) regulation of mammoths in Russia**

As previously noted, the main challenge in the field of legislative regulation of extraction and commercial use of the mammoth fauna in the Russian Federation is the fact that currently there is no legislative framework in this field, both at the federal, regional and municipal levels. The exception is the regional legislation of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), represented by a wide range of legal documents:

– The Law of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) of June 06, 2005 No. 507-III “On the Regulation of the Use and Disposal of a Special Natural Resource – Fossil Residues of the Mammoth Fauna”;

– Decree No. 425-III of the State Assembly (Il Tumen) of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) of December 25, 2003 “On Approval of the Provisions on the Procedure for Issuing Licenses (Permits) for the Right to Use Subsurface in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) When Studying and Collecting Mammoth Tusks As Well As Other Remains of the Mammoth Fauna for Commercial Purposes, and Excavation of Cadaveric and Skeletal Remains of the Mammoth Fauna for Scientific Purposes”;

– Decree No. 2044 of the President of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) of March 30, 2005 “On the Special Status of Natural Resources – Fossil Remains of the Mammoth Fauna and Regulation of Their Turnover in the Territory of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia)”;

– Order No. 1730-p of the Government of the Russian Federation of August 18, 2016 “On Approval of the Agreement between the Federal Subsoil Resources Management Agency and the Government of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) on Delegation of Certain Powers to the Government of the Republic in the Field of Subsoil Use, in Terms of Issuing Licenses for the Collection of Paleontological Collection Materials in the Republic”;

– Order No. 649-ПГ of the Head of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) of August 13, 2018 “On Approving the Concept for the Development of Collection, Study, Use, Processing and Sale of Paleontological Materials of Mammoth Fauna in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia)”.

All the aforementioned documents certainly contribute to ensuring state regulation of the collection, study, use, processing and sale of paleontological materials of the mammoth fauna in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia).

If we look at the specific gaps of the current legislation, the serious problem is that the mammoth tusks are still not specified in the Tax Code of the Russian Federation and other documents as a separate type of mineral, despite the fact that in most cases mammoth tusks are informally perceived by all territorial entities as a mineral, and not only as a paleontological material.

In general, collection of paleontological materials of mammoth fauna is regulated by the Law No. 2395-I of the Russian Federation of February 21, 1992 “On Subsurface Resources” (Articles 6, 10.1, 11, 16, 33) and the Order No. 711 of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation of November 29, 2004 “On Approval of the Procedure for Considering Applications for the Right to Use Subsoil for the Purpose of Collecting Mineralogical, Paleontological and Other Geological Collection Materials.” This Order, however, does not regulate the collection of mammoth tusks for commercial purposes.

The scope of the conceptual interpretation of the mammoth fauna materials is confirmed, for instance, by their attribution to decorative and applied art and folk art crafts. A similar interpretation is given in the Decree No. 511-II of the Government of the Krasnoyarsk Krai of

September 30, 2013 “On Approval of the State Programme of Krasnoyarsk Krai “Development of Culture and Tourism” and a number of other documents.

At the same time, it should be noted that prerequisites for its development have recently been identified in this area of legislation. This is mostly connected with uncontrolled illegal excavation of mammoth remains in all the territory of their presence and, especially, in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia). That is why the legislative framework of this territorial entity is more developed, as noted above.

One of the most important regulatory acts for the development of all territorial entities with deposits of mammoth remains of federal level, in addition to the aforementioned Law of the Russian Federation “On Subsurface Resources”, is the Decree No. 366 of the Government of the Russian Federation of April 21, 2014 “On the Approval of the State Programme of the Russian Federation “Socio-Economic Development of the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation.” The document notes that “according to expert estimates, more than 80 percent of fossilised mammoth tusk resources of Russia are concentrated in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia). The estimated resources of the fossilised mammoth ivory in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), according to the experts, are 450-520 thousand tons” (Reference Legal System Consultant Plus). Moreover, as a negative factor, it should be noted that unlike other resources and strategic directions for the development of the Arctic zone of Russia this document does not disclose further prospects for the development of this resource.

Another confirmation of gaps in the Russian legislative base is the Letter No. СД-4-3/2438 of the Federal Tax Service of Russia of February 8, 2018 “On Imposing Mineral Extraction Tax on Mammoth Tusks”, which addresses the issue of imposing mineral extraction tax on mammoth tusks. Due to the lack of established conceptual framework in the current legislation, the letter, for example, states that “in case of excavating mammoth tusks for the purposes not related to getting collection materials specified in Subparagraph 2 of Paragraph 2 of Article 336 of the Tax Code

of the Russian Federation, and in case of the lack of a technical document for a field development, management of such a mineral may cause difficulties in determining the reliable amount of extracted mineral for calculating the sum of mineral extraction tax.” (Reference Legal System Consultant Plus) Therefore, the state budget suffers direct financial losses.

Thus, the lack of a developed regulatory framework in the field of the mammoth fauna items circulation and their illegal extraction not only contributes to significant financial losses for the state budget and acts as a factor for the development of organised crime, but also causes irreparable damage to local ecosystems, as well as a unique archaeological and paleontological heritage, since frequently the extraction of mammoth fauna items is carried out in barbaric manners without meeting the necessary requirements and following rules. Therefore, it is necessary to focus on the development of new and amending existing legislation in accordance with real practice in this area and to plan economically viable, environmentally friendly and convenient for scientific and research activities consumption of the mammoth fauna, including the adoption of a clear procedure for their sale and export.

#### **The mammoth and indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East of Russia**

In the worldview of the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East of Russia, the mammoth is one of the deeply revered animals. Therefore, the image of the mammoth in the culture of indigenous peoples is rather important. The mammoth is one of the characters of ethnic fairy tales, legends and fables. In various modifications, the mammoth is a character of the pieces of visual ethnic art, including modern one. In addition to that, the mammoth ivory is one of the main materials in bone carving art. Finally, it is necessary to note the widespread practice of preserving the remains of mammoths. The mammoth museums are established for this purpose, in particular in Yakutsk.

The most complete explanation of the role of the mammoth in the indigenous peoples' life is given by mythology. According

to the mythology of indigenous peoples, the mammoth, along with the mythical serpent Dyabdar, is the creator of the Earth. It is the mammoth who, according to the legend, expanded the initially small Earth to create more comfortable living conditions for people. With the help of its tusks, the mammoth “got” the earth from the bottom of the sea and threw the lumps into the initial territory of the Earth. After that, the earth started growing rapidly and mountainous terrain appeared. The mammoth asked the mythical serpent Dyabdar for help and requested him to flatten the uneven ground with its body. As a result, rivers were formed at the places where the mythical serpent crawled, lakes where the mammoth walked, and mountains were formed at the places where pieces of land remained untouched. According to another myth, the mammoth is one of the first inhabitants of the Earth along with Dyabdar and other animals. According to this myth, the Earth was formed as a result of the struggle of the mammoth and the snake with a mythical monster Chuliugdy, who pursued the first inhabitants of the Earth. The fight, according to the myth, ends with the fact that the mammoth and the serpent drop Chuliugdy into the abyss of the underworld, and they themselves go underground (into the lower world) (Anisimov, 1951). Here the mammoth becomes the guardian of the lower world.

There are also myths where the mammoth appears as an inhabitant of the underwater world and turns into a fish. Thus, for example, the Evenks have myths about a pike-like Oymyakon monster. There is no detailed description of the monster in the myths. It is only said that this “huge pike-like monster” lives in the depths of the vast sea. It has a tusk – kiami, sticking out up the ice and resembling the horn of a large mountain sheep. When it appears, the water runs high, and people who were at the sea at that moment become victims of this monster. In the myth “The Legend of the Oymyakon Monster”, for example, an old man who fished in the sea becomes a victim. Another myth says the following: “... a strong crack of ice was suddenly heard. The lake ran high and people and reindeer teams went under ice. They all disappeared” (Kiryak, 2003).

If in the mythological picture of the Evenki world the mammoth takes the form of a pike or a burbot, and often embodies the features of an elk and a fish, ancient Yakuts called the mammoth a water bull (“Уу обуна” [Uu Obupa]). In addition to the images of the underwater world, the mammoth could be embodied in other images of terrestrial animals. In Selkups’ mythology, for instance, it was embodied in the form of a bear, and in the Nenets one – in the form of a deer.

Occupying a significant place in the mythological worldview of indigenous peoples, the mammoth becomes one of the characters in the pieces of visual ethnic art.

The first figures of the mammoth found in the North, Siberia and the Far East of Russia and belonging to the Palaeolithic Period, indicate the cult of the animal that had already been developed at that time.

One of the characteristic features of the image of the mammoth in the art of indigenous peoples is the fundamental dissimilarity

of the artistic image of the animal with its real look. Even in the Palaeolithic Period, when the mammoth played an important role in human economic activity, the image of the animal was interpreted extremely conditionally (Zaika, 2014) (Fig. 5).

The main feature of the first images of the mammoth is their small size (not more than 10 cm in height and width) and schematism. The only elements that emphasise the resemblance to the animal are vertical scratched strokes that imitate the long hair of the mammoth. The main emphasis is not on conveying the anatomy of the animal, but on its monumentality, in a sense, even the global nature of the image. The lack of specification gives an opportunity to characterise the first images of the mammoth as of symbolic and cult nature. In this case, the value is the form of the image which can “comprise” a specific symbolic content. According to the Evenki shamanic mythology, the mammoth is among the assistant spirits of shamans in addition

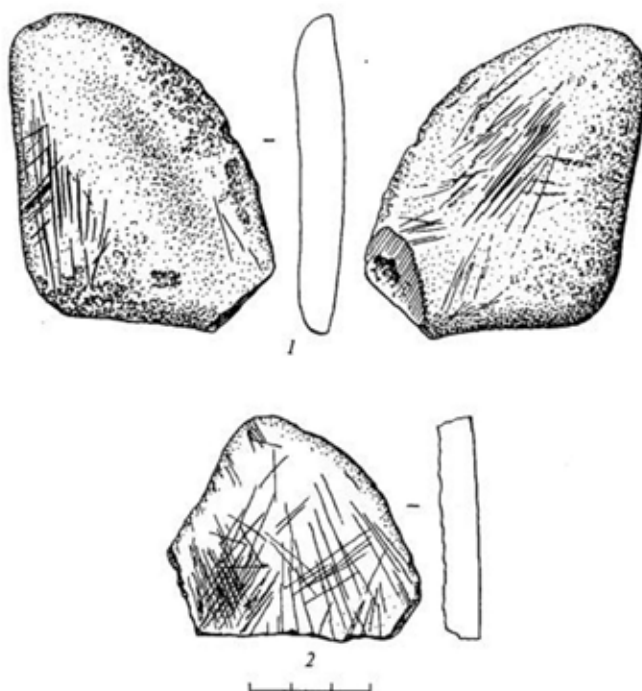


Fig. 5. Stone figures of mammoths from layer VI of the Ushki I site (Kamchatka). The figures were found by N.N. Dikov (cit. by M.A. Kir’iak (Dikova)). In Kir’iak (Dikova), Margarita. 2003. Ancient art of the north of the far east as a historical source (the Stone Age).

Magadan: NECSRI FEB of the RAS: 53

to such group of animals as the wild deer, the elk, the musk deer, the bear, the wolf, the wolverine, the otter and the ermine (Zaika, 2014). All these animals, without exception, were endowed with totemic features. Therefore, it is most likely that the stone figures of mammoths, which were mass-produced (Novikova, 1987), also served as a totem or a talisman, and the animal itself was thought of as a cult animal.

In the modern native art of indigenous peoples, the appeal to the theme of the mammoth is also relevant. Masters of bone carving art, for example, widely use the mammoth tusk as the main material, and the mammoth's rib is often used as well (Kiryak, 2003). In addition, the mammoth itself is one of the characters of sculptural compositions. Unlike the very first sculptural images of the animal, modern sculptural works are distinguished by more elaborate details and proximity to the real appearance of the mammoth. The sculpture "Baby Mammoth" by V.S. Kirgizov may be its representative (Fig. 6).

The image of the mammoth also penetrates into the sphere of modern national fine art. Other representatives are the paintings of Khakass artists A.L. Ulturgashev "The Shaman" (1996) and G.N. Sagalakov "At the Foot of the Sayan Mountains" (2013) (Fig. 7-8).

Silhouettes of terrestrial animals are depicted in the art space of the paintings. There is no accurate attribution of these signs. The visual signs in the art space of the painting "At the Foot of the Sayan Mountains" by G.N. Sagalakov are especially noteworthy. These are silhouettes of animal with elongated body proportions and exaggeratedly long horns and tails (Fig. 9).

According to the ideas of the indigenous peoples, there is a mythical animal that combines the features of the elk and the mammoth. By the end of its life, this animal has rather long horns (Reznikova, 2018). Therefore, these signs quite likely symbolise the ancient mythological representation of the indigenous peoples about the transformation of the mammoth's appearance. In addition, the mammoth could often be depicted in the artistic space of the painting as an oval-shaped mythical creature with three protuberant eyes that endow it with the characteristics of the all-seeing creature (Fig. 10). The appeal to the technique of planar drawing of faces en face resembling cave paintings serves as an artistic means of expressing the symbolic meaning of this image.

Thus, the analysis of the mythological worldview of the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East of Russia and



Fig. 6. Vasily Kirgizov. Baby mammoth. Mammoth tusk, tree (cit. by L. Popova). In *A man of the Northern Lights*: Vasily Kirgizov – a bone carver from Syndassko. 2007. Dudinka: House of Taimyr Folk Art



Fig. 7. A.L. Ulturgashev. The Shaman. 1996, in A.L. Ulturgashev. Paintings Spirits Shamans Pliuk. <https://ok.ru/vsesamoemi/topic/63508257816750>



Fig. 8. G.N. Sagalakov. At the Foot of the Sayan Mountains. 2013, in At the Foot of the Sayan Mountains ~ Georgy Sagalakov | Artclub Gallerix. <https://sagalakovgeorg.in.gallerix.ru/expo/hakasiya/u-podnozhya-sayan/>

the visual forms representing the image of the mammoth gives an opportunity to talk about the significance of the image of this animal in the life and culture of indigenous peoples (Espinoza et al., 1992; Koptseva, 2014; Lozh-

kin et al., 2016; Luzan et al., 2019; Reznikova, 2018; The concept of developing... 2018). At the same time, in the mythological worldview of the indigenous peoples, the mammoth is endowed with multi-image characteristics,



Fig. 9



Fig. 10

Fig. 9, 10. Fragments from the painting by G.N. Sagalakov *At the Foot of the Sayan Mountains*. 2013, in *At the Foot of the Sayan Mountains ~ Georgy Sagalakov | Artclub Gallerix*, <https://sagalakovgeorg.in.gallerix.ru/expo/hakasiya/u-podnozhiya-sayan/>

having not only positive traits (the creator of the earth, the first inhabitant of the earth, the guardian of the underworld), but negative ones as well (the pike-like monster). Different ideas of this animal gave rise to a variety of sign and symbolic forms of its visualisation in the contemporary art of the indigenous peoples. In addition to that, two trends in the artistic representation of the image of the mammoth can be distinguished. The first tendency is connected with the more realistic image of the animal.

The second tendency is associated with deviations from the real image towards symbolic signs of expressing its religious and mythological nature. Nowadays, both trends are fully developed in the artistic culture of the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East of Russia.

#### **Conclusion**

The study has demonstrated that the image of the mammoth and the remains of this

fossil animal are of great importance, both in the world culture and economy, as well as for the Russian Federation, especially for the indigenous peoples of the North.

Various interpretations of the image of the mammoth existing in the world culture are most often associated with collective identity. The visual image of a distant and unknown animal constructed by humanity is interpreted as the image of the ancestor and is conveyed in a number of stable sociocultural characteristics: unification (group, social, territorial and national), the unity of opposites (mythological and real, social and natural), and timelessness (cult of a common ancestor and its actualisation in the world culture).

The image of the mammoth in Russian culture is mainly associated with archaeological discoveries. The discovered carcasses of baby mammoths determined the prevalence of the theme of a baby who lost its parents in designing the image of the mammoth. A peculiarity of the mythological image of the mammoth in Russia is its distortion associated with conveying its traits through the oral tradition. Russian culture has its own version of the name for this animal, which was influenced by the old male name.

In the mythological worldview of the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East of Russia, as well as in visual forms, the mammoth is endowed with multi-image characteristics: the creator of the Earth, the first inhabitant of the Earth, the guardian of the underworld and the pike-like monster. There are two tendencies in the artistic repre-

sentation of the image of the mammoth in the modern artistic culture of the indigenous peoples: the more realistic image of the animal and deviations from the real image towards symbolic signs of expressing its religious and mythological nature. Both tendencies are fully developed in the artistic culture of the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East of Russia.

In the field of legislation and legal regulation of the extraction and sale of mammoth ivory in the world, the issue of the status of mammoths is raised only in connection with a discussion of the survival of rare species of elephants. Measures to prevent the extermination of the elephant population, including a ban on trade in mammoth ivory, cause heated debates and are controversial for craftsmen, antique dealers and art collectors.

The issue of legal regulation in this area is particularly acute for the Russian Federation. The practice of developing such documents exists only in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia). This situation leads to significant financial losses for the state budget, acts as a factor for the development of organised crime and causes irreparable damage to local ecosystems, as well as unique archaeological and paleontological heritage.

The development of new and amending existing legislation in accordance with real practice in this area and planning economically viable, environmentally friendly and convenient for scientific and research activities consumption of mammoth fauna is a priority for the Russian Federation.

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## История мирового и русского мамонтоведения

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**Аннотация.** Статья посвящена истории исследований концепта мамонта в нормативно-правовых документах и культурных практиках. Анализ как российского, так и зарубежного опыта позволил обобщить имеющиеся правовые положения относительно регулирования мамонта, а также определить роль мамонта в мировой и российской культуре, в том числе в культуре коренных народов Севера, Сибири и Дальнего Востока. Методологическим основанием данного исследования выступили сравнительно-сопоставительный анализ источников и материалов, историко-сравнительный и хронологический методы, историографический метод, методология философско-искусствоведческого анализа. Исследование показало, что в сфере законодательства и правового регулирования добычи и реализации мамонтовой кости в мире вопрос о статусе мамонтов затрагивается только в связи с обсуждением проблем выживания редких видов слонов. Меры по предотвращению истребления популяции слонов, включающие запрет на торговлю, в том числе и мамонтовой костью, вызывают бурные дискуссии и являются неоднозначными для ремесленников, торговцев антиквариатом и коллекционеров предметов искусства. Для Российской Федерации вопрос правового регулирования в данной сфере стоит особенно остро в связи с отсутствием окончательно сформированной нормативной правовой базы как на федеральном, так и региональном и муниципальном уровнях. Образ мамонта в мировой и российской культуре воплощен в ряде визуальных практик. Это и геральдика, и мультипликация, и книжная графика, и скульптура, и изобразительное искусство. Знаково-символические формы мамонта воплощают религиозно-мифологические характеристики животного, демонстрирующие его значимость в мировоззрении людей, а также свидетельствующие о «живой» памяти о нем в современном мире.

**Ключевые слова:** мамонт, концепт, история изучения, культурные практики, нормативные документы.

Научные специальности: 07.00.00 – исторические науки, 24.00.00 – культурология.