

	Object:	Ornamented mammoth tusk (fragment)
	Museum:	Національний музей історії України вулиця Володимирська, 2 01001 Київ +380442784864 history_museum@nmiu.org
	Collection:	Археологія, Доба каменю
	Inventory number:	a10/3

Description

A fragment of a mammoth tusk with zoomorphic-ornamental carving was found by Vikentii Khvoika during the excavations of the ancient hunters' site in Kyiv, in the Kyrylivska Street. The place where many huge bones were found acquired a fantastic character for Kyivans. Grandmothers collected mammoth bones, because they considered them healing. There were rumors that these were the bones of the giants Gog and Magog. One festive day interested townspeople, despite the watchman's prohibition, broke into the estate and took many finds with them.

It was thanks to the ornamented tusk the Kyrylivska site immediately became famous. Most of this unique sample of ancient art is covered with an ornament of wavy lines, zigzags, short cuts, arcuate segments. These motifs are complemented by stylized images (in profile) – the head of a mammoth with a trunk, the head of a bird with a long neck and beak, and a turtle. The body of the reptile is elongated, the fin are released from under the shell. Part of the engraving is damaged as a result of using the tusk as a tool, possibly for earthworks. There are many conjectures and hypotheses about meaning of the image on the tusk fragment. Mysterious to us today, it was certainly quite understandable to its creators. Besides, scientists consider zoomorphic images as the personification of the 3 elements that surrounded the primitive man – earth (mammoth), air (bird), water (turtle).

Basic data

Material/Technique:	Mammoth tusk, turning, carving
Measurements:	l 294, d 70 mm

Events

Created	When	19 000 років тому
	Who	
Found	Where	Кирилівська стоянка
	When	1893
	Who	Vikentiy Khvoyka (1850-1914)
	Where	вулиця Кирилівська

Keywords

- Верхній палеоліт