

Gaukhar batyr. The forgotten heroism

“The next morning, glorious Kabanbay batyr was leaving with his horsemen from Turkestan. When he approached to the hitching post, somebody slightly touched him on the arm. He turned and saw a slim girl with fair hair. She could hardly be called beautiful, but something remarkably cute was in her nose and brown eyes. The Karatau sable cap shading her high clean forehead suited her well.

– Let me see by tradition, our batyr! – she said and boldly took up a headrope of the famous horse “Kok-Daul” – “Blue Storm”. He really was with a bluish tint, this horse sung in hundreds of songs and it seemed that by one kick of the hoof, the horse could turn a girl into ashes. But the horse let to be caught and batyr wondered.

-Take a headrope, Kabanbay batyr! – the girl said.

Batyr took the headrope and she held the stirrup when he was in a saddle. – What is your name, girl? – he asked, looking directly in her eyes. –My name is Gaukhar, which means “pearl”. I am Malaisary batyr’s sister from Basentiyn tribe.

She gave him her white hand.

-Let your way be lucky...Let God save you in the battles. And may we meet again! She raised her hand with a white handkerchief. Batyr raised his hand in a heavy black armor.

-Let our wish come true, Gaukhar! – seriously said Kabanbay batyr and clapped spurs to horse. Kabanbay batyr looked back when he was on the hill. A small figure was standing visible well from here at the hitching post.

-See you, Gaukhar! A Pearl! – he shouted it with all his might, but the wind caught his words and carried somewhere in the steppe. Gaukhar was standing and staring in the empty steppe..”. (historian I.Esenberlin “Nomads”).

Meeting of these unusual people necessarily had to happen; it was a command from above. Each reader has their own ideas about such people, their aspirations, desires and love. A famous Kazakh writer Ilyas Yesenberlin described a meeting of Gaukhar and Kabanbay batyr. Gaukhar Toktaulkyzy is a sister of

famous Malaisary batyr and was known as a sharpshooter since childhood and was very smart. She had the gift of prophecy. Malaisary batyr's sister was very bold like her brother.

“Gaukhar went to guard in the mountains Kalmakkyrylgan” (the place where the Kalmyks were extirpated). She was clad in the warrior's armor with weapon in hands, she was face-to-face as men on the battlefield with the enemy. She especially excelled in the difficult years, when there was a threat of disappearance of Kazakh people. Gaukhar warrior together with Karakerey kabanbay, kanzhigali Bogenbay, Zhasybay and brother Malaisary batyr participated in the battles.

Gaukhar constantly followed Kabanbay batyr in all his campaigns. He had 7 sons from two wives. One of them was our heroine Gaukhar. Kabanbay batyr (Karakerey Kabanbay) is the famous Kazakh batyr, a commander from Karakerey, tribe naiman. His real name is Erasyl. He was born in 1692 near the lake Alakol, died in 1770 in the valley of Esil and Nura. His grandfather Mambet, father Kozhakul, brother Kozhakul Kushuk –all fought for their country. Erasyl was seven years old, when the Dzungars killed his father, when he was sixteen, he saw his elder brother Esenbay's death. At the age of sixteen, Erasyl sneaked into the enemy camp and slaughtered the Dzungar batyr, his brother's killer. Since that time he was called Kabanbay batyr. The first major battle with his participation was in 1718 in Ayagoz. Kabanbay batyr participated in the defense of Turkestan, Bulanty and Anyrakay battles. He fought in Shyngystau and on the river Irtysh. In the campaigns in 1752-1754 in Zhetysu, Tarbagatay and Altay, Kazakh troops under Kabanbay batyr's command cleared the enemy from the surroundings of the lake Balkhash, river Ili and Karatal.

Then the troops appeared in two directions: from the south and to the north of the Tarbagatay ridge. Kabanbay commanded the southern detachment liberating Karakol, Naryn, Urzhar, Katynsu, Alakol, Barlyk and after that united with the northern detachment of Bogenbay batyr. Kabanbay batyr participated in the battles in Basoan-Mazar, Shorga, Manyrak. He liberated the Zaisan, the Markakol, the Kurchum.

Our story would be incomplete if we will not mention about Gaukhar and Kabanbay's daughter Nazym. She was like her parents and mastered the art of warfare. "...The third, main army was led by Ablay. It went through Shieli and Zhana-Korgan directly to Turkestan. It included famous batyrs as military commanders: Bayan, Malaisary, Zhapek and Kabanbay batyr. Not a wife -a famous warrior Gaukhar accompanied batyr – but her daughter, beautiful Nazym”

It would be enough for Gaukhar to be batyr's wife and raise his children. But it cannot be assessed what she did as Kabanbay batyr's friend. Where the name of Kabanbay batyr is mentioned, it is necessary to remember Gaukhar – a heroine, a warrior, who remained in the memory of nomadic people.

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