

GREAT GULDURSUN – THE PLACE OF MYTH AND HISTORY

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ABSTRACT

In this article, the history of the Great Guldursun fortress is reflected in historical and artistic sources

Keywords: Guldursun, Genghis Khan, Kalmyk, Temur, Turtkul, Beruniy

1. INTRODUCTION

Big Guldursun is an archaeological monument located in the territory of the Republic of Karakalpakstan. It was built in the IV-III centuries BC. It is located 20 km east of Beruniy town of Karakalpakstan and 26 km northeast of Turtkul. It is one of the thickest borders of Khorezm, which was built on the ruins of an ancient hill. This fortress is in a non-rectangular shape with the size of 350x230 m, the corners are pointed to the light. The outer wall has survived up to the present day with large piles of bricks. During the archeological findings, a number of medieval and ancient tombstones, bronze tools and jewelry, antique and medieval coins were found. According to the findings, the date of the last settlement was signed as the year of 1220. It corresponds to the rule of Khorezmshah and the time of the Mongol invasion of ancient Khorezm. However, in the epic 'Suhayl and Guldursun' of the Sayif Sarayi, it was pointed out that there were the signs of life in this fortress during Amir Temur's attack on Khorezm.

2. MAIN PART

The Big Guldursun is located in the separated area of Kyrkyz and Tuprakala Irrigation, and its planning is built on the unevenly rectangular shape of the plain. The total area is 620x500 m, in other words 31 ha. The monument is surrounded by a wall of two rows, first built from mud and then square-shaped bricks, with a width of 2 meters of path on it. In the city, the arc is not perfectly visible, and the remains of public buildings are not hilly in its interior structure. The south-east corner of the gate is equipped with a fascine complex. In the I-II centuries BC, an additional wall was built on the outer wall and reinforced with half-circle bursts. The distance between them is 55 m. The findings found as a result of archaeological explorations suggest that the city has diminished in the fourth century AD, and since the mid-sixth century BC, cultural life continued and on the walls and bursts there was constructed mud walls. It seems difficult to notice changes in its planning. The monument was the economic, cultural and military-religious center in VIII-IX centuries. Repairs to walls and benches of the defense were carried out. In the first Middle Ages walls and constellations were recovered from the roof, there was an open path on the upper part and its width was 2 m. the wall has been turned into a circle shape because of the work being done on it. An old wall and a burst height of 1.2-1.5 m and a width of 2.55 m. the lower part of the wall of the defense wall is 1.65 m in the upper part of 6.7 m. It is worth noting that a separate wall of 1 m from the outer wall was built, which, in its turn, had the rings of the circle.¹

There are countless myths and stories about the magnificent ruins of Guldursun. There was a rising tide between the people, hidden under the castle, and the dragon guarded it, and whoever was determined to find the endless treasure of Guldursun would have died.

There is another story about this fortress. Once it was called as "Gulistan". It is said that this place has been a rich and prosperous city. The city was ruled by an old king who had a beautiful daughter named Guldursun. One day the city faced a trouble: The invading Kalmyk tribes from the desert tore up everything that went on its way and finally approached the city. These tribes besieged the fields and the gardens, and then besieged the city. Public defended the city bravely. The enemy was unable to overcome the opposition. Thus, several months passed and unfortunately another more dangerous enemy- hunger came to assist the invaders. The food stock was over and people began starving in the streets of the city. The brave defenders of the city could hardly hold their weapons in their hands. The king then summoned his advisors and commander-in-chiefs in order to exchange ideas. There was a person among them, and he offered to try the last and prospective solution in order to get out of this situation. This was a very cunning plan. The people of Gulistan under the conquest of Kalmyks selected one of the fattest bulls in the city and managed to take it secretly to the palace, and they fed him with the last wheat in the king's warehouse and threw him out of the city. Not only those who were attacked, but also

those who besiege suffered from hunger. The Kalmyks had eaten everything which could be eaten during a few months of siege. They began to speak about abandoning the siege at all. The hungry kalmyks grabbed the bull and saw that it was full of the best wheat and said: "If they feed the bull like that, their food is very huge!" shouted the kalmyks. "There's no use for sacking, we cannot take the city, and let's go away before starving."

The leaders of the Kalmykians agreed with the idea and were ready to go back. However, the dream of shah's daughter, Guldursun was different. He was thinking about the brave, young and handsome commander of Kalmyks, the son of the Kalmyk king for a long time and observing him through the walls of the castle. In the heart of the girl there was a passion for the leader of her own native people's enemies. The girl seized the tricks of the rebels, saw the lumbering of the camels loaded up, and the remains of the Kalmyk people disappear one after another, and thought about that after a few hours they would never be here, and the gentle prince would have gone forever and she decided to act in an inappropriate way to the name of a human: he sent a letter to the son of enemy king from his faithful maid. In the letter the girl expressed her affection for the young man and revealed the mystery of the residents of Gulistan. "Wait for another day," she wrote, "you will see yourself with your own eyes how the city will capitulate."

The kalmyks loaded their camels, and at night the fire could be seen from a distance. By the dawn, when the Gulistanian people saw that the enemy was approaching the city and realized that their cunning plan did not work, they were very desperate and the starving city was surrendered. The city was robbed and burned, some of the people were killed, and the rest were taken as slaves. The betrayer Guldursun was brought to the prince's palace. The prince looked at her and said, "If he had betrayed her people and her father because of the unwanted passion for the enemy of her own country, would she be loyal for me when someone attracts her attention? Tie her to the tail of wild horses, so that she could betray no one thereafter."²

Guldursun's body, which is tied to a horse's tail, is fragmentary and has left in the desert grass. The place where the blood of the betrayer was dumped, and it began to be called as Guldursun, not as Gulistan.

In this tragic story, sparks of historical truth are hidden. According to the Central Asian peoples' myths, in the XVII-XVIII centuries, when the northern and central parts of Kazakhstan and Central Asia were horrified by the hegemony of Kalmyk invaders, sometimes the most violent invader of XIII century, Genghis Khan's invasion was largely understood. Life in the Guldursun city and its fields which was destroyed during the invasions of mongolians, just like the ruins of these monuments, is reborn and blossoming in our days. In addition to these myths and legends, Sayfi Sarayi's poem, "Suhayl and Guldursun" is also available. If the fortune of this castle is linked to the Kalmyk or the attack of Genghis Khan in Khorezm, Saroyi connects the fate of the city with Amir Temur's attack on Khorezm. This poem begins with the following phrase:

*(Not a legend, true this event is,
As a true legend appeared within love.)*

Sayfi Sarayi says that "I am telling you a true fact, not a myth. We can trust this poem more than any other legend. Because Sarayi was a man who lived at that time.

In dastan (novel) Suhayl, a military commander of Timur, was taken prisoner and when he was brought to the king, the king's daughter Guldursun loved Suhayl at a first sight and decided to save him from prison. When the officer was drunken by the princess, both of them run away from the castle. They come to the desert. They got exhausted by the thirst and hunger. Suhayl's sigh turned into a storm in the desert and both of them died in the sand. Unlike other legends, Guldursun does not betray her own country and didn't let the enemies into the city.

*May this work be a keepsake for the history,
There is not a lie, but truth in it.*

This work is about the faithfulness of wife towards her husband:

*Wife is loyal, love her, hey dear husband,
In every hard work she is into to you.*

3. CONCLUSION

Big Guldursun was a great and magnificent fortress. By studying the history of this castle, we can discover the unfavorable aspects of the ancient history of the Khorezm oasis.

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