

## MOUNTAINEERS IN THE NOVEL BY M. Y. LERMONTOV

### "THE HERO OF OUR TIME"

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**Annotation.** The article is devoted to the image of the Caucasian mountaineers, with whom the war was waged in the North Caucasus. In the person of Kazbich, Lermontov shows one of the representatives of the historically established type of fighter against the Russian conquerors – Abrek. On the one hand, the author draws the life and everyday life of a Russian fortress on the so – called "Caucasian line", on the other hand, the mountain village. To recreate the local color, Lermontov turned to the traditional comparison of a woman and a horse in the East. Lermontov is an artist, not a historian or ethnographer, so he did not slavishly follow the facts of life.

**Keywords:** mountaineers, Pechorin, Caucasus, Lermontov, the novel "Hero of Our Time", Maxim Maksimych, Kumyks, Bela, Chechens, Kazbich.

Russian Russian novel "Hero of Our Time" is Lermontov's "most perfect prose work", "amazing", "brilliant", "the best Russian novel" [4, p. 5]. The Caucasian pages of the novel attracted the attention of the Russian advanced public and foreign readers (the first publication of the novel in French under the title "Hero of our Time, or Russians in the Caucasus"). What are the peoples of the Caucasus depicted on the pages of the novel?

The struggle of the peoples of the Caucasus for freedom, their bright life and "wild simplicity", their love for nature, and the nature of the Caucasus itself-all this attracted the poet and was an immense source of inspiration [ 3, p.57].

S. Durylin made an attempt to prove that Bela is from a Chechen family, and the action takes place on the "Sunzhenskaya line or even further south, into the depths of Chechnya" [9, p.55]. Meanwhile, Maxim Maksimych answered the question "Have you been in Chechnya for a long time?" in the most definite way: "in the fortress beyond the Terek", "...at the Stone Ford" [5]. We are talking about a fortification on the Aksay - Tash-Kichu River. For the first time, an indication of the Tashkent as a Stone Ford was made in our literary criticism by I. L. Andronikov.

The Tash-Kichu fortification was located on the Kumyk plane, on the very border with Chechnya and in the immediate vicinity of such Chechen villages as: Kash-Geldy, Kurchi-Aul,

Nauruz-Aul, Nuim-Berdy, Oisungur, Istisu. Formally, they were part of the Aksai possessions. There were also Kumyk villages inhabited by descendants of Chechens. The villages of Chechnya – Engel-Yurt, Kadi-Yurt, etc. - were located nearby. Therefore, Maxim Maksimych did not deny that he was in Chechnya, and Pechorin asked Bella if she loved a Chechen [5].

Durylin S. correctly noted that the Chechens did not have feudal princely families. But here we see the Kumyk prince. He is certified as "peaceful" [3, p. 57], and indeed, his behavior towards the commandant of the Russian fortress is calm and respectful. The Kumyks have been economically and diplomatically connected with Russia since the XVI century. Russian tsars protected the interests of the Kumyk feudal lords, and in the XIX century the Russian military administration controlled the Kumyk princes.

Recalling the story of Bela, Maxim Maksimych mentioned the wedding. The narrator forced him to tell more about it with his question. The first phrases refer to the Kumyk wedding in general, and then the staff captain proceeds to the description of the wedding at the prince-kunak. S. Durylin believed that Lermontov made a mistake by forcing the wedding to be celebrated in the bride's house, whereas this does not happen among mountaineers. N. S. Semenov writes that a description of Kumyk wedding ceremonies was found in the bride's house, which coincides with what Maxim Maksimych tells [9, p. 57].

At the wedding, the poor old man strummed on "a three-stringed musical instrument like our balalaika". This is "agachkomuz" [8, p. 44]. The "ragamuffin" took part in the wedding fun, he broke down, clowned, mixed an honest company. At the Kumyk wedding, the participation of the jester-oyunchu is mandatory.

We read further: "Girls and young guys stand in two rows, one against the other, clap their hands and sing. Here comes one girl and one man to the middle and begin to sing verses to each other in a singsong, whatever they can, and the rest take up the chorus." "Whatever happened" [8, p. 44] should be understood as improvisation. In the description, it is not difficult to recognize the song-game characteristic of the Kumyk wedding; it is called saryn. According to P. Golovinsky, during the performance of saryn, a girl and a guy exchange compliments [3, p. 58] of a love content. Something "like a compliment" [8, p. 45] in the spirit of saryn, Bela sang to Pechorin. She was dragging a Russian officer into the Kumyk wedding game. Her compliment did not have an obvious love content, but to some extent hinted at the feelings of the girl. That's why Kazbich's eyes looked at Bela from a dark corner of the room, "motionless, fiery" [9, p. 56]. The Adats did not allow a woman to have conversations with a strange man. At a wedding – another thing. Lermontov skillfully used the wedding ceremony to create a scene of acquaintance between Bela and Pechorin.

Lermontov is an artist, not a historian or ethnographer, so he did not slavishly follow the facts of life. The Tash-Kichu fortification was located next to the large village of Novy Aksai [3, p. 59]. In the novel, the fortification stands alone on the river bank, "six versts away" is an aul. In fact, the village was located seven and a half versts away and was called Batash-Yurt...

Pechorin, in order to teach Bela the Russian language, hired a dukhanschitsa (a sutler) who knows "Tatar", and he himself studied "Tatar" [8, p. 52]. Lermontov wrote to Raevsky: "I began to learn Tatar [3, p. 58], a language that is necessary here, and in general in Asia, like French." The opinion was established that in this case the Azerbaijani language is meant. N. Semenov writes without looking at Lermontov: "The language of the inhabitants of the area that occupies us (the Kumyk plane) is Tatar, that is, the universal language of Asia" [9, p. 57]. So, it

is more correct to say that Lermontov studied the Kumyk language, and therefore could easily master Azerbaijani. Tolstoy L. N. also studied the Kumyk language and called it Tatar.

What ways did Lermontov get acquainted with the life and customs of the Kumyks? Personal acquaintance with Kumyks outside the Caucasus and in the Caucasus is possible. The first Kumyk ethnographer Shikhaliyev was a military man and served in Chechnya in 1840. In the documents, he is sometimes listed as Sheikh Ali. Kumyk Shah-Wali studied at the school of Guards sub-ensigns and cavalry junkers together with Lermontov. Apparently, they are the same person. Shikhaliyev could tell Lermontov a lot about the Kumyks.

In a letter to Rayevsky, he reported: "...I traveled the entire Line along, from Kizlyar to Taman." Usually, fortifications along the Terek rise under the left flank of the Line. Yermolov's chief of staff, General Velyaminov, testifies that Yermolov laid the "second parallel" of the Line: fortifications of the Barrier Camp, Groznaya, Amir-Aji-Yurt, Tash-Kichu, Burnaya, etc. To "travel" the entire Line means to visit the fortifications on the Kumyk plane [9, pp. 57-58].

Considering the story of Bela, it should be borne in mind that Maxim Maksimych told it, and the narrator wrote it down. About the Caucasian, very similar to Maxim Maksimych, Lermontov said that this is "a half-Russian, half-Asian creature" [2]. The story takes place in the Caucasus. Fidelity to reality required a local flavor. It manifested itself, as Belinsky said, in ethnographic, folklore and linguistic elements (especially Kazbich's story), in the traditional "skeleton of content" [9, p.58].

To recreate the local color, Lermontov turned to the traditional comparison of a woman and a horse in the East. In the story of Maxim Maksimych, the struggle for Bela and Karagez unfolds. The action develops in parallel. Maxim Maksimych expresses himself in the spirit of the East: "How I look at this horse now: black as pitch, legs are strings, and eyes are no worse than Bela's" [8, p. 45]. Kazbich's song ends with the lines:

Four wives will buy gold.

A dashing horse has no price:

He will not leave behind the whirlwind in the steppe,

He will not change, he will not deceive [8, p. 48].

The song does not compare, but contrasts a horse and a woman. The horse will not change, will not deceive [3, p. 58], it will not lag behind the whirlwind in the steppe. And the woman? The conclusion is easy and not at all in favor of the woman.

Literary critics paid attention to the folklore character of the song, but they forgot that the consciousness of the working mountain masses in the past was characterized by inconsistency and did not always correctly reflect the true interests of the people. There were proverbs: "Do not spare either your wife or the horse," "The wife should work harder than the donkey, because she eats clean bread, and the donkey straw." There were also such: "A wolf is allowed to marry two". "The death of his wife – the collapse of the roof" [9, p. 48] ...

The prince's son Azamat, spoiled by his parents, does what he wants. Burning with a passionate desire to take possession of Karagoz, he tells Kazbich that "he will die if he does not sell him his horse" [8, p.47], offers him his sister Bela for him. Azamat turns from defenders of family honor into an enemy of the family [3, p. 58].

It is known that in the Caucasus in the past, stealing horses was considered a bravado. The folk song of Kumyk says: "Not as an old hound dog who has lost his fame, but as a famous young horse, you will be invaluable when you are fifteen years old."

Kazbich has a different view of a woman. "Kazbich was silent for a long, long time; finally, instead of answering, he began to sing an old song in a low voice" [8, p. 48]. Kazbich considered the answer, weighed all the circumstances and decided that the song that humiliates a woman would best express the idea. This is what the adats demanded, for Kazbich they are the tradition of his ancestors, the collective opinion of his fellow tribesmen, the exponent of moral norms, the truth of life. Kazbich is like everyone else. Not only by tradition, but also by the power of conviction. He responds to an insult with instant revenge, resolutely fulfills his plan. The shadow of Pushkin's Gasub seems to fall on the image of Kazbich. Internally, they are close to each other. Both are almost equally affected by the shock. "Having driven away his son, Gasub lay down on the ground – and closed his eyes. And so he lay until night" [1, p. 592].

Kazbich, having lost his Karagez, fell to the ground and "lay there until late at night and the whole night" [8, p. 51].

Hasub paints a picture of the murder of an Armenian merchant that is pleasing to his heart:

Why an accidental blow  
You didn't try to slay him  
And did not jump to him from the cliff [1, p. 592]?

Convinced of Tazit's inability to avenge his murdered brother, Gasub scares him with a terrible meeting:

To put a dead brother on your shoulders  
He sat down like a bloody cat... [1, p. 592]

Kazbich seemed to realize the dreams of a fantastic follower of Islam: "like a cat, he dived from behind a bush, jumped on a horse from behind him, knocked him to the ground with a dagger blow" [8, p. 65].

For Maxim Maksimych, Karagez is a "robber's horse" [1, p. 45], even in Bela, in his opinion, "robber blood flows" [1, p. 62] But he is a soldier and therefore appreciates the highlanders and admires them: "Live hard, robbers! I have seen others in action, for example: after all, the whole is pierced like a sieve with bayonets, and everyone is waving a saber..." [1, p. 49] And there were many such courageous people in the real life of Chechnya at that time.

Let us now consider the place and meaning of Kazbich's song in the story. The humiliating suspicions voiced in the song were addressed to Bela. Kazbich was referring to her. Meanwhile, the whole course of the narrative, her image, resolutely revolt against this. Gold could not and could not buy Bela. It can be stolen, killed, but not forced to fall in love. Kazbich believed the horse [3, p. 58]. And what happened? The boy Azamat became his master: he raced off to the mountains on it, like the wind. Karagez Kazbich was "deceived". This is how the patriarchal-feudal attitude towards women is condemned, and with it Kazbich.

Semenov L. P., relying on N. Lerner and M. Olshansky, put forward in 1939 the assumption that the prototype of Kazbich was the Kizilbech Sheretlukov. In 1960, an article by L. P. Semenov was published, in which the assumption turned into a statement. In the academic

edition of Lermontov (note to "Bela"), it is stated that Kazbich is "a completely real historical person". We think that there are no sufficient grounds for such statements.

First of all. Sheretlukov died at the end of the 30s at an advanced age. Maxim Maksimych's story dates back to 1832, when the fame of Sheretlukov was already booming. Maxim Maksimych said: "... I heard that the Shapsugs have some kind of Kazbich on the right flank." In this case, we are talking about Sheretlukov. But the staff captain did not say: some Kazbich appeared.

Secondly. The appearance of Lermontovsky Kazbich (small, dry...) is a sharp contrast to the appearance of Sheretlukov. here is how the Adyghe writer Akhmetukov draws his portrait: "Kizilbech... was of enormous height, with rich blue eyes, with an iron chest, a large head, a rather pleasant-looking man..." [9, p. 61]

The "Hero of Our Time" stubbornly emphasizes the connection of appearance with the human psyche, with his character. And in this case, we can not ignore the Lermontov method. The poet could not "combine" the appearance of one person with the character of another, a well-known contemporary, and pass off such a combination as a historical person.

Third. The character of Lermontov's Kazbich is different. About the historical Kazbich, Maxim Maksimych says: "... a daredevil who rides around in a red beshmet step by step under our shots and bows politely when a bullet buzzes close..." [8, p. 68] Before us is a reckless brave, a favorite of luck, a daring man. And what is Lermontov's Kazbich like? He came to the wedding in chain mail, treacherously attacked the old man and killed him, quickly retreated from under the walls of the fortress from a single soldier's shot. The following characteristic from the "Tazit" is more suitable for him: courage, cunning and agility, a crafty mind and strength of hands" [1, p. 589].

It is customary to say about Bela that she is all in love. Bela died because she only knew how to love. And yet the pathos of the image of Bela is not only and not so much in her strong, noble heartfelt feeling.

The fiery love of a mountain woman, the passion of an eastern woman is a traditional romantic motif.

Bela fell in love with Pechorin. And difficult questions arose before her. Revealing the secret corners of Bela's inner world, Lermontov showed not only her fiery feelings, but also her awakening intellect.

"Listen, my peri," Pechorin turned to Bela, " you know that sooner or later you must be mine – why are you only torturing me? Do you love any Chechen? If so, I'll let you go home now. "She shuddered slightly and shook her head." Returning home did not bode well. And she did not love anyone except Pechorin. "Or, – he continued, – do you absolutely hate me?" "She sighed." The girl confessed her feelings. "Or does your faith forbid you to love me?" "She turned pale and was silent." Bela is shocked by the question. This question, the most terrible, tormented her, making her suffer and toss around. She understood that she was ready to cross the boundaries of what was allowed by the Adats and Sharia. "Believe me, Allah is the same for all tribes, and if he allows me to love you, why will he forbid you to reciprocate me? She looked him full in the face. As if struck by this new thought, distrust and a desire to make sure were expressed in her eyes" [8, p.53]. There is a gleam of inquisitive thought in her eyes, an acute desire to understand the circumstances, to comprehend her actions and feelings.

Marlinsky saw in the mountain women "greed" even in love. The gifts did not affect Bela. Maxim Maksimych said: "They have their own rules: they are brought up differently" [9, p. 63]. And that's right. The Kumyk song says: "Let the stupid girls be cursed, whose mind is short, their hair is long; who love a rich young man for his wealth and, having married a rich man, dress in silk dresses" [9, pp. 63-64].

In the episode of Pechorin's decisive explanation with Bela, the ideal of a man native to her heart appeared. Pechorin "dressed in Circassian style, armed himself and went in to her." A saddled horse was waiting for him in the courtyard. He entered as a batyr enters, who has gathered for a brave feat. Pechorin did not flatter, did not deceive. He expressed the truth about love briefly and energetically. Bela got complete freedom. The song is sung: "The batyr does not resort to flattery, which is used to gain the favor of people." - Goodbye, I'm going-where? How do I know! Maybe I won't be chasing a bullet or a saber strike for long: then remember me and forgive me" [8, p.54]. That's what Pechorin said. The song says: "A batyr, both on a dark night and on a thin horse, will achieve what a coward will never achieve. The batyr does not run away from danger, but hurries to meet it." Pechorin resolutely hurried towards death [9, p. 64].

Pride, generosity, courage, sincerity (at the moment Pechorin was immensely sincere) conquered the girl...

Dying, Bela does not condemn her love. From the dogmatic positions of Sharia, she is a terrible criminal and a great sinner. She doesn't belong in heaven. Bela did not admit this, did not blame herself, but decided to carry her love for the Russian into the afterlife, she regretted that she would not meet Pechorin's soul in the next world and that another woman in paradise would be his friend.

But maybe Lermontov wanted to show that, having fallen in love with Pechorin, Bela changed her people? No! Her ardent love for Russian did not extinguish, did not change her devotion and love for her native land. Before her death, she "spoke incoherent speeches about her father, brother: she wanted to go to the mountains, home" [8, p. 66].

As a result, it is worth noting that today we are living witnesses of how Lermontov's poetic divine gift was gaining height [6, p. 270]. How many beautiful works of Lermontov could have come to light if he had lived at least until the age of Pushkin. But, this was not destined to come true. One thing is clear that "the Caucasus, being the cradle of Pushkin's poetry, has also become the cradle of Lermontov's poetry" [10, p.39]. After all, the Caucasus has become a place of inspiration for the great writer, his outlet [3, p. 60]. And it was not for nothing that Belinsky foreshadowed Lermontov an honorable place in Russian literature next to Gogol and Pushkin. He wrote to Botkin that the third Russian poet was being prepared in this young man, and that Pushkin did not die without an heir [7, p. 79].

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