

A STUDY OF KOROGLU DESTANI



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Just like in all of the world literatures, the first examples of the Turkish Literatures were the epics. The term of "destan" (epic) was and has been used for several verse genres and types within the Turkish literary traditions.

What is the epic?

•The epics that are the offset works of all the world literatures are the long stories written in verse style. We can give some of the epics examples.

Some Of Turkish Myths And Legends:

- Koroğlu Myth
- Kız Kulesi (Maiden's Tower) Myth
- Dede Korkut
- Nasreddin Hodja, etc.

Now we can see the epic's story:

THE STORY OF KOROGLU

The Story Of Koroglu is one of the most widespread of the Turkic *destans*¹ It is shared not only by nearly all Turkic peoples, but also by some non-Turkic neighboring communities, such as the Armenians, Georgians, Kurds, Tajiks, and Afghans. There are, of course, differences among these many versions, but in general they can be separated into two major groups, the western and the eastern, with the Caspian Sea as a rough boundary between them.

Both groups of versions have ties, whether geographical or cultural, to Persia. Although the destan's path of transmission is not yet fully understood, most researchers agree that it originated in the south Caucasus region, most likely Azerbaijan, and traveled eastward from there (also slightly westward, into Anatolia and the Balkans, but it is the eastward movement that concerns us more here)². The earliest written version of this Turkic destan was recorded in Persian near Tabriz in the mid-nineteenth century and interest in the story still exists in present-day Iran. Versions also exist in other varieties of Persian, such as Tajik and Afghan Dari. Also, as we hope to demonstrate, the Persian epic tradition has had a significant influence on the transformations the destan underwent during the transmission process. So while the destan itself may be Turkic, its roots and its branches are largely within the Persian cultural sphere.

One of the fundamental criteria distinguishing the two groups from each other is the occupation of the hero. In the western versions (the Azeri and all the other Caucasian and Anatolian versions), Koroglu is a murderous outlaw; in the eastern (mostly central Asian) versions, he is a wise and just ruler. Focusing only on the change in Koroglu's occupation, we can see two separate factors at work:(1)the typological evolution of a popular heroic

tale, and (2) the influence of the classical Persian epic tradition in the entire area of distribution of the Koroglu story. The present study aims to demonstrate how these two factors made possible Koroglu's transformation from a robber to a ruler. To do this, I discuss three versions of the *destan*, one near each east-west geographical extreme and one in the middle. These versions are: (1) the Azeri (CHODZKO 1842, SADEQ Beg 1842), which is most likely the original and certainly the one with the most plausible connection to historical events; (2) the Turkmen (GOVŞUDOV 1980), which is widely acknowledged as a transitional version; and (3) the Tajik (BRAGINSKII et al .1987) which— not surprisingly— best reflects the Persian epic influence that is also, however, reflected in other versions at the eastern end of the *destan*'s area of distribution.

In the Azeri version, as in all the other western versions that stem from it, Koroglu is simply a bandit. This is perhaps the best-known image of Koroglu: he robs merchant caravans and other travelers, kidnaps women and children, and fights the local rulers. He acquired the name Koroglu, which means “son of the blind man” when his father, who was the chief herdsman for the shah of Turkestan, was blinded for angering his employer. In selecting a group of prime colts for the shah's own stable, Koroglu's father included two scrawny-looking colts that he knew to be of magical parentage, but he was unable to convince the shah of their worth and was blinded in punishment. The young Koroglu avenges his father's mistreatment and gathers a band of followers around himself, eventually establishing a fortress hideout called Çamlıbel.

According to the stories, Koroglu is a great trickster, attempting (and usually succeeding in) very bold endeavors (e.g., capturing the daughter of the Ottoman Sultan), and having an uncanny ability to evade capture. He often uses clever disguises to achieve his goal and is never recognized, despite his great physical size and his use of his own name as a *mahl* as (penname) in the songs he improvises. But notwithstanding these amusing aspects of his character, he is basically a murderous robber, coarse and even obscene in his manners, holding nothing sacred but his wondrous horse, Kirat (which was one of the two scrawny colts rejected by the shah). This criminal Koroglu was, however, soon transformed in the popular imagination into a hero of the oppressed people, their avenger against the tyrannical local rulers. A convenient parallel in western European legend would be the story of Robin Hood, a bandit similarly idealized into a champion for social justice. It would not be too far off the mark to imagine the Koroglu of the Azeri version as a musically-inclined Robin Hood with a horse.³

Possible Historical Prototypes of Koroglu

The Koroglu of the Azeri version is not a totally fictional character. More than a dozen late sixteenth-century documents in the *Miihimme Defterleri* (Ottoman state reports of provincial disturbances) mention Koroglu or members of his band (who also occur in the *destan*) as Celali rebels.⁴ Eight of these, dated between 1580 and 1585, deal with Koroglu himself. He is indeed described as a daring and amazingly elusive bandit. One document even describes how he and his men, disguised as theological students, robbed a caravan; so the disguise element seems to have some basis in fact. According to these documents, Koroglu was active in the region of Bolu⁵ and Gerede in northwest Anatolia; one even says that Koroglu was from the village of Sayik, near Gerede. So the historical Koroglu was quite likely from western Anatolia. Nevertheless, it is generally agreed that the legend concerning him took root in eastern Anatolia and Azerbaijan, where he was active at a later stage in his career, and where his songs are sung even today (Sumer 1987, 9-46).

The government documents are mostly orders for Koroglu's arrest, and so they make no mention of his musical abilities. These talents of his, however, are noted by the early seventeenth-century Armenian historian Arakel of Tabriz, who mentions that the songs of Koroglu the Celali are widely sung by the traditional balladeers of the region, the *aşıks* (BORATAV 1946,38). So it seems that Koroglu's songs were famous within one generation of the bandit's lifetime. Arakel also mentions several of Koroglu's comrades' names, and says that Koroglu was famous for his tricks (BORATAV 1946, 194). Later in the seventeenth century, the Ottoman traveler Evliya Çelebi in his *Seyahatname* mentions a bandit named Koroglu in northwest Anatolia (1982 V, 18). Slightly later, in the early eighteenth century, the Armenian Ilyas Muşegyan included some of Koroglu's poems in a collection of songs from the Tabriz area, written in Azeri Turkish using the Armenian alphabet. He also provides some background on Koroglu, noting that he lived in the hills of Kars and Erzurum during the reign of Shah Abbas (1587—1629) in Iran and Sultan Murad (i.e., Murad III, 1574—1595) in Turkey (RA'IS-NIYA 1988, 302-303).

However, the matter of Koroglu's identity is not quite that simple. Other evidence indicates that there may have been more than one Koroglu in the area at that time. Besides Evliya Çelebi's one reference to the bandit Koroglu, he also mentions a folk-poet by that name twice (see BORATAV 1955, 911; Evliya y 283; I,638—39), without relating the two individuals. It is not completely clear whether the folk-poet Koroglu and the Celali Koroglu of the *destan* are one and the same person. In his verses, the poet Koroglu mentions having served in the Ottoman army under Ozdemiroglu Osman Pasha in the campaigns in the Caucasus and the conquest of Tabriz. The poetry of this soldier Koroglu is of a heroic nature; especially eloquent is his lament upon the death of his commander. Scholarly opinion is divided on the matter (YILDIRIM 1983,113),⁶ but there is no reason why the Celali and the soldier-poet could not be the same person. The dates involved are not irreconcilable, and former Celalis were sometimes pardoned and accepted into the military or government service. (For example, one of Koroglu's associates both in the oral tradition and in the archival documents, a bandit named Deli Hasan, sought pardon and also requested a post in the government. Both requests were granted: he was made beylerbeyi of Bosnia and was sent there together with ten thousand of his followers, and thus he was no longer a menace in Anatolia.) Furthermore, there is some overlap in the names of Koroglu's associates in the archival documents, the oral tradition, and Arakel's history. So the soldier-poet and the bandit were most likely one person.

In the documents from the *Mühimme Defterleri*, however, there is some indication that there may even have been more than one bandit named Koroglu in late sixteenth-century Anatolia. In some of the documents, Koroglu's name appears far down on a list among the names of many other outlaws, as though he were not even a minor leader; in others he is obviously already well-known to all and greatly feared (Sumer 1987,19—20). There also exists a Safavid document from the early seventeenth century that implies that Koroglu was an employee of Shah 'Abbas; he captured a traitorous tribal chief and his relatives and sent them to the shah. There is also some evidence of a Turkmen chieftain of one of the Afshar tribes named Sultan Husrev Koroglu who lived in the hills of Kerman and Kiluye at about the same time (BORATAV 1931, 96).⁷ So the name seems to have been a popular *lakab* (nickname). In any case, it is clear that there was at least one bandit named Koroglu, and he is the hero of the Azeri version.

Koroglu has got a lot of version. Some of them there are:

- The Azeri Version
- The Turkmen Version
- The Tajick Version
- The Antep Version
- The Van Kyrgyz Version
- The Özbek Version
- The Kazak Version
- The Karakalpak Version

As can be seen there are several variant and we will explain the wide range of only three version and will give the most famous,short one every Turk boys know that.

The Epic of Koroglu

From past to present, from east to west Köroğlu ,Robin Hood,Brave Heart ,William Tell have been told as public hero stories against injustice.In our culture Brave Köroğlu who struggles against injustice questions the soul of bravery and courage as follows;

Send my regards to Ruler of The City of Bolu
It is necessary to go up and lean to these mountains
Mountains will have sounds
Of horse neighing, and spears.
The enemy came battalion by battalion
The lines of fate were written on our forehead
Gun was discovered and courage disappeared
The curved sword shall rust within its scabbard

KÖROĞLU LEGEND

The Ruler of Bolu city is a person who is curious about horses. One day he sends his groom, qualified about horses, to other places to find a skilled and lovely horse.After going around for days, Groom Yusuf (Joseph) meets a colt in one of the nomadic families.Its origin is from a horse which lived around the rivers in the past. So it is a good type of horses.Yusuf has purchased it from its owners. Colt is not so attractive and strong since it is too young.It is nearly ugly.But in future, it is going to turn into a fine horse if well-fed.Yusuf is aware of it and he comes back to the his ruler in happiness. But the ruler does not like this ugly colt. He thinks that Yusuf makes fun of him, he gets angry and he tells his men to make Yusuf's eyes blind . He gives the colt to him and dismisses him.Blind Yusuf comes back to his village and he tells his story to his son.He says that he is going to take revenge from the Ruler of Bolu soon. Blind Yusuf and his son started to train the colt.After a few years,colt becomes a wonderful purebred Arabian horse.It is as fast as wind and it can jump over like a deer.It has capability of strategic wars. Meanwhile,Yusuf's son grows up. He becomes a brave and strong, young man. He has also capability of bravery and courage. One night, Hızır *shows himself to Yusuf in a dream and tells the waters of Aras will flow as a kind of magical foam and whoever will drink that foam will be cured of physical problems including blindness and ageing. Upon his proposal, Yusuf and his son set out a journey.

*Hızır: A saint in Muslim belief. He is known by his affection.

They go to the shore of River Aras, they wait to see the magical foam coming from Bingöl city. Yusuf' s blind eyes are going to heal and he is going to be able to see by the magical foam. Also, he is going to be young and strong enough to take revenge. When the foam flows and comes ,Yusuf' s son drinks the foam before his father. Yusuf feels sorry when he has learned it but, on the other hand, he feels happy because he has a brave son to take revenge instead of himself. The magical foam provides Rushen Ali with power of endless life, bravery, and poetry . After a while, Yusuf bequeathes taking revenge to his son and dies. People call him Koroğlu. (The son of blind man) He builds a fortress in Çamlıbel Region the opposite the city of Bolu.He and a group of people defeat The Ruler's soldiers .After a few years, he destroys the city of Bolu.Then the sister of Ruler of Bolu falls in love with Koroğlu.He falls in love with her ,too.After long struggles,they get married. The Ruler of Bolu also fights with him and some days he catches Koroğlu and his son and he throws them into dungeon. But Koroğlu and his men are rescued by their skills and courage all the time.

Koroğlu also campaigns in Georgia and China. He finds himself in various adventures. Koroğlu always helps the poor. He spends his life helping people in need. After a while, gun is discovered and courage disappears. Koroğlu cannot see the soul of bravery, and courage in the world anymore. His horse Kirat (white horse) which serves him for years disappears and he also goes away to unknown place and The Epic of Koroğlu Legend comes to an end.

Vocabulary

Courage: Cesaret.*Bravery: Yiğitlik.*Brave: Yiğit.*Colt: Tay.*Ruler: Bey,yönetici.Region: Bölge*The City of Bolu: Bolu Şehri*.Horse breeding: Atçılık*Purchase: Satın almak.*Groom: Seyis*.Blind: Kör.*Dismiss: Kovmak.*To take revenge: İntikam almak.*Nomadic family: Oba.*Nomad tent: Oba çadırı.*Jump over: Sıçramak.*Deer: Geyik.*Capability: Yetenek.*Strategic wars: Stratejik savaşlar.*Legend: Efsane.*Grow up: Büyümek.*Saint: Veli, aziz.*Destroy: Yıkmak.Defeat: Yenmek.*Fortress: Kale.*Endless life: Sonsuz hayat.*Provide someone with something: Birine bir şey sağlamak.*Foam: Köpük*.River: Nehir.*Disappear: Gözden kaybolmak.*.Georgia: Gürcistan.*China: Çin.*Poetry: Şairlik.*Gun: Silah.*Rob: Soymak.* Soyun yapmak.*Tax: Vergi.*Caravan: Kervan.*Invent: İcat etmek.*Various adventures: Çeşitli maceralar.*After a while: Bir süre sonra.*Get married: Evlenmek.*Dungeon: Zindan*.Bequeath: Vasiyet etmek.*Campaign: Sefere çıkmak.*White horse: Kirat ,beyaz at.*Set out a journey: Bir yolculuğa çıkmak.*Magical:Sihirli.Anymore:Artık .He does not repair it,anymore(O artık onu tamir etmez.)*Help people in need:İhtiyaç halindeki kişilere yardım etmek.*

The Azeri Version : Chodzoko's Kuroğlu-Nama

The first compilation of stories about this semi-historical character was recorded in Azerbaijan in the mid-nineteenth century by Alexander Chodzko. Chodzko's English translation of the Persian and Azeri Turkish original, and also S. S. Penn's Russian translation of Chodzko's English translation, have been important contributions in the study of Koroglu; they are regarded as representing the basic Azerbaijani version. Chodzko was a scholar of Persian, working as an interpreter at the Russian consulate in Tabriz; he was the author of a Persian grammar, a book on Gilan, and other works. He is said to have known Turkish very well, having lived among the Turks of the Caspian region for eleven years, and he certainly had an avid interest in their oral literature (RA'IS-NIYA 1988, 305-306).⁸ But for some reason, he preferred to do his translation from Persian; in the original manuscript, only Koroglu's songs are in Azeri Turkish.⁹ Given the starkness of the prose portions in Persian, one can understand why Chodzko felt a need to reconstruct the story a bit when doing his English translation, but in so doing he managed to distort the image of the rough bandit

significantly. Not only did Chodzko conform to the nineteenth-century trend toward glorifying the heroic past when dealing with folklore,¹⁰ but it is also clear from his introduction that he had the heroes of the *Shahnama* in mind when doing the translation, though he does not equate the two works in terms of quality (CHODZKO 1842, 4—6). The result is that sometimes Koroglu's words (and even his deeds) appear much nobler than would be appropriate for a crude outlaw. Koroglu here is closer to the bawdy Rostam of 'Obayd-e Zakani's *Ahlaq al-Aşraf* than to any hero of the *Shahnama* (cf. Sprachman 1995, 58, 60).

So the romanticization and Persianization of Koroglu's character had an idea for us in this very first translation of the stories. Here is just one brief example of Chodzko's tendency towards embellishment and exaggeration: During Koroglu's encounter with the ruler who blinded his father, the ruler notices Koroglu's horse. In his English translation, Chodzko writes that the prince was "captivated by the uncommon beauty of the horse, as well as by the noble appearance of the rider..." while the original says simply: "The shah's eye fell upon the horse" (*çaşm-e şah bar asb oftad*). Chodzko's translation also includes some outright errors that serve to exaggerate Koroglu's greatness: e.g., at one point he renders *beg* ("lord, master") as "god," presumably lapsing for a moment into his native Polish, where *bog* means "god" (Chodzko 1842, 22-27; SADEQ 1842, 4-6).

The Tajik Version

This brings us to the third version we wish to consider, the Tajik *Gurogli*. In the most recently published Tajik version, based on the narrations of three *Gurogli-xwans* (reciters or *Gurogli* tales), there is no separate episode devoted to the encounter with the *bezirgan*. Merchants do indeed appear in the stories, sometimes as visitors to the court of *Gurogli Sultan* (as he is called) in the mythical kingdom or *Çambul-i Maston*. One visitor with evil intentions even tries to gain admittance to *Çambul-i Maston* disguised as a *bezirgan*, which would be a very unwise way to approach the bandit of the Azeri version. *Gurogli* here is indeed a sultan, so much so that he hardly does any of the fighting himself. He is much more involved with *bazm* (feasting) than with *razm* (fighting); he does still *sine*, but he has become more of a *Key Kavus* than a *Rostam*. He rules his kingdom with wisdom and justice, assuring protection from foreign invaders, sitting enthroned while his adopted son *Avaz* (who appears in all versions, though not so prominently) rides out like a knight to deal with challengers to *Gurogn's* power. The stories continue with the adventures of the descendants of *Gurogli* and his original followers, and so the cycle goes on.

Researchers differ in their views of the Tajik version of *Gurogli*. Some see it as the result of Uzbek influence (CEJPEK 1968, 630), others claim it to be a unique national creation with little relation to other versions (CHADWICK and ZHIRMUNSKY 1969, 285).¹¹ I would suggest that, in the creation of the Tajik version, the Uzbek influence hardly goes beyond providing the characters' names; it is much less important than the powerful influence of the Persian epic tradition in the region. This affected the form as well as the content of the *destan*. While most Turkic versions are in prose with only Koroglu's songs in verse, the *lajiK* versions (alike in Tajikistan and northern Afghanistan) are entirely in verse, as is preferred in Persian epics. They are, however, not in *motaqareb* or any other classical meter; nor are they in any regular syllabic meter, though some scholars prefer to think of it as syllabic.¹² So far no one seems to understand the unique meter of the Tajik *Gurogli* or its provenance, though several suggestions have been put forth.¹³ In Tajikistan the *Gurogli* stories are also recited in a manner similar to that used in some *Shahnama* performances— a solo performer singing in a roughened voice and accompanying himself on a stringed instrument.

The Tajik *Gurogli* was not scientifically studied or published until the 1930s, although the story is thought to have existed among the Tajiks since the second half of the eighteenth

century (BEÇKA 1989, 380). It is interesting to note that even in the Soviet era the feudal setting of the story was retained. Çambul-i Maston is not a state run by the workers, but rather conforms to the Iranian ideal of a just ruler in an orderly society with happy, contented subjects and strong, loyal warriors. The common people do sometimes help in repelling the enemies of the land, but hints of aristocratic bias are also apparent. For instance, Avaz, Gurogli's adopted son, is the natural son of a butcher in this as in almost all other versions; but only in the Tajik version is his lowly ancestry a cause for occasional jeering.¹⁴

So the story of Koroglu, which in its eastward progress had lost some of its heroic features, gained a fresh infusion of epic elements from the Persian tradition in the Tajik version. This is not surprising in a region where the *Shahnama* tradition was so firmly entrenched that even the common people expected a courtly cast of characters in a heroic tale. This is not to imply, of course, that the *Shahnama* has no influence in Azerbaijan. But Azerbaijan was the scene for at least some of the historical events upon which the *destan* is most probably based, and it was there that the legend of the bandit Koroglu took root very early and lasted until the present day. In Azerbaijan the bandit could not easily become a king. In Central Asia, far from its point of origin and having undergone transformations in the transmission process, the *destan* was ready to accept a royal hero.

The Turkmen Version

It is generally accepted that the Azeri version, the basic western version of the *destan*, has influenced to some degree all other present versions, and that it traveled mainly eastward from the south Caucasus region.¹⁵ It is only logical to assume that the Turkmen played an important role in this eastward movement of the *destan*. The Turkmen being a partly migratory population with a presence on all shores of the Caspian Sea and into Central Asia, stories of Koroglu could have accompanied them on their comings and goings, which would have been a much more rapid and effective means of spreading the story over a wide area than if it were being carried by only a few wandering minstrels (BARTHOLD 1934). Furthermore, Koroglu himself is acknowledged in most versions (both eastern and western) to have been a Turkmen of the Teke tribe, though the *destan* is not confined to the Teke tribe alone.

The Turkmen version of the *destan* does indeed include several features that can be considered transitional between the western and eastern groups. It is written in a western Turkic language (Turkmen being of the Oguz group, together with Azeri and Ottoman), but in many other respects it resembles the versions of the eastern group. As in most eastern versions, the hero's name is Gorogli, "son of the grave" (Persian: gur, "grave"), as he was miraculously born after his pregnant mother's burial. But in this Turkmen version, the meaning of "blind man's son" is also retained, as the hero's grandfather (Cigaly Beg, who in some variants is his father) has been rendered blind by some injustice. Both meanings of the hero's name have given rise to theories about the origins of the *destan*, as one or the other of these motifs (i.e., either blinding over a horse dispute or miraculous birth in the grave) occurs in numerous earlier legends within the *destan*'s area of distribution. There are, for instance, Armenian and Georgian legends about sons of blinded fathers rising up to avenge this injustice; some of these even involve disputes over horses (RA'IS-NIYA 1988, 104). Some researchers contend that Gorogli is the original form of the hero's name, and that the *destan* was brought from Central Asia to the Middle East and was later simply enriched by the incorporation of the stories of Koroglu the bandit (KARRYEV 1982, 76—77).¹⁶ Whether or not this argument has any validity, it is very probable that the Koroglu *destan* in its present forms represents the conflation of several different characters and the incorporation of motifs from several different legends.

But the most important feature of the Turkmen version for our purposes is the change in the hero's occupation. Gorogli is no longer an outlaw living on the fringes of society, but the

chieftain of his people. In this Turkmen tribal setting, however, his high station does not prevent Gorogli from robbing caravans, conducting raids on enemies, and personally engaging in fierce combat (MEMMEDYAZOV 1982, 29—30, 34—35).¹⁷ He still sings his poetry, as in the Azeri version, and is more or less comparable to the Arab hero ‘Antar, a physically powerful tribal warrior famous for his poetic abilities (SUMER 1987).¹⁸ Gorogli can be both the ruler of his own people and the robber of others.

This dual aspect of the Turkmen Gorogli’s occupation, in my opinion, marks an important turning point in the development of the *destan*. As has been said, the distinction between Koroglu the bandit and Gorogli the ruler has been a basic criterion in categorizing the versions, but the distinction is, to some extent, a false one: any bandit with sufficient power may be in effect a ruler; and a ruler with sufficient power may behave like a bandit if he so chooses. Gorogli’s role as chieftain and the tribal setting in which that role occurs make it clear that power is the crucial element, and what form it takes is rather secondary. In any case, the Turkmen version represents an important step in transforming the rough bandit Koroglu into a kingly character.

It is also in the Turkmen version that the beginnings of a genealogy of Gorogli appear. His father and grandfather were tribal leaders before him, so his legitimacy is established, paving the way for an Iranian-type hero-king in versions farther east, and also initiating a biography for the hero, which is a first step in the cyclization of a *destan* (RYPKA 1968, 162-66). The supernatural element is also much increased here, which may be seen as a sign of the disintegration of the heroic-epical texture of the *destan* and the beginning of its transformation into a folk romance.¹⁹ In the Azeri version this supernatural element was almost totally absent, but in the Turkmen version Gorogli marries fairies, for example, instead of princesses, and he has powerful allies such as ‘Ali, Khezr Elyas, the Forty Pirs, etc. He sometimes can hardly manage a simple kidnapping without assistance from some *deus ex machina*, whereas the Azeri bandit Koroglu is quite earthly and self-sufficient.

A brief comparison of one episode that occurs in both of these versions— and, in fact, in almost all other versions as well—will help illustrate these differences. Koroglu has an encounter with a powerful and wealthy *bezirgan* (merchant); the two men struggle for a long while, the *bezirgan* being Koroglu’s equal in strength; finally the *bezirgan* defeats Koroglu and sends him away. However, a little later the angry Koroglu returns quietly, and kills the *bezirgan* with an arrow in the back. In the Azeri version, that’s about all there is to the story, except that after killing the *bezirgan*, Koroglu also strips him naked and is pleased to discover that this capable fighter was not a Muslim, but an Armenian. The Azeri Koroglu being a fervent Shi‘i, he would not want to admit that a despised Sunni could have been such a worthy opponent. Koroglu takes the merchant’s possessions and leaves, feeling no compunction whatsoever about having killed him in a cowardly manner.

In the Turkmen version, Gorogli’s wife, Aga Yunus Peri (a fairy), challenges him in the presence of others to ride out to collect the toll from the mighty *bezirgan*. Thus, it is a matter of honor as well as profit to deal with this merchant. Again, the two men fight, but then they agree to be brothers. On his way home, Gorogli meets a *kampir* (an old sorceress) who tells him that the *bezirgan* will come and plunder Gorogli’s household if left alive. The superstitious Gorogli believes this and returns and kills the *bezirgan* with an arrow in the back. Before dying, the *bezirgan* asks Gorogli (who has apologized) to look after his younger sister, Aysultan, and the remorseful Gorogli agrees. Feeling very guilty, he builds a commemorative dome over the *bezirgan*’s grave. When the lovely Aysultan hears of her brother’s death and appears on the scene dressed as a warrior to avenge him, Gorogli shows her the memorial dome, admits his crime, and offers her his dagger as her weapon of revenge. She pardons Gorogli and ultimately marries one of his heroes. The story ends with a great wedding feast being held in their honor.

So in the Turkmen version Gorogli is no longer an irreverent bandit operating as a free agent. He takes matters of honor seriously and acknowledges and fulfills his responsibilities, acting more like a ruler than a mere robber. Though the tribal setting is the reason for this feature of the hero's character, and not any direct influence of the Persian epic tradition, the Turkmen Gorogli still can be said to have facilitated the further development of the Persianate courtly hero from the Turkic popular hero. The supernatural elements, the genealogy, and the neat completeness of the story— even ending as it does with a wedding in the usual manner of folk tales— are typical changes in the later stages of folk destans.

Now we can see today to Turkmen's have can live Koroglu. There are an informations about Turkmen's music it is about our subject too.

EPIC SINGING KOROGLU



The history of Turkmen music is closely linked with the narration of heroic epics. The ritual recitation of epics, also known as dastan, the Persian term, was the foundation and main means of transmission of the Turkmen cultural heritage in the broad sense for several centuries.

In the oral tradition of the Turkic-speaking peoples, the narration of epics of various kinds (their names differing according to the ethnic group - olonkho among the Yakuts, kal chorchdk among the Altaic people, for example) appeared at a time when their tribal organization of society was disappearing. For this reason many Turkic dastan are, in fact, collective productions which, for the generations to come, conveyed behavioural patterns, elements of real life, customs and beliefs of shamanism, the cult of the Heavens and the Earth and of a multitude of guardian spirits and host spirits.

The structural pattern of a popular Turkmen dastan consists of prosaic narrative interspersed with numerous songs in verse form, usually monologues or dialogues, which recount stories marked by strong emotional content or tension. The repertory of songs, originally a collection of ancient ritual and folk songs, was enriched over the years by the creative works of renowned poets and by the original contributions of the dastan performers, the bakahi.

In Turkmenistan, the tradition of dastan recitation has survived mainly around Tashauz and in the Yolatan region (Merv province in south-eastern Turkmenistan). The northern and southern styles of dastan recitation differ markedly. In Tashauz, two instruments are essential : the

customary dutar and the ghschak In Yolatan the bakahi sing to the accompaniment of one or two dutar Tashaur performances, where many features of the ritual narration of myths can be found, also include theatrical aspects (mimicry, gesture, change of place to illustrate the plot, and so on) which are not present in Yolatan performances.

Northern and southern daxtan recitations differ, moreover, from the standpoint of their repertoires : whereas more recent productions, mainly of a religious kind, are common in Yolatan, in Tashaur numerous narratives are recited, the most popular being the celebrated Kbroglu tale, the earliest Turkic heroic epic that has survived.

The main character in the Korogly epic is a legendary hero - evolving with the passage of time - who defends his clan or tribe against all danger. The historical background of the epic reflects the themes of popular insurrections and aggressive or defensive wars at the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries. But the hero used to bring their stories up to date and this accounts for the description of later events in the songs, especially the struggle of Turkic tribes against the expansion of foreign powers along their frontiers, such as the Khiva Khanate, the Ottoman Empire, Arab feudal lords and others.

But the hero of the epic himself has preserved many traits of pre-Muslim figures (the martyr) revealed in the weapon he carries He is clad in armour of an unusual kind. He carries a magic sword and a bow that he alone can string He is accompanied by Kyr At the winged horse, who understands human speech and without whose help Kbroglu's famous exploits would never have come to pass. Koroglu is also under the protection of the ubiquitous eren, mysterious beings of ancient lineage, and of all kinds of shamanist spirits whose actions are in keeping with those of the Prophet, his son-in-law Ali, who is the patron of knights, and other Muslim saints.

Kbroglu's exploits are strongly reminiscent of the story of a legendary hero and also reflect the life of a great shaman Kbroglu's birth is accompanied by extraordinary events. His youth is spent away from home, on the steppes, where, guided by an experienced master of horsemanship, he becomes an accomplished knight and rider. In love with a virgin he has seen in a dream, Kbroglu embarks upon a long voyage, his road (Yol), which finally leads him to the ideal of his dream in an enchanted land.

The Turkmen version of the Kbroglu tale consists of 13 chapters called (shaha means branch or twig):

1. Koroglynyng dorejshi(Koroglu's birth)
2. Koroglynyng ojlenishi(Koroglu's wedding)
3. Arapdan at alysh (Revenge on the Arabs)
4. Ovez getiren (The adoption of Ovez)
5. Ovezing halas edilishi (The liberation of Ovez)
6. Ovez oylenen (The wedding of Ovez)
7. Arap-Reyhan
8. Kyrk mungler(Forty thousand)
9. Ovez Oykelan (The accident to Ovez)
10. Kempir(Old woman)
11. Harman Dali
12. Bezirgen
13. Koroglu's death

No bakhshi, present or past, has known the entire text of the Koroglu epic. Their repertory contained one, two or, at most, three or four shaha. One brilliant exception was Palvan-bakhshi (1890-1939) from Tashauz who performed all the shaha except the final one. The performance of this final shaha has always been strictly banned and is to this day death, symbolized by black, is a sign of impurity and is associated with the spirits of the underworld with which no bakhshi may enter into contact. The ninth chapter of the Koroglu epic, whose subject is Turkmen reverses, is hardly ever performed in Turkmenistan.

The most complete version is very probably the one that Palvan-bakhshi noted in 1937. It was published, with a Russian translation, in 1983 (BA. Karryev, ed. koroglu, Nauka, Moscow, 1983). It includes 209 songs, most of which enjoy considerable popularity in Turkmenistan.

Most of the songs included in this disc are performed by the "collectors", the bakhshi-tirmechi. They do not recite the dastan, but, in performances which may last for a number of hours, they sing pieces from the different dastan and classical Turkmen poems.

And there is a news about the epic of Koroglu : "The epic of Koroglu will meet the audiences in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Turkey and Azerbaijan"

The Joint Administration of Turkic Arts and Culture (TURKSOY) is an international organization that works to increase and strengthen the cultural relations between Turkic states and communities. The organization, which was established in 1993, has 14 members. Enhancing the coordination between the member states, TURKSOY arranges artistic and cultural activities participated by multiple parties. Annually celebrated Nevruz Fest, TURKSOY Painters' Meeting, Opera Days, Scientific meetings and publications are among the activities of TURKSOY.

Within the scope of 15th year activities, TURKSOY is preparing to put on the stage "Köroğlu Opera" by the famous Azerbaijani composer Uzeyir Hacibeyoglu with the contribution of the outstanding artists of the member states. In the capital of Kirgizstan, Bishkek, more than 250 artists are currently practicing. Presentations will be put on the stage in Bishkek on September 9, 2009; in Almati September 12, 2009; in Ankara September 15, 2009 and in Baku on September 18, 2009.

Organization of the Islamic Conference pronounced the capital of Azerbaijan, Baku, as the Capital of Islamic Culture in 2009. The President of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev, will attend the presentation that will be performed in Baku on September 18, 2009. Baku performance of Köroğlu Opera is included to the activities of Capital of Islamic Culture.

The fact that a mix of artists performs Köroğlu Opera by the Azerbaijani composer Uzeyir Hacibeyoglu, who is the first opera composer of the Islamic world, will immensely contribute to the intercultural dialogue besides developing the cultural ties between the member states of TURKSOY and promotion of Turkic culture and opera.



NOTES

1. Regarding the term *destan* (Persian, *dastan*)-. While *destan* is often translated as “epic,” both “epic and *destan* are really very imprecise terms and are not exact equivalents. The question of what constitutes an epic has been debated since the time of Aristotle, and the many versions of the *Koroglu* story vary in how well they fit the suggested criteria. Also, *destans* can be of many types; see, for example, the table of contents of Zabihollah SAFA’ s study of the Iranian epic (1955), where many subtypes of *dastan* are listed. Pertev Naili BORATAV, the pioneer in the study of *Koroglu*, vacillates in his many writings over the years (1931, 1939, 1943, 1955, 1964) as to whether or not *Koroglu* qualifies as a *destan* and whether or not a *destan* is an epic. In the present paper, although *destan* can be loosely translated as “folk epic or “popular oral heroic tale, ” I have chosen to retain the native term for this genre for the reasons given by Karl REICHL in his *Turkic Oral Epic Poetry* (1992): many subgenres of *destan* are possible, and the native term differentiates *destan* most clearly from other types of tales (*masal*, *hikaye*). Thus *destan* is as inclusive and as exclusive as it needs to be, while “epic” is not specific enough.

2. The question of the origin of the *Koroglu destan* is still far from settled. Although the historical evidence is inconclusive, the scanty facts that do exist have become the basis for rival claims to national possession of the *Koroglu destan*, the most plausible of them being made by Anatolian Turks, Azeris, and the Turkmen. In short, the situation is this: the best-documented prototype for the hero is the bandit from northwest Anatolia (SUMER 1987); the earliest recordings of the *destan* are all from the Caucasus, primarily Azerbaijan (BORATAV 1931,21; CHODZKO 1842; TAHMASIP 1969; EVLIYEVA 1990; and many others); and the hero in many versions is said to have been a Teke Turkmen. Thus, Anatolian Turks point to the Bolu region as the birthplace of *Koroglu*, while others point out that there were many Turkmen living in the Bolu region at the time (MEMMEDYAZOV 1982, 38-39, describing the viewpoint of Azeri folklorist X. G. *Koroglu*); and a major Azeri folklorist (Tahmasip), while conceding that the *destan* may have originated among the Turkmen in the Caucasus, insists that these Turkmen spoke Azeri and practiced *Sm* ism at the time the *destan* arose (RA’IS-NIYA 1988, 107). A few scholars still insist that the *destan* arose in Central Asia and traveled west from there (YILDIRIM 1983), a view once very popular with pan-Turkists, but now largely discarded by folklorists (MEMMEDYAZOV 1984, 25).

3. HOLT (1982, 10–11) discusses how even Robin Hood does not fit the mold of the idealized sort of bandit envisioned by HOBBSAWM (1969) and others who subscribe to the idea of “noble banditry.” *Koroglu* does not conform to this notion any better than other real-life bandits do (BLOK 1972). *Koroglu*’s later idealization is the result of a process involving romanticism, nationalism, and various political currents in the areas where the story is known. An especially strong criticism of the Turkish idealization of *Koroglu* can be found in KAPLAN 1985, 101-11.

4. *Celali* (i.e., *Jalali*) refers originally to the followers of one Shaykh Jalal, who led a rebellion against the state in 1519. Although this rebellion was effectively put down, the term was later applied to members of any group that caused trouble for the state, and it continued to be used throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

5. Bolu: The GREEN FACE of the WESTERN BLACK SEA REGION
With more than half of its territory covered by forests, Bolu is the green face of the Western Black Sea Region. Thanks to the many species of trees including beech, hornbeam, oak, alder,

poplar and fir, it reflects different colors in each season. Its territory formed by mountains, lakes and plains, have been carrying Bolu into thousands of photographs for years. Tourist movements that are observed during all seasons peak in the winter months in particular. The history of the province, that had begun in about 1200 BC, with the Phrygians, includes traces of the Persian, Bithynian, Roman, Seljuk and Ottoman civilizations. In the 6th century BC, Bolu was included in the territory of Macedonia when Alexander the Great conquered Anatolia by defeating the Persians. After the death of Alexander the Great, his disintegrated empire was replaced by the Kingdom of Bithynia, the present-day center of Bolu was called “Bithynia”, and the Bolu Plain was called “Salonia Campus”. Therefore, Romans changed the name of the city to “Claudio Polis”. According to historians, the present-day name “Bolu” should have been derived from the word “polis”. The territory of Bolu was conquered by Aslahaddin of Horasan in the Seljuk period that had started after 1071, and the first sultan who initiated the Ottoman raids was Osman I. After witnessing many wars between princes in the period of the Ottoman Empire and gaining importance as a sanjak (administrative division) led by Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent when he was a prince (şehzade), Bolu became a province in the Republican Era of the new Turkey.

6. Again, Dursun Yildinm is in disagreement with many others on this issue. He finds it hard to reconcile the personalities of the hero and the folk poet.

7. Here Boratav quotes an unpublished work by Ahmet Zeki Velidi, *Türk Tarihi Dersleri* (Lessons in Turkish history). Also, Rahim RA'IS-NIYA (1988, 152), cites a sixteenth-century Persian-language history that mentions this chieftain: Ahsan al-Tavarix by Hasan Bey Rumlu.

8. For further information on Chodzko, see also Jean CALMARD 1983, 502–504.

9. Some indications in the manuscript of the Kurogli-nama lead me to believe that Chodzko's Turkish was not very good. There are interlinear translations of the Turkish songs, and also numerous glosses of Turkish words into Persian, French, or Chodzko's native Polish.

10. FINNEGAN 1979, 31–41, contains a good discussion of the shortcomings of the romantic and evolutionist theories of oral poetry.

11. See also BERDIEVA 1991, 330. The Tajik author of this article sounds just as possessive of the Gurogli dastan as any Turkic scholar: “Some of the people of Zarafson and Fargona regard Gurugli as belonging to the Turks, some of the people of Xatlon ascribe the sasmaqom 316 JUDITH M. WILKS [classical musical modes] to the Uzbeks, whereas both of these belong to our nation, both sasmaqom and Gurugli.”

12. Those who regard the Tajik Gurogli as syllabic include CEJPEK (1968, 634); BRAGINSKII et al. (1987, 44); ASRORĪ and AMANOV (1980, 260); Beliaev, as cited in REİCHL (1992, 327); and HİSOMOV 1980.

13. See BRAGINSKII et al., 1987, 43–44. CEJPEK (1968, 634), however, sees the entirely versified forms of the lajik Gurogli as evidence of the Persian preference for metrical epics. A preference for end-rhymes in the lajik version has been noted by several scholars, e.g., BRAGINSKII et al. (1987, 44) and ASRORĪ and AMANOV (1980, 260). Stress patterns have also been suggested as a clue, with musical accompaniment being a crucial element, and a possible relationship to pre-Islamic Persian epic verse meters has been discussed. Such meters may have been a step in the development of the Persian epic meter motaqareb (BRAGINSKII et al., 1987, 44). Gilbert LAZARD (1994, 82, 86) has suggested something similar regarding the oral epic verse forms of the Baluch. On the other hand, arguing against a Persian source for this unusual meter, Walter Feldman has pointed out (in a personal communication) that some of the most archaic Turkic epic works (Dede Korkut or the South Siberian epics) also employ uneven syllabic verse, and the lajik meter also bears

some resemblance to the zir form from Uzbekistan, so the influence need not be from the Persian epic tradition.

14. I was told by Walter Feldman in a personal communication that this jeering also occurs in some Uzbek versions.

15. The dissenting opinions are discussed in note number 2 above.

16. See also Braginskii quoted in KARRYEV (1982,76). Dursun YILDIRIM (1983,113) doubts that the bandit and the khan could have developed from the same character. He contends that the eastern and western versions arose side by side.

17. Memmedyazov comments here on the prevalence of tribal features in the Turkmen version. HOBBSAWM (1969,14) also has some interesting observations on the different perspectives on banditry that exist in tribal societies.

18. Faruk SUMER (1987,notes) mentions that, among the forces fighting in Syria during World War I, the Arabs sang songs of Antar, while the Turkmen sang songs of Koroglu.

19. This is similar to the process described by HANAWAY (1978, 91–93), where he discusses the later transformations of Shahnama stories into romances. A similar case is described by J. A. ROSS (1980, 90) in discussing Old French chansons de geste.

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