

MOTIVES COMMON TO TURKIC PEOPLE IN KAZAKH TOPONYMIC LEGENDS*

Kazak Toponimlik Efsanelerinde Türk Halklarının Ortak Motifleri

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ABSTRACT

Toponymic legends, a subcategory of the legend genre in field of folklore, are valuable cultural heritage that reflect the cultural and historical significance of a place and are associated with the beliefs and stories of local people. Toponymic legends are stories hidden in the depths of place names. These legends shed light on the history and cultural context of the places they are named after. Serving as a reflection of a place's essence, toponymic legends nourish the fabric of geography, revealing the uniqueness of a region. Like an archaeologist carrying the traces of history, they provide us with an unparalleled window to unravel the secrets of the past and understand the roots of local culture. However, this subcategory has not been sufficiently studied within the discipline of folklore. However, the study of toponymic legends contributes to the preservation and valorization of cultural heritage by providing scientific data in cultural, historical, linguistic, geographical and ecological fields. Moreover, the interrelationship between similar legends in different regions is an important means of comprehensively assessing the culture of a nation. This relationship sheds light on the internal harmony, national unity and historical depth of a specific nation's traditional culture. The aim of the study is to provide a holistic perspective on Turkish culture through two toponymic legend texts from Kazakh Turks. The legends of "Kız Kulesi" (Maiden's Tower) and "Kırk Kız" (Forty Maidens) exist among both Kazakh Turks and other Turkish communities in the research sample. Both legends belong to the categorical subcategory of toponymic legends. When examined in terms of their motifs and narrative patterns, along with their texts, variants, and historical background, they show significant similarities. Furthermore, when the elements that constitute the narrative are analyzed and interpreted from the perspective of Turkish culture, it is determined that they possess intra-cultural consistency. The fact that Turkic communities, which have interacted with distant and different cultures, share the same legends with almost identical motifs, indicates the preservation of cultural unity. "Kırk Kız" and "Kız Kulesi" legends shed historical light on Turkish culture within the toponymic category. These legends, with their rich motifs and narrative elements, provide insights into the cultural heritage and historical background of the Turkish people. They serve as important cultural symbols, reflecting the deep-rooted traditions, beliefs, and values of the Turkish culture. Through the exploration of these legends, one can gain a deeper understanding of the historical, social, and cultural dynamics that have shaped the Turkish identity over time.

Anahtar Kelimeler

Folklore, worldview, toponymic legends, common motifs, Turkish spirit.

ÖZ

Halkbilimi alanında efsane türünün bir alt kategorisi olan toponimik efsaneler, bir yerin kültürel ve tarihsel önemini yansıtan, yerel halkın inançları ve hikâyeleriyle ilişkilendirilen değerli kültürel miraslardır. Toponimik efsaneler, yer adlarının derinliklerinde saklı hikâyelerdir. Bu efsaneler, isimlerini aldıkları yerlerin tarihine ve kültürel bağlamına ışık tutar. Bir yerin özünün yansıması olan yer adı efsaneleri, coğrafyanın

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dokusunu besleyerek bir bölgenin benzersizliğini ortaya çıkarır. Tarihin izlerini taşıyan bir arkeolog gibi, geçmişin sırlarını çözmek ve yerel kültürün köklerini anlamak için bize benzersiz bir pencere açarlar, fakat folklor disiplini içinde bu alt kategori yeterince çalışılmamıştır. Oysa, toponimik efsanelerin araştırılması; kültürel, tarihsel, dilbilimsel, coğrafi ve ekolojik alanlarda bilimsel verilerin sunulmasıyla birlikte kültürel mirasın korunmasına ve değerlendirilmesine katkı sağlayacaktır. Ayrıca, farklı bölgelerdeki benzer efsanelerin karşılıklı ilişkisini ve bir milletin kültürünü bütünsel bir şekilde değerlendirmek için önemli bir araçtır. Bu ilişki; iç uyumu, ulusal birliği ve tarihsel derinliği yansıtarak milletin millî kültürünü aydınlatmaktadır. Çalışmanın amacı, Kazak Türklerinden alınan iki toponimik efsane metni vasıtasıyla Türk kültürüne bütüncül bir bakış açısı geliştirmektir. Araştırmanın örnekleminde bulunan “Kız Kulesi” ve “Kırk Kız” efsaneleri hem Kazak Türkleri hem de diğer Türk halkları arasında mevcuttur. Her iki efsane, kategorik olarak toponimik alt kategorisine aittir. Metinler, varyantları ve tarihî arka planıyla birlikte ele alındığında içerdiği motifler ve anlatı modeli bakımından önemli ölçüde benzerlik göstermektedir. Bununla beraber anlatıyı oluşturan öğeler, Türk kültürü açısından incelenip yorumlandığında kültür içi tutarlılığa sahip olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Birbirinden uzak ve farklı kültürlerle etkileşime geçmiş Türk halklarının aynı efsanelere neredeyse aynı motiflerle sahip olması kültürel birliğin korunduğuna işaret etmektedir. “Kırk Kız” ve “Kız Kulesi” efsaneleri, toponimik kategoride Türk kültürüne tarihsel bir ışık tutuyor. Bu efsaneler, zengin motifleri ve anlatı öğeleriyle Türk halkının kültürel mirasını ve tarihsel arka planını yansıtıyor. Türk kültürünün derin köklü geleneklerini, inançlarını ve değerlerini önemli kültürel semboller olarak temsil ediyor. Bu efsanelerin ortaya konmasıyla zaman içinde Türk kimliğini şekillendiren tarihsel, sosyal ve kültürel dinamiklerin derinliğine anlaşılması sağlanabilir.

Keywords

Folklor, dünya görüşü, toponimik efsaneler, ortak motifler, Türklük ruhu.

Introduction

Each nation's language and folklore show its worldview, peace and nature, virtues and behavior. Language is a storehouse of human material and spiritual culture. The most important thing is the supplier to the next generation. This is a cumulative property of language. One of the next main functions of language is to recognize people as individuals, representatives of a certain people, or nation. Because culture, traditions and customs, way of life and experience of each people reach other people through language. It is natural for every person to have peculiarities in his outlook on the world. It is not so far from the national character. Because the national outlook of any nation is an indicator of the behavior, attitudes, and views of the representatives of that nation and their mentality. And mentality, that is, the national mentality, is the formed spiritual attitude, the behavior of a particular nation.

Common motifs in Kazakh toponymic legends are created by national thinking and consciousness. Their basis is the common world view of the Turkic peoples. Many things are reflected in the toponymic legends: Where and when our ancestors settled, what historical events and personalities lived there, the basic way of life and the socio-political situation. Since ancient times, the Turkic peoples have been intertwined with nature and have mastered its secrets. They have used land, water, mountains, stones, etc., named after their main characteristics and qualities. The most important thing is that each of them has left legends about the history of his name. Such legends reflect people's experience of life, their attitude to society, the environment, nature and its riches, and life itself. Such historical-cognitive, i.e., world-view function of toponymic legends is one of the current issues in folklore and linguistics that requires research. Of course, we cannot say that legends, including toponymic legends, have not been studied in the science of folklore. They have been studied, but in many studies, attention was paid only to the problem of determining the genre, thematic, and stylistic features of legends based on place names.

The aim of the study is to analyze the common motifs of the Turkic worldview in toponymic legends, which have been neglected in previous studies. For this purpose, the

texts of the Legend of the Forty Girls and the Legend of the Maiden's Tower were used in this study. In this way, mutual connection and unity in the thought of Turkic peoples will be established. Because, regardless of the differences in state, region and settlement, the meeting of toponymic legends of various Turkish peoples (Kazakh, Turkish, Azeri, Kyrgyz, Uzbek, Bashkir, etc.) shows that we can justify the problem of national worldview only by looking at the national heritage as a whole.

Collection and study

Toponomic legends are a sub-heading of the legend genre, and the compilation of texts took place in a mixed manner in the early period. Many local and foreign names have contributed to the compilation of the legends of the Turkic world. Names such as Valikhanov, Divaev,¹ Radlov, Potanin (1916) recorded many narratives in the 19th and 20th centuries. In addition, the texts published in printed media, especially in the newspapers "Turkestanские Ведомости"² and "Dala Ulayaty", have made significant contributions to the compilation. In the Anatolian field, names such as Ögel (1993), İnan (1987a; 1986b), Elçin (1986), Sakaoğlu (1989), Bayatlı (1941), Orkun (1943), Ergun (1997) have contributed with very important researches on legends.

Kazakh scientists Alkei Margulan, Abubakir Divaev, Auelbek Konyratbaev, Pakhmankul Berdibay, Seyit Kasqabasov, Shakir İbraev, Ermek Tursynov, Berik Rahimov, and others participated in the study of toponymic legends. The contributions of Gabdullin (1974), Margulan (1985), Tursynov (1976), Kaskabasov (1984)³ to the legend category are extremely important. Considering that all these works were carried out despite the pressures of the Soviet regime, their importance will become more understandable. The Republic of Kazakhstan, after gaining independence, published a comprehensive folklore corpus consisting of 100 volumes, with a significant focus on legends (comprising 80-89 volumes) (Alibekov and Korabay 2011). This extensive collection serves as a testament to the vibrant nature of oral cultural expressions.

Dede Korkut legends of various Turkic peoples, including toponomic legends, have been collected and published (Tuyakbaev 2018). Among the contributors to toponomic legends are O. Zhanaidarov (2013), Tuyakbaev (2022), Yıldırım (2021), Yeşil and Ergun (2021). These studies provide the texts of the legends and include some analyses. Furthermore, within the extensive nine-volume history of Turkish literature published in Turkey, special attention is given to the legends originating from the Turkic world in the second volume (Tural 2002).

Kaskabasov (2009) emphasised the importance of looking at the folklore of Turkic peoples from a holistic perspective. B. Rakhimov states that it should become a mission to look at the folklore of Turkic peoples in a holistic way. Similar opinion was expressed by Sh. İbraev, who said that it is necessary to show the unity in the expressions of related peoples, whether distant or close (İbrayev and et.al. 2009: 111).⁴ Taimova and Begmanova (2022: 180), on the other hand, pointed out the importance of folklore studies that will show the representation of the unity of Turkic peoples. As Mamadil (2019: 118-123) has also tried, the effort to show the common culture of Turkic peoples is very important in this context. One of the basic principles of this study is to shed light on the common culture through the unity of motifs of toponomic legends belonging to different geographies.

Discussion

Toponymic legends are the artistic and spiritual treasure of our people, the most important example of oral literature. Toponomic legend is a concept used for legends that express the connection established with the geographical name in terms of their

motif structure (Elena, et al., 2015: 109). It is one of the subgenre used in the classification of legends. For example, those who have studied the legends of Kazakh Turks have generally analyzed these texts under two headings: historical and toponomic. At first glance, although it suggests a definition in the form of a text describing how a place name came into being, the toponomic legend describes the event that occurred in a place (Kenbayeva and Söylemez, 2022: 292; Yıldırım, 2012: 2104). Sometimes the concept is also considered by some researchers as a legend describing the origin of a place/space. İvanova (2021: 40), while discussing the legends in the Sverdlovsk region, recognized the texts she classified as toponomic as "...an oral story that is passed down from generation to generation and contains information about the origin of a toponym...". Gylejtdinov (2000: 12), in his classification of Tatar legends, uses the sub-title of toponomic narratives and states that they are told to explain geographical places, but some researchers consider them to be the same as historical narratives and the distinction between them is traditional. Kaskabasov, on the other hand, explained the concept of toponomic legend as follows:

(...) the name "toponymic legend" should be accepted on the traditional axis and include stories about events associated with or related to a place. In other words, toponymic legends are neither related to the fact that the origin and name of a place are connected with ancient mythical concepts or the activities of legendary ancestors, nor that they are the result of a miracle or the actions of miraculous or fantastic characters; they should be understood as stories in which a particular event is described in connection with a fact or fact or the name of a well-known historical figure (Kaskabasov 2014, 326-327)⁵

The echoes of centuries, ancient events, our people's attitude and way of life in historical times, world view and beliefs are clearly engraved in them. Unfortunately, the problem of the Turkish worldview in toponymic legends has not been the subject of special research, except for being indirectly mentioned in one or two scientific articles (Berdibay 2005: 8).⁶ The biggest problem is the widespread view that legends, and especially toponymic legends, are localised.

Of course, in science it is natural to have a one-sided view or a variety of views on the same subject. But, all the virtues of folklore can be discovered only when it is considered as a whole, together with the ethnography, world outlook and national philosophy of the people. Among them, the national outlook on the question of kinship and coexistence among related peoples must come to the fore.⁷ Therefore, the opinion that toponymic legends have only a regional character should be reconsidered. For example, the legends about the "Forty Legendary Girls" are common to the Kazakh, Karakalpak, Anatolian Turk and Kyrgyz peoples, which proves that we cannot agree with the opinion that the toponymic legends have a regional character. At the same time, the secret of this similarity is probably not only historical-typological, historical-genetic, or historical-cultural. Beliefs and ideologies influence national thinking and consciousness. And the first visible place of national thinking and consciousness is art, including the art of speech. The legends of the "Forty Legendary Girls" we are talking about also show this.

There are several legends related to "Qyryq qyz" (Forty legendary girls) in the Turkistan region of Kazakhstan. According to the legend of the Kazygurt region "In the old days of war, the enemy invaders saw 40 girls bathing in the waters of Karabau and walking carefree, and chased them away. Then the girls begged God: "Turn this enemy and us into stones before the enemy tramples my country and my land!" The girls' wish was granted, and both the enemy army and the girls turned to stone" (Kirikkiz tas musini turali anizdar).

One of them is related to one of the Tanirtau mountain ranges, Ogem: "The day has come in this region when the daughter of a rich man would become a lady and marry the boy to whom she was betrothed in her cradle. When the bridegroom arrived, the girls of the village stood before him. Suddenly the enemy attacked the land. The whole land trembled, and all the men who could hold weapons mounted their horses. However, the enemy, who had been ambushed, did not unite their heads, but cut them into pieces, covered them with blood, and slaughtered them. At that time, the girls who came out to wait for the bridegroom wept and lamented at the top: "O God, our land is in flames, our land has turned to ashes. "Now save us from the humiliation of the enemy and turn us to stone," they wailed and begged God. God granted their request and turned 40 girls to stone.

The plot of the above two Kazakh legends is very similar to the following legend from Kyrgyz folklore: "Once upon a time, forty girls went to a wedding in the Koshkara region and left the Zhumgal region. When they left the village, the sky was clear and there was not a single cloud in the mountains. The girls got dressed up because they wanted to go to the wedding. After leaving the village for a long time, they climbed to the top of the high mountains. At that moment a storm of white smoke blew from the other side and a gray fog covered the area. At that moment, forty girls put their heads together and began to protect each other. But on the deserted mountain, no matter who protected them, the mountain was filled with a terrible sound. At the top of Muzart, 39 of the forty girls turned to ice, and only the poor man's daughter, dressed in camel fur and a tattered cloak, survived".

There are a number of common motifs that are noticeable in the examples of legends. The number forty, the enemy, and the motif of turning into a stone are seen. However, the influence of the mountain cult is evident in the texts. The juxtaposition of these motifs and the mountain cult cannot be considered coincidental. In other words, each element in the narratives successfully reflects the harmony of the internal dynamics of Turkish mythology. The desire of the "forty girls" to ask God to turn them into a stone rather than fall into the hands of the enemy shows the attitude of the Turkish people towards the education of girls. Qualities such as pride, placing personal purity above everything, even life, and a sense of nobility are the result of a national worldview. In addition to reflecting the value placed on women, the immediate acceptance of prayers and the fulfillment of wishes indicates the positive status of the "forty girls" motif or, more isolated, of girls in the eyes of God. The special situation they face, namely the possibility of losing their purity by falling into enemy hands, is an important influencing factor for the fulfillment of their wishes. If the fall of the forty girls into the hands of enemies is considered together with the above-mentioned elements of national culture, it is possible to see that traditional Turkish beliefs are based on the principle of a god who watches over the custom (töre). In terms of the mountain cult, this idea is supported by Turkish mythology itself. For the Turks, the mountain is a directly divine place. The most important rituals are performed here. Hakan himself accompanies this ritual. Because he is an official to whom God has given the fortune of ruling, just as after Islam the caliph has the title of "God's shadow on earth". The girls praying on the mountain and turning into stones is another manifestation of the idea of god protecting the tradition.⁸

Secondly, there is a similarity between the "lame girl" who survives among forty girls in Dede Korkit and the "poor girl" who survives in the Kyrgyz legend. In both legends, the souls of the surviving girls are close to each other. This is also a reflection

of the closeness of the worldview between the two nations that created the legend. Third, although the place names that form the basis of the legend networks are geographically distant from each other, the legend weave is close. Also, when the texts are approached on the basis of the concept of toponomic legends, it is noteworthy that there are concrete data between space and narrative elements. One of them is the discovery of the city of Qyryq Qyz (I-VI centuries BC) 27 km north of the city of Biruni (Uzbekistan). It is important that a fortress of the same name was discovered in the Termez region (Uzbekistan), Merva (Turkmenistan), Azerbaijan, northern Afghanistan and northern Iran (Beskempirova et al. 2019: 99). Moreover, there are even oral rumors that the Kyrgyz national name was formed from the words "forty girls", reflecting the importance of toponymic legends (Hu, Zhenghua).⁹

The given examples, motif analysis and opinions of researchers show that the toponymic legend associated with the name "Forty legendary girls" is present in the oral literature of various Turkic peoples. Now the problem is the spread of opinions on the question of what is the origin of these legends and the reason for their similarity.

Folklore similarities can be considered in terms of historical-genetic, historical-cultural and historical-typological coherence (Abilkasymova and Tamaev 2007: 142). Therefore, a comparative analysis of the elements that constitute the narrative at the cultural level gives important results. Thus, in the matter we are talking about, we must first look at the mystery of the number "40", which is considered sacred by the Turkic peoples. Because the number "Forty" is found in monuments and manuscripts, the literary heritage of the Turkic peoples from ancient times. For example, in the chapter "Tokakozhaugly er Domrul" in the poem "Korkyt" forty young men meet, in the famous Kyrgyz "Manas" the hero goes with forty comrades. However, the etymology of the number forty, its properties and characteristics are not found in the written data. Therefore, it can be assumed that the number forty among the Turkic peoples is related to beliefs. After burying a deceased person, reading the Koran, leaving a grave forty steps away, remembering to give a dead person "forty days" later, immersing a baby in forty spoonfuls of water, celebrating a birthday for forty days, and so on. It is well known that faith is behind customs and traditions.

Academician Alkei Margulan says that the number "forty" is a sign of strength and durability. It is said that the concepts of "forty tribes", "forty servants", "forty friends", "forty shora", and "forty viziers" mean these signs. As Kondybay (2008: 132-136) points out, the number forty has always been a boundary and usually refers to the border between two worlds. Rituals of transition periods are full of forty motifs. The examples we have given show that the end of the lives of 40 girls in a tragedy is connected with S. Kondybay's opinion about the number 40. As if he chose this number to understand the limits of life and death, good and evil, goodness and cruelty.

The most comprehensive statement that can be made about the number forty is that of maturity. The cosmic status of the number forty, both in popular belief and in celestial religions (but it is imperative to give priority to Islamic sources, which have had a greater influence on Turkish culture and legendary texts), generally emphasizes the completion of a "thing," the elimination of its incompleteness. At the moments of birth and death, the gates of the spirit world and the intermediate world do not close until the fortieth day. The rains that cause the flood last for forty days and forty nights. The Qur'an indicates forty as the age of human maturity. Elsewhere, Moses meets his Lord for forty nights. Whether it has positive or negative consequences, forty is a symbol of completion.¹⁰

In this context, the fact that the girls mentioned in the legends consist of forty people is a symbol of completion and maturity. It is extremely difficult to make a clear determination as to what this pattern of forty girls, which has clearly come from the world of myths, a language of symbols, represents. They could be forty concepts, forty objects, or they could have been taken from forty people who took part in a real event that provided a motif reserve for legends. However, the motif model formed by forty and the girls reflects the dynamics of a traditional belief by emphasizing a direct divine connection.

Another line of toponymic legends found among many Turkic peoples revolves around the "Maiden Tower". The legend about the "Maiden's Tower" on the Bosphorus (Istanbul) is as follows: A fortune-teller predicted that the king's beloved daughter, who had the mouth of the moon and the eyes of the sun, would enter the other world when she turned eighteen. When the king heard this, he renovated the old tower in the strait to save his daughter from death and took her there with his most trusted men. It is guarded on all sides and watched day and night. Every year the king comes here and celebrates his daughter's birthday with luxury. Unfortunately, on the day the royal daughter turned eighteen, she was bitten and killed by a snake that came out of the fruits brought from the coast. Since then it has been called "Maiden's Tower".

The legend of the "Maiden (Burana) Tower" near the city of Tokmak in Kyrgyzstan is not far from the Turkish legend. One could even say that there is no difference. Here it is told about the Khan's daughter who was bitten by a poisonous spider instead of a snake: "The khan, who had a daughter, called all the fortune-tellers and wise men in the state to find out the future of his daughter. An old man told the khan that his daughter would die on her sixteenth birthday from a poisonous spider. The Khan ordered a huge tower to be built to protect his daughter. The Khan's servants carefully checked the food, put it in baskets, and delivered it to his daughter with the help of a ladder. Some years have passed. For his daughter's sixteenth birthday, the khan brings fruit in a basket. The Khan did not notice the poisonous spider hiding in the basket. Finally, a poisonous spider bites and kills the Khan's daughter, who has reached out her hand to the "fetus".

Similar legends can be found among other Turkic peoples. Even in Kazakhstan there are legends about several "Maiden Towers". Common motifs in the lines of legends about such towers as "Maiden Tower" in Azerbaijan (Baku), "Begim Ana" in Kazakhstan (Aralsk), "Aisha Bibi" (Taraz), "Akbikesh Tower" (Sozak), "Bitim Tower" (Zhalagash), "Kyz molasy" (Mulkilan Aulie, Syrdarya), similarity is a characteristic feature of national thinking and world view on historical basis.

We can mention the motif of "snake bite" as a common motif of Turkic peoples in legends. The image of "dragon-snake" is often found in world mythology. Although names such as Propp and Meletinsky point to some cultures for the origin of the dragon, they all have different characteristics. A. Toyshanuly says that the image of a dragon in Kazakh is not in the form of a giant snake with fire coming out of its mouth, wings, four legs, moving tail and flying in the sky, as described by the above people. S.A. Kaskabassov says that a dragon in Kazakh is a giant snake.¹¹ The snake is also recognized as the owner of wisdom and mystical insight. In Kazakh fairy tales, a snake teaches the person and helps to understand the language of nature, teaches the language of animals, and interprets dreams. Kydyr comes to a person in the form of a snake.

Wherever we look at the legends of the Maiden's Tower, the constant motif is that a girl lives in this tower/space for one reason or another. In addition to the legend given

above, in the Greek Tower of Leandros and Battal Gazi narratives of Turkish Islamic culture, it is always the girl in the tower. Considering that there are even some records that Damalis, the wife of Kharis, the King of Athens, is buried here, it can be seen that the motif of a girl cut off from the outside world in a place surrounded by water has become identical with the Maiden's Tower for thousands of years (Saticioglu, 2020: 49).¹²

The legends of the Maiden's Tower give very important clues about the motifs they contain. The first of these is directly related to the place itself and its location. As we know, the Maiden Tower is a structure surrounded by water in the middle of the Sea of Marmara. The figure that has been the subject of this single place for centuries is a girl. The question of why no one else could be the subject of this structure becomes more important.

In Turkish mythology, water is the beginning of creation, a source of inspiration, a reserve. It is the one that exists with God before the creation of mankind. The inspiration that comes from water is personified in the symbol of a woman called Akene. This important duality in the creation story has been preserved in the legend of the Maiden Tower under different stories. The serpent, which is the subject of the legend, is the symbol in which evil is hidden, as in the creation epic of Turkish mythology. In the Byzantine legend it is possible to see it as the mythological source of the prophecy that the snake will kill the girl. In the legend of Leandros, the girl in the Maiden's Tower is Hero, with whom he falls in love, and she is one of the priestesses of the place. Just as in the myths of the Forty Girls, the cult of the mountain is incorporated into the narrative as a sacred space, in the legend of the Maiden's Tower we can also find the sacredness of the place. The protective function of the father is rooted in the fact that God entrusted human beings to the guardians after creating them in the upper world.

Conclusion

One of the characteristic features of folklore, including legends, is multivariance. The legends about "Forty legendary girls", and "Maiden Tower", which were analyzed as a basis in the article, are closer to the presence of motives common to the Turkic peoples in the storyline than to multivariance. Therefore, these legends were not considered as legends in several versions, but as a folk heritage born from the result of the common thinking of related peoples.

Belief and faith, worldview is philosophical categories. The worldview of any nation is reflected in its art and culture, language and religion. At the same time, if we take into account that folklore is a collective work that has passed through the centuries, it is natural that the national worldview lies in all genres of oral literature, including legends.

Although the two types of legends included in the research are different from each other, they overlap in terms of their internal dynamics and motifs. The legends have the same symbolic language and elements, appearing in Turkish peoples and neighboring cultures. In both, the image of a female being with a direct connection to the sacred is integrated with the cults of water and mountains. In Turkish mythology, the sacred female often appears together with these two cults. Water mother and mountain girls are beliefs that still have some rituals among the Turkic peoples. Turning to stone, the number forty, and snakebite are mystical understandings that are frequently encountered in Turkish mythology and the texts it permeates. The Legends of the Maiden's Tower and Forty Girls brings together the elements of belief in the toponomic category in a single center and contributes to the understanding of the Turkish belief world and its historical infrastructure.

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NOTES

1. Two important works based on Divaev's (1989a; 1992b) collection are important sources for the legend genre.
2. Shubinsky's (1898) *Golodnaya step i yego predanya* [The Hungry Steppe and its Legends] and Zaleman's (1898) *Legenda pro Hakim Ata* [Legend about Dede Hakim] are good examples.
3. Of special interest is a study of non-fairy-tale texts in Kazakh oral culture based on Potanin's materials. See, Kaskabasov and et.al, 1972.
4. In another study published at a later date, the same points were emphasised (İbraeva et al. 2020).
5. In this context, under the concept of mythotoponym, three sub-headings covering the myths and legends of Uzbek Turks are proposed. These are 1) Ancient Toponymic Legends, 2) Medieval Toponymic Myths, 3) New Toponymic Myths (Sattarov, 2019: 47). A similar attempt was made for Karakalpak toponyms. For a related study, see Tolibayev, 2021. The following study, which examines the relationship between legends and place names in Kazakhstan, is an important example for the sub-genre of toponomic legends: Ergun and Yesil, 2021. See also the following study, which examines oral narratives about the Adyghe, one of the peoples of the Caucasus, using the same concept: Kudayeva and Hagojeyeva, 2020. For a chronological essay on the disciplinary study of toponomic legends and narratives, see the following article: Normurod Qizi, 2022. The following example, which reveals the mutual interaction of the relationship between place and character through etymological and mythological analysis, is important in terms of giving an idea about the data that toponomic legends can provide: Hallaç, 2022.
6. In the context of commonalities in the Turkic world, the following study on ancestry and genealogy is an important example: Yıldırım and Topay, 2022.
7. An example of this at the micro level can be said about the history of the Kazakh people (Kazak halkının filisofiyalık mirası, 2006: 482).
8. More universal ideas about the connection between the mountain and the girls turning to stone are conceivable. One of the most common suggestions is "human sacrifice". In fact, the presence of bloody sacrifices in the rituals performed on the mountain among the Turks brings this possibility closer, but the fact that there is no sign or archaeological material of human sacrifice among the Turks, and that the tradition emphasizes the survival of human beings, is enough to reject the girls as human sacrifices.
9. Professor Dr. Meral Demiryurek in the article "Evaluation of Two Examples of the Myth of the Forty Legendary Girls in Scriptural Culture" says that the legend of the Forty Legendary Girls, an important legend explaining the origin of one of the Turkic tribes known today as the Kyrgyz and the origin of the name "Forty Legendary Girls," was written by Omer Seyfettin in 1918 and by Ahmet Zuhuri in 1927 (Demiryurek 2017: 47).
10. See the following pages where Schimmel discusses the number forty in the context of religion and culture with material and commentary: 1993: 245-253.
11. The unique appearance of the dragon/snake in Turkish culture and mythology, and its presumed origin, can be found in the following lines: Hallaç, 2022: 738-749. According to Kondybay, it would be an important development for Turkish culture to determine where the snake myth began.
12. The influence of Turkish culture on Greek and Byzantine sources and even religious literature, possibly through the Sumerians, has already been shown through the Albastı belief element. Therefore, it is possible to consider that the structural elements of these legends were influenced by Turkish culture and mythology. For the aforementioned research, see: Hallaç, 2022: 52-210.

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