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# **Analysing the Importance of Alps, Alp-Erens and Alp-Gazis in the Cultural Life of the Turkish World by Content Analysis**

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## **Abstract**

The Turkish nation, in its 5000-year history, has established many states after the wars it waged against its enemy. From nomadic-to-nomadic life, they believed in religions such as Tengrism, Shamanism, and Islam. They have faced many droughts, famines and related migrations due to the geographical conditions. This heroic and difficult life adventure has found its place in Turkish epics in the form of anonymous products since the first periods with the oral tradition. The most important common motif of these anonymous products, which emerged both before Islam and under the influence of Islam, were characters like Alp, Alp-Eren or Alp-Gazi. This study aims to explain the Alpine type by giving examples from epics, legends and Dede Qorqut Stories, which contain epic features. This research was carried out in a scanning model, adopting a qualitative research approach. Document analysis technique was employed and the data were analysed using content analysis. Alp, which means valor, heroism, and courage, which has an important place in Turkish mythology and old Turkish life, thus being the subject of Turkish epics, and Alp-Eren or Alp-Gazi, which means dervish, mujahid, also found a place in Dede Qorqut Stories and Islamic period epics and even in local legends. In the research, it has been concluded that these motifs in question have preserved their existence in literary texts and folk culture. This study revealed that discussing and highlighting characters like Alp, Alp-Eren, and Alp-Gazi in various studies can contribute to the development of cultural and religious tourism.

**Keywords:** Turkish World, Epics, Legends, Dede Qorqut, Alps.

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## Introduction

The Sumerians are a civilization that settled in Southern Mesopotamia between approximately 4000-2000 BC and lived in the geography known as the cradle of civilization. It is considered to be the oldest known civilization in the world. They were the first to come to the fore among many different tribes living in Mesopotamia and laid the foundation for later civilized formations. The Sumerians are the inventors of writing. "There is no doubt that every nation wanted to protect such a civilization, which started in 3300 (three thousand three hundred) years before Christ and was strengthened by the invention of writing in 3200 (three thousand two hundred)." (Hatiboglu, 1979). "According to the latest research, the beginning of the history of the Turks goes back to Sumerian history. The origin of the Sumerian language has been written about and processed a lot. Linguists from almost every nation compared Sumerian with their own languages and sought a way out, but could not find it. Fundamental facts contradict all languages except Turkish. With the explanation of the fact that the language of the Guds, especially the Kas, was Turkish, the Sumerian problem has been also fully clarified. According to recent studies, it would certainly be correct to say that Sumerian is Turkish." (Hatiboglu, 1979). When it is accepted that their past is so old, it is possible to say that the Turks have left important traces in the history of the world and civilization. Turkish states such as Gokturk, Avar, Caspian, Uygur, KaraHanid, Ghaznavid, Seljuk, Khwarazmshah, Golden Horde, Mughal, Ottoman, which were established in a wide geography starting from the Huns; as an army possessed state and with the influence of nomadic life, has ensured that epic genres, especially heroism and valor, as a common cultural element in epics since the earliest times. This nomadic and Alpine way of life has been the main theme of Turkish epics. It is possible to talk about many definitions made by researchers of the subject of epics. Based on these definitions, it can be said that an epic is an anonymous work with a unique narrative and tradition, in which the adventures of a nation, which deeply affect the nation, are told around a hero and based on that hero (Yıldız, 2009).

The epic tradition in the Turks has been the pioneer of literary genres and is quite developed. It is possible to see the existence of an epic of their own in almost all Turkish states both before and after Islam. These epics are The Turkish Epic of Creation, Epic of Alp Er Tunga, Epic of Shu, Epic of Oghuz Kagan, Ergenekon, Epic of Bozkurt, Epic of Türeyiş, Epic of Migration; Epic of Saltuk Bugra Han, Epic of Danişment Ghazi, Epic of Manas, Epic of Koroghlu.

## Literature Review

### Alp, Alp-Eren and Alp-Gazi Types

Turkish traditions glorified and encouraged courage, heroism and valor. Because they were struggling with difficult climatic conditions and the enemy surrounding them. This struggle was not just for survival. There were also tough struggles to protect their national and cultural values. Wars had been fought. These and similar conditions led to the emergence of the concept of "Alpine" and to transform the Alpine type into a cultural institution in the future. Later, this type took an important place in Turkish culture. The term "Alp", which stands for valor, courage and heroism, was used by valiant warriors from within the nation. This concept has even become a title for rulers (Koçak, 2021). So much so that this holy concept is also mentioned in the Orhon Inscriptions. It is seen that the concept of virtue in the language of the Orhon

Inscriptions is used together with the features of wisdom and alp. It is stated in the inscriptions that fighting for society and showing bravery is the greatest virtue. The spread of the wise and alpine personality throughout the society is very important for the survival and continuity of the country (Gümüş, 2016). The concepts of Alp and Alp-Eren symbolize the courage of the Turks. In this sense, it has settled in the Turkish language. It is seen that these words mean brave warrior, hero and wrestler in *Divan-ı Lügati't-Türk* (Erdi and Yurtsever, 2005). In Muslim Turkish society, the concept of Alp-Gazi is also used close to the concepts of Alp and Alp-Eren.

Tip (character) is a character that has similar and some fixed properties. The character represents the basic values that society cares about and believes in. "Alp" is one of the most common characters in Turkish epics. Alp is used to mean "valiant, hero" (TDK, 2021). The first condition for the ancient Turks to take this name is to show valiantness, bravery, heroism and superiority; They should come from a noble family. The Alpine type encountered in the pre-Islamic period transformed into the "Alp-Eren" type in the period under the influence of Islam. Alp-Eren means dervish, mujahid" (TDK, 2021). "Halil İnalçık argued that the words "Alp" and "Gazi" were synonymous and emphasized that they were the ideal professional warrior cavalry type in 13th century Anatolia. İnalçık also stated that the Alpine type in Turks merged with the "Gazi" type after the adoption of Islam, and the characteristics of this type were combined with the akindjis. Mehmet Fuad Köprülü, on the other hand, states that combining the title of Alp in Turks with the title of Gazi, which has been widely used in the Islamic world since the first centuries, as Alp-Gazi was very common in the Great Seljuks period; He even explained that this concept was seen even among the Ghurids, who were in the political and cultural sphere of influence of the Seljuks, by citing Nasreddin Alp Gazi, the Meliki of the Gurians, as an example." (Erkmen, 2019). Accordingly, Tan-şe-hoey in the Syenpi Epic, Alp Er Tunga, Oghuz Kagan, Atilla Alp in the Alp Er Tunga Epic; Manas, his son Semetey and grandson Seytek, Genghis Khan, Edige Mirza Bahadır, Saltuk Bugra Han, Seyyit Battal Gazi, Danishmend Gazi and Koroghlu are described as Alp-Eren or Alp-Gazi.

Alp, Alp-Eren or Alp-Gazi, who are after an ideal with their personalities and behaviors, became the property of the society. It can be said that these people are precedent and unique in society in terms of their physical and spiritual personalities. This personality is God-given and not found in everyone: "Kut has also been defined as a divine power bestowed by the creator. According to Turkish beliefs, God did not give this power to everyone, he gave it to the people he chose. This power has also ensured that person's success in life." (Yıldız Gold, 2021: 87). Alp is a strong symbol of the people he represents, and he never gives up because of his struggle for the sake of his country and his belief in his ideal, which is what Oğuz Kağan said, "I have paid my debt to Tengri." is an expression of this belief.

With the acceptance of Islam by the Turks, the Alpine type turned into Alp-Eren with Battal Gazi, Danişment Gazi, and Saltuk Buğra Han, who struggled to make Anatolian lands home for their nations, to Turkify and Islamize them.

### **The Epics and Dede Qorqut Stories in Which the Alpine Type is Prominent**

In this section, parts from Metin Turan's work titled *Turkish Epics*, published in 1998, are included as a document:

## The Epic of Alp Er Tunga

The Epic of Alp Er Tunga is the oldest known epic after the Epic of Creation. Alp Er Tunga was the ruler of Saka who lived in the 7th century BC. He gained fame in the Turkish-Iranian wars, he was defeated and killed by the Iranian ruler Keyhüsrev.

The voluminous and rich parts of this epic, which tells about the Turkish-Iranian wars before Christ, are found in Ferdowsi's Shahnameh. The fact that Alp Er Tunga took such a place in a foreign epic of that time shows that he left deep traces in the lives of Iranians. In Diwan Lughat al-Turk (English: "Compendium of the languages of the Turks"), written by Mahmud al-Kashgari in the 9th century, it is seen that the great Saka ruler is mentioned occasionally. A requiem about the death of Alp Er Tunga was also written down by Mahmud al-Kashgari. It is estimated that this requiem is a part of the last section of the Epic of Alp Er Tunga.

## The Plot of the Epic

There were many sultanates in Iran. One of them was the Kabul Sultanate, and it was headed by a sultan named Zal. The Sultan of Kabul, Zal, marched to the Turan country to save the Iranian ruler, who was held captive by Alp Er Tunga. He defeated Alp Er Tunga but could not save his ruler. Time has passed. Zev, the ruler of Iran, died. Seeing this as an opportunity, Alp Er Tunga once again declared war on Iran. By then, Zal had also aged. Instead of himself, he sent his son Rüstem against Alp Er Tunga. Numerous wars took place between this famous Iranian hero and Alp Er Tunga, whose stories are still told in the famous folk books in Anatolia with the name of Zaloglu Rüstem. Rüstem won most of the battles and Alp Er Tunga won some of them.

While these wars were going on, Keykavus, who was the ruler of Iran, offended his son Siyavuş and Zaloglu Rüstem. Thereupon, prince Siyavuş escaped and took refuge in Alp Er Tunga. He stayed there for a long time, even married the daughter of one of the Turkish heroes, and had a son named Keyhüsrev. When Keyhüsrev grew up, the Persians kidnapped him and made him ruler. Keyhüsrev pleased and treated Zaloglu Rüstem well and sent him against Alp Er Tunga. Again, there were many wars. Alp Er Tunga was defeated in most of them. In the end, Alp Er Tunga got very tired, his army dispersed, and he had no soldiers left. He retired to the mountains alone and lived in a cave by himself. However, one day, the Iranian soldiers, who found his trace, killed him.

## The Requiem of Alp Er Tunga

Did Alper Tunga die?  
 Did the poor (world) remain unheaded?  
 Did fate (time) take its revenge?  
 Now the heart is breaking.  
 Fate defended him, his weapon,  
 Added strength to his strength,  
 Made the bey of beys go astray  
 How he could find rescue had he stayed there,  
 The brave men would howl like a wolf,  
 Tear their collars and cry loudly,  
 Scream and shout,  
 Shed tears and the tears will dim their eyes.

This epic, which is quoted, not only constitutes a typical example of pre-Islamic Turkish poetry but also bears traces of the *yuğ* (requiem) ceremony, which was a common custom of the ancient Turks. As it is known, in the old Turkish tradition, dead heroes were not buried immediately; The dead were put in a tent, and their relatives would sacrifice horses or sheep in front of the tent. Then they would mount their horses and circle around the tent seven times. As they turn, they would weep and cry, sing requiems; on the other hand, they would bleed by scratching their faces with a knife. This was the first ceremony. The actual *yuğ* ceremony was then performed with extensive preparation. If the valiant died in spring or summer, the leaves were expected to fall, that is, autumn, to bury the dead; If he died in autumn or winter, this time they would wait for the leaves and flowers would bloom, that is, spring was expected. According to the reputation of the deceased at the time of burial, friends and relatives from other countries were also gathered. These people were called “*yuğcu*”. Before the dead were buried, the ceremony we mentioned above was repeated this time with the participation of the *yuğcus*. In addition, weepers would come or be brought specially for the ceremony, These weepers were called “*sığıtçı*”. The requiem sung by the bards during and after the *yuğ* ceremonies were the same pieces as seen in the example of the Requiem of Alp Er Tunga. In this respect, The Requiem of Alp Er Tunga is also a good example of *sagu* (requiem), which is one of the verse forms of Turkish poetry.

### **The Epic of Oghuz Kagan**

The Oghuz Epic, which is considered to have been born in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC, could only be written down in the 8<sup>th</sup> century.

There is only one manuscript copy of the Epic of Oghuz Kagan known today. This epic, registered at number 1001 in the Turkish Manuscripts section of the Paris National Library, was written in Uighur letters. This text, known as the Paris copy of the Oghuz Epic, was first published by Turcologist W. Radloff together with Kutadgu Bilig (1891). The epic was later published by W. Bang and G. R. Rahmeti, first in German in 1932, and then in Turkish in 1936 as “*Oğuz Kağan Destanı*”.

In this epic, Oghuz is a Turkish ruler and hero who was born beautiful, grew up forty days after he was born, killed the monster that tortured the people, sent ambassadors to all over the world when he grew up, took those countries under its flag, and divided his homeland among his six sons when he got old. The epic is woven around the life and experiences of Oghuz Kagan. In this epic, it is said that the hero of the epic, Oghuz, was actually the Turkish-Hun ruler Mete. Indeed, there is a great similarity between the historical personality of Mete and the adventures of the epic hero Oghuz. Four different versions of the Epic of Oghuz Kagan are known. The first of these is the Uyghur copy in the Paris National Library, which we mentioned above. The second figure is the text in the “*Tarih-i Oğuzân ve Tūrkan*” section in the second volume of Reşideddin's book *Câmi'ü't-Tevârih*. The third is the Chagatai text found in Uzunköprü, which is H. Namık Orkun's *Oğuzlara Dair* (Ankara, 1935). The fourth is the narrative fragment in Ebulgazi Bahadır Han's *Secere-i Terâkime*.

### **The Summary of The Epic of Oghuz Kagan**

“... One day, Ay Kagan's eye shone. The labour pains began, and she gave birth to a boy. This child's face was red like the sky, his mouth was red like fire, his eyes were hazel, his hair and eyebrows were black. He was more beautiful than fairies.

The born child was named Oghuz. This child took milk from his mother's breast once and never again. He asked for raw meat, soup and wine. He started to speak immediately. Forty days later he grew up, walked and played. His feet were like the feet of an ox, his waist was like the waist of a wolf, his shoulders were like that of a sable, and his chest was like a bear's chest. He used to herd horses, ride horses, and hunt prey.

At that time, there was a large forest there. The roar of rushing streams and cold rivers could be heard in this forest. If there wasn't a big monster in this forest, it would be nice to live in this place. It was a violent beast. He ate horse herds and people.

Oghuz Kagan was a brave and valiant man. He wanted to hunt this beast. One day he went hunting with a spear, bow, arrow, sword and shield. He captured a deer in the forest, tied it to a tree with a willow branch, and rode away. At dawn, he came and saw that the beast had eaten the deer. Then Oghuz Kagan caught a bear, tied it to a tree with his gold belt and left. When he arrived at dawn, he realized that the beast had eaten the bear as well. This time he stood at the foot of the tree himself. The monster came and struck Oghuz's shield with its head. Oghuz killed the monster with his spear. He cut off his head with his sword, took it and left.

When he came again, he saw that a falcon had eaten the intestines of the beast. With a bow and arrow, he killed the falcon and cut off its head. “The beast ate the deer and the bear. My spear killed it because it was iron. The falcon ate the intestines of the beast. Because it was copper, my bow and arrow killed it.” he said and walked away. Again, one day, Oghuz Kagan was begging God in some place. Darkness fell and light descended from the sky. It was brighter than the sun and the moon. Oghuz Kagan walked there and saw that a girl was sitting alone in that light. She had a wire on her head and a mole, she was like a pole star. That girl was so beautiful that if she laughed, Tengri would laugh, and if she cried, Tengri would cry. When Oghuz Kagan saw him, he lost his mind; loved her and took her. After days and nights, the girl gave birth to three boys. They named the first one Gün (Day, Sun), the second Ay (Moon), and the third Yıldız (Star).

Another day, Oghuz Kagan went hunting. In the middle of the lake, he saw a very beautiful girl sitting alone on the bark of a tree. Her eyes were bluer than the sky, her hair was wavy like a river, and her teeth were pearly white... When Oghuz Kagan saw her, he lost his mind; loved her and took her. After days and nights, the girl gave birth to three boys. They named the first Gök (Sky), the second Dağ (Mountain), and the third Deniz (Sea). After that, Oghuz Kagan gave a big feast. Oghuz Kagan had forty tables and forty benches built. They ate and drank a variety of dishes, various wines, desserts and kumiss. After the feast, Oghuz Kagan gave orders to the men:

I have become your Han;  
Let's all take swords and shields;  
Kut (divine power) will be our sign;  
Gray wolf will be our uran (battle cry);  
Our iron lances will be a forest;

Khulan will walk on the hunting ground;  
More seas and more rivers;  
Sun is our flag and the sky is our tent.

Then, he sent letters to the Kings of the Four Directions, saying: "I am the Han of the Turks. And I will be Han of the Four Corners of the Earth. I want your obedience."

At that time, there was a Han named Altun Kagan on the right corner of the earth. This Altun Han obeyed Oghuz Han. On the left was Urum Kagan. He had many soldiers and cities. He did not obey. Oghuz Kagan was enraged and wanted to march against him, unfurling his flag, he marched against him with his soldier.

Forty days later he came to the foot of a mountain called Ice Mountain. He pitched his tent and slept quietly. At dawn, a light like the sun entered Oghuz Kagan's tent. From that light came a large male wolf with sky feathers and a sky mane. This wolf addressed Oghuz Kagan and said, "O Oghuz! You want to march on Urum; O Oghuz, I want to walk in front of you."

This big male wolf with sky hair and sky mane stopped after a few days. There was a sea named İtil Müren here. Here the war began. The struggle and fighting were so fierce that the water of İtil Müren turned red from head to toe. Oghuz Kagan was victorious and Urum Kagan fled.

Then Oghuz Kagan came to the river called İtil with his soldiers. İtil was a big river. Oghuz Kagan saw it and said, "How do we cross the waters of İtil?"

There was a good man among the soldiers. His name was Uluğ Ordu Bey. He was a smart soldier. He saw that there are many branches and many trees in this place. He cut down the trees and laid down on these trees, crossing the water. Oghuz Kagan was happy, laughed and said, "You be the Bey in here, let your name be Kıpçak Bey."

Again, they advanced. Oghuz Kagan marched to India, Tangut and Syria with the sky-haired, sky-mane wolf in front of him. After many battles and many fights, he took these lands and made them his home.

Again, it should not be left unsaid, and it should be clear that there was an experienced old man with a white beard and gray hair next to Oghuz Kagan. He was an understanding and nobleman. He was the overseer of Oghuz Kagan. His name was Uluğ Türk. One day in his sleep he saw a golden bow and three silver arrows. This golden bow was pointing towards the east, and three arrows pointed north. When he woke up, he told Oghuz Kagan what he had seen in his dream and said, "O my Han, may your life be pleasant; O my Han, may your life be pleasant. May the Tengri bring to the truth what he gave in my dreams. May Tengri forgive the whole world for your sake!"

Oghuz Kagan liked Uluğ Türk's words and listened to his advice. In the morning he summoned his elder and younger sons and said, "My heart wants to hunt. Because I am old, I no longer have the courage; Gün, Ay, and Yıldız go east; Gök, Dağ, and Deniz, you go to the west side."

Those who went east found a golden bow on the road. Those who went west also found three silver arrows. They brought them and gave them to their father. Oghuz Kagan divided the bow into three and said, "O my great sons, let the bow be yours,



shoot the arrows up to the sky like a bow.” He divided the arrows into three and said, “O my little sons, let the arrows be yours. The bow has fired the arrow, so be like the arrow.”

After that, Oghuz Kagan convened the great congress. He summoned his people. He divided his homeland among his sons called “Gray Arrows” and “Three Arrows” and said: My sons, I walked a lot; I saw many battles; I threw so many arrows and lances; I rode many horses; I made my enemies cry; I made my friends smile; I paid my debt to Tengri; Now I am giving my land to you.

### **The Epic of Saltuk Bugra Han**

In parallel with the KaraHanids being the first Muslim Turkish state in the 940s, it is told that the KaraHanid ruler Saltuk Bugra Han called people in various provinces to Islam, showed miracles to the unbelievers, and burned the unbelievers by spewing fire from his mouth in wars.

This narrative, which was made epic around Saltuk Bugra Han, is the source of the interest shown as a “visiting place” to his tomb, which is located in the town of Artuç, near Kaşgar today.

The Epic of Saltuk Bugra Han is recorded in a work called “Tezkire-i Buğra Han”. This work has several manuscripts.

### **Epic of Manas**

According to the most established judgment, the main source of the Epic of Manas is the events experienced by the Kyrgyz during the political and military struggles that took place at the beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> century between the Karahitays who followed the Mani religion and the KaraHanids who were Muslims. While some sources talk about a historical personality named Manas who lived in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, some researchers argue that the events in the epic of Manas date back to the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Manas Epic, which is a great heroic epic among Kyrgyz Turks, tells the struggles between Muslim Kyrgyz and pagan Kalmyks. The epic consists of three parts. These are the sections about Manas, his son Semetey and his grandson Seytek.

The most voluminous form of the epic compiled is Sayakbay Karalayev's Manas-Semetey-Seytek trilogy with 500.500 lines. It is recorded that the total number of verses of more than 60 narrations of the epic compiled from various Manasists is 1,500,000.

The subject of heroism occupies a large place in the epic of Manas. Manas, who came out of the Nogai tribe, not only protected his place, the freedom of his tribe from the Kalmyk raiders, but also became a bahadur who united all the disintegrated Kyrgyz people and worked for their freedom and equality. In his name, the unity, will and power of the whole people are united and expressed.

Within the tradition created by the epic of Manas, concepts have also developed according to the way of conveying the epic. The poets who sing the Manas epic among the people and in oral folk literature are called “ırçı” or “comokçu”. The poets who sing the Manas epic in Kyrgyz literature are divided into two. These are “comokçu” and “camakçı”. The Comokçus (comokists) are the people who read the Manas epic after

hearing it from the poets who lived in their own time and interpreting it in their own way. The poets who read some parts of the epic of Manas after listening to it from the great comokists and putting them in their memory, adding to it or abbreviating it are the camakcis (camakists). In addition, those who read the first part (Manas) or three parts (Manas, Semetey, Seytek) of the Manas epic are called manascı (manasist), and those who read only the second part of the epic (Semetey) are called semeteyci (semeteyist).” (Turan, 1998).

### **Summary of Epic of Koroghlu**

“The governor of the City of Arzulum (Erzurum) dies. The notables of the city send a name to the sultan and ask the sultan to appoint a new governor. The Sultan appoints Laloğlu Hüseyin Pasha as the governor of Erzurum. One day, the governor asks for “a full-fledged milk-white steed horse”. It is investigated, and the horse he wants is found for the governor. Deli Yusuf is assigned as the caretaker of the horse. One day, when he was grooming the horse, Deli Yusuf killed the horse by hitting the horse's forehead with a mallet after the horse nibbled at him. Hüseyin Pasha assigns Deli Yusuf to find a good horse for himself. Yusuf finds a foal that looks ugly but has the quality he is looking for and brings it to Hüseyin Pasha. Pasha sees the colt, gets angry and blinds Deli Yusuf. He gives the foal to Yusuf and fires him.

Deli Yusuf raises foals with the instructions he gave to his son, Ruşen Ali. The foal would make a beautiful prairie horse. Deli Yusuf, who is afraid that the horse will be seen and taken away by the governor, leaves Erzurum with his son and comes to Bingöl. Ali gets thirsty and at a place where they take a break goes out to look for water. He finds water that resembles ayran (a drink made of yogurt) flowing from a rock hole. He and Kirat drink it. Then he brings his father to the water; but he cannot find the water. Because water flows from all sides. His father says that the water was ab-ı hayat (fountain of youth). When Ali goes out to look for something to eat because they were hungry, he robs a peddler; This is his first robbery. Later, such robberies and tolls become more frequent, and Ali's name begins to be called the bandit Koroghlu. As his fame spread, “Those who killed people, robbed, kidnapped girls, put their tent stakes around their waist, on the Bingöl plateau, on the Çamlıbel mountain, and hung their ax on their shoulders” began to gather.

Meanwhile, the Ottoman army is fighting the Russians in Sevastopol and the situation is not going well. Koroghlu defeats the Russians on an expedition to Sevastopol; He goes to Istanbul and receives the title of “Hero of Sevastopol” from the Sultan. In addition, the sultan gives an edict stating that he donated Çamlıbel to Koroghlu. Koroghlu has Çamlıbel build his castle and plant trees. Later, hearing the beauty of Ayvaz, he goes to Üsküdar to bring him to Çamlıbel. Disguised as a shepherd, he kidnaps Ayvaz with various tricks. He kidnaps Benli Döne, the sister of the Bey of the city, whose image he saw, and the daughter of the uncle of Bolu Bey. Upon the claim of one of his chiefs, Mahmudu Bezirgan, he embarks on a Georgia expedition to bring the seven most beautiful sisters of the Georgian king Ahmet Shah. After various wars and adventures, he takes these seven beauties and brings them to Çamlıbel and marries them with their favourite Bey. Then, Bolu Bey takes Koroghlu prisoner and throws him in the dungeon. Demircioğlu, one of the Beys, saves Koroghlu and kidnaps the Bolu Bey's daughter, Dizdar, and brings her to Çamlıbel. Koroghlu, on the promise he made to one of his lords, Dellek Hasan and Hoylu, made an expedition to Erzurum and kidnapped Güllü Nigar and Döne Han, the daughters of his uncle Bey Ali, to

Çamlıbel. He takes the lords of Koroghlu, who got drunk during a party, to Bolu by capturing Bolu. Koroghlu, disguised as a shepherd, goes to Bolu and saves his men. Bolu Bey is killed by Dellek Deli Hasan. While going to China to bring Zor Ahmet Bezirgan's fiancée, Koroghlu stops by in Dagestan. Here he marries Hösne Bala, whom he sees and falls in love with. After a one-night stay, Koroghlu leaves Dagestan, and leaves his armband there, telling Hösne Bala if he has a son, she should give him the armband and send him to Çamlıbel.

Koroghlu, who lost seven thousand soldiers in the sudden raid of the Chinese campaign, returns to Çamlıbel. Thirteen years passed and Hösne Bala gave birth to a son, named Hasan. When Hasan is fourteen, he goes to Çamlıbel and finds Koroghlu. Hasan falls and faints while looking at a figure that Koroghlu found in his secret chamber. He sees the girl in the figure in his dream and gets together with the girl through a pır and drinks wine from the girl's hand. The girl is Gülizar, the daughter of the vizier of the Chinese sultan. Hasan goes to China to find the girl and kidnaps Gülizar. He is wounded while fighting the ensuing Chinese forces. Koroghlu catches up and saves Hasan. On the way back to Çamlıbel, they stop by Dagestan and pick up Hösne Bala.

A wedding association is established in Çamlıbel. When an old woman said, "It would be more beautiful if crane feathers were put on the brides' heads," the brave men of Koroghlu went to Baghdad to bring crane feathers and were taken prisoner there, assuming they were spies. Koroghlu, who went to Baghdad to save his men, fights with the Iranian army to save Baghdad from the Iranians as per the agreement. In this war, one of his chiefs, Hoylu, is martyred and Koroghlu returns to Çamlıbel with his men. A wedding association is established again. Meanwhile, a master named Firenkoğlu invents a flintlock gun and presents it to Ayvaz. His purpose is to confuse the Beys. Ayvaz shoots Demircioğlu while showing the gun to the Beys. Seeing this, Ahmet Bezirgan kills Ayvaz. Hasan kills Ahmet Bezirgan. The wedding is interrupted, and the peace between the Beys is disturbed. Koroghlu gathers his family, divides his property among his soldiers and migrates to Damascus. In Damascus, his fiancée Benli Döne dies and is buried in the cemetery at the foot of Kırklar Mountain. One day, when Koroghlu went to visit the grave with his son Hasan, he told Hasan to return to Dagestan with his mother Hösne Bala and his fiancée Gülizar, they are never seen after." (Sever, 2003).

## **Bogac Han Son of Dirse Han**

### **Summary of the Story:**

Bayındır Han gives a feast to the Oghuz beys once a year. While organizing this feast, he divides his guests into three groups. He orders those who have no children to sit in the black tent, those who have a daughter in the red tent, and those who have a son in the white tent. Dirse Han has no children and attends the feast with forty valiant men. He is seated in the black tent. Dirse Han, who learned the meaning of the black tent, leaves the feast and shares his sadness with his wife. He consults her. His wife says that some conditions must be met to have a child. Dirse Han fulfills these conditions. His wife becomes pregnant. His son is born. At the age of fifteen, he joins his father's army. Dirse Han's son beats Bayındır Han's strong bull in the square. Dede Korkut names this boy Bogaç. Then he asks his father to give him a throne, horse, camel, robe and land for his son. Dirse Han offers all of these to his son. Forty braves are jealous of this situation and turn the father against his son. Dirse Han goes hunting

with forty valiant men and his son. These forty men make a plan. While they advise Bogac to show his father his skills, they lie to Dirse Han that his son will kill him. Dirse Han shoots his son with an arrow. Dirse Han's wife is preparing a feast for the first hunt. She gets the bad news. He goes out with forty slim-waisted girls to look for his son. He finds his son and heals him. Dirse Han thinks his son is dead. Forty valiant men learn that Bogac Han is not dead. Before Dirse Han understands the whole plan and kills his Forty valiant, the braves make a plan and catch Dirse Han. Dirse Han's wife learns about the situation. He encourages his son and asks him to save his father. Bogac Han saves his father. Bayındır Han gives Bogac Han a principality. Dede Korkut comes out and prays.

## **Bamsı Beyrek Son of Kam Püre**

### **Summary of the Story:**

Bayındır Han organizes a discussion. Oghuz Beys, who participated in this conversation of his, join this conversation with their sons. Püre Bey has no son and is worried that no one can replace him when he dies. When he shares this concern with the Oghuz Beys, they all pray on his behalf. Pay Piçen Bey asks the Oghuzs for prayers to have a daughter in his name and says that if he has a daughter, they would be betrothed in the cradle with Püre Bey's son. Both the two children are born. Püre Bey orders his Bezirgans for his son. Püre Bey's son goes on a hunt to get a name. During the hunt, he becomes a guest of his father's groom. Meanwhile, the infidels attack and damage the property of Bezirgan. Bezirgan unknowingly asks Püre Bey's son for help. He thinks he is a valiant soldier. War is fought. Pure Bey's son saves Bezirgan's property. He learns that this item was his father's order for him. Rather than accepting the gift that Bezirgan gave him for his valor, he prefers to receive it in his father's presence. And he returns home. He soon returns to his homeland in Bezirgan. They look and kiss this valiant hand next to Püre Bey. Pure Bey is surprised to see that his son's hand is kissed while the father is standing and asks about it. Bezirgans tell about the valour of the son. Dede Korkut names Püre Bey's son Bamsı Beyrek next to the Oghuz beys. Bamsı Beyrek, who does not know he was betrothed to Banu Çiçek, hunts deer one day and sends the deer to Banu Çiçek's tent. When Banu Çiçek realizes that he is the fiancé her father was talking about, she meets Bamsı Beyrek. Banu Çiçek, who introduces herself as her nanny, wants the valiant to beat her in the games they will organize so that she can meet the real Banu Çiçek. When their powers are equal, Bamsı Beyrek is ashamed and cheats in front of his valiants. The defeated Banu Çiçek introduces herself and they get engaged. Bamsı Beyrek returns to his homeland and wishes his father for permission to marry. When Bayındır Han hears about the evils of Banu Çiçek's brother Deli Kaçar, he calls Oguz Beys and Dede Korkut and consults them about what to do. Dede Korkut goes to Deli Kaçar to ask for his sister. However, Deli Kaçar, welcomes his guest with harsh words and disrespect, and runs away when he intends to kill him. Dede Korkut prays and Deli Kaçar's hands wither. Deli Kaçar says that he will give his sister to Bamsı Beyrek after Dede Korkut heals him, and in exchange for his sister he asks for many things. Dede Korkut lectures Deli Kaçar on these extreme requests. Hearing that the wedding preparations are being made, the infidels inform the lord of Bayburd Hisar and take Bamsı Beyrek prisoner by taking advantage of this hurdle. Sixteen years later, Yaltacuk, the son of the Liar, tells the lie that Bamsı Beyrek was killed. Banu Cicek marries Yaltacuk, the son of the Liar. Pay Püre Bey orders his son to be brought back, even if he is dead. The Forty Braves see that Bamsı Beyrek is not dead. Bamsı Beyrek manages to escape with the help of the

daughter of an infidel who is in love with him. On the way, he gets a kopuz from a bard. He catches the wedding and outsmarts Yaltacuk. He sees Banu Cicek and introduces himself to remind her. They set off and arrive at Bamsı Beyrek's mother and father's place. He catches Yaltacuk in the reeds and kills him. He goes to the Citadel where he was captured and fights. He saves thirty-nine valiant men. He marries Banu Cicek. Dede Korkut comes and prays.

## **Methodology**

In this section, the titles "Research Model" and "Data Collection and Analysis" are given.

### **Research Model**

This research aims to exhibit one of the most important common motifs of anonymous products that emerged both before and under the influence of Islam is Alp, Alp-Eren or Alp-Gazi type based on the epics in Metin Turan's "Türk Destanları", Semra Şen's "Türklerde Ad Verme Törenleri, Adların Önemi, Ad Verme ile İlgili Gelenek ve İnançlar" and Mustafa Sever's "Köroğlu Destanı-Antep Rivayeti" articles, and the chosen stories from Prof. Dr. Muharrem Ergin's work named "Dede Korkut Kitabı", was carried out in the scanning model.

A qualitative research approach was adopted in the research, a document analysis technique was used, and the data were analyzed through content analysis.

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

Document analysis, one of the qualitative research techniques, was used in the collection of research data. In the research Metin Turan's "Türk Destanları", Semra Şen's "Türklerde Ad Verme Törenleri, Adların Önemi, Ad Verme ile İlgili Gelenek ve İnançlar" and Mustafa Sever's "Köroğlu Destanı-Antep Rivayeti" articles, and the chosen stories from Prof. Dr. Muharrem Ergin's work named "Dede Korkut Kitabı" were analysed; content analysis technique was used to analyze the obtained data. While determining the themes as a result of the content analysis, as Merriam (2013) stated, the researchers themselves and the sources in the related literature were taken as the basis. Within the scope of the analysis, it has been determined that one of the most important common motifs of anonymous products that emerged both before and under the influence of Islam is Alp, Alp-Eren or Alp-Gazi type.

## **Results**

As in the example of Yunus Mürebbi, who fought bravely and was martyred during the siege of Kastamonu Castle during the Seljuk Period but succeeded in planting the banner on the towers of the castle, it is important to fight with self-confidence and strength as well as courage as an Alp or Alp-Eren. The aforementioned Yunus Mürebbi is known as "Bayraklı Sultan" in the Kastamonu region. He was buried in a tomb on the western bastions of Kastamonu Castle. For this reason, it is called "Bayraklı Sultan Tomb". The Legend of the Bayraklı Sultan is available on the official website of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Kastamonu Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism:

“Kastamonians plant flags here instead of sticking candles. The stories about it are as follows:

Kastamonu Castle was besieged by the Seljuks. The siege was prolonged, and the patience of the brave men was exhausted. One day, they gather and decide: The next day, before the sun rises, the castle will be attacked, whatever happens, the castle will be taken, and the castle will be gifted to the first valiant to plant the flag.

The next morning, a formidable attack is launched. Towards noon, the war escalated. Meanwhile, the famous valiant Yunus Mürebbi shouts: “Come after me, watch over me. I will be the first to plant the flag on this castle.” He shoots out like an arrow, attaches the rope in his hand to the sharp teeth of the bush, and climbs the bastion in a blink of an eye. He takes his sword out of his bosom and fights valiantly. Those behind also go to the bastion. He starts hitting. Yunus Mürebbi plants the flag on the castle. The war is over, the banner is floating on the castle. But Yunus Mürebbi does not appear. When his men found him, he was lying in blood. He still holds the banner that he hid in his body tightly. That's why his name is Bayraklı Sultan (Sultan who possesses the flag). The people give him a flag so that his wish may come true.” (KTB, 2022).

The Epic or Requiem of Alp Er Tunga emerged after Alp Er Tunga's death and the epic started with “Is Alp Er Tunga dead?” because his death involves an incredible amount of pain and impact. As the name suggests, Alp Er Tunga is an Alp, and this order of the old Turks, who had an order and a way of life around the Alps, was shaken by this painful event. His death is an event that deeply affected society, and society embraced this painful event, turning it into a social pain, and this pain resulted in an epic, passing his Alpine personality, courage and heroism down from generation to generation.

The Epic of Oghuz Kagan starts as “Ay Kagan's face is the sky, his mouth is fire, his eyes are hazel, his hair and eyebrows are black, and he had a son who is more beautiful than fairies. This boy spoke to his mother after sucking the first milk and asked for raw meat, soup, and wine. Forty days later he grew up and walked.” As it can be understood from this example, the Alps are born mature and strong with extraordinary features. But when the heroes reach the age of fifteen, events related to the Alps show up. A child cannot get a name unless he shows bravery. Alp exhibits different behaviours from normal children in his childhood. For example, Oghuz Kagan took breast milk once and walked in forty days.

It should also be stated that traces of pre-Islamic Turkish culture and life are seen in the examples of the Epics of Alp Er Tunga and Oghuz Kagan and that this pre-Islamic culture was completely abandoned in oral or legendary products that emerged in the post-Islamic period. “Turks, who entered many cultural circles and experienced acculturation and cultural changes in the historical course, also got their share from this change/transformation. In this context, when we look at the historical chronology of the Turks, it can be said that the most important event, which is the turning point, is the Turks' acceptance of Islam in masses. ... It can be said that Satuk Bugra Han, who took the name Abdülkerim after he became a Muslim, was almost the pioneer of the tradition of taking Islamic names among the Turks. What is noteworthy here is that while he took the name Abdülkerim after he became a Muslim, he did not abandon the name Satuk Bugra Han given to him by his ancestors. This situation, which can be interpreted as the syncretization of Turkish and Islamic ideologies, is encountered not only in the name of Satuk Buğra Han, who stands out with his historical and epic

personality but also in the names of his children and grandchildren who became Muslims after him. Their use of both Turkish and Islamic names supports this argument.” (Cakir, 2018).

Again, in the Kyrgyz Manas Epic, the Alpine motif is exhibited by the Kyrgyz Turks' devotion to their independence. “Kyrgyz-Kalmuk wars take place in the historical layer of the epic. The myths of the Kyrgyz people, their oldest religious beliefs, marriage and wedding customs, entertainment, joys, suffering, love and excitement are told around the struggle of four generations (Cakip Bay, Manas, Semetey, Seytek) to protect their homeland. Shamanism is still dominant in the lives of the Kyrgyz people, who we know to have converted to Islam at the actual time of the epic, especially in the rites of passage. In the epic, there is a dominant theme, or rather an ideology, which is “freedom”. Manas expresses this as follows: “As bad as it is to run away from the enemy in fear, begging him, bowing his head and holding hands in front of him is just as shameful... Let's fight... Manas should die rather than see the Kyrgyz in the hands of the enemy!” (İnan, 1992).

It is seen that the Alpine element comes to the fore in the Epic of Koroghlu as well: “The heroism, courage and determination of Koroghlu and his friends are always at the forefront in the epic. While they are depicted, they are told by analogy with various beings. For example, when the narrators of the epic talk about Koroghlu, they make descriptions such as “Koroghlu, who stands on Kırat like a bastion of a castle, has a head resembling a bath dome, a neck that overflows his shoulders like a calf hump, a breast that opens like a breadboard...” (30). This is not only to symbolize the warriors of Koroghlu or his heroic friends but also to enable them to be compared with their enemies. When describing Koroghlu's marvels, it is mentioned as if describing a giant. These are generally the thoughts of people who do not know Koroghlu when they see Koroghlu. The valiant men next to Koroghlu are also referred to with various nicknames while being introduced. Moreover, these nicknames become their names, they are called by these names: Eceli Yakın, Canı Cebinde, Eşek Götürmez, Darı Deymez, Zor Bezirgan, Kabire Sığmaz, etc. When Koroghlu meets with his enemy or before meeting with his men, he is described as follows: “Frowning brows, moustaches bent, arms are tight, four bars of swords are sticking out, pure majesty, an attitude as if he were going to cut off the head of anyone who will dare to speak...” (Sever, 2003).

The protagonist of Epic of Köroğlu is Ruşen Ali. Although in the epic the struggle of Ruşen Ali and his father Koca Yusuf with Bolu Bey is told, it is seen that the cruel Bolu Bey, who is seen in the common rumors, was replaced by Hüseyin Pasha, the Governor of Erzurum, in the “Antep Legend” that we included in our study. When Köroğlu was a small child, Koca Yusuf could not make Hüseyin Pasha like the foal he chose, and Hüseyin Pasha, therefore, blinds Koca Yusuf. As a child who has experienced this persecution, Köroğlu grows up with his father and becomes a valiant young man. He raises the foal that Pasha did not like, according to his father's advice; the foal becomes the Kırat with its unique beauty.

Koca Yusuf puts Ruşen Ali on Kırat and sends him to the mountains to take his revenge. Ruşen Ali thus became Köroğlu. In Antep Rumor, the reason why Ruşen Ali left the place was his concern that Hüseyin Pasha would like Kırat and take it away from him.

Köroğlu settles in Çamlıbel and gains a reputation for his valour. As his reputation grows, other valiant men join him, and their numbers increase. Köroğlu and these valiant men with him become a force that can resist many rulers and sultans. Those who were persecuted by the lords and sultans and escaped from these oppressions also came and took shelter under Koroghlu's and his valiant men's protection. Therefore, Köroğlu becomes a friend of the poor and a hero who watches over the oppressed rather than a bandit. He also gives the poor what he takes from the rich.

Köroğlu also has a lot of romantic affairs. He kidnaps the daughters of beys or sultans. One of these kidnapped girls is Dizdar Hatun, the daughter of Bolu Bey. In the end, the rifle, referred as a flintlock pistol in the Antep version, is invented, and a valiant like Köroğlu does not like this situation because shooting a man from behind by cheating is incompatible with manliness and bravery.

Köroğlu expresses himself by saying "Holed iron is invented, valour is deteriorated." While these words are enough to show that Köroğlu is an Alpine type, many behaviours such as standing up against injustice, protecting the weak from the oppression of the strong, taking revenge for his father and his physical depiction in the epic show his courage and valour.

As in the story of Bogac Han, he does not take a name until showing bravery: "In the epic of Bogac Han, the son of Dirse Han, Dirse Han had a son after a long time. While Dirse Han's son and three tribal children are playing "the game of aşık" in the square, by holding Bayındır Han's bull with iron chains, they take it out of the palace and put it in the middle of the square to watch and have fun. The three boys run away. Dirse Han's boy does not run away. The bull and the boy quarrel. The boy knocks the bull over his head by punching it on his forehead. He cuts off the head of the bull with his knife. Oghuz lords come and gather at the boy's head: They say, 'Dedem Korkut should come, give this boy a name, ask his fatherland for this boy.' Dedem Korkut, who was summoned, comes and tells the boy's father:

Says:

O Dirse Khan!

Give this young man a principality now.

Give him a throne for the sake of his virtue.

Give him also a tall Bedouin horse

He can ride such a capable man.

Give him ten thousand sheep

To make shish kebab for himself; he has virtue.

Give him next a red camel from out of your herd.

Let it carry his goods; he has virtue.

Give a large lavish tent with a golden pole

To provide him with shade.

Give a suit to this man and a coat that has birds on its shoulders.

Let him wear both of these; he has skill.

This young man fought and killed a bull on the playing field of Bayındır Khan. Therefore, let your son's name be Bogac. I give him his name, and may Allah give him his years of life." (Şen, 2006).



The tradition of naming an Alpine name can also be seen in the epic “Bamsı Beyrek, Son of Kam Püre”:

“Pay Püre Bey, he cut off heads; he spilled blood; and he knocked men. Pay Püre asked ‘Is it enough to earn him a name’ ‘Yes, more than enough’ they replied.

Pay Püre Bey invited the strong Oghuz princes as his guests. Dede Korkut came and gave the boy a name.

He said:

Hear my words and listen to me, Pay Püre Bey  
 Almighty Allah gave you a son, and may He preserve him.  
 May he ever be followed by Muslims as he bears his white banner  
 When he has to cross those snow-covered mountains lying yonder  
 May Allah help him cross them  
 When he has to ride through bloody rivers  
 May Allah grant him safe passage  
 When he has fallen among the crowds of infidels  
 May Allah give him yet a chance  
 You will pamper him and call him still ‘My Bamsı’  
 But let his full name now be Bamsı Beyrek with the Gray Horse  
 I have given him his name may Allah give him years.  
 The strong Oghuz Beys lifted their hands in prayer and asked that his name bring him good luck.” (Ergin, 1999).

It is seen that boys are given a name without showing any heroism, but Alpine behaviour is expected from the boy in his youth, even in childhood: “Due to the extraordinary circumstances observed in the birth of Manas Ata's son, which is expressed in the Epic of Manas, the name Semetey was called, 'Let him destroy homelands at the age of five, shoot arrows at the age of fifteen, let him take big cities!’” (Polat, Yener and Yılmaz, 2021).

Another feature of the Alpine type in Turkish epics is that it is always mounted on horses. This way of life, which comes from the oldest times, refers to Turkish thought as “A Turk is born in a tent, dies on horseback.”

Alp, Alp-Eren or Alp-Gazi do not hesitate to fight, they can even go to war alone, but they usually have forty soldiers with them. He always triumphs over the enemy; never be defeated. For example, Oghuz Kagan and Manas are examples of the Alpine type, which cannot be defeated by anyone. An important point to note here is that the enemy that the Alpine type fights is not weak either, so Alp defeats strong and numerous enemies. Thus, his courage, valour and heroism are revealed as the ideal type.

The wives of the Alpine type seen in the epics are as blessed and important as the Alps are, the wives of the Alps were sent to them by God, and they are sacred. It is seen that the Alps choose their wives from valiant and combative women: “First of all, Akine/Akana, who inspired God Kayra Khan to create in the Creation Epic, is a woman, and this woman who inspired creation is nothing but the reflection of the Umay myth in the epic. It is indisputable that the girls whom Oghuz Kagan married are associated with sacred elements such as light and trees and that they have divine characteristics in the Epic of Oghuz Kagan. The beginning of events that led to the formation of the

migration epic of the Uyghurs begins with the loss of the sacred “yada” stone on the mountain of Hatun. The fact that the name of this mountain is Hatun (means “woman” in Turkish) is quite remarkable in terms of emphasizing the place of women in Turkish epics.” (Colak, 2016). Again, Bamsı Beyrek in Dede Korkut goes hunting to marry Banu Çiçek, races horses, shoots arrows, wrestles and gets married after winning these races.

Alpine is modest, honest, generous, virtuous and hospitable as he is strong on his wrist; He is talented with his features such as slaughtering, shedding blood, and riding a horse, but he does not touch the weak and forgives those who ask for his forgiveness.

## Discussions and Conclusions

In this study, it has been observed that the common motifs of the Turks, who have a deep-rooted history of 5000 years, live in both pre-Islamic and Islamic-influenced anonymous products. The most important of these are Alp, Alp-Eren and Alp-Gazi types.

Along with the contents of the texts examined, the Alpine type in Turkish mythology continues to exist under the names Alp-Eren or Alp-Gazi in epics, Dede Korkut Stories and even in local legends such as Bayraklı Sultan, despite the religious changes in Turks. Thus, it has been determined that the cultural heritage is protected in these works.

In the research of Çılgınoğlu and Helveci (2022) on Kastamonu religious tourism centers, it was stated that the visit rate of these centers is low and awareness studies should be made to increase this rate. Researching social complexes like Nasrullah, Şeyh Şaban-ı Veli, Yakupağa and İmsailbey; mosques like Sinanbey, Atabeygazi, Honsalar, Ferhatpaşa, İbni Neccar, Musa Fakih; and religious places like Hepkebirler Sahaba Turbe or Kubbeli Mescit and cultural sites, and the founders of these sites, the saints, could make Turkish people, who protect and preserves their culture, more interested in these sites. Therefore, it can be said that discussing and highlighting characters like Alp, Alp-Eren, and Alp-Gazi in various studies could contribute to the development of cultural and religious tourism.

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