

THE ERGENEKON EPIC



“Ergenekon Epic” is a part of “Great Turkish Epic.” It is about the era of “Kök-Turks (Göktürk).” Ergenekon Epic is one of the greatest of Turkish Epics. It affected the Turkish type of lifestyle for centuries and even today some of its effects can be seen in the customs of mountain village life in Anatolia.

Ergenekon Epic is the kind of a widely and freely explained “Bozkurt Epic”. It means, it tells about the fact that source of Turkish race is based on “Bozkurt Epic” and about the period of development and spread of Turkish race.

Ergenekon Epic starts at the point that Bozkurt Epic ends, as in the writings of the Chinese historians. Shortly, Ergenekon Epic is the next stage of “Bozkurt Epic” and is Mongolized in Cengiz Han’s time. But, obviously the roots and the basic motives of the epic is related with Kök-Turks (Göktürk).

“The state of Kök-Turk (Göktürk) became a worldwide empire in the 6th century and lived 200 years. It is impossible that such a great empire takes an epic of primitive Mongols and explain its roots by the epic. On the other hand, one of the main characters of “Ergenekon Epic” is an ironworker. In the epic, this ironworker finds an iron mine and Turks melt the iron and leave Ergenekon under the leadership of Bozkurt. It is known that the ancestors of Gokturks were ironworkers. They used to make arms and sell them to other states.

Gökturks lived on Altay and Sayon mountains. These mountains had rich iron mines. Turks worked on iron very well and made a war industry during the era. Gökturks produced swords, knives and some other arms. They also produced shovel, sickles for agriculture. On the other hand, Mongols didn’t know about ironworking.

Chinese general Men Hung, in his book “Meng-Ta Pei-Lu”, wrote, Mongols didn’t know how to work on iron, they used bones for the arrow tips and they bought iron arms from Uygur Turks.



In the Ergenekon Epic, Turks could not find a way out from Ergenekon and had to melt the iron parts of the mountain and open a gate. In order to melt the iron mine, they located wood and coal parts around the mountain and they started 70 fires on 70 different spots. The number “7” and “70” are Turkish mythologic numbers. Mongol’s mythologic numbers are “6” and “60”. The number “70” in the epic instead of “60” proves that the epic is not stemmed from a Mongol writing, but from a Turkish one.

Caves take a significant place in Turkish mythology and school of thought. This is valid not only in Göktürk, Bozkurt and Ergenekon Epics, but also in Anatolian tales. Some characters and style in these epics can be seen in Anatolian Epics, even in Islamic tales.

In one of the Anatolian epics, Muhammed Hanefi (one of Hz.Ali's four children) chases after a deer and deer gets into a cave and Muhammed Hanefi enters into the cave, passes through it and reaches at a plain and meets Mine Hatun there. If noticed, it can be seen that, the cave is similar to the one that Bozkurt takes the last living Turkish young in and the plain is the same with the one in Bozkurt Epic. And more over, this plain is the location where Kayı and Tokuz Oguz formed their native country.



It is possible to see the signs of Bozkurt and Ergenekon Epics in Altay Epics too. In one Altay Epic, a hunter while hunting, starts to run after a deer and they reach at a copper mountain. Suddenly the copper mountain opens up and they pass in the gate. Some time later, deer disappears and the hunter comes across some types of evils, meets wise men and sees charming girls. As seen in Altay Epics, motifs like cave and plain are the same as in Muhammed Hanefi Epic.

In the great Asian Hun Empire, there were ceremonies under the presidency of Hun Empire. One of the most important ceremonies, the managers of the state gather and visit "Ata Cave" and conduct religious ceremonies and show their respect to their ancestors. The same ceremonies are seen in Göktürk state. This cave, named "Ata Cave" is the one Bozkurt brought the rescued Turkish teen and hid him and took him to Ergenekon.

Tabgaçs also engrave the rocks in cave shapes and sacrifice for earth, sky and Ata spirits. Then they plant a holy forest by the beech trees. The main thing is all the nation believes in this and state respects this epic.

The Ergenekon Epic is the story of Turkish, Plowing, hunting, mining and increasing and the story of holly lands surrounded by mountains beyond reach. One of the main points that should be underlined is the custom of iron working. Weapons made up of iron and steel are the natural handcraft and honor for Turks in Ergenekon Epic. Turks melted an iron mountain and immortalized their heroes.



Ergenekon Epic was first ascertained by Resideddin, the state historian of Cengiz Han's Turk-Mongol state. Resideddin provides wide range of information about Ergenekon Epic in his book, "cami üt-Tevarih", but he Mongolizes the Turkish Egenekon Epic in this book.

In 17th Century, the leader of "HİVE", "Ebulgazi Bahadır Han" mentioned about ergenekon Epic in his book, "Secere-I Turk" (Family Tree of Turks) Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu wrote a book in which he similarized the Anatolia of Independence war with Ergenekon.

Bozkurt is the leading role of Ergenekon Epic, as in other Turkish Epics too he guides Turkish nation.



In one rumor, Turks left Ergenekon on 9th of March. In another rumor the date is 21st of March. So, it can be inferred that departing started in the 9th of March and completed in the 21st of March.

In Turkish lands, there were no communities not defeated by Turks. So, foreign communities were envious of Turks. Then they came together and attacked on Turks. In reaction to this attack, Turks assembled their tents, people and herd at one place, dig ditches and put trenches. When the enemy reached they started fighting for 10 days and the enemy was defeated.

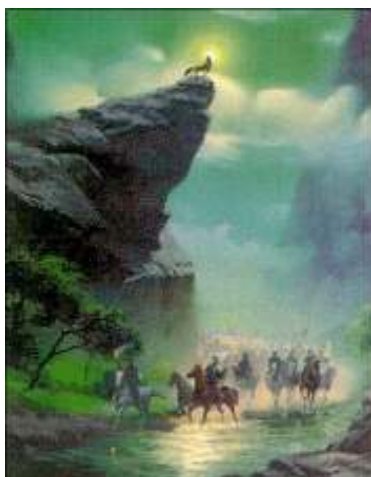
As a result of this defeat, the leaders of enemy made a meeting and decided, “Unless we cheat Turks, We can’t stay alive”

At the dawn of the day, they started to run back leaving their arms and equipments back, and Turks chasing after them supposing that the enemy lost power. Suddenly, the enemy turned around and fought back. They reached Turkish tents by killing Turkish soldiers, firing tents, killing matures and imprisoning the children.



At that time, the president of Turks was “İl kaan”. His son Kayı and cousin Tokuz Oguz was captured by the enemy. They were alive after 10 days of imprisonment. They escaped with their wives on horse ride and reached at Turkish land. They found horses, camels and cows there. They were surrounded by enemy from every corner. So they migrated to mountains with their herds. The route they took was very dangerous and difficult to walk on.

In the country they reached at, there were rivers, rich vegetation and hunting fields. Kayı had many children. The children of these two, Kayı and Tokuz Oguz, stayed in Ergenekon, Developed, increased in numbers and 400 years passed by.



After 400 years, they increased so much in numbers that Ergenekon was not wide enough for them anymore. So they gathered the council and said.

“We heard from our fathers that there are wide and nice lands out from Ergenekon. We shall get out of Ergenekon and pass over mountains, find other places and make friends if possible or enemy if necessary.”

After the meeting and the decision of the council, they tried ways out of Ergenekon but could not find one. At that moment, on ironworker told, “There is on iron mine in the mountain, if we melt it, then we may have a pass”. So they found the mine and put many woods and coal around the mountain in 70 different points. They melted the iron mine and opened up gate through which a loaded camel can pass through.





After that, that appeared a Bozkurt whom nobody knew about. Bozkurt stood up in front of the Turk, so it is understood that he will guide the Turks and Turks behind the Bozkurt left Ergenekon on a holly year, holly month, and holly day.

Turks kept in mind the date and set the date for ceremony. Every year, they melt iron and work on it with hammer and so celebrate the anniversary day.

Once they left Ergenekon, the chief, Bozkurt, coming from “Kayı Han” family, sent representatives to all other countries to inform them about Turk’s leave from Ergenekon. And it meant a sign of Turkish power on the other countries. Some of them accepted the power of Turks, some did not. And Turks fought with them and after victory, Turks took the power on every corner.

In order to keep in mind the Ergenekon Epic, every year, Turkish leaders commemorate anniversary of Ergenekon, by melting and working on iron as a show.



Beyza AKANOĞLU
9-C 1584
Ümitköy Anadolu Lisesi