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*The back cover features photographs of figurines made
by sculptor Gorush Babayev based on themes from the epic
“Book of Dada Qorqud”.*

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As part of the programme of events envisaged in the Order of the President of the Azerbaijan Republic on marking the 200th anniversary of the first German translation and publication of “The Book of Dada Qorqud”, the

Baku International Multiculturalism Centre presents in 26 languages:

Arabic	English	Hebrew	Khinaliq	Talish
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* This book is to be published in Spanish, Portuguese, Indonesian, Dutch, Polish, Czech, Bulgarian and many other languages in the future



**Order
of the President of the Azerbaijan Republic on marking
the 200th anniversary of the first German translation
and publication of “The Book of Dada Qorqud”**

The 200th anniversary of German Orientalist Friedrich von Diez’s discovery, publication and presentation to the international academic community of «The Book of Dada Qorqud» falls in 2015. This literary monument occupies an exceptional place in the cultural treasury of the Azerbaijani people and has for centuries been an inseparable part of national spiritual life.

A considerable quantity of research has been done into the «Dada Qorqud» epic and significant steps have been taken to shape Qorqud studies as a distinct discipline. The celebrations of the 1,300th anniversary of «The Book of Dada Qorqud» in 2000, organized at an international level through UNESCO, marked the beginning of a new stage in the history of research into the epic.

Taking into account the great importance of the Dada Qorqud epic in preserving and revitalizing national heritage and raising new generations in the Azerbaijani spirit, with the aim of ensuring the systematic work of Qorqud studies, and guided by Article 109, Paragraph 32 of the Constitution of the Azerbaijan Republic, I resolve:

1. That the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Azerbaijan Republic, together with the Ministry of Education of the Azerbaijan Republic and the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences, taking into account the suggestions of the Baku International Multiculturalism Centre, the Knowledge Foundation under the President of the Azerbaijan Republic and the Azerbaijan Writers' Union, should prepare a programme of events to mark the 200th anniversary of German scholar Friedrich von Diez's first translation, publication and presentation to the international academic community of «The Book of Dada Qorqud» and submit it to the Cabinet of Ministers of the Azerbaijan Republic for confirmation.

2. That the Cabinet of Ministers of the Azerbaijan Republic should resolve issues arising from this Order.

Ilham Aliyev,
President of the Azerbaijan Republic

Baku city, 20 February 2015.



Heinrich Friedrich von Diez

(1751-1817)



With Love to Von Diez...

In 1815 the outstanding German Orientalist and diplomat, Heinrich Friedrich von Diez, translated into German part of the Azerbaijani (Oghuz) epic poem "The Book of Dada Qorqud". He collected a variety of Oriental manuscripts during his time as Prussia's first ambassador to the Ottoman state, but had a special affinity with this manuscript. The heroes and stories depicted here reminded him of the myths of ancient Greece, as there are plenty of parallels and similarities. That is why he chose to translate for publication "The Tale of How Basat Killed Tapagoz" rather than one of the other tales. The similarities between Basat and Odysseus, Tapagoz and Polyphemus, and the parallels in the story allow Von Diez to trace the literary genealogy of the Dada Qorqud epic to ancient times.

Von Diez published his translation in Berlin, accompanied by a foreword with a deep comparative analysis. In this way, the epic "Book of Dada Qorqud" was presented to international scholarship in 1815.

Since then, Italian, Russian, Turkish, French, German, British, American and Azerbaijani scholars have taken up Von Diez's baton and created an extensive, interesting, rich and colourful world of Qorqud studies. Two hundred years have passed.

On 20 February 2015, Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev signed an extremely important Order on marking the 200th anniversary of this unforgettable event. This Order constituted a political expression of respect and gratitude from the followers of Dada Qorqud to the spirit of

Von Diez, outstanding Orientalist, scholar and one of the best-known representatives of 19th-century German Romanticism. This made 2015 a celebration not just for Azerbaijan, but for philology and Qorqud studies throughout the world.

This book includes the foreword written by Von Diez in 1815 and the story he chose from the 12 in "The Book of Dada Qorqud", "The Tale of How Basat Killed Tapagoz". Although 200 years have passed since the first publication in Berlin, the appreciation of the Azerbaijani people's spirituality, generated by the German scholar's "Book of Dada Qorqud", remains relevant today. We are pleased and proud today that the excerpt from our immortal Epic, part of the system of human values, and Von Diez's precious foreword have been translated and published in the world's leading languages. I believe that this book, compiled by the Baku International Multiculturalism Centre and the Azerbaijan Creativity Foundation, will stir the same excitement in the hearts of readers, regardless of creed and race, as it did in Von Diez's heart 200 years ago.

With deep respect and love for Heinrich Friedrich von Diez and all Qorqud scholars.

Kamal Abdulla

HEINRICH FRIEDRICH VON DIEZ

*A Comparison of the Newly
Discovered Oghuz Cyclops
with Homer's*

*The Book of Dada Qorqud.
The Tale of How Basat Killed
Tapagoz*

Berlin - 1815 / Baku - 2015



**A COMPARISON OF THE NEWLY
DISCOVERED OGHUZ
CYCLOPS WITH HOMER'S**

By Heinrich Friedrich von Diez,
adviser to the secret mission and prelate
Halle and Berlin, 1815.

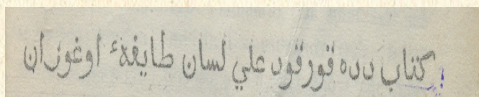
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TAPA GOZ (TƏPƏ GÖZ) OR THE OGHUZ CYCLOPS

From the Tatar – Turkish language

1. The text, from where I have taken this heading, is written on the cover side of the first page:



That is, the “Book of Dada Qorqud” written in the language of the Oghuz people. It bears the number 61 in the small folio in my collection of Oriental manuscripts. The same writing can be found in the royal library in Dresden and matches mine perfectly, though with mistakes. (Recollections of *Paul*, Part 4, p. 13, No. 86).

2. Difficulties may arise since there is no indication of the book’s contents or author; therefore,

it is very important to acquaint readers more closely with this manuscript.

3. The short introduction (to the manuscript) says:

Near to the time of the prophet (Muhammad), peace be upon him!, there was born into one family Qorqud Ata (Ata – father - is the same as Dada) who knew the lineage of the first Oghuz very well. Whatever he said would come to pass. He gave all kinds of tidings of what was to come. The sublime God gave him inspiration. Thus spoke Qorqud Ata: In the last days sovereignty will come again to a rock and no-one will be able to take it from its hand. This refers to the lineage of the Ottomans, which continues today and will continue to the last times, to the dawn of Judgment Day. He expressed many similar ideas. Qorqud Ata resolved all the difficult problems of the Oghuz. Come what may, one did nothing without seeking advice from Qorqud. Whatever he said was met with approval. One listened to his word and acted accordingly.

4. It is clear from the reference to the house of the Ottomans that this introduction was written

at a time when the Ottoman dynasty had already been established. But how could Dada Qorqud here belong to Muhammad's time before the creation of the Ottoman dynasty: so I have shown from a detail in the Book of the Oghuz that he could not have lived before the ninth century. I will tackle the discrepancies that arise after I have first said more about the contents.

5. The introduction is followed by Dada Qorqud's aphorisms.

The first is: if you do not call upon God, things will not go right. They take up about half a page in my manuscript. It appears that they have been added by a third hand while most, though not all, of the sayings can also be found in the Book of the Oghuz.

6. The actual beginning of the book, what is ascribed to Dada Qorqud, can only be found on the second page.

Dada Qorqud says: We want to see what my khan has said!

As I open my mouth I will praise Almighty God etc.

7. From praising God, he goes on to praise Muhammad and Ali. This is how all the books of the Mohammedans customarily begin, with the sole difference that authors who are not of the Persian confession express their blessings for the family and descendants of Muhammad, without mentioning the Caliph Ali by name. It follows from this that the author or compiler was not a Hanafi or an Ottoman. It would be logical for Dada Qorqud to have belonged to the Persian confession, as I have shown in my Book of the Oghuz.

8. After these expressions of praise some remarks by a well-known Ozan about the qualities of women come under a special heading on the same second page. These continue onto the third page.

9. Next comes a series of twelve historical tales, the first of which is headed Bughaj Khan, the second the pillaging of Salur Qazan, while the eleventh and twelfth both have titles, the freeing of Salur Qazan and the rebellion of the foreign Oghuz against the native Oghuz. All these stories feature misfortunes or heroic feats of individual Oghuz nobles in individual instances, or in war with unnamed Greeks on the

Asian shore of the Black Sea, so material for Oghuz history as a whole cannot be found here. They are special family memories that have been embellished in the remembering or completely fabricated.

10. To talk some more about the author, I should first say that no sign of the times can be found in the whole book that would allow conclusions to be drawn about the era in which the separate events took place. From the outset one might think that everything happened in the times of Dada Qorqud. But he does not narrate anything in his own name. He appears from time to time in order to give advice in separate instances, but mostly he appears at the end of an event in order to give his blessings to the Oghuz, which is then called the Oghuznameh. One can read the expression of these blessings at the end of seven different stories, but one scarcely knows what to make of them. This word [Oghuznameh] cannot be translated as the Book of the Oghuz or the History of the Oghuz. Rather, it should be clarified as an address to the Oghuz or a dedication to them. It should have been called the history of the Oghuz, if all the stories themselves were meant. The expression is limited every time to only praise and

blessings, which Dada Qorqud says as a third party who arrives after the event. It is to be suspected that the expression Oghuznameh is, therefore, repeated so often in order to serve as the original title of the whole book. At least the book seems to have been named the Book of Qorqud by a previous owner on the cover side of the first page as he saw Qorqud appear with his blessings so often; for I have several times noted and proved that the Orientals have never been exact in their literary message. One can assume from all this that the book was put together by an unknown third person. What cloaks this assumption in certainty is the fact that the events narrated took place in clearly very different periods; the incidents with the Greeks on the Black Sea and the rebellion of the foreign Oghuz against the native are much more recent than other events which must have happened in the early days of the forefathers of the Oghuz, i.e. thousands of years ago, when Qorqud cannot have been present. This discrepancy can be seen in the introduction mentioned above, which says that Dada Qorqud knew the first Oghuz, although he can only have known the last Oghuz; the forefathers of the Oghuz lived more than three thousand years earlier.

11. All this is confirmed in the eighth story which I share here from the book. It has the heading:

بساط دپه کوزي اولدم رکبي نوي ديبان ايدم

It says “it is written how Basat killed Tapagoz”. Tapagoz is presented as a giant of a man in body and strength with a single eye in his forehead. He got his name from this eye. His name, Tapa Goz, literally means “an eye in his forehead” (Scheitel-Auge). It is the very same creature that the Greeks called Cyclops; it is in all respects like the Greek Cyclops, and especially Homer’s Cyclops, which we have more material about than other Cyclopes.

12. One will soon hear that the Oghuz Cyclops was not copied from the Greek, rather the other way around. If the Greek version dates back to early antiquity, the Oghuz version cannot be so new that Dada Qorqud could be his contemporary, as is invented here; for according to the narration he is not only sent to Tapagoz to negotiate an end to the latter’s hostility to the Oghuz, but he is also fetched to start playing new songs of joy and to grant his blessings after Tapagoz has been killed by Basat.

On the other hand, the beginning of the tale talks about the Oghuz khan, forefather of the Oghuz, and other Oghuz nobles are listed as his contemporaries, namely Aruz Qoja, father of Bissat, the hero of the story who fells the Cyclops. This is also new proof that Dada Qorqud is taken to an ancient time only for the sport of it which was very easy as both Cyclopes themselves, the Oghuz and the Greek, are to be seen only as fictional. Although they might have had the same historical roots, which cannot be explained now.

13. I have no reason to doubt that a man named Dada Qorqud did live. But he lived only with the later Oghuz, who had already been robbed of the rule of their fathers, as is shown in the introduction above (to the quoted prophecy) and other events that happened in the Book of the Oghuz. I also believe that, as reputed, he was a perspicacious advisor to his Oghuz and lived to a ripe old age as his epithet shows, Grandfather – Dada or Ata. I am also convinced that through tradition he knew many old tales, which he told to his contemporaries or bequeathed them in a completely different form from the present one. As

we know, it was Dada Qorqud who first amongst his people collected all the practical proverbs and maxims of the Oghuz khan and recorded them in the Book of the Oghuz. Despite all the confusion about time and dates, typical of the Orient, it is impossible to accept that Dada Qorqud himself was an eyewitness or a contemporary of the people that preceded him by more than two thousand years: I have satisfied myself that this book was compiled by a third person from Dada Qorqud's oral or written accounts and out of respect or for the fun of it Dada Qorqud was presented as an advisor between the younger Oghuz and older Oghuz with whom he did not live. I must stress, however, the fact that Dada Qorqud does not speak anywhere in his own voice, and is always mentioned only as an advisor or giver of blessings. All this should not makes us doubt the age of the book, however; but indicators of the time of the author or compiler are lacking: so I should at least assert that, allowing for the short introduction, that it goes beyond the emergence of the Ottoman dynasty. This is shown not only through the mixture of the Tatar and Turkish language, but also through the flatness and roughness of the style of the creator,

as both are older than the Ottoman Empire. This will become even clearer when I have explained about the Oghuz language, as it was called on the back of the first page, probably by an Ottoman.

14. This is no other than the Tatar-Turkish language that I wrote about in the introduction to the Book of the Oghuz.

Denkwürdigkeiten von Asien. I. Band. S. 165, 166 (Recollections of Asia, Vol. 1, pp. 165-166.). The Oghuz were from the beginning one of the peoples brought together from Turks and Tatars, while Oghuz Khan, Mogul's grandson, united both under his rule. (*Ibidem*, p. 158).

A long time after his death many changes had occurred amongst his people, such as the emergence of new tribes, or changes in name, which led to the creation of new dialects. What isn't missing is the straight line of the descendants of the old Oghuz. There were tribes who kept their own languages under the name of the Oghuz and passed them down from one generation to another, the very same who are talked about here, and they existed until the time of Ertugrul, father of Osman I, who

founded the Ottoman dynasty. In order to prove this, I refer to the Byzantine historians who go back to a Duz Alpes from the tribe of the Oghuz whose leader he was. His son Oghuz Alpes (later named Suleyman), ruler of an Oghuz tribe, fought a great deal with the Greeks and in a short time attained considerable power. Under Ertugrul, son of Oghuz Alpes, the Oghuz took many strongholds in Tauris [Crimea]. Finally his son Osman gave his name to the Ottoman dynasty. (Stritter *Memor. Popular.* Vol. III pp. 531-533). This concurs with the information that De Guignes collated from oriental countries. He maintains that the Turcomans named Ghuzz were the same as the Oghuz, of which some groups dispersed to Europe and became known as the Uz. These Uz probably came from the land of Uzia, which the Byzantines put in the Caucasus (Stritter III, p. 807). Those Turcomans drove the Seljuks from Khorasan and settled there themselves. Afterwards in Hijri year 611 (1214 AD) they undertook their first campaign in Asia Minor under the aforementioned Suleyman Shah, grandfather of Osman I. They were, however, driven back by the Mongols and went to Azerbaijan. In Hijri year 616 (1219 AD) the selfsame

Suleyman set out with five thousand men for Asia Minor but died at the Euphrates. His son Ertugrul reinforced his power in Iconium, the seat of the Seljuks. He died in 680 or 687 (1280 or 1287 AD) and was succeeded by his son Osman I. (De Guignes, *Geschichte der Hunnen und Turken*. Vol IV, p. 353.) It is clear from all this that Ertugrul brought the Oghuz language to Iconium, the land of the Seljuks. As the fine historians and old friends Reis and Raschid Efendi once assured me personally that Osman had only two thousand Turcomans or Oghuz with him, when he began his conquests to found the monarchy: it follows from this that the Oghuz language could not remain dominant as the language of the Seljuks, called the Turkish language, found itself dominant in Asia Minor, although the speakers of both languages could understand one another just as the Russians and Poles can more or less speak to one another today. So the name of the Oghuz language must have got lost, while the name of the Turkish language of the Ottomans remained. Just as a family named Seljuk lent its name to a tribe that originally migrated from Turkestan in order to make conquests under their aforementioned leaders, Osman left a name to

the mixed peoples who were subordinate to him and his successors. So if it is said of this book that it was written in the Oghuz language, this means that it was written long before Osman I.

15. To consider the content of the story more closely which is the subject of this essay: it would, therefore, be quite strange to find amongst the Oghuz in Central Asia, that is in the lands on the far side of the Oxus, a Cyclops, a mythical creature that we have so far sought only among the ancient Greeks.

16. The Greeks talk of three types of Cyclopes, who get their name from the single round eye they are supposed to have had in the middle of their forehead. They are presented as enormous giants, who like Polyphemus are 200 feet tall and carry a club larger than the largest mast. They are portrayed as wild, uncultured men from whom the expression a cyclopic life became a byword for a life lived without respect for law, good morals or religion. This was what all Cyclopes had in common.

17. Three of the first type are called Arges, Brontes and Steropes. They are said to have been born of Goelus and his wife Terra. They were not

gods but were very like the gods (*diis similes*). Their father Goelus bound their arms and legs and cast them into Tartarus. Jupiter, however, released them, for which they forged him thunderbolts. They also served Vulcan as blacksmiths and had their forge on the island of Lipari. They were killed by Apollo for forging thunderbolts.

18. We are not dealing here with these mythical Cyclopes. No-one knows what they should think of them. They were used by the Greek poets, and later the Roman poets, simply as empty names with whom they did as they wanted, though it can come across in their writing as rather repetitive. Without doubt certain traditions are hidden beneath this, which the first inhabitants of Greece brought with them from the Orient or which their descendants collected during trips to the Orient. These traditions have, however, become unrecognisable, partly through name changes, partly through new layers coined in the Greek language, partly through arbitrary additions or distortions, which were added by the scribes. It would also be a vain effort to want to go back to the first ground of mythical events or people.

One should leave it open, as Macrobius and Cicero noted, that the term so-called giants referred to nefarious people who denied the gods, so one might assume that the gods would have liked to drive them from their home.

19. The second type of Cyclopes are artisans who are said to have built enormous constructions. In the land of Argos was a city Tiryntha which a certain Proatus fortified with the help of seven Cyclopes summoned from Lycien. The city walls were built of stones, the smallest of which could be moved only by a pair of oxen. The walls of the city of Mycenae were also attributed to them, while Strabo called the caves at Nauplia and the three labyrinths therein the works of Cyclopes. In this sense, the Cyclopes are invoked when one wants to explain something wondrous and astonishing. These people said nothing of their deformity or of a single eye. They seem to have been viewed really as giants who have only this in common with the mythological Cyclopes: *Roburque et vires et doli erant in operibus.*

20. One can consider here too the Albanians who lived between Iberia in the West and the Caspian Sea

in the East, as it was customary to ascribe to them a cyclopic way of life as they were large of stature and farmed the land and raised stock. The Cyclopes were considered cannibals: some Scythians who lived to the north were called Cyclopes as they were accused of cannibalism.

21. The second type of Cyclopes are more Cyclopes in name than in deed, as we have only a general idea of them, as applied to certain people and certain tribes. Here we come to a single individual who can be compared with the Oghuz. This is thirdly no other than the Homeric Cyclops named Polyphemus. The other Cyclopes, who are said to have lived near him on the island of Trinacria or Sicily, can be put in the aforementioned second category; for some of them are not described in detail by Homer, but were singled out by another scribe for their deformity. Rather, all the old accounts concur that the Sicilian Cyclopes were only the first inhabitants of the island and arrived there from Italy approximately one hundred years after Peleg and were seen later by the Phoenicians as native born (aborigines). They settled on the bay of Lilybaeum

in the environs of Mount Etna, whose eruption of flames and thunder led to the idea of the forge; so, following the example of the first kind of Cyclopes, they were portrayed as Vulcan's servants in the forge. All that is known of their stature that is out of the ordinary is that they were the size of giants, as can be seen from the skeletons found in various graves, although this is disputed. At least this has provided the opportunity to put them with the example of the Cyclopes of the second kind with the same names. The cliffs where they lived were called *Cyclopum scopuli* and are now called Faraglioni. They are three cliffs on the east coast of the Val di Demone near Catania, to the north.

22. We would also like to see in what aspects the two Cyclopes, the Oghuz and Homeric, tally and what the circumstances are on which Homer remains completely silent; for we learn far more about Tapagoz here than we know about Polyphemus.

23. (1) An Oghuz shepherd (a respected person in ancient times) comes one day to a spring where angel fairies (*peri*) have gathered, and forces himself upon one of them. The angel gives birth to a boy who

grows to an enormous size and has only one eye in his head, for which he is called Tapagoz.

24. Homer says only of Polyphemus' origins that he is Neptune's son. Some say that he was born of Neptune and the nymph Toosa or Amphitrite, others that he was born of Elatus and the nymph Stilbe or Amymone, although the son of Elatus was really one of the Argonauts and must therefore have been a man, like the others, in order to have had a place on the boat.

25. *Ricci diss. 51* thinks that the single eye of the Cyclopes is an allegory to make the point that they look around them to see the opportunity to attack and plunder their neighbours. This idea lacks coherence. True or false, both Cyclopes were shown with a single eye in order later to be robbed of it. Ricci does add that, according to many witnesses, there were people with one eye. This could have been the case, but does not apply here as they were not the Cyclopes under discussion.

26. (2) The Oghuz nobles found the new-born boy, Tapagoz, near the spring where his fairy mother had

laid him after his birth: one of the nobles, called Old Aghuz, took him to bring him up with his son Basat. The wet nurses he was given died because of the strength of his sucking. He had to be fed a different way. As soon as he grew bigger, he began to eat the noses and ears of other boys and his playmates. As a result, he was driven out of the house.

27. Homer and others completely ignored this period in the life of their Polyphemus.

28. (3) After Tapagoz was disowned by the Oghuz, his mother appeared before him in order to place a ring on his finger through whose power he would be invulnerable to arrows and swords. Left to his own devices, he made his home on the high mountain called Qara Dagh, that is Black Mountain, and lived as a brigand.

29. Nothing is known of Polyphemus being invulnerable. What Tapagoz has in common with him is living on a mountain and leading a lawless or cyclopic life.

30. Plato believes that people put the Cyclopes on mountains as after the Flood people first lived in

mountains for fear of being flooded again. Only later did people move to the plains and finally to the coast. But this goes against history: the reason the Cyclopes chose to live in the inaccessible mountains should be sought in their need for protection from human attack and their desire to live their wild way of life.

31. (4) In order to feed himself, Tapagoz stole and ate people and animals. The Oghuz united seven times in order to destroy him, but were defeated every time. With a single tree-trunk, the aforementioned club of the Greek Cyclopes, which he ripped from the earth, he killed between fifty and sixty people. Arrows, swords and javelins did not work against him at all and smashed against his body.

32. Polyphemus escaped such attacks. Moreover, the other residents of the island of Trinacria are described as his friends. Ulysses and his companions did not risk such an undertaking either.

33. The Oghuz could see no other way to help themselves than to reach an agreement with Tapagoz. At first he demanded sixty people to eat every day. He let himself be persuaded to settle for two people

and five hundred sheep, which the Oghuz had to deliver every day. Moreover, he also had to be given a one-off gift of two Oghuz as servants to roast the people and sheep for him.

34. All one knows of Polyphemus' usual diet is that, according to Homer, he lived off the produce of his numerous flocks of sheep and goats, especially milk and cheese, and the grains that grew on the island and drank wine. Only when Ulysses and his twelve companions arrived at his cave did he indulge morning and evening in eating two of the companions raw, without waiting to roast them.

35. (6) The Oghuz met the terms of the agreement until it was again the turn of an old woman to give up her second and final son when she had already given her first for the greater good to Tapagoz. This woman complained to Basat, the very same who for a time was raised with Tapagoz and was then suckled by a lioness. He took the decision to free the Oghuz from the ogre, although his father and mother and all the Oghuz nobles tried to dissuade him from this impossible undertaking. Armed with bows, arrows and swords, he went to the rock where Tapagoz

lived. He shot in vain and as soon as Tapagoz saw Basat, he seized him and took him to his cave, intent on eating him for his evening roast.

36. Ulysses and his companions landed in Trinacria purely out of curiosity and went to Polyphemus's cave just when he was away. No-one had any ill intent towards the Cyclops. But what Ulysses and Basat do have in common is that both were caught in the cave and can think only of escape.

37. (7) After Basat switched from attack to defence, and heard from Tapagoz's two servants that only his eye was vulnerable, he put a large knife (butcher's knife) in the fire until it was red-hot and chose a time when Tapagoz was asleep to burn and gouge out his eye. Tapagoz roared so loudly that it echoed in the mountains.

38. Here we see a coincidence between Ulysses and Basat, as the former, imprisoned in the cave, put an olivewood stake into hot ashes, then plunged it into the sleeping Polyphemus's eye and twisted it round, at which the Cyclops roared so loudly that it echoed in the rocks.

39. What appears to be genuinely cyclopic about Tapagoz and Polyphemus is that after the initial pain of their eye being burnt and gouged out, which caused them to roar, they suffer no further indisposition.

40. The question arises why Ulysses did not kill Polyphemus instead of only depriving him of his eye. The answer lies with Homer himself that Polyphemus must be kept alive in order to remove the large boulder from the door to the cave which Ulysses and his companions had not been able to do. There was no such boulder before Tapagoz's entrance. Since Tapagoz was vulnerable only in his eye, Basat had to seize the Cyclops's sword to ensure that his life was not in danger.

41. (8) Lest he miss the opportunity to roast Basat, Tapagoz took the entrance to the cave, placing one foot on one side and one foot on the other and called the sheep to pass through; he grabbed each one by the head to make sure that Basat did not slip through.

42. Polyphemus did it in a similar way, as he sat in the entrance to the cave and put out his hands to

feel the backs of the passing rams and to grab Ulysses and his companions if they tried to escape.

43. In order to deceive the Cyclops, Basat slayed and skinned a ram, without removing the head and tail. He hid inside the skin and when he passed Tapagoz he put the head into his hands and jumped out through his legs.

44. In order to rescue the six companions who were left behind, Ulysses bound together three rams; the middle one had to carry one of the companions under his stomach. For himself he took the strongest ram in order to hang himself from its woolly stomach. This is how they got out of the cave.

45. Some have been surprised that Ulysses and his companions could each be carried by a single ram. Others have thought that Sicily had rams large enough to bear the burden of a horse. I leave this undecided, but I do believe that Basat chose a better way though he did not have to get seven people out at once. This could be the original reason why Homer did not choose it.

46. (10) Tapagoz talks about all sorts of things with Basat, trying to enchant him. He is so unsuccessful

that in the end Basat has to force Tapagoz to his knees and cut off his head with Tapagoz's own sword. One can read about this in more detail in the following story.

47. There is no further comparison with Polyphemus, for as soon as Ulysses had escaped, he drove the rams into his ship and rowed away. He mocked Polyphemus from the water, prompting the latter to throw boulders at him, which posed a new threat. This behaviour of Ulysses is criticized as imprudent. However, I might add that after he is blinded Tapagoz undertook a similar trial of strength, in which with a stroke of his hand he smashed open either a cave or vault where he kept his treasure as he intended to bury Basat there. While Polyphemus had asked Ulysses his name when he was still in possession of his eye and received a false response, Tapagoz asks this question for the first time after he has lost his eye and Basat gives his real name, whereupon Tapagoz holds him responsible for all the wrong done him by his family.

48. After this comparison, it is difficult to deny that the Oghuz author, whatever he may be called,

and Homer are talking of one and the same ogre or, moreover, that both stories are based on the same material; for although these events, mythical though they are, are set in very different times and places, their narration could not be so very similar through coincidence. Admittedly, the grounds for this similarity do not let themselves be known through clear and uncontested facts. There are reasons, however, why I cannot let myself be persuaded that the Oghuz Cyclops was copied from Homer's. They are the following:

49. First, the Orientals were never acquainted with Greek mythology. They could never have translated Homer's writing, as mythology was incomprehensible to them. The Asian languages themselves had rejected the necessary expressions. *Aelian var. histor. Lib. XII p. 48* does write that the Indians and Persians were accustomed to singing the poems of Homer in their own languages. However, he found this so hard to believe that he added that one should not consider this credible. Also *Abulfaraj histor. dynast. p. 40* talks of a Syrian translation. This is the one that was done in the time of Theophilus

Astronomus of Edessa and included only the first two books of the Iliad, as Abulfaraj noted (p. 148). However, no-one has ever found any trace of these fragments in Syrian books as Fabricius said. *Bibl. graec. lib. 6. p. 250* Dio Chrysostom *orat. 53* repeats the rumour of an Indian translation. However, denying it himself, he adds that many Brachmans had heard the name of Homer without knowing if it referred to an animal or a plant or something else. It is, therefore, to be considered pure fiction if *Labbe nov. Bibl. Mss. p. 257* quotes a Persian Homer amongst the manuscripts in the Vatican library which no-one has seen for themselves. If Asians did not know Homer in translation, they cannot have known the story of Polyphemus.

50. On the other hand, the description of the Oghuz Cyclops from the beginning of his life to his death is so complete that the Homeric account of Polyphemus looks like an extract and copy in comparison. There appear as many points of similarity as needed to prove that they are one and the same character. It is obvious that the Oghuz scribe, though he cannot be identified, knew more

of the matter than Homer. It cannot be determined either how he came to hand down to us the complete legend if it had not been native to the Oghuz tribes and preserved orally, if not in writing, to the time of Dada Qorqud from whose lips it passed into the current collection of Oghuz stories.

51. I am, therefore, inclined to believe that Homer heard the legend of Tapagoz, during his journey to Asia, though he heard it partially, as tends to happen when one has to speak through an interpreter, and that he was moved to borrow the basic features for his Polyphemus. Perhaps he came across the legend in the vicinity of Ionia if a tribe of Oghuz (who knows by which name!) were allied with Priam and fought with him against the Greek siege of Troy. They would, therefore, have brought the fable of Tapagoz to Asia Minor and it would have been quite fresh in the memory in Homer's time. However, Homer made use of it as he wished. It is clear that a complete Cyclops fable may have circulated amongst the so-called barbarian peoples from the most ancient times, independent of Homer, and that it is, therefore, wrong to ascribe to the Greeks everything that one

reads in their literature. I have proved that several scientific concepts and accounts of the Greeks were borrowed from the Orientals. See *Buch des Kabus*, p. 441. Note 2. 615. Note 1 and 824. *Schrift von königlichen Buche S. 20. Note 1. Denkwürdigk. von Asien. Band 1. p. 1. 2.* Here we can see a whole coherent fiction or a history made into fable from Central Asia, of which the Greeks spoke without any link with the name of the Cyclops. Even if one considers together the three types of Cyclopes of which they speak, this will not result in such a whole picture as the one left by the Oghuz.

52. Viewed in this light, it seems to me that it behoves the old science of human affairs to make this known as a notable matter from Asia of which nothing has to date been said in Europe. I will place the literal translation next to the original text, in order to make matters easier for a future scholar if, equipped with linguistic knowledge, he wants to pursue the story of the Oghuz Cyclops in other oriental texts and might be lucky enough to come across the trace of the close connection in which the Asian and Greek accounts of the Cyclops stand together. It is never a labour in

vain to illuminate the darkness of antiquity when we owe it to the rare few that will draw the benefit after us. The original itself is quite poor, as is the way with old books that have passed through the hands of many scribes. I am letting it be printed as it is. There are, however, mistakes that distort the sense or make it incomprehensible, practically leaving it open to guesswork. For such words I have used the best versions that I could find enclosed in brackets. The small mistakes will be easily recognised from my translation by anyone who is versed in the language.



**THE TALE OF HOW BASAT
KILLED TAPAGOZ**



O my Khan!

This may surprise you, my Khan, but one day when the Oghuz were resting, the enemy fell upon them. They took fright and scattered. As they fled, Old Aruz's baby son fell. A lioness found him, carried him away and suckled him.

A new day dawned and the Oghuz returned to their land.

The Oghuz khan's horse drover brought news: "My Khan, a lion comes out of the bushes, striding like a man. He frightens the horses and sucks their blood."

Aruz said, "My Khan, could it be my young son who fell that time we took fright?"

The nobles mounted their horses and galloped to the lion's den. They drove the lioness away and took the boy. Aruz brought his son home.

They made merry with food and drink. But however many times they brought the boy back, he did not stay but ran off to the lioness's den.

They would go and bring him back. My Dada Qorqud came and said to him, "My son, you are a man, you cannot consort with animals! Come, mount a good horse and go out riding with the fine young men. Your older brother's name is Qiyān Seljuk and your name will be Basat! I have given you your name, may God give you a long life."

One day the Oghuz moved to their summer pasture. Aruz had a shepherd whose name was Qonur Qoja Sari. He always migrated first, ahead of everyone else. There was a famous spring, the Tall Spring, where the fairies gathered. Suddenly the sheep took fright.

The shepherd scolded the billy goat and went in front. He saw that the fairies were flying, their wings joined together. The shepherd threw his cloak at them and caught one of the fairies. He desired her and immediately forced himself upon her. The sheep began to take fright so the shepherd ran ahead of them. The fairy beat her wings and flew off, saying,

“Shepherd, in one year exactly I will have something in safekeeping for you. Come and take it. But you have brought calamity upon the Oghuz!”

Fear gripped the shepherd’s heart. His face turned pale at the girl’s words.

The time came for the Oghuz to migrate again to the summer pastures. Again the shepherd went to the spring. Again the sheep took fright. The shepherd ran ahead and saw something glittering and glistening on the ground.

The fairy came and said, “Shepherd, come and take what I have in safekeeping for you! But you have brought calamity upon the Oghuz.”

When the shepherd saw the thing, he was gripped by foreboding and showered it with stones from his catapult. Each time it was hit, it grew. The shepherd fled from the thing and the sheep followed him.

Now, Bayindir Khan was out riding with his nobles and they came to this spring.

They saw the terrible thing lying on the ground. They couldn’t make out its head from its arse. They surrounded it. One knight dismounted and kicked

the thing. Each time he kicked it, it grew. Aruz Qoja dismounted too and kicked it, catching it with his spur. The thing cleaved in two and out popped a boy. He had the body of a man and a single eye in his forehead. Aruz took the boy and tied him in his skirts.

“My Khan,” he said, “give this one to me! We will raise him with my son Basat.” “He is yours!” said Bayindir Khan.

Aruz took Tapagoz and brought him home. A wet nurse was summoned and put her nipple in the babe’s mouth. He sucked once and took all her milk, he sucked twice and took her blood, he sucked three times and took her life. Several wet nurses were brought but he killed them all.

They saw it was impossible and said they would feed him with milk themselves. A cauldron of milk a day was not enough. They fed him and he grew and began to walk. He played with the other little boys. He began to eat the nose of one little boy, the ear of another. To cut a long story short, the whole camp of the Oghuz was greatly upset with him. They were helpless. They wept as they complained to Aruz.

Aruz thrashed Tapagoz, scolded him, banned such behaviour, but he paid no heed. Finally, he was banished from the household.

Tapagoz's fairy mother came and placed a ring on the boy's finger. "Son," she said. "No arrow will fell you! No sword will hurt you!"

Tapagoz left the Oghuz and went to a high mountain. He blocked the roads, carried off men and was a great brigand. Many men were sent against him. Arrows were shot but did not fell him, swords were thrust at him but did not hurt him. They plunged javelins into him but to no effect. No shepherds or shepherd boys remained, he ate them all. He began to eat men from the Oghuz too.

The Oghuz assembled and marched on him. When he saw them, Tapagoz was furious. He tore a tree from the earth and cast it at the Oghuz, killing fifty to sixty men. He struck a blow against Qazan, chief amongst the heroes, and the world became narrow for his head. Qazan's brother Qaraguna turned limp at Tapagoz's hand. Dozan's son, Alp Rustam, was martyred. A strongman like Ushun Qoja's son was martyred at his hand. Faint of heart, two brothers lost their lives at

Tapagoz's hand. Iron-clad Mumaq died at his hand. Bayduz Aman of the bloody moustache turned limp at his hand. He squeezed the blood from white-bearded Aruz Qoja. He split the gall bladder of his son Qiyān Seljuk.

Seeing they had no effect on Tapagoz, the Oghuz took fright and fled. Tapagoz turned and went ahead of them, he barred the path of the Oghuz and sent them back.

In short, seven times the Oghuz took fright. Seven times Tapagoz intercepted them and brought them back. The Oghuz were clay in Tapagoz's hands.

They went and summoned Dada Qorqud. They talked together and said, "Come, let us reach a pact with him!"

They sent my Dada Qorqud to Tapagoz. He went and greeted him.

"Son, Tapagoz!" he said. "The Oghuz have become really weak, you have overwhelmed them. They have cast me at your feet. We will give you tribute, they said."

"Give me sixty men to eat every day!" said Tapagoz.

“That way you will soon have no men left,” he said. “We can give you two men and five hundred sheep a day.”

Tapagoz replied, “Very well, so be it! But give me two men. They will cook my food and I will eat it!”

Dada Qorqud turned and went back to the Oghuz.

“Give Tapagoz Yuklu Qoja and Yanaqli Qoja to cook his food. He wants two men and five hundred sheep a day,” he said.

They agreed to this. Whoever had four sons, gave one and three were left. Whoever had three sons gave one, and two were left. Whoever had two sons, gave one, and one was left.

There was a man called Qapiqqan who had two sons. He gave one son and one was left. When his turn came round again, he had a visit.

The boy’s mother wailed and sobbed and cried. Now, my Khan, Aruz’s son Basat had gone on an expedition and returned.

The old woman said, Maybe he will give me a prisoner and I can get my dear son back.

Basat had pitched his tent of gold and was sitting beneath it when he saw a woman approach.

She went inside to see Basat, greeted him, and sobbed, saying, "The wild-goat's kid doesn't fit into the palm of your hand! Shoot from your bow of wild goat horn! Your name is known amongst the Inner Oghuz and Outer Oghuz. Son of Aruz, my Khan, Basat! Help me!" "What do you want?" Basat asked.

"A man has appeared in this treacherous world. He has not let the Oghuz tribe settle in their summer pastures. The swordsmen did not make their black steel swords hurt him. The lancers make their lances dance but did not pierce him. The archers with their beech arrows had no result. He struck a blow against Qazan, chief of the heroes. His brother Qaraguna was limp at his hand. Bakduz Aman of the bloody moustache was limp at his hand. He squeezed blood from your white-bearded father Aruz. On the battlefield he split the gall bladder of your brother, Qiyan Seljuk, who gave up his soul. Some of the nobles of the numerous Oghuz went limp, others were martyred. Seven times he drove the Oghuz from their land. Tribute, they said, and agreed tribute. He

wanted two men and five hundred sheep a day. They give him Yuklu Qoja and Yapaqli Qoja as servants. Whoever had four sons, gave one, whoever had three sons, gave one, whoever had two sons gave one. I had two young sons, I gave one and one was left. Again it is my turn and they want him too, my Khan! Help me!”

Basat’s dark eyes filled with tears. He spoke for his brother. Let us see, my Khan, what he said:

Can that tyrant have flattened your tents pitched on the bank, brother?

Can that tyrant have chosen your swift horses from your stable, brother? Can that tyrant have separated your camels walking in their train, brother? Can that tyrant have killed the sheep you would slaughter at your feast, brother? Can that tyrant have separated from you the young bride you brought so hopefully?

Can you have made my white-bearded father weep for his son, brother?

Can you have made my white-faced mother sob for her son, brother?

Peak of my black mountain that lies askew,
brother!

Flood of my gushing river and its tributaries,
brother!

Power of my strong back, light of my dark eyes,
brother!

I have been parted from my brother, he said,
and wept long and hard. He gave the woman a male
prisoner, "Go and take back your son!" he said.

The woman took the prisoner and went and gave
him in her son's place. She also brought Aruz the
glad tidings that his son had come. Aruz rejoiced and
went to meet Basat with the nobles of the numerous
Oghuz. Basat kissed his father's hand. They wept,
they wailed, they went to his mother's tent, she came
out to meet her son and clasped him to her chest.

Basat kissed his mother's hand. They talked
and wailed. The Oghuz nobles gathered. There was
eating and drinking.

Basat said, "Nobles, for my brother's sake, I will
face Tapagoz, what do you say?"

Qazan spoke here, let us see, my Khan, what he said.

Tapagoz emerged, a black dragon!

Beneath the sky, I chased him, but couldn't catch him, Basat!

Tapagoz emerged a black tiger, in the jet black mountains I chased him but couldn't catch him, Basat!

Tapagoz emerged a roaring lion, in the dense thickets I chased him, but couldn't catch him, Basat!

If you be a man, if you be a noble, you will not be like me, Qazan, Basat!

Do not make your white-bearded father cry! Do not make your white-haired mother wail!

"Of course I will go!" said Basat.

"You can do it!" said Qazan.

His father cried and said, "Son, don't leave our hearth without a master! Have mercy, don't go!" he said.

"No, my dear white-bearded father, I will go," said he.

Paying no heed, he took a clutch of arrows from his quiver and tucked them into his belt, he girded his scabbard, took up his bow, rolled up his skirts, kissed the hands of his mother and father and took his leave: "Farewell!" he said.

He went to Tapagoz at Sallakhana Rock. He saw Tapagoz asleep, his back to the sun. He pulled his bow taut and took an arrow from his belt. The arrow hit Tapagoz's liver. The arrow did not penetrate but shattered. He shot another and this too shattered.

"A mosquito's bothering me," Tapagoz said to the old serving men.

Basat shot again, this time too the arrow shattered. A fragment fell in front of Tapagoz. Tapagoz jumped up, looked around and saw Basat. He clapped his hands, laughed out loud and said to the old men, "Another fine lamb has come to us from the Oghuz."

He ran to face Basat, grabbed him, dangled him from the throat, brought him to his den and shoved him into the leg of his boot.

"Hey, old men! This afternoon you will turn this one and I'll eat him," he said and went back to sleep.

Basat had a dagger. He cut open the boot and got out.

“Hey, old men! How can this one be killed?”

“We don’t know,” they said, “but his eye is the only place with flesh.”

Basat went up to Tapagoz’s head, lifted his eyelid and saw that the eye was indeed flesh.

“Come on, old men! Put this in the fire to heat up,” Basat said.

They put a stake into the fire and heated it (until it was red-hot). Basat took it in his hand. He praised the beautiful name of Muhammad. He plunged the stake into Tapagoz’s eye, destroying it. He bawled and bellowed so loudly that it echoed from the mountains and rocks.

Basat jumped into the midst of the sheep and entered the cave. Tapagoz knew that Basat was in the cave. He stood at the entrance to the cave, one foot on one side, one on the other, and said, “Hey, leaders of the sheep, billy goats! Come through one by one!”

As the flock came through one by one, he stroked the head of each animal.

"Yearlings, my wealth, my white ram, come through!" he said.

One ram got up and stretched. Quick as a flash Basat grabbed the ram and slit its throat. He flayed it without cutting the head or tail from the skin. He got inside and went before Tapagoz.

Tapagoz knew that Basat was inside the skin. He said, "Hey, white ram! You knew how to destroy me. I will beat you against the walls so that your fat greases the cave!"

Basat slipped the ram's head into Tapagoz's hand.

Tapagoz grabbed the horns hard and pulled them up, but the horns and skin were left in his hand. Basat jumped between Tapagoz's legs and got out. Tapagoz took the horn and beat it against the earth.

"Boy, have you saved yourself?" he said. "My God has saved me."

"Hey, boy, take the ring on my finger, put it on yours and arrow and sword will be powerless against you."

Basat took the ring and put it on his finger.

“Boy, have you put on the ring?” asked Tapagoz.
“I’ve put it on,” said Basat.

Tapagoz jumped at Basat, wielding a dagger, and stabbed.

Basat leapt to open ground. He saw the ring lying at Tapagoz’s feet.

“Have you saved yourself?” asked Tapagoz.
“My God has saved me,” replied Basat.

“Boy, have you seen the vault?” asked Tapagoz.
“I have seen it,” came the reply.

“That’s my treasure. Go and seal it, so that the old men don’t take it!” he said.

Basat entered the vault and saw mounds of gold and coins. Gazing at them, he forgot himself. Tapagoz came up to the entrance to the vault.

“Have you gone into the vault?” he asked. “I have,” said Basat.

“I will shake it so strongly that you and the vault will be dashed to pieces!” he said.

These words came to Basat’s lips, “There is no God but God, and Muhammad is his messenger!”

At that moment the vault was rent apart. In seven places the door opened and he went out through one of them.

Tapagoz thrust his hand into the vault and shook it about, turning it upside down.

"Boy, have you saved yourself?" asked Tapagoz. "My God has saved me," Basat replied.

"There is no death for you. Can you see that cave?" Tapagoz asked. "I can," said Basat.

"There are two swords inside, one with a scabbard and one without. The one without a scabbard will cut off my head. Go and get it and cut off my head!" he said.

Basat went to the entrance to the cave. He saw a sword without a scabbard that was moving up and down without stopping.

"I won't be able to get hold of this easily," he said. He took out his own sword, held it out and it was split in two.

He went and brought a tree and held it out to the sword. It too was split in two. He took up his bow and with his arrow struck the chain that the sword

was hanging from. The sword fell to the ground and was buried. He shoved it into his own scabbard, held it firmly by the hilt and went out.

“Hey, Tapagoz! How are you?” he asked.

“Hey, boy! So you’re still not dead?” Tapagoz replied. “My God saved me,” said Basat.

“There is no death for you,” he said.

Tapagoz spoke, let us see what he said.

My eye, my eye, my only eye!

I broke the Oghuz with you, my only eye.

You tore my grey eye from me, knight!

May the Almighty tear from you your sweet life!

The pain this eye has suffered

May the Almighty inflict on no knight today.

Again Tapagoz spoke:

Where do you rest and where do you roam,
knight?

If you lose your way in the dark of night, what
hope do you have? Who is your khan who bears the
great standard?

Who leads your heroes on the day of battle?
What is the name of your white-bearded father?

It is shameful for a brave man to hide his name from another, What is your name, knight? Tell me!

Basat spoke to Tapagoz. Let's see, my Khan, what he said:

I rest and I roam at Gunortaj.

If I lose my way in the dark of night, God is my hope. Our khan who bears the great standard is Bayindir Khan. Our heroes are led on the day of battle by Salur Qazan.

If you ask my mother's name, it is Great Tree,

You say my father's name, Roaring Lion,

If you ask my name, it is Basat son of Aruz.

Tapagoz said, "Then we are brothers, spare me!"

Basat said:

You scoundrel!

You have made my white-bearded father cry. You have made my white-haired mother wail. You have killed my brother Qiyan.

You have widowed my white-faced sister-in-law. You have left his grey-eyed babes fatherless. And I should let you be?

Not until I have drawn my black steel sword, not until I have cut off your domed head in its felt hat, not until I have spilled your scarlet blood on the face of the earth, not until I have avenged the blood of my brother Qiyan, will I let you be.

Then Tapagoz said:

I meant to rise from my place.

I meant to break my pact with the numerous Oghuz nobles. I meant again to eat their young,

I meant to eat my fill of human flesh,

I meant the numerous Oghuz nobles to mass against me. I meant to run and enter the Rock of Sallakhana.

I meant to throw stones from my catapult.

I meant to die as the stones fell on my head.

You tore my grey eye from me, knight!

May the Almighty tear your sweet life from you!

Tapagoz spoke once more:

I made the white-bearded old men sob,

The whitebeards' curse must have taken you, my eye.

I made the white-haired old women sob, Their
tears must have taken you, my eye,

I have eaten many white moustached knights.
The knights must have taken you, my eye.

I have eaten many of your maidens, their slender
hands dyed with henna, Their curses must have
taken you, my eye,

May Almighty God give no knight such pain in
his eye. My eye, my eye, o, my eye!

My only eye! (o, my eye!)

In fury Basat rose to his feet. He forced Tapagoz
to his knees like a male camel.

With Tapagoz's own sword he cut off his head,
made a hole, tied his bowstring through it and
heaved and dragged him to the entrance to the cave.

He sent Yuklu Qoja and Yapaghli Qoja to the
Oghuz with the glad tidings.

They mounted their white and grey steeds
and galloped forth, and brought the news to the
numerous Oghuz tribes. Horse-mouthed Aruz Qoja
galloped to his tent and brought joy to Basat's father.

“Glad tidings! Your son has slain Tapagoz,” he said.

The numerous Oghuz nobles arrived. They went to the Rock of Sallakhana. They brought out Tapagoz’s head for all to see.

My Dada Qorqud sang songs of joy. He told what had befallen the fighters for the faith. Basat too he applauded: When you reach the Black Mountain, may he show you the way through! May he show you a crossing over the bloody waters! Valiantly have you avenged your brother’s blood. You have freed the nobles of the numerous Oghuz from their burden. May Almighty God honour you, Basat!”

When the hour of death comes, may you not be separated from the pure faith! May your sins be forgiven for the sake of Muhammand Mustafa of beautiful name!

O, my Khan!

Translated by Anne Thompson-Ahmadova



On the Epic “Book of Dada Qorqud”

Azerbaijan is located on the shores of the Caspian Sea and on the Great Silk Road, which unites the continents of Asia and Europe. Rich in monuments that are protected by UNESCO as part of the world’s cultural heritage, it is an example to the world of the traditions of tolerance and multiculturalism. Enjoying these traditions, the people and ethnic and religious minorities in Azerbaijan preserve their culture, language and customs and live in friendship and cordiality.

There are many epics, songs, tales and other works of folklore in Azerbaijani Turkish, the result of the close relations amongst the different peoples living in this land since ancient times. These works preserve the spiritual and moral values of their day.

The epic “Book of Dada Qorqud” is one of the monuments of this intangible cultural heritage. This epic was presented to the world of scholarship for the first time in 1815 by German Orientalist Heinrich Friedrich von Diez. Von Diez translated one of the tales from the epic into German and published it in Berlin together with a foreword.

In 2000 the 1,300th anniversary of “The Book of Dada Qorqud” was marked in Azerbaijan at the level of UNESCO. The National Leader of the Azerbaijani people, Heydar Aliyev, said in this regard: ““The Book of Dada Qorqud” is a mirror reflecting the history, ethnic memory and old way of thinking of the Azerbaijani people. It has great cultural and aesthetic significance as a song of our speech, language, spirituality and soul.”

“The Book of Dada Qorqud” consists of twelve stories and a foreword. The stories feature the brave warriors of the Oghuz. The epic’s narrator, Dada Qorqud, is a wise *ozan* or minstrel who knew the history of the Azerbaijani people and lived to an old age, the Homer of the Azerbaijanis. Every tale in the epic paints in rich colours the mythological worldview, history, traditions, struggles, way of life, language, religion and culture of the Azerbaijani people and constitutes a song of praise to them.

Over the past two hundred years, German, Italian, Russian, Turkish, Dutch, English, Hungarian and French scholars and the world’s most prominent Turkic specialists have conducted research into “The Book of Dada Qorqud”. Various tales and heroes of the epic have even been compared with figures from ancient Greek and Roman mythology. As did Von Diez, scholars have noted that in some aspects “The Book of Dada Qorqud” dates to even earlier times. Commonalities from the point of view of the work’s philology with the ancient epics of different peoples have made it an object of research for specialists in other areas, such as Germanic and Slavonic scholars.

With its humanism, colour and call to live in peace and harmony, “The Book of Dada Qorqud”, a creation of the Azerbaijani people, is a treasure of not only the Azerbaijani and Turkic worlds but of the whole of humanity.

Sarraf Balakhan



On Heinrich Friedrich von Diez

(1751- 1817)

Outstanding German diplomat and Orientalist Heinrich Friedrich von Diez was born into a merchant's family in the town of Bernburg in Germany (Prussia) in 1751. He entered Halle University in 1769 to study law. After completing his studies, he worked for eleven years for the Magdeburg provincial government where his abilities helped him rise from desk officer to head the administration.

Frederick the Great appointed him counsellor to the embassy to Turkey on 16 May 1784. This was an important date for the future of Turkic and Qorqud studies. Since he had no education in oriental studies, Von Diez began by learning oriental languages, including Turkish, at the embassy in Istanbul. In 1786, he was ennobled by King Frederick William II and appointed Prussia's minister and ambassador extraordinary to Turkey. His great love for the Turks and special talent helped him to amass a collection of many rare oriental manuscripts during his six years in Istanbul. According to Von Diez himself and his encyclopaedic information, his library had 17,000 volumes

and 856 manuscripts of which 407 concerned the Orient. He bequeathed his entire library to the Berlin Royal Library on his death.

When he completed his term as ambassador in 1790, Von Diez returned to Prussia and began to study the rare Turkish, Arabic and Persian manuscripts in his collection. He published the

“Qabusnameh” in 1811 and “Selected Manuscripts of Asian Monuments”, which featured all his oriental manuscripts, in 1811-1815. The “Selected Manuscripts” included Von Diez’s translations of the pamphlet “Mizan-i Azhar” by Sheikh Mohammed Lalezar, the “Muzaffarnameh” (Book of Victory) by Buzri Jumhur, the travel notes “Mirat-ul-Mamalik” (Mirror of Countries) by Katibi Rumini , the “Oghuznameh” (Book of the Oghuz) and “The Tale of How Basat Killed Tepegöz” from “The Book of Dada Qorqud”.

This work won Von Diez the goodwill of prominent philosopher and poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. In the “Notes and Queries” section of his “West-Eastern Divan”, Goethe himself devoted a section to the outstanding Orientalist because of the great role of Von Diez’s work in his own writing, expressing his respect and gratitude. Later, in 1816, Von Diez translated “The Tales of Molla Nasreddin” for Goethe. A contemporary of Prussia’s outstanding scholars Friedrich August Wolf, Alexander von Humboldt, Schlegel and the Brothers Grimm, Von Diez made his contribution to German scholarship

and was one of the founders of comparative studies in German literature.

Von Diez began work on “The Book of Dada Qorqud” in 1814. He compared “The Book of Dada Qorqud”, which had been neglected until then in the Dresden Royal Library, with the tales of the Oghuz in his own collection. He translated into German “The Tale of How Basat Killed Tapagoz” and published it together with a large foreword, thereby introducing the epic to the world of scholarship. Comparing the character of Tapagoz in the epic with

Homer’s Polyphemus, the Orientalist concluded that Tapagoz was the older.

In 1814 the Prussian Academy of Sciences elected Von Diez an honorary member for his services to oriental studies.

Ravan Hasanov



Guide to Proper Names

1. **Prelate** – one of the higher clerical offices in the Roman Catholic Church.
2. **Cyclops** – a legendary giant with a single eye in his forehead.
3. **Foliant** - is a book of in folio format, one page of which is equal to the half of a traditional sheet
4. **Paul** – the Mansi people, Paulus – Mansi
5. **Qaya** in the original should be *Qayi*, the name of one of the Oghuz tribes. The word *qaya* means rock or cliff.
6. **Stritter** – German Orientalist and historian, Johann Gotthelf von Stritter (1740-1801)
7. **De Guignes** – French Orientalist and historian Joseph de Guignes (1721- 1800).
8. **Iconium** –now the Turkish province of Konya.
9. **Oxus** – the river Amu-Darya, known in ancient times as the Oxus and as Jeyhun to the Arabs.
10. **Polyphemus** – one of the Cyclopes in ancient Greek mythology, a race of giants with a single eye in their foreheads

11. **Arges** – one of the Cyclopes in ancient Greek mythology
12. **Brontes** – one of the Cyclopes in ancient Greek mythology
13. **Goelus** – the Roman equivalent to the Greek god of the sky Uranus
14. **Lipari** – an island near Sicily
15. **Apollo** – the god of the sun, light, divine wisdom and art in ancient Greek and Roman mythology and religion. He is the son of Zeus and Leto.
16. **Macrobius** – Ambrosius Theodosius Macrobius (395-430), a philosopher and linguist of ancient Rome
17. **Cicero** – Marcus Tullius Cicero, a Roman orator, politician and philosopher (106-43 BCE)
17. **Argos** – an ancient Greek city in the Peloponnese
18. **Lycia** – a state in Asia Minor. Its name means Country of Light.
19. **Strabo** – a Greek historian and geographer (64/63 BCE – 23/24 CE)
20. **Nafplio** – a city in Greece
21. **Homer** – an ancient Greek poet, author of the epic poems “The Iliad” and “The Odyssey”. He is thought to have lived in the 12th to 11th centuries BCE.
22. **Trinacria** – modern-day Sicily
23. **Lilybaeum** – a town and bay in Sicily
24. **Mount Etna** – a volcano in Sicily

25. **Faraglioni** – an island off the coast of Sicily where Cyclopes were said to have lived
26. **Catania** – a city and province in Sicily
27. **Val di Demone** – Valley of the Devils, to the north of Catania
28. **Neptune** – the god of the sea in Roman mythology
29. **Nymph Toosa** – a sea nymph thought by some to be the mother of Polyphemus
30. **Amphitrite** – wife of Poseidon (Neptune), thought by some to be the mother of Polyphemus
31. **Nymph Stilbe** – thought by some to be the mother of Polyphemus
32. **Amymone** – thought by some to be the mother of Polyphemus
33. **Elatus** – thought by some to be the father of Polyphemus
34. **Argonauts** – the Argo is the name of the ship on which Jason is said to have sailed to Colchis to find the golden fleece
35. **Plato** – ancient Greek philosopher (428/7 - 348/7 BCE)
36. **Aelian** – Claudius Aelianus, a Roman philosopher and teacher of rhetoric
37. **Theophilus of Edessa** – a Syrian scholar from Edessa, today's Urfa in Turkey (695-785)

- 38. Hieronymus Fabricius** – Italian surgeon and anatomist
(1537-1619)
- 39. Dio Chrysostom** – a Greek orator, philosopher and
historian (c. 40-115 CE)
- 40. Priam** – king of Troy, father of Hector and Paris



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