

TURKISH FOLKLORE

Course Description:

Designed for English-speaking students, this course will cover some of the major issues surrounding Turkish folklore and oral literature. Among the subjects are the Turkish epic, romantic epic (or *hikâye*), Turkish name-giving traditions, folklore and nationalism, folk religion, the structure and performance of Turkish romances, the formula in oral creation, performer-audience relationship, folklore as a political instrument, digression in oral narrative, proverbs and social change, folk theater, orality in the written text, and the gender dynamics of oral literature and performance. The course will also integrate some of the fundamental theoretical works of the field of Folklore, and their applicability to the Turkish context.

About the Professor

This course was developed by Kemal Silay, Ph.D., Chair of Ottoman and Modern Turkish Studies Department, Central Eurasian Studies, Indiana University.

Required Texts:

- Richard Bauman, *Verbal Art as Performance*. Prospect Heights, Illinois: Waveland Press, Inc., 1977.
- *The Book of Dede Korkut: A Turkish Epic*. Translated into English and edited by Faruk Sümer, Ahmet E. Uysal, Warren S. Walker. Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1972.
- Albert B. Lord, *The Singer of Tales*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1960.
- Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word*. London and New York: Methuen, 1982.
- Vladimir Propp, *Morphology of the Folktale*. Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 2009 [First published by the American Folklore Society and Indiana University in 1968].
- Kemal Silay, Ed., *Turkish Folklore and Oral Literature: Selected Essays of İlhan Başgöz*. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Turkish Studies Series, 1998.
- Jan Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History*. Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985.

Contents

Unit I Theory

Week 1

The Nature and Dynamics of Orality and Literacy

Week 2

Music

Narration

Formula

Themes

Writing

Oral Tradition

Week 3

Verbal Art (or Spoken Art)

Performance as Totality of Human Experience

Metanarration

Week 4

Oral Tradition as History

Process

Performing

Performers

Authorship

Testimony and Text

Tradition as Information Remembered

Structure *without* Social Context: Russian Formalism and Vladimir Propp

Unit II Towards an Understanding of Turkish Folklore and Oral Literature: Between Theory and Data

Week 5

Tradition

Change

Nationalism and Folklore

Metanarration and Minstrels

Week 6

Islam

Shamanism

Dreams and Initiation

Becoming an *Âşık*

Turkish-Turkic Interactions
Love, Pre-Islamic Turkish poetry, Divine Love, Epic

Week 7

Tale-Singer
Audience and Social Class
The *Hikâye* or the Romantic Epic

Week 8

Structuralism in Social Context
Formulaic Theory and Turkish *Hikâye*
Digression—Narrative—Orality

Week 9

Interactions Between the Oral and the Written Word
Folklore as Historical Truth
Epic and Religion
Menâkıbnâmes as Ethnographic Data
Folklore as a Source of Modern Literature

Week 10

What's in a name...
Onomastics
Personal Names, Magic, Religion, Society, Politics
Folklore as Political Struggle

Week 11

Metanarrative Definitions of Proverb
Social Change and the Message of Proverb
Genealogy of Proverb

Week 12

Folk Theater: Structure and Social Function

Unit III Reading the Epic World of Dede Korkut

Week 13-15

Preliminary Notes:

No matter how “modernized” Turkey may be, especially in the industrial cities, the majority of the population in rural Anatolia still exhibit the traditional way of life and their centuries-old folk customs and beliefs. From name-giving traditions to burial rituals, from circumcision ceremonies to wedding customs, the cultural legacy of the peoples of Anatolia has remained intact for the most part, unaffected by outside elements or other cultural and political changes. One might even argue that Mustafa Kemal Atatürk’s cultural revolutions of the early 20th century provided significant opportunity structures to folk cultures and beliefs to flourish. The Kemalist philosophy (based predominantly on the values of secularism) paid special attention to Anatolian Turkish linguistic and folkloric elements (especially folk religion) in the struggle against the radical and political forms of Islam. Establishing a modern academic discipline—folklore—for the scientific study of these rich cultures of Anatolia was also a useful instrument in the Turkification process, as well.

Turkish folklore and oral literature includes mostly but is not limited to folk poetry (*‘halk şîiri’*, *‘âşık şîiri’*), tales (*‘masal’*), jokes (*‘fikra’*), legends (*‘efsane’*), hagiographic legends (*‘menâkıbnâmes’*), riddles (*‘bilmece’*), proverbs (*‘atalarsözü’*), epic (*‘destan’*) and romantic epic (*‘hikâye’*), and folk theatre (*‘seyirlik oyunlar’*). The most significant aspect of all these genres is the fact that they are produced predominantly in the oral mode and have survived and been re(created) through oral transmission for centuries.

Riddles constitute a significant portion of Turkish folk literature. Riddling has indispensable social and cultural functions especially in the rural communities of Anatolia. In Turkish generally the term *‘bilmece’* is used for ‘riddle’. However, in some local dialects, we observe the usage of *‘tapmaca’* for the same concept. In addition, in many areas of Anatolia, the term *‘matal’* (or *‘metel’*, *‘metal’*, *‘masal’*, *‘mesel’*) is commonly employed (see İlhan Başgöz and Andreas Tietze, *Bilmece: A Corpus of Turkish Riddles*, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1973). Başgöz and Tietze have provided us with over 12,000 Turkish riddles in a single volume.

Turkish *menâkıbnâmes* are composed of hagiographic folk legends surrounding the lives of famous religious figures. In these legends, we find the representation of the extraordinary powers and events associated with Islamic saints and their miracles. Such common motifs as “resuscitation,” “killing a dragon,” “curing the sick,” “transformation,” “foreseeing the future,” “total control over natural forces,” “feeding the entire population of a community with a single fruit tree,” “praying on a rug on the water,” “communicating with animals,” “incarnation,” and the like constitute the basic thematic content of these stories. Even though the corpus of surviving Turkish *menâkıbnâme* literature seems to have been produced in written form, different levels of orality can be observed in almost all of them. The figures and geographical settings of these manuscripts can be local and culture-specific but their motifs and structure show similarities to other traditions.

If we were to illustrate only one representative form of folk theatre from the Ottoman Empire to the Republic of Turkey, that would be the Turkish shadow theater called *Karagöz*. The name of this performance comes from one of the two main characters: Karagöz and Hajivat (Hacivat). It is a comedy form performed by a single puppeteer using entirely hand-made two-dimensional colorful puppets reflecting their shadows through a transparent screen. Continuously changing his voice from one character to another, the puppeteer becomes the voice and life of many social, cultural, and political entities of the Ottoman state. He mimics, for instance, the voice, appearance, and manners of an Arab, an Albanian, an Armenian, a Greek, an Iranian, a drunk, an opium addict, or sometimes even an animal such as a dog or a cat in order to make his audience laugh. Usually what creates the

comical element for the audience is the stereotypical representation of the many different peoples of the Ottoman Empire, and this includes a Turkish character, as well, called Baba Himmət, undoubtedly one of the most idiotic characters of the play. Legend has it that the *Karagöz* theater was born in the city of Bursa during the time of Orhan Gazi (1326-1362). Two men named respectively Hajivat (a mason) and Karagöz (a blacksmith) were workers in the construction of a mosque in Bursa. They were so funny that the other workers would listen to them and laugh all day thus delaying the construction process of the mosque. Informed about this serious problem, the Ottoman sultan gave the order for their execution. According to İlhan Başgöz, this performance art appeared in Istanbul right after the 1517 Egypt campaign of Sultan Selim I (1512-1520), who had watched a similar shadow theater performance in Egypt, seeing an Arab puppeteer making fun of the enemy of the victorious sultan. Pleased with this mockery, the Ottoman sultan invited the puppeteer to Istanbul to repeat the same performance for his sons (*Turkish Folklore and Oral Literature*, pp. 174-200) Karagöz performances remained one of the major sources of entertainment for the people until the introduction of western-style theater and modern Turkish cinema later in the nineteenth century. Obviously, the birth of the modern performing arts and media, such as radio and television, contributed greatly to the demise of this traditional performance although numerous fruitless attempts were made to give it a new lease on life during the Republican period.

The two most fundamental Turkish folk poetry forms are 1) *mâni*, and 2) *türkü*. *Mâni* is the shortest poetic form and is comprised of four seven-syllable lines. Its rhyme scheme is the following: a a x a. *Türkü* is an orally composed and generally anonymous poetic form, even though a significant number of *türküs* were composed by known individuals. The themes of *türküs* can vary from love to natural disasters to everyday life events. There seems to be no limit as to what can constitute the "appropriate" theme of a *türkü*. From this point of view alone, *türküs* make up the most important and perhaps richest literary form of Turkish folk literature. *Türküs* are usually composed either in three-line stanzas, four-line stanzas or in couplets, and some of the most widely used *türkü* rhyme schemes are the following: a a x a / b b x b / c c x c / d d x d...; b b b a / c c c a / d d d a / e e e a...; a a a / b b b / c c c / d d d...; a a / b b / c c / d d...

The Turkic epic (*destan*, *dessan*, *dasitan*, *jir*, *boy*) tradition in its "pure epic form" (*épopée*) has not survived in the Oguz Turkish-speaking area. A Turkish epic similar to the Kirgiz *Manas* has yet to be discovered, though scholarship by Mehmet Fuat Köprülü and Pertev Naili Boratav suggest the existence of "pure" Turkish epics which did not survive either in oral tradition or in manuscript form. The closest counterpart to this genre would be the *Kitab-ı Dede Korkut* (*The Book of Dede Korkut*) which includes a prologue and twelve legends (*boys*), composed predominantly in prose. These legends came down to us through two manuscripts written toward the end of the 15th century. It is not easy to come up with definitive conclusions regarding the historical facts and settings of this text. All the epic protagonists of these legends demonstrate a mixture of cultural and historical characteristics. Elements from shamanism, Islam, and other traditions manifest themselves in a single character. What was important for the epic composer was to turn these characters into die-hard fighters of the Oguz. We cannot speak of a single authorship when it comes to a work like this. There are strong suggestions that the epic-teller of the book was Dede Korkut who was the Shaman of the Oguz, a Muslim saint, and an epic composer and teller with his musical instrument called the *kopuz*.

What has been predominant and abundant in the Oguz tradition are those works which derived directly from the pre-Islamic epic form such as the *Dâstân-ı Tevârih-i Mülûk-i Âl-i 'Osmâns* (Ottoman chronicles), folk *hikâyes* (romantic epics told by *âşıks* with the accompaniment of the musical instrument called the *saz*, most likely the replacement of the

ancient *kopuz*), *menâkıbnâmes* (hagiographic legends), *gazavâtnâmes* and *jihâdnâmes* (heroic/religious epics, holy war epics). These works may be classified as transitional genres in the historical development from the ancient epic to the modern novel.

Even though the Turkish *âşık* (troubadour) poetry has gone through tremendous structural and thematic transformations over the centuries, it is still a living part of Turkey's cultural prosperity. Traditionally, there was an indispensable ritual attached to becoming an *âşık*. A dream was always involved in the birth of a troubadour. A holy man or sometimes a maiden would offer one or three cups of wine to the hero in his dream. İlhan Başgöz mentions that despite the variety of holy persons in this so-called dream motif, their role was almost always the same: they would 1) act as cup bearers, 2) introduce a beautiful maiden to the *âşık*, 3) bestow a pseudonym upon the hero to be used in his poetry, and 4) offer their help whenever the hero was in trouble. There were also physical ritualistic effects of the holy wine or love potion upon the hero. After drinking the wine, a flame of fire would consume the body of the hero. He would faint, blood would come out of his mouth, and he would remain in this condition for three to seven days. After that, an old woman would appear to the hero, bringing him the traditional stringed instrument, the *saz*. The hero would then take the instrument and begin playing it. He would immediately start singing, composing poetry orally, and revealing his newly bestowed poetic name. Başgöz argues that the Turkish dream motif complex containing the above-mentioned characteristics occurs *only* in Turkish romantic epics collected from oral tradition. Indeed, it is all but natural that we see such rituals in oral tradition often acting as a bridge between the pre-Islamic Turkic nomadic cultures and the Islamic sedentary Anatolia. As Başgöz argues, there is little or no doubt that the dream motif complex has strong Shamanistic elements, one of the religious practices of the Turkic peoples. After accepting the precepts of Islam which are based on sedentary cultural values, Turkish society began mixing elements from both cultures. In an unconscious and natural manner, numerous pre-Islamic cultural rudiments were carried over to the newly Islamized Anatolia.

After the 1960s, the Turkish romantic epic tradition went through a major transformation and gradually became more urban and highly political. A Marxist-Leninist discourse became the dominant quality of this once most celebrated form of literary entertainment in rural Anatolia. Especially during the decade preceding the 1980 military coup, Turkish romantic epic poetry became the political weapon of both the Turkish left and the conservative and often ultra-nationalist right. Today, this tradition has been going through another fascinating social stage in the over-populated urban centers of Turkey. It now has a brand new house of performance: the so-called *Türkü Bars*. Usually located next to or near the other bars of these cities, the *Türkü Bars* have become an alternative form of entertainment for the educated population, and the performers are no longer the inspired holy *âşıks* of Anatolia. Wine, beer, and other alcoholic beverages are served in these places not in a traditional or religious ceremonial sense but in an effort to compete financially with the more established places of night life entertainment of the neon-lit cities of modern Turkey.

Unit I **Theory**

Week 1

The Nature and Dynamics of Orality and Literacy

Reading

Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, 5-15, 31-77, 139-155.

Essay Questions

How does Walter Ong discuss the "orality of language"? Which specific discipline is predominant in establishing his arguments? What are his thoughts on the relationship between oral performances and the written word?

Discuss the concept of "psychodynamics of orality" as developed by Ong.

Discuss Ong's approach to the concepts of and interrelations between "oral memory" and "narrative in oral cultures."

Week 2

Outline

Music

Narration

Formula

Themes

Writing

Oral Tradition

Reading

Albert B. Lord, *The Singer of Tales*, 3-12, 13-29, 30-67, 68-98, 124-138.

Essay Questions

Before Albert Lord's *The Singer of Tales*, many scholars had talked about "stock epithets," "epic clichés" "stereotyped phrases," and the like. However, these terms were too vague or too restricted. An accuracy, a precision was needed; Milman Parry's effort was an answer to that need. The culmination of Parry's work was a definition of the "formula." According to Parry, the formula was "a group of words which is regularly employed under the same metrical conditions to express a given essential idea." By this definition, he had eliminated the ambiguity of the word "repetitions." Based on these principals, Albert Lord dealt with the issue of "formula" not only from outside, but from the point of view of the singer of tales, and of the tradition—paying special attention to the performance event. Discuss how Lord approaches interrelations between the "combination of thought and sung verse," and the importance of "composition *during* oral performance."

According to Lord, "[f]ormulas and group of formulas... serve only one purpose. They provide a means for telling a story in song and verse. The tale's the thing." Following the footsteps of Parry, Lord names the groups of ideas regularly used in telling a tale in the formulaic nature of traditional song as the *themes* of poetry. Lord finds that the troubadours (bards) listened to some specific themes numerous times in order to familiarize themselves to those themes before they began to sing. Explain further how Lord establishes his theories of the "theme" and the oral performer.

Discuss how Lord explores the relationship between "writing" and "oral tradition."

Week 3

Topics

Verbal Art (or Spoken Art)
Performance as Totality of Human Experience
Metanarration

Reading

Richard Bauman, *Verbal Art as Performance*, 7-14, 15-24, 25-35, 61-79 [Essay written by Barbara A. Babcock].

Essay Questions

Bauman argues against the conception of a text-centered verbal art, and attempts to develop a "meaningful framework" towards an understanding of "verbal art as performance." Compose an essay discussing Bauman's concepts of "Nature," "Keying," and "Patterning" of performance.

How does Babcock construct her concept of "metanarration in folk narrative," and how does "metanarration" differ from "metapoetics," as it has been applied in written literature? How does her arguments contribute to Bauman's approach to "verbal art as performance"?

Week 4

Topics

Oral Tradition as History

- Process
- Performing
- Performers
- Authorship
- Testimony and Text
- Tradition as Information Remembered

Structure *without* Social Context: Russian Formalism and Vladimir Propp

Readings

Jan Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History*, 3-32, 33-67.

Vladimir Propp, *Morphology of the Folktale*, 1-158.

Essay Questions

Jan Vansina explains the concept of "oral tradition" as interrelations between the process and its products, and according to him, the products are the "oral messages based on previous oral messages." He interprets the very process itself as the oral transmission of these messages. What are the dynamics of these interrelations? Focus on "news," "the interpretation of experience," "oral history," "memorized speech," "accounts," and "oral tradition as historical evidence."

In Vansina's view, when it comes to dealing with oral tradition, historians are faced with far more complicated issues than those who work and interpret based on "ready-made documents." But what is a "document"? Is it original? Is it a forgery? And what is the relationship of the "document" to the whole living tradition? To be able to answer these questions, he argues, certain aspects of authenticity, authorship, originality, place, and time of composition should be taken into consideration. Further discuss the interrelations between "performance," "tradition," and "text."

Vladimir Propp defines "morphology" simply as the "study of forms," and attempts to find out the structural nature of the "morphology of the folktale"—more specifically the morphology of Russian fairy tales. However, after it was translated into Western languages, Propp's theory has been tested out on similar narrative products of other cultures (including Turkish folk narratives) yielding more or less similar results. According to Propp, the characters' actions constitute the fundamental functions of the folktales. Propp determines up to 31 functions in any given Russian fairy tale. These functions remain as the permanent structural components of the tale. Read Propp's *Morphology of the Folktale*, and provide specific examples on the application of his theory to Russian fairy tales.

Unit II Towards an Understanding of Turkish Folklore and Oral Literature: Between Theory and Data

Week 5

Topics

Tradition

Change

Nationalism and Folklore

Metanarration and Minstrels

Readings

Silay, *Turkish Folklore and Oral Literature: Selected Essays of İlhan Başgöz*, 166-173, 41-52, 1-10.

Essay Questions

Provide an overview of how İlhan Başgöz analyses the concept of folklore within tradition and change.

According to Başgöz, how was folklore implemented in the construction of Turkish nationalism? What are the strengths and weaknesses of his "Folklore and Nationalism in Turkey"?

Discuss Başgöz's "Turkish Folk Stories About the Lives of Minstrels," and compare it with Babcock's construct of "metanarration in folk narrative."

Week 6

Topics

Islam

Shamanism

Dreams and Initiation

Becoming an *Âşık*

Turkish-Turkic Interactions

Love, Pre-Islamic Turkish poetry, Divine Love, Epic

Reading

Silay, *Turkish Folklore and Oral Literature: Selected Essays of İlhan Başgöz*, 11-23, 24-40, 53-63.

Essay Questions

In the "Dream Motif in Turkish Folk Stories and Shamanistic Initiation," Başgöz discusses the interrelation of a motif chain ("dream motif") in Turkish folk narratives with Shamanistic initiation rituals. He discovers the continuity of a paganistic ritual in Islamic folk narratives with convincing scholarly evidence. This essay has become a classic in the field of Turkish studies and has been the major source and inspiration for many other works on the subject. Write an essay on the function of "dreams" in becoming a Turkish *âşık* (troubadour). Pay attention to the pre-Islamic religious practice of shamanism and its initiation rituals, and the transformation of them into sedentary "Islamic" settings.

Discuss the Turkish *hikâye*-telling tradition and its interactions with other Turkic cultures.

How does Başgöz argue that "[l]ove does not appear as a prevalent theme in pre-Islamic Turkish poetry, nor in the folk poetry of the post-Islamic era until the twelfth century"?

Week 7

Topics

Tale-Singer

Audience and Social Class

The *Hikâye* or the Romantic Epic

Reading

Silay, *Turkish Folklore and Oral Literature: Selected Essays of İlhan Başgöz*, 76-129, 302-332.

Essay Question

Although several Turkish and American folklorists were aware of the impact of the audience on the folk narrator, it had not been supported by convincing field work. Başgöz goes to a small town in Anatolia, spends days and weeks with the Turkish minstrel Müdami to test the theory. He asks Müdami to perform the same *hikâye* in two different socio-cultural settings—one to the villagers in a coffeehouse and the other to the intellectuals of the town. The results of this experiment later become the fundamental basis for the creation of his article “The Tale-Singer and His Audience: An Experiment to Determine the Effect of Different Audiences on a *Hikâye* Performance.” Discuss the performance reactions of the tale-singer to different audiences. Why and how would a tale singer shorten his story when he is faced with a non-traditional audience. Give specific examples of reactions from both the traditional and non-traditional audiences of the tale-singer’s performance.

Literary Analysis

Provide a description of plot, themes, and the main characters of the “Romance of Âşık Garip and Shah Sanem.”

Week 8

Topics

Structuralism in Social Context
Formulaic Theory and Turkish *Hikâye*
Digression—Narrative—Orality

Reading

Silay, *Turkish Folklore and Oral Literature: Selected Essays of İlhan Başgöz*, 64-75, 130-150, 231-249.

Essay Questions

In the 1960s, the structuralism of Vladimir Propp became very fashionable among American folklorists. Başgöz, however, came to the conclusion that Propp's structuralist analysis was a lifeless skeleton of the folktale, one that was totally isolated from its social and cultural settings. Read his article entitled "The Structure of Turkish Romances," and provide specific details that challenge the validity of the Russian formalist Vladimir Propp's *Morphology of the Folktale*.

Milman Parry and Albert Lord's formulaic theory which attracted many followers and critics was tested out in the field by Başgöz for Turkish folk narrative. His findings showed that the essential aspect of the formula is not merely metric or musical. His research proved that formula is created as much in verse narrative as in prose narrative. Discuss the data and methodology of Başgöz in his "Formula in Prose Narrative *Hikâye*."

In Turkish folklore studies, digressions were not considered an important part of the folk narrative until Başgöz presented his research findings in his article entitled "Digression in Oral Narrative: A Case Study in Oral Narrative by Turkish Romance Tellers." His work proves that this is not only an indispensable element in Turkish epic, romantic epic, folktales and others but it is a universal narrative technique. Provide specific examples of digressions from Turkish romance tellers, and discuss the techniques used in integrating them into the main plot of the narrations.

Week 9

Topics

Interactions Between the Oral and the Written Word

Folklore as Historical Truth

Epic and Religion

Menâkıbnâmes as Ethnographic Data

Folklore as a Source of Modern Literature

Readings

Silay, *Turkish Folklore and Oral Literature: Selected Essays of İlhan Başgöz*, 160-165, 250-256, 333-338, 151-159.

Essay Questions

Explain how elements from *The Book of Dede Korkut* (written down from the oral tradition in the 15th century) are present in the works of the 13th century Anatolian mystic poet Yunus Emre.

Başgöz claims that "Koroğlu's Tekgözler story represents a new form of material in Turkey among the bulk of oral narratives which at least contain some motifs of the Polyphemus story in the Homeric Epic, *Odyssey*." What is the significance of this observation?

Discuss the *menâkıbnâme* genre as a source of history and ethnography.

Write an essay discussing Yaşar Kemal's integration of Turkish oral literature into modern fiction.

Week 10

Topics

What's in a name...

Onomastics

Personal Names, Magic, Religion, Society, Politics

Folklore as Political Struggle

Reading

Silay, *Turkish Folklore and Oral Literature: Selected Essays of İlhan Başgöz*, 201-215, 216-230, 339-356.

Essay Questions

One of Başgöz's most original contributions to the field is his work on personal names in Turkey. His rich archive includes thousands of names. Two of his essays based on this archive are "The Meaning and Dimension of Change of Personal Names in Turkey," and "The Name and Society: A Case Study of Personal Names in Turkey"). These articles on Turkish onomastics also demonstrate his ongoing efforts to analyze his subject in its social and historical context. Write an essay describing in detail the social, religious/magical, and political reasonings behind the name-giving traditions in Turkey.

Briefly define the concept of "protest" in the context of the Turkish tale-singing tradition, and explain how Başgöz's "Protest: The Fifth Function of Folklore" attempts to challenge some previous assumptions regarding the "functions of folklore."

Week 11

Topics

Metanarrative Definitions of Proverb
Social Change and the Message of Proverb
Genealogy of Proverb

Readings

Silay, *Turkish Folklore and Oral Literature: Selected Essays of İlhan Başgöz*, 257-266, 267-286, 287-293.

Essay Questions

Discuss the following categories in defining the proverb by the folk: "Definition by means of content," "definition in relation to speech and discourse," "definition by means of origin," "definition by means of transmission and diffusion in time and space," "definition by means of prestige and power," "definition by means of form," and "definition by means of function."

Discuss the way Turkish proverbs reflect "sex and sexual life," and "religion and religious life." Compare the data collected from the *Compendium of the Turkic Dialects* (1072–1077), and from the *Book of Ancestors* (1480).

Explain how the Turkish proverb "the horse does the work, the hero boasts" has survived seven centuries. Focus on the changes in message and, if there is, in structure.

Week 12

Topics

Folk Theater: Structure and Social Function

Readings

Silay, *Turkish Folklore and Oral Literature: Selected Essays of İlhan Başgöz*, 174-200, 294-301.

Essay Questions

Discuss the structure of the Turkish shadow theater, Karagöz. Clearly define each section of the performance.

How do the characters of the Turkish shadow theater Karagöz reflect the social, cultural, and political nature of Ottoman-Turkish society?

Discuss the Jewish contribution in Ottoman-Turkish performing arts, and the Jewish elements in the Turkish shadow theater, Karagöz.

Unit III Reading the Epic World of Dede Korkut

Week 13

"Although the heroic world is a man's world, women are not absent from *The Book of Dede Korkut*, nor are they relegated to a greatly inferior position. Turkish women originally had almost equal status with men, the veil, the harem, and polygamy being Arabian institutions imported some time after the adoption of Islam. In the legends women are revered as mothers, loved and respected as wives. They are often good counselors to their husbands. Dirse Khan (II) and Begil (IX) survive periods of crisis because they follow the sage advice of their wives. Reared in the hardships of nomadic life, Oghuz women come naturally by Amazonian attributes. Of the twenty-four women in the epic, three—Banu Chichek (III), Burla Hatun (IV), and Seljen Hatun (VI)—engage successfully in physical combat against male antagonists" (From the "Introduction" of *The Book of Dede Korkut: A Turkish Epic*, p. xvii).

After reading the editors' "Introduction," and the "Prologue," provide a description of plot, themes, and the main characters of the following epic stories ("legends") from *The Book of Dede Korkut*:

Readings

The Book of Dede Korkut: A Turkish Epic, 9-22, 23-39, 40-69, 70-88.

Literary Analysis

"The Story of Bugach Khan, Son of Dirse Khan"

"The Sack of the House of Salur Kazan"

"The Story of Bamsi Beyrek, Son of Kam Büre"

"The Story of the Capture of Uruz Bey, Son of Kazan Bey"

Week 14

Readings

The Book of Dede Korkut: A Turkish Epic, 89-97, 98-114, 115-121, 122-133.

Literary Analysis

After reading the editors' "Introduction," and the "Prologue," provide a description of plot, themes, and the main characters of the following epic stories ("legends") from *The Book of Dede Korkut*:

"The Story of Delü Dumrul, Son of Duha Koja"

"The Story of Kan Turali, Son of Kanli Koja"

"The Story of Yigenek, Son of Kazilik Koja"

"The Story of Basat, Killer of the One-Eyed Giant"

Week 15

Readings

The Book of Dede Korkut: A Turkish Epic, 134-144, 145-155, 156-167, 168-175.

Literary Analysis

After reading the editors' "Introduction," and the "Prologue," provide a description of plot, themes, and the main characters of the following epic stories ("legends") from *The Book of Dede Korkut*:

"The Story of Emren, Son of Begil"

"The Story of Seghrek, Son of Ushun Koja"

"The Story of Salur Kazan's Captivity and His Rescue by His Son Uruz"

"The Story of the Revolt of the Outer Oghuz against the Inner Oghuz and of the Death of Beyrek"