

# MYTHOLOGEMES AND PERSONIFICATIONS OF THE FATE (THE ATTEMPT FOR INTERPRETATION OF THE ANTHROPONOMY "KORKUT")

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**ABSTRACT:** THE REPORT DISTINGUISHED THE TERMS "MYTHOLOGEMES" AND "ARCHETYPE" AND MONITORED MYTHOLOGICAL NOTIONS OF FATE AND ITS PERSONIFICATION IN GREEK, ROMAN AND SCANDINAVIAN MYTHOLOGIES. IT WAS MADE AN ATTEMPT FOR INTERPRETATION OF THE MYTHOLOGICAL FIGURE OF DEDE KORKUT, A PERSONIFICATION OF ITS FATE IN TWO HYPOSTASES: "THE RULED, THE PREDETERMINED" AND "THE HAPPY FATE, THE FATE PROTECTION. THE ANTHROPONYM "KORKUT" IS INTERPRETED AS A COMBINATION OF TWO WORDS "KOR" AND "KUT" - MALE AND FEMALE PRINCIPLE, WHICH IS ULTIMATELY CONNECTED WITH THE DIVINE TENGRI (WHO RULES) AND U MAY (WHO PROTECTS). OTHER INTERPRETATIONS OF THE NAME "KORKUT", RELATED TO THE PERCEPTION OF FEAR AND MISFORTUNE MAY BE CONSIDERED TO LATER TRANSFORMATIONS, PASSED THE COMPLEX WAY OF ASSOCIATIVE RETHINKING AND REFRAMING.

**KEY WORDS:** KORKUT, MITHOLOGEMES, ARCHETYPE, FATE, TENGRI, U MAY, ASSOCIATIVE RETHINKING AND REFREMI NG.

IN Turkic epos one of the heroes, who predetermines and takes part in the destiny of people is the mythical figure Dede Korkut.

AS a mythical figure, he is characterized by mystical circumstances surrounding his birth, as well as its unusual origin. According to some sources, these unusual circumstances are set out in the basis of his name. Let us consider some hypotheses on the etymology of the anthroponomy "Korkut".

## 1. KORKUT - fearful or inspiring fear?

ETYMOLOGY of the name of the alleged author and unmistakable - (according to the epos data) participant in the events described in the Kitab-i- Dede Korkut - Korkut usually is associated with the verb 'korkma' – 'afrai' or 'korku' – 'fear'. This etymology is supported by certain facts relating to the circumstances surrounding the birth and death of Dede Korkut. As in any mythological hero the circumstances about his birth contain mystical elements: his mother's pregnancy continues **three years and nine days**. The same birth is accompanied by natural disasters: storm, lightning, falling strong fog. These natural phenomena cause in humans a great confusion and alarm. His relatives began to experience an even greater fear when the infant begins to issue sounds similar to adult speech. The first time they even do not decide to diaper the baby. The fright caused by circumstances of birth and confusion of infant's "speech" are according to the legend the reason to call him 'Korkut' – 'fright'.

[Aliev <http://kumukia.ru/modules.php?name=Pages&pa=showpage&pid=9220>].

**AURIC** spiral of fear hovers above the interpretation of his death - this time the fear is associated with Korkut attempts to avoid death. In this case, the name "Korkut" is associated with shaman reasons – the fear of death and the attempts to avoid it. The same author quotes other interpretations of the name Korkut - and in particular as 'fire' + 'kut', as 'kut', what means according to them a sacral force. The author notes that the origin of his name reflects the divine wisdom and the origin of Korkut. Part of authors believe that Korkut is a prophet, and the image of Korkut is the last in a series of Gorguds – the prophets who later became head of the Order of alevi - Dede as the keeper of ancient knowledge and the leader of a society [Ibidem].

If we get into account the mission of Korkut, we can try to answer another question:

## 2. WHETHER Korkut (Hoskut, according to some sources) is not a syncretistic image which means the unity of male and female basis determining the fate of the people?

**AUTHORS** such as H. Husainova, F.G. Hisametdinova, L. N. Iskakova considered one of the possible meanings of the name of Korkut - Defender of the happiness of Bashkiria language 'kursalau' and the word 'kut, meaning happiness, good. [Iskakova 2007]. Alternatively the interpretation of "Kor – kut" - is 'fire' + 'fate, luck' from 'kor' – 'fire, gleeds', which in eastern mythologies is associated with male basis and 'kut' - 'fate', 'happiness', 'luck' with the female basis. In favor of this assumption, besides linguistic interpretation, evidence several facts even indirectly.

**KORKUT** lives up to the river, so the fire (male) nature of Korkut must be in unity with the water (female nature). He inhabits not just to the river but to its mouth - this image refers to our perceptions of the source of the female principle which gives birth and purification.

**THE** evidence of its occupation near water, which are highlighted in some of the songs of the Basque, published by I. Kastanie: *'Living up to the mouth of the river, the brave Korkut (Su ayaga er Korkut) sent away misfortune ... living up to the mouth of the river, the brave Korkut, sent away disease!'* [Kastanie, quote on Zhirmunski 1963].

**THE** second morpheme - 'kut' definitely is associated with women, childbearing nature. According to the authors of the "Traditional view of Turks of Southern Siberia" in ancient Turkic language the word 'kut' has the following meanings:

1. soul, life force, spirit;
2. happiness, good, grace, prosperity, luck, success;
3. dignity, majesty.

*In some Turkic languages (Kazakh and Karakalpakian) the word means:*

1. life force, spirit;
2. amulet, animals protection;
3. happiness.

1. bit blood clot, falling through a hole for passage of smoke and lucky good, honest man; it is considered that the newborn child with "kut" in the hand is happy-örnek: Çingiz Han, "avucunda bir kan pıhtısı tutarak doğmuştu"[Türk mitolojisi II Cilt Prof. Dr. Bahadır Ögel 1995 Ankara, s.584]

2. *amulet, protecting domestic animals and human;*
3. *little divinity, little idol;*
4. *life force, spirit, soul;*
5. *happiness, luck, grace.*

In Hakkasan and Altaic language '**ku**t' is 'soul, spirit, life force'(Mongolian - Xutag - 'happiness, prosperity'; Tungus language 'Gutu' – 'happiness', Korean 'kut' - «shaman rite», etc. And further: «In the Turkic languages names form 'got' ( 'kot') - 'kut' and single-affixial affixial formations' 'goden, (keden') have meant:

1. *seat, rump of a bird (in all sources);*
  2. *men and women genitals*  
(Kirgisiens, Altaians, Teleutians, Chuvasians)
  3. *rectum (Kirgisiens, Nogaians, Altaians) anus (Kirgisiens, Chuvasians)*
  4. *back, uterus, abdomen, stomach, placenta (Turkmen dialect), etc.'*
- [The traditional .... 1989: 2-73]

**THUS** the morpheme '*ku*t' in antiquity was in a correlation with lower body part giving birth. In Turkic tradition this concept, reflecting the biological basis for the creation of life, ability to reproduce, spreads over the whole organic world "[Ibid, p.72-73]. Is of interest that in Russian culture has a proverb - „Родился в рубашке” /Born in a shirt (with the placenta) i.e. wrapped, surrounded, protected by '*ku*t'. In Turkic culture the birth is associated possibly with the idea of the origin of the world from an egg - and hence the image of Umay as a swan or goose (duck). The place where the egg passes (analogy of the birth of the person) in symbolic rituals is presented as a narrow crevice in the rock, narrow passages in the caves, and success passing through symbolizes the new birth (and protect by Umay).

**THUS** morpheme composition of the name '*Korkut*' - '*Kor* + *ku*t' may be a merger of two opposing essences and uniform natures - male and female.

**3. ANOTHER version of the first morpheme interpretation in the name - Korkut:**  
'*kor*' is a 'group of peers who were born in the same 12-year cycle', ie 'generation', 'time', 'circle'. '*Kor arug*' or '*Kor uk*' - means the assembly of the family. Tatar-Bashkir korga kerua - 'take into kor' – means 'to become a major', 'to become a man '. Children under 12 years have not been in '*kor*'. Hence '*kordash*' - 'coeval', '*koraltay*', '*koru*' - build, it comes from the word '*kurban*'-'*kurman*' ritual sacrifice. Tatar word '*korak*' ( '*karak*'-forty) – means 'lasso','hook '. Another Tatar word '*korshau*' means 'ring', 'environ', 'embed'. Similar in its imagery has meaning has the ancient Turk word '*kur*' which means 'snare','circle'.  
<http://www.tatforum.info/forum/index.php?act>  
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**AT** first sight sema who have no connection "*circle*", "*forty*" are in fact related to the archetypal idea of time as a circle, ring. In this sense, the name of Korkut means '*Round-doom*', in a related archetypal notions of a range of cycle time and fate, destiny (luck) -'*ku*t', which in its unity builds the image of the time in its repetitive cycles and fate, which it brings to people - literally '*time*'-'*destiny*'. The functions of Dede Korkut are quite close to the semantics of both morphemes - '*time*' ( '*kor*') - '*fate*' (*ku*t). Dede Korkut has a direct connection with the ritual of initiation (introducing the boys to "*kor*" - in recent times when they become men), as the ritual is accompanied by giving a new name. The names usually represent the essence of a new full member of the family and wishes that have character and determination of prophecy and determination of fate.

**4. ANOTHER version of the origin of the name of Korkut is that its prototype is (Gorgud) - god, divine source determining the fate of the people** [ibidem, <http://www.tatforum.info/forum/index.php?act> Added@[mergetime]1117532127[/mergetime] - actually refers to its prototype, but does not divulge the inner form of the name, which can also be a carrier of an ancient archetypal personification. Kazakhians honor Korkut as their father, who has landed the earth from heaven and has left on the coast of Sara (the river Sardarya) his falcon (kobuz - musical instrument). According to the saga his name consists of two parts: 'kor' and 'kut'. 'Kor' of Kazakh language means 'evil, misfortune', 'kut' - 'good, happiness'. <http://hosting.bakinter.net/torah/son2.htm>). Thus it may be assumed that the name Korkut embodies the ideas of good and evil (possibly for rotation good and evil, their existence, all that ultimately is typical for any fate). In Kazakh language 'kor bolma' means the desire to avoid misfortune and 'kutta bol' is the wish of the happiness and welfare. [Ibid]. Although indirectly, here can be traced again the connection to male source, which essentially refers to the nature of Tengri, ruthless god who prejudices. 'Kut', associated in Kazakh language with 'good', 'welfare' refers to the female principle - the goddess Umay, the protectress.

**5. TAKING** into consideration the etymology of the ancient Turkic word 'kor' and 'kut' properly here arises the question **whether Korkut is a personification of a destiny itself?** From the statement it is clear that the content of mythologemes "fate" in ancient Turkic culture is distributed among the minds of its materialization, personification, indicating functionality of personified deities (male and female) and how to implement these functions. Abstract nature of fate is metaphorized as the presence or absence of 'kut' - happiness (success, wealth, luck).

**THE** material bearer of 'kut' is a blood clot from birth which possesses magical qualities. As showed the analysis of the word *kut*, one of its meanings is related to birth - placenta, the woman's childbearing organs, birds (ducks). The content of the most ancient Turkic mythologema layer is associated with the "receipt" (or non-receipt) to 'kut' of the Godhead - Tengri and further protection from Umay. It is interest the fact that if the name of the Tengri is associated with heaven, heaven, the name of Umay means "fold" - shelter, protection, conservation site<sup>1</sup>.

**ALL** that we can associate with the main function of Dede Korkut – he is that person who predicting in fact predetermines the fates, gives new name after initiation (ritual death and new birth (cf. with the ritual passing through *kut*) and determines the new nature of the young people passing initiation. It is a symbolic unity between male and female principle, 'introduces' in recent times and predicting predetermines the fate. It is time to remind that the names of all the goddesses (deities) of the fate obligatory reflect their function - they are what they do: "casting lots", "which spins the fate", "the irretrievable", "the necessity" etc. Thus

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<sup>1</sup> It is interesting the fact that in the Turkish and Bulgarian culture it is preserved the belief that the passage through the gut in the cave, between the narrow crevice in the rocks brings happiness and luck. They remind a lot of ritual jab between gut created by the swallow bar and the earth, associated with the ritual of initiation - which symbolizes the birth of a new life (new luck). The passage through a well to the underworld in the tales leads to another level - to the underground world of Erlik [Smirnova <http://www.ic.omskreg.ru/~cultsib/trad/sm.htm>]. These trips usually end with the return of the hero who after many narrow escapes returns the land rich and happy – according to Propp this is an analogy with initiation - a symbolic death and return "new birth".

"Korkut" as a mythological hero of divine origin, born in mystical circumstances, is endowed with divine capabilities and performs sacral functions.

**BINDING** the name of Korkut with the image of fear is probably secondary - the future may be disgrace. Furthermore the etymology of the name of Korkut of '*kork*' (fright, fear) is probably associated with the mythical hero's attempts to avoid death. But such attempts are generally characteristic of the mythical heroes (at the end of their adventures mythical hero obligatory enters in an anti-fight with the death). It is indicative, however, Korkut trying to avoid death on the water - fire male nature and water attends one another, as in birth, and at the end (forming a circle or a ring).

**THUS** the analysis of the name "Korkut" gives the reason for the following conclusions at this stage of the study have hypothetical nature:

- The name "Korkut has encoded ancient Turkic mythologemes of fate, represented as a unity of male and female principle '*kor*' and '*kut*'.
- The facts related to the function of the mythical hero Korkut show that the name reflects the functions of the higher power that determines the destinies of people.
- The name of the mythical hero initially consists of two parts, the morpheme '*kut*' refers to an even more ancient materialized idea of the good fate as a share that is given to man at his birth. '*Kut*' is a female principle, it belongs to Umay. The morpheme '*kor*' is polysemantic. It has been comprehended in Turkish language as '*fire*' and in this context it represents the principle.
- '*Kor*' in some Turkic languages is comprehended as raw sentence (unhappiness).
- In the course of time the name expressed by mythologemes for raw and good fortune is redesigned in different socio-historical conditions, or rather actualizes in the new angle the ancient archetypes.
- This actualization passes a complex way of creation new association links, framing and reframing till comprehending the name Korkut – as "suggested fear" (which was born in suggested fear circumstances and which "causes fear" because it predetermines the fate) or as "cowardly" (as the interpretation of its attempts to avoid death).

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