Story 677 (1973, Tape 3) Narrator: Hasan İpek
Location: Kaza town of
Gümüşhacıköy
Province of Amasya
Date: Summer 1973

#677   #677
Keloğlan and Köse

(Teker one,

Once there was and once there was not, when the sieve was in the hay--in such older times, when the camel was a town crier, when the rooster was a barber, when the child was rocking his father's cradle tıngır mıngır,[1] well, in those days there was a man with a baldheaded son. *Onomatopoeia -- for rocking of cradle*

"Keloğlan,"[2] this man said to his son, "we are out of flour. I shall load some grain on our donkey, and you can take it to a mill and have it ground." After he had loaded the grain on the donkey, he added, "But if you see that the miller is a köse,[3] then do not have the flour ground there. Go on to some other mill."

"All right, father," said Keloğlan.

Keloğlan soon arrived at the mill and knocked on the door,

[1]Onomatopoeia for the sound of the rocking of a cradle.

[2]The word keloğlan means, literally, bald boy. Children in rural Turkey are sometimes afflicted with ringworm. Infestations of the scalp destroy the roots of the hair and leave the victim bald in those places. Youngest children, unable to attend to personal cleanliness as well as older children, seem to be more often afflicted with this disease, and so keloğlan often suggests the youngest child. The keloğlan is often clever and often considered to be lucky.

[3]The köse is a beardless man, often said to have a heart-shaped face and short legs. The type is clever and wily to the point of treachery.

Story 677

Thomatopoeia —for Knocking on door

"Tak, tak, tak!"[4] When the miller came to the door, Keloğlan

immediately that he was a <u>köse</u>. He said, "My father warned

me against having a <u>köse</u> grind our grain," and he left that mill

and went to another farther down the stream.[5]

When the <u>köse</u> saw him leaving, he locked up his mill. He

then ran along a short-cut to the lower mill, entered it quietly

and hid behind the door.

Keloğlan knocked on the door of this second mill, "<u>Tak,</u>

<u>tak, tak</u>!" He looked at the miller who came to the door and said,

this one is a <u>köse</u>, too. I shall not have my grain milled

here either.

When the boy set off to a third mill, the <u>köse</u> again

preceded him there. When Keloğlan knocked on the door, "<u>Tak,</u>

<u>tak, tak</u>!" he looked at the miller who came and he asked him,

"Are all millers <u>köses</u>?"

"Yes, all of them are <u>köses</u>."

"Well, a <u>köse</u> is a <u>köse</u>, and I might just as well have

had my grain ground at the first mill I came to. I shall return

to the upper mill.

The <u>köse</u> was at the first mill when he arrived there.

Together they unloaded the grain and started to grind it into

[4]Onomatopoeia for the sound of knocking.

[5]In rural Turkey almost all grist mills are water-powered.

Story 677

flour. After a while the köse said, "Keloğlan, we are hungry.
Bring a little of the flour here, and let us make an (ashcake)[6] ─ the sig
with it."

"All right, ağa bey."[7]

Keloğlan went and brought some flour, and the köse began to
prepare it so that it could be kneaded. "Bring some water,
Keloğlan," he said. When the boy brought water and poured some
in upon the flour, the köse said, "Too much! The (dough) has
become too sloppy!

said, "More water!" And then when the dough became too soft
to knead, he said, "More flour!" This went on until all of
Keloğlan's flour had been used in the dough for the ashcake
They then buried the dough in the ashes of a wood fire, and the
köse baked an askcake the size of the (wheel of a ox-car)t. When
it was thoroughly baked, he rolled it out of the ashes and stood

[6]This is a method of baking bread where no oven is available
--at a camp site, for example.

[7]Ağa bey may literally refer to a landlord (ağa) of aristo-
cratic (bey) status, 95% of the time it is used today, however,
it is not meant literally. Its most common use is as an honorific
or term of respect. Younger siblings call an older brother ağa
bey. Servants, salesmen, shop keepers, and those of low social
or economic status will often refer to a male customer or patron
as ağa bey as a deferential gesture. An old man may be referred
to by anyone his junior as ağa bey. The Keloğlan here is using
the term in wariness rather than in genuine respect.

Story 677

it against a wall. Then he said, "Now, Keloğlan, this ashcake
will belong to whichever of us tells the better tale."[8]

"All right, ağa bey." After the <u>Köse</u> had finished telling
a tale, Keloğlan began his tale:

"Once there was and once there was not, in an older time,
when the camel was town crier, when the rooster was a barber,
when the hen was a tailor, and when the child was rocking his
father's cradle, <u>tıngır mıngır</u> --well, back in those days we
had a pair of oxen.

"We used to hitch up these oxen to a wagon frequently and
use them to haul things to this place and to that place. After
a while one of the oxen developed a sore on his neck from the rub-
bing of the yoke. We went and talked with people who were
knowledgeable about such things. 'A sore has developed on the
neck of one of our oxen. What shall we do about it?' They said,
'Squeeze a walnut on it, and the neck will heal.'
"We did as they suggested, and, to our surprise, a large
walnut tree grew from the ox's neck. Those who passed in one
direction threw stones at the tree to knock down walnuts for
themselves , and those who passed in the other direction threw
dried cow dung[9] at it. They threw so much at the tree that

[8]In most variants of this tale, the contest is to tell the
<u>taller</u> tale, not just a better tale of any kind.

[9]This could be cow dung from a pasture lot, but it might
also be the cow dung that is dried in circular cakes and used
for fuel.

field -- large -- b.   up - beneath Joshua tree -- on neck of ox
corn --planted   large field --beneath wehat tree -- on neck 5 jot ox
pig -- wild -- eats corn growing in field -- beneath wehat tree -- on neck of ox

Story 677

Pig -- wild -- with handle of sickle stuck in ear -- runs around in pain
          corn field -- and harvests grain
ickle - handle of which is stuck in pig's ear -- harvests grain -- as pig runs in pain

after a while a large field gradually built up at the foot of the

tree. We decided to plant corn in that field. When the corn

was ripe, a wild pig got into the field and got a taste of the

corn. After that, he kept returning repeatedly and eating the

corn. Try as we would, we could not catch him at it, and so we

were afraid that we should be unable to save the crop. Finally

we said, 'Let us harvest the corn and solve the problem that

way.' On the day we had set to harvest the corn, we went to the

field and began to work with our sickles. No matter what side

of the field we harvested, the pig would be on the opposite side

eating corn. I threw stones at the animal, but it would not go

away. Then I threw my sickle at it, and the handle of the

sickle stuck in the pig's ear. In pain, the pig whirled about

in this direction and then, turning, whirled about in another

direction, and as he did so, the sickle was reaping the corn

wherever he went. The corn was all cut down in a very short

time, but the effort was too great for the pig, and it died.

   cut open the abdomen of the pig, and inside I discovered a

letter. It was just a short letter, and so I was able to read

it quickly. It said, 'The ashcake belongs to Keloğlan.'"

    Keloğlan then loaded the large ashcake on his donkey and

took it home. And that is how the tale ends.

Pig --wild -- dies from over-exertion --after harvesting field of corn -
          with sickle stuck in ear

letter -- found   stomach of pig which died of over-exertion from reaping
          field of corn -- says that narrator has won storytelling contest