

CULTS OF ANCESTOR, TREE, FIRE, STONE, AND WOLF IN TURKISH CULTURE

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Abstract. One of the sacred or ancestral settlements of the Mangystau (Mangyshlak) region of Western Kazakhstan is Mount Otpan. This place contains the oldest elements of Turkish culture and is considered an important destination for pilgrims and cultural treasures. Researchers need to pay attention to five cultural objects. The first of them is the «procession», as it is believed that the grave of Adai-Ata is located in it. The sacred tree near his mausoleum symbolizes the «Tree Cult». The stones placed around the tree are arranged in such a way as to resemble a mound, which indicates the «Stone Cult». The name of this place, «Otpan», probably means «Fire Cult». The last cultural object added after independence is a gray wolf statue depicting the «Wolf Cult». In this article, we would like to examine the meanings of these five cults in Turkish culture, the necessity of preserving them as cultural heritage, and their importance in the formation of national identity. The scientific novelty of the presented research lies in its integrated linguocultural interpretation of ancestor, tree, fire, stone, and wolf cults as an interconnected system of conceptual structures within the Turkic worldview. Unlike previous studies that have primarily described these cults from ethnographic or mythological perspectives, this work examines their linguistic representation through lexical-semantic, conceptual, and cognitive analysis. For the first time, the selected cults are analyzed as a unified conceptual network in which each concept (ancestor, tree, fire, stone, wolf) functions as a culturally encoded cognitive model embedded in language. The study demonstrates how these cult concepts are structured around semantic cores and peripheral associations, and how they are preserved, transformed, and reactivated in contemporary discourse.

Key words: ancestor, tree, fire, stone, wolf, cult, Otpan.

Introduction

From past to present, various beliefs, faiths, and practices have been preserved and passed on among different Turkish tribes within the broader Turkish culture and continue to be transmitted today. Among these beliefs, faiths, and practices, whether in daily life or within oral and written traditions passed from generation to generation, various cults also exist.

Societies living in harmony with nature, as a part of it, have developed certain emotions and thoughts toward elements of nature and those affecting their lives. Curiosity, fear, respect, and love are among these emotions and thoughts. Since the mythical thought periods of societies, these emotions and thoughts have ascribed sacred, religious, and ritualistic characteristics to certain natural elements and aspects of human life. The sacredness attributed to these elements, and the beliefs and practices associated with them, are a result of human individuals and societies striving to make sense of the universe, nature, and their own lives. On this occasion, the concept of «cult» appears.

Materials and methods of research

The methods of observation, comparison, analysis of our object of study from a cognitive point of view based on the views and scientific and information resources of domestic and foreign scientists, were used.

Results and its discussion

The term «reverence» (cult), derived from the French word «culte», is defined in the Turkish dictionary as «worship; religion; religious ceremony, ceremony» [1, 1436]. Pervin Ergun conveys V. Beshliev's comments on the term as follows: Cult, which constitutes one of the most fundamental elements of any religion, is expressed through various actions in the interaction of man with supernatural forces or gods. These actions can take different forms. They can include pure sounds such as music, singing, screaming, or crying, or verbal elements such as prayer, divination, magic, or sacrificial rituals.

They can also be silent prayers or a simple bow before God [2, 15].

«Cults are elements that ensure cosmic repetition, sanctify time and space, and therefore differ from others» [3, 174]. In the history of mankind, nature and the supernatural world have been deeply intertwined in the collective consciousness of societies. As a rich bearer of cultural memory, folkloric traditions preserve and convey the homage shown by early humans to elements they consider powerful or sacred. Among the most persistent and common manifestations of this bow are the veneration of an ancestor, a tree, a wolf, a stone, a fire. Each veneration reflects different aspects of a person's relationship with nature, death, and the unknown, often performing both spiritual and social institutional functions. In addition, veneration is a sacred manifestation called hierophany [4, 9].

In Turkish culture, cults are «objects that are considered sacred, valued in the divine sphere, but never become real objects of worship» [2, 16]. In Turkish culture and folklore, the cult of ancestors, wood, wolves, stones, and fire occupies a special place. The belief systems that developed around these elements left an immortal mark on social experience, conversations, and everyday life. This report is devoted to these five cults: ancestor, tree, wolf, stone, and fire.

In the field of linguocultural analysis, cults are considered stable individual formations encoded and preserved through language. Each cult concept creates a semantic structure consisting of the main meaning (core), peripheral meanings, metaphorical extensions, and culturally established connections. Linguistic evidence shows that the cults of ancestors, wood, fire, stone, and wolf are not separate lexical phenomena, but interconnected conceptual units, which together form a whole Turkic worldview. Below, each concept is analyzed in detail with reference to lexical patterns, phraseological use, and mythological meaning.

1. Ancestor Cult:

Ancestor Cult is likely to be the oldest and most common type of religious belief. In different cultures and religions, it is understood that ancestors serve as protectors of the living, influencing the productivity of the land, the abundance of crops, the health of individuals, and collectives. Customs such as offerings, seasonal commemorations, and other commemorations involve maintaining the bond between the living and the dead. In many organizations, it is believed that ignoring ancestors brings misfortune. Historically, since ancient times, it has been thought that in different cultures, there was respect and worship of ancestors, and ancestors performed the duties of counseling, protection, and punishment.

In the old Turkish belief system, which dates back to the period of shamanism, the cult of ancestors among the Turks is based on respect. It is believed that within the framework of this cult, ancestral spirits continue to influence the lives of the living. In ancient Turkish organizations, it was considered that the cult of ancestors could bring protection, promotion, or curses. Offerings, wishes, and commemorations (such as yug measures) were important to maintain harmony with the ancestral spirits. This cult has survived to this day in various ways. For example, the posture of visiting tombs and shrines, which began after the Turks converted to Islam, is a continuation of the ancestral cult of the pre-Islamic period.

The oldest Chinese sources tell us that the Eastern Turks had a tradition of visiting their ancestors' cave graves annually to offer sacrifices [5, 36]. In the ancestor cult, food and fruits are offered, and sacrifices are made to obtain the ancestors' help; they are represented through statues and masks, and large stones are erected in their names and memory [6, 23].

The ancestor cult existed among the ancient Turks. In some cases, the ancestor cult could be blended with animal cults – if the revered ancestor was an animal, this points to totemism. In this study, we will focus solely on human ancestors. When discussing ancestors, it is useful to distinguish between two types: those who were the founders of the tribe or empire, i.e., ancestors from royal lineages, and those who were the founders of a specific clan or family line [5, 36].

«The ancestor-father cult, over time, evolved into a protective function and eventually transformed into ocak (hearth) lineages. After the adoption of Islam, it played a fundamental role in the emergence of

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the sacrament. As a result of this interaction, the ancestral ritual also acquired sacred characteristics, especially in Central Asia, Azerbaijan and Anatolia» [7, 81].

The cult of ancestors occupies a prominent place in the Turkic linguistic culture and is mainly reflected in the lexemes «ata», «baba», «ata-baba», «aruak» and «auliye». The semantic core of the concept of ancestors is built around the meanings of origin, continuity, protection and moral authority. In Turkic languages, the word «ata» refers not only to the biological father, but also to the symbolic source of law and harmony. Expressions such as «ata zholy» and «ata salty» are linguistic expressions that demonstrate the legacy of social norms and ethical values from previous generations.

Phraseological units further reinforce the protective role of ancestors. For example, the phrase «aruaq koldysyn» (may the spirit of the ancestors support you) expresses faith in the active involvement of ancestors in the lives of the living. This linguistic form is not simply figurative; it serves as a speech act that calls for moral and spiritual help. Similarly, the phrase «ata-babanyn aruy aldynda» (in front of the spirit of the ancestors) expresses responsibility not only to society, but also to the moral authority that is passed down from generation to generation.

Conceptually, the ancestors serve as intermediaries between the earthly and sacred worlds. Linguistically, this intermediary role is clearly manifested in the frequent combination of lexemes related to ancestors with verbs of protection, guidance, and punishment. Thus, the concept of ancestors constitutes an ethical principle of the Turkic worldview, placing social behavior within the sacred genealogical framework.

2. Tree Cult:

Tree Cult is manifested by wearing rags on the branches of certain trees, pouring water on their roots, as well as holding gatherings or worship rituals at the base of important trees. In folk culture, trees are often considered the linkers between worlds. Their roots spread to the underworld, and their branches prick into the sky. In beliefs and legends, certain trees are described as the abode of owners, ancestors, or gods.

The veneration of the tree, described as one of the symbols of the Blue God in the Turkish belief system, occupies a place in ancient Turkish beliefs and legends as one of the main concepts of the appearance of man.

As shown in the myth of the origin of the Turks, the tree comes as an original symbol. This feature is also observed in the Yakut epic «Er-Sogoto». In ancient Turkey, «the tradition of hanging the deceased on trees undoubtedly stems from the hope of rebirth and also from the belief in elevating the deceased and leading them on the path to the top» [5, 26].

The sacred tree, which serves as the exterior of the Universe (imago mundi) and the growth of the Universe (axis mundi), connects the three worlds, implements the connection between them, enables access to daytime energy, and serves as the center of the universe (omphalos) and the cosmic core [8, 176]. Mircea Eliade says: «in the simple mind, the tree is the universe and it not only reproduces the universe, represents it, but also ensures its vitality» [4, 270].

In Turkish thought, the sacred tree, known as the Shaman tree, the World Tree, Juniper-Poplar, Juniper-Birch, Tamir-Poplar, the Tree of Life and the Saint Tree, stands in the middle of the world. Its branches support the sky, its trunk strengthens the Earth, and its roots hold the underworld. Thus, the sacred tree connects the three abodes. So, the veneration of the tree indicates the integrity and harmony of the Triune world.

As the periods passed, the worship of the tree also caused the addition of symbolic meanings to the supports of yurts among the Turkish people. Just as the space tree unites the universe, the pillars inside the yurt also unite the House. It symbolizes family unity and inviolability.

Since ancient times, respect for the tree has been important not only for its holiness, but also in matters of power and administration. The holiness of trees is emphasized in many legends and works. For example, in many parts of The Book of Dede Korkut, trees are mentioned as the owners of sacred

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life. He never forgets to bless the poet at the end of the epics: «a section of thick-leaved wood underfoot».

The tree symbolizes life, vegetation, the growth of the world, and the connection of the heavenly, earthly and underground worlds. Especially old and lonely trees are considered venerable and are considered the abode of owners or gods. The Turks retained the custom of wearing handkerchiefs on trees to make wishes or seek healing (wish trees). Different types of trees, such as beech, poplar, pine, and Oak, held a certain sanctity among various Turkish tribes. The cult of wood, rooted in the belief in the sacred tree, has become one of the most significant natural symbols for the Turkish people from ancient times to the present.

The tree cult is described in lexical terms by words such as «tree», «bayterek», «life tree», and «sacred tree». The semantic core of the concept of tree includes life, growth, productivity, and connection. In the Turkic linguistic consciousness, the tree plays the role of a vertical field connecting different levels of life. This vertical symbolism is encoded in lexical terms by transitional expressions that associate the tree with lineage and continuity, for example, deep roots and wide branches, which characterize not only plants, but also families and clans.

In myths, the origin of people or heroes is often associated with a sacred tree. Lexically, these stories strengthen the conceptual connection between the tree and birth, renewal, and destiny. The phrase «high as a sacred tree» serves as a transitional word of assessment, expressing moral or spiritual exaltation. Thus, the tree becomes a lexical symbol of cosmic order and social stability.

In addition, the practice of tying cloth to trees created a certain lexical and phraseological space related to wishes, hopes, and healing. Although the act itself is a cultural practice, its verbal expression preserves the symbolic meaning of the action. Therefore, the concept of a tree operates simultaneously at the levels of myth, metaphor, and everyday speech.

3. Fire Cult:

Fire, essential for heating, lighting, protection, and cooking, naturally became an object of sacred belief. In Turkish folklore, fire is portrayed as both life-giving and purifying. In most traditional societies, the hearth is considered the center of the home and the primary point of connection with ancestors or deities. «In the formation of Turkish culture, fire first, then the hearth where fire is kindled, and finally the ancestors who protect it, have been regarded as important and, over time, these elements have evolved into cults through various practices surrounding them» [9, 1366].

As a cult, fire contains divine characteristics. Among the Altai Turks, it was the god Ülgen who taught humans how to make fire: «Ülgen brought down one black and two white stones from the sky. Crushing dry grass in his palm, he placed it on one of the stones and struck it with the others, igniting the grass. Thus, Ülgen taught humans how to create fire and said, ‘This fire is from my ancestor’s power, fallen onto the stone».

Along with fire, Ülgen also created the hearth and gifted it to humanity. It was believed that originally each family had its own fire and hearth. Moreover, it was believed that the family fire was first lit by the family’s founding ancestor. For this reason, the family hearth holds great significance. The hearth and home are grounded in ancestral and paternal hearths. In this sense, the fire and hearth cult are closely related to the ancestor cult.

«Among the Turks, the fire that sanctifies the hearth is not the large fire lit outdoors during ceremonies but rather the fire kindled within the home’s hearth, which represents the 'family hearth.' It should be noted that the concept of the ‘family hearth’ likely emerged alongside changes in the social structure. That is, while initially each tribe had one fire, changes in social life led to a transition from tribe to family. Among Turks, children who got married would take fire from their father’s hearth to start their own. This sacred fire from the parental home would ignite their hearth and continue their lineage» [9, 1361].

Thus, individual, familial, and societal unity is completed through the fire and hearth cult. In old Turkic culture, the youngest son was called «Ot Tigin», meaning the protector of the family hearth and

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the continuator of the paternal homeland [7, 123]. The purifying function of fire is seen among nearly all Turkic peoples. For this reason, both Muslim and non-Muslim Turks show great reverence toward fire and the hearth, attributing human qualities to it [7, 125]. Fire holds a central role as a purifying, protective, and sacred element. In Turkish Shamanism, fire rituals were particularly important for driving away evil spirits and diseases.

The constantly burning fires in homes (hearths) represent the soul and continuity of the family. Fire ceremonies and the hearth cult are based on ancient perceptions of fire as a life-giving and socially unifying force. Even after the influence of Islam increased, the fire cult persisted in rituals such as jumping over fire during Nowruz and Hidrellez, symbolizing purification and renewal.

Fire, as a flame, symbolizes spiritual power and force, transcendence and enlightenment, and is seen as a manifestation of the divine or the soul's breath of life; it is also considered a symbol of inspiration and illumination [8, 66-67].

Encoded in words such as flame, hearth, and candle, they together create a semantic space of warmth, purity, continuity, and life-orientedness. The main meaning of flame in Turkic linguistic culture is closely related to family and lineage. In addition to its literal meaning, the word hearth means the integrity of the household and the continuity of ancestors. Phrases such as «koranyn zhalyny sonbesyn» (ohak otı sonbesyn) linguistically express the desire for the preservation and development of the family.

Images related to flame are widespread in Turkic languages. The phrase «iřh zhalyn» (iřhiindegi ot) denotes internal power, desire, or soul energy. This alternating expansion shows how the physical flame is written as an internal quality of a person. In addition, flame carries a cleansing semantic component, which is reflected in phrases that associate flame with purity and renewal.

From a linguistic and cultural perspective, the concept of flame connects the material and spiritual realms. Its linguistic manifestations encode not only practical functions, but also abstract values such as continuity, responsibility, and purity of character. Thus, the flame serves as a central organizing image in the Turkic conceptual system.

4. Stone Cult:

«The hardness, solidity, and durability of matter are a hierophany in the religious understanding of primitive humans» [4, 222], and the stone cult is one of the most important examples of this. Stones of particularly large or unusual shape were of ritual importance in cultures. Beliefs and skills often attributed holiness to the stones as a manifestation of stability, inviolability, and memory.

In many rituals, it was understood that certain stones are places of rest for spirits or have magical properties. Legends about wish stones, healing stones, and border stones are often found in World Folklore. Activities such as the creation of stone piles to mark travels or sacred abodes show a deep belief that stones are «alive» and involved in the spiritual life of people. In simple symbolism, stones can give birth to people and have life-giving potential, or people can become sacred stones. In ancient Turkey, the baksy used special stones to perform their functions.

In Turkic traditions, stones are associated with the concepts of stability, memory, and holiness. It was decided that the stones were inhabited by spirits and were entrusted with spiritual powers. The ancient Turks called the stones placed in the tombs «balbal» for each opponent killed. In Central Asia, balbals (stone sculptures) attributed to tombs are recognized as both a grave marker and a carrier of the soul of the deceased. Some stones were called «Dream Stones», while others were associated with fertility and protection. The depiction of stones and the perception of them as spiritual mediators openly reflect the revitalizing worldview of the Turks towards nature.

«The Kül-Tegin and Bilge-Kagan Inscriptions written in 732 and 735 on the Eternal Stone (Bengü Taş), the «eternal and immortal stone» are considered important examples of the stone cult. Another reflection of the stone cult is the «Yada Stone», which symbolizes fate, sovereignty, wealth, and power in Turkish culture. Its significance is seen in the Uyğur «Migration Epic», where the Uyğur khan, by giving a mountain-sized stone (Yada Stone), crucial to the fate and strength of his nation, to the Chinese,

«In the context of the mythological stone cult, beliefs such as being born from stone, turning into stone, the patience stone, messenger stone, miraculous stone, healing stone, sacred stone, wishing stone, intention stone, need stone, divination stone, rain stone, talisman stone, etc., have found a place in Turkish folklore and over time became topics in various genres of Turkish folk literature» [7, 233].

Because the stone cult represents a hierophany, it is also associated with divine protection or punishment. In this context, the motif of turning into stone frequently appears in the legends and narratives of Turkish tribes. Stories often feature people turning into stone either for protection or as punishment. These tales of human-stone transformation are another variant of the cosmic-origin stone myth.

In addition, the stone cult is found in beliefs and practices related to «medicine and healing, childbirth, talismans, magic, luck, wishes and vows, oaths, and inducing rain and snow». It is known that stones are frequently used in folk medicine in Turkey. For example, in the village of Şambayadı in Adana, women hoping to have children have heated stones placed on their abdomens at certain shrines.

Stone is described by words such as «sacred stone», «mangi tas», and «kieli tas». The semantic basis of the concept of stone includes strength, stability, memory, and power. In Turkic linguistic usage, stone is often found in interchangeable phrases that denote endurance and preservation, such as «tas zhurek» (stone heart) and «taska kashalgandai» (as if carved into stone). These phrases reveal the conceptual connection between stone and immutability.

Legendary and historical writings further reinforce the sacred status of stone. The name «mangi tas» (eternal stone) linguistically encodes the idea of indelibility and eternal memory. In writings and heroic tales, stone is a preserving tool of history and power. Linguistically, this function is reflected in the correspondence of words related to stone with the concepts of law, oath, and fate.

The concept of stone is also intertwined with the concept of ancestors, as stones often function as monuments or symbols that signify the relationship of ancestors. This interweaving reflects the unified nature of sacred concepts in the Turkic linguistic worldview. Thus, the stone serves as a materialized form of memory that ensures the transmission of cultural values from generation to generation.

5. Wolf Cult:

Animal figures hold significant value in Turkish folk culture, shaped by people's history, relationship with nature, and societal values. Over time, as the Turks transitioned to a settled life, animal cults receded into the background while plant cults came to the fore. However, the cult of spirits that protect animals was preserved in Turkish mythology, and the most important among them is the wolf [7, 81].

The wolf is an animal that played a very important role in ancient Turkish mythology. It is possible that the original Legend was created by the Hyun-Nu (Huns) in the form of a «wolf type» [5, 57].

There are often legends about the historical origin of Turkic peoples, which reflect the role of both nature and the human spirit in physical and cultural life. In early Turkic beliefs, The Wolf was considered a defender of the state, a keeper of public order, a symbol of freedom.

In Turkic mythology, The Wolf is considered a distinctive person and is often considered a sacred ancestral animal. Many stories in early Turkic beliefs describe how the ancestors of the people came into contact with Wolves and how these animals protected them. The Wolf idol, in particular its «White Wolf» (Bozkur), serves as a mythological protector, seen as a heroic ancestor, guide, and symbol of loyalty in the Turkic understanding, as well as a revered hero.

Because of this, the early Turks carried products related to wolves or wore wolf skins. Wearing animal skins or masks restores the virtuous relationship between humans and animals and represents the attainment of instinctive, Animal Wisdom [8,13]. Among the early Turks, shamanism was the main religious system, in which harmony with nature, communication with animals and the use of their power were at the forefront. Shamans believed that they could contact Wolves with spiritual orientation. By

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wearing wolf masks or depicting a relationship with Wolves, the shamans performed their spiritual journeys. In this sense, the Wolf represented a deep connection between man and nature.

Bahaeddin Ögel, drawing from Chinese sources, states: «As the Chinese claimed, the Turks believed they were descended from the wolf. To show that they had not forgotten their first and sacred ancestor, they placed wolf statues atop their state symbols». As in the Türeyiş Epic, the Turks believed they were descended from wolves. In addition to being an ancestral animal, the wolf appears as a guiding leader in the Oğuz Kağan Epic and the Ergenekon Epic. Thus, the wolf cult is closely related to the cult of ancestors. «As a sacred ancestral animal, the wolf's image or head adorned the tops of banners, and officers in the Turkish guard division called themselves 'wolves» [5, 58].

The most significant reflection of the wolf cult in Turkish culture is the Gray Wolf's warlike spirit. In mythological narratives, epics, and oral and written traditions, this cult is portrayed as having rescued Turks from calamities, bringing them happiness and strength, and establishing social order.

Moreover, the wolf cult is still respected among various Turkish groups today. For example, among the Yörük-Turkmens in Turkey, there is a belief that a person who carries a Gray Wolf's tooth in their pocket is protected from the evil eye and will not talk in their sleep. Additionally, it is believed that if the eye of a Gray Wolf is dried, ground into powder, and applied as eyeliner, it will enhance vision and prevent eye pain.

The cult of the wolf occupies a special place in the Turkic linguistic culture and is described by such words as «wolf», «bori», «kok bori» and «bozkurt». The semantic basis of the concept of wolf includes protection, guidance, freedom and strength. In linguistic representations, the wolf is often presented as a model of leadership and stability. Expressions that associate individuals or groups with the wolf emphasize heroism, independence and companionship.

In legendary stories, the wolf is depicted as a leading ancestor or guardian of the generation. Linguistically, this role is maintained through epithets and conceptual naming methods. The expression «kok bori» (blue/gray wolf) is used not only as a characteristic of the animal, but also as a shortened symbol of common identity. Thus, the concept of a wolf combines biological, mythological, and socio-cultural dimensions into a single lexical-cultural framework. At the biological level, the wolf is perceived as a real animal inhabiting the steppe ecosystem and is characterized by strength, endurance, and group organization. At the mythological level, it transcends its zoological uniqueness and becomes the sacred ancestor, guide, and protector of the Turkic people, which is reflected in origin legends and epic traditions. At the socio-cultural level, the wolf serves as a symbolic model of leadership, unity, and freedom, often used in political rhetoric, poetic debate, and national symbols.

From a lexical-semantic point of view, the difference between «wolf» and «kok bori» is also important. While «wolf» is often used in everyday language to name an animal in its natural state, «kok bori» often has a high stylistic and symbolic meaning in literary and mythological texts. The word «kok bori» further reinforces this symbolic layer, linking the animal to heroic origins and group identity. Such lexical variation demonstrates how semantic differences encode cultural layers of meaning.

Fixed phrases increase this interpretive complexity. For example, the phrase «boridei kairatty» (strong as a wolf) can refer to physical and spiritual strength, while «kaskyr minez» (wolf-like habit) can refer to perseverance, strategic intelligence, or sometimes calculated toughness. These phraseological structures demonstrate how the concept of the wolf functions simultaneously as a positive heroic image and a symbol of principled resolve.

In epic speech, especially in stories of origin and migration, the wolf appears in a guiding role, leading the people to salvation or to a new territory. Linguistically, such stories establish a stable connection between wolf-related words and verbs of movement, orientation, and preservation. This recurring textual pattern reinforces the connection between the wolf and concepts of fate and historical continuity.

Therefore, the concept of the wolf cannot be reduced to a simple animal image. It represents a

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multi-layered structure of thought, where natural characteristics, mythological archetypes, and socio-political meanings are intertwined. Its preservation in modern linguistic use demonstrates the strength of old symbolic patterns in the contemporary cultural consciousness.

In addition to its epic and mythological manifestations, the concept of the wolf is also observed in modern mass media discourse, political symbolism, and narratives about individuals. In modern Turkic societies, references to the wolf are often found in words that emphasize national renewal, unity, and historical continuity. Linguistically, such use activates a deep cultural consciousness-reaction embedded in the word, which allows a single symbolic reference to evoke an entire mythological and historical basis. This phenomenon demonstrates how the concept of the wolf functions as a compressed cultural code that can convey complex ideological meanings through a small linguistic target.

From a philological-linguistic perspective, the concept of the wolf can be represented as a radial group with a main core (the steppe predator) and several figurative extensions radiating outward. These extensions include: (1) an ancestral guide; (2) a military leader; (3) a symbol of independence; (4) a manifestation of prudence and cunning. Each extension is activated in specific discursive situations. For example, in poetic discourse, the wolf often symbolizes unbridled freedom and resistance, while in political discourse, it can symbolize group power and statehood.

The semantic ambiguity of the wolf also deserves attention. Although it mainly means good in the Turkic mythological tradition, the wolf can take on a negative meaning in certain practical situations, for example, to denote danger or a state of foreboding. This ambivalence reflects the broader archetypal structure of the predatory symbol in human cognition. However, in the Turkic lexical culture, the positive heroic dimension significantly outweighs the negative dimension, which indicates a cultural reinterpretation of the general archetype.

An intertextual study of epic formulas further demonstrates the stability of images related to the wolf. Recurring epithets and narrative patterns create a stable symbolic circle in which the wolf is associated with dawn, the sky, or the sacred direction. Such connections contribute to the sanctification of the concept and enhance its cosmological significance. Thus, the wolf becomes not only a cultural symbol, but also a messenger-exchanger connecting nature, legend, and group relations.

In conclusion, the concept of the wolf demonstrates how a single lexical meaning can encompass biological reality, legendary narrative, moral values, and socio-political symbolism. Its multi-layered semantic structure proves the functioning of cult concepts in Turkic culture.

Conclusion

The cults differentiated in this article, as The Cult of Ancestors, The Cult of Wood, The Cult of Wolves, The Cult of Stone, and The Cult of Fire, are the main components of Turkish culture. The transformation of these elements into cults and their continuation among the Turkish tribes is considered a consequence of the renewal and preservation of the ancient and modern belief systems in history and geography by the Turks. These cults were passed down from generation to generation as cultural heritage, thereby preserving the individual, tribal, and national identity.

One of the places where these five cult elements coexist is Mount Otpan among the Kazakh Turks. All five cult elements took place on Mount Otpan. These cultural features are preserved as valuable heritage that ensures the personal and family characteristics of the Kazakh Turks, as well as national identity and self-awareness. They are used to remind and instill national identity in the younger generation.

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ТҮРІК МӘДЕНИЕТІНДЕГІ АТА-БАБА, АҒАШ, ОТ, ТАС, ҚАСҚЫР КУЛЬТТЕРІ

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Аңдатпа. Батыс Қазақстанның Маңғыстау (Маңғышлақ) аймағындағы қасиетті немесе ата-баба мекендерінің бірі - Отпан тауы. Бұл жер түрік мәдениетінің ең көне элементтерін қамтиды және қажылық мен мәдени қазыналар үшін маңызды орын болып саналады. Зерттеушілер бес мәдени нысанға назар аударуы керек. Олардың біріншісі – «шеру», өйткені онда Адай-Атаның бейігі орналасқан деп есептеледі. Оның кесенесінің жанындағы қасиетті ағаш «Ағаш Культін» бейнелейді. Ағаштың айналасына қойылған тастар үйіндіге ұқсайтындай етіп орналастырылған, бұл «Тас Культін» көрсетеді. Бұл жердің «Отпан» атауы «Отқа Табыну» дегенді білдірсе керек. Тәуелсіздік алғаннан кейін қосылған соңғы мәдени нысан – «Қасқыр Культі» бейнеленген сұр қасқыр мүсіні. Бұл мақалада біз осы бес культтің түрік мәдениетіндегі мағыналарын, оларды мәдени мұра ретінде сақтау қажеттілігін және олардың ұлттық бірегейлікті қалыптастырудағы маңыздылығын зерттейміз. Ұсынылып отырған зерттеудің ғылыми жаңалығы ата-баба, ағаш, от, тас және қасқыр культтерін түркі дүниетанымындағы өзара байланысқан концептуалдық құрылымдар жүйесі ретінде кешенді лингвомәдени тұрғыдан талдауында жатыр. Бұған дейінгі еңбектерде бұл культтер негізінен этнографиялық немесе мифологиялық сипатта қарастырылса, аталған жұмыс олардың тілдік репрезентациясын лексика-семантикалық, концептуалдық және когнитивтік талдау әдістері арқылы зерттейді. Алғаш рет аталған

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Әлеуметтік-гуманитарлық ғылымдар-Социально-гуманитарные науки-Social and humanities sciences
культтер біртұтас концептуалдық желі ретінде қарастырылып, әрбір концепт (ата-баба, ағаш, от, тас, қасқыр) тілде кодталған мәдени-танымдық модель ретінде сипатталады. Зерттеу нәтижесінде бұл культ концептілерінің семантикалық ядро мен перифериялық ассоциациялар негізінде құрылатыны, сондай-ақ олардың қазіргі дискурста сақталу, трансформациялану және қайта белсендірілу тетіктері айқындалады.

Түйін сөздер: ата-баба, ағаш, от, тас, қасқыр, культ, Отпан.

КУЛЬТЫ ПРЕДКОВ, ДЕРЕВА, ОГНЯ, КАМНЯ И ВОЛКА В ТУРЕЦКОЙ КУЛЬТУРЕ

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Аннотация. Одним из священных мест или поселений предков в регионе Мангистау (Мангышлак) на Западе Казахстана является гора Отпан. Это место содержит древнейшие элементы турецкой культуры и считается важным местом для паломников и культурных ценностей. Исследователям нужно обратить внимание на пять культурных объектов. Первый из них – «крестный ход», так как считается, что в нем находится могила Адай-Ата. Священное дерево возле его мавзолея символизирует «Культ дерева». Камни, расположенные вокруг дерева, расположены таким образом, что напоминают курган, что указывает на «Культ камня». Название этого места «Отпан», вероятно, означает «Культ огня». Последним культурным объектом, добавленным после обретения независимости, стала статуя серого волка, изображающая «Культ волка». В этой статье мы хотели бы рассмотреть значение этих пяти культов в турецкой культуре, необходимость сохранения их как культурного наследия и их важность для формирования национальной идентичности. Научная новизна представленного исследования заключается в комплексной лингвокультурологической интерпретации культов предка, дерева, огня, камня и волка как взаимосвязанной системы концептуальных структур в тюркском мировоззрении. В отличие от предыдущих работ, в которых данные культы преимущественно рассматривались в этнографическом или мифологическом аспекте, настоящее исследование анализирует их языковую репрезентацию с использованием лексико-семантического, концептуального и когнитивного анализа. Впервые указанные культы рассматриваются как единая концептуальная сеть, в рамках которой каждый концепт (предок, дерево, огонь, камень, волк) функционирует как культурно закодированная когнитивная модель, закреплённая в языке. В ходе исследования выявлено, что данные культовые концепты структурируются вокруг семантического ядра и периферийных ассоциаций, а также сохраняются, трансформируются и актуализируются в современном дискурсе.

Ключевые слова: предок, дерево, огонь, камень, волк, культ, Отпан.