

SYMBOLIC MARKERS OF THE NATIONAL IDENTITY OF THE TURKISH PEOPLE

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During life, people interpret the world around them with symbols acquired in the communities to which they belong. Symbols convey information and, therefore, demonstrate the cohesion and commitment of the nation, values and way of life. Symbolic markers of the Turkish nation, like any other, differ by certain means, which distinguishes them from others. Everything, from language to action in everyday life, can be taken for symbols, and this multilayering and universality makes studying symbols extremely important. Introducing the basic concept of a symbol, using semiotic and theoretical analysis, we demonstrate the identity of the Turkish people. For the purpose of studying the national symbols of the Turkish people, manifested in language, culture and national-civic identity, symbolic characteristics used to determine the identity of the Turkic-speaking people, as well as culture, national colour, music, cuisine and state national symbols, are considered. The epistemological approach has been applied, which determines the basis of this study in the development of a concept detailed part of the national symbols of the Turkish nation.

Key words: national symbols, markers, identity, Turkic-speaking people, national colour, Turkish cuisine.

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В течение жизни люди интерпретируют окружающий мир с помощью символов, приобретенных в сообществах, к которым они принадлежат. Символы передают информацию и, следовательно, демонстрируют сплоченность и приверженность нации, ценности и образ жизни. Символические маркеры турецкой нации, как любой другой, отличаются определенными средствами, что различает их от других. Начиная от языка и до действий в повседневной жизни, все можно принять за символы, и эта многослойность и всеобщность делает изучение символов чрезвычайно важным. Вводя базовое понятие символа, с помощью семиотического и теоретического анализа мы демонстрируем идентичность турецкого народа. Для целей исследования национальных символов турецкого народа, проявляющихся в языке, культуре и национально-гражданской идентичности, рассмотрены символические характеристики, используемые для определения идентичности тюркоязычного народа, а также культура, национальный колорит, музыка, кухня и государственные национальные символы. Применен эпистемологический подход, определяющий основу данного исследования в разработке концепции, детализированной части национальных символов турецкой нации.

Ключевые слова: национальные символы, маркеры, идентичность, тюркоязычный народ, национальный колорит, турецкая кухня.

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During life, people interpret the world around them with symbols that are acquired by the community to which they belong. They speak using these symbols, act or refrain from actions also using symbols. In each individual community, people learn and use symbols which are in the most general form represented in the language of the culture of the nation, which, in turn, gives a prerequisite for the formation of an identity that makes up a national identity. The creation and recreation of culture takes place constantly and continuously and, therefore, the continuous creation and deconstruction of already existing symbols in the community takes place. The fact that the community is perceived as a repository of symbols, attributing values to the surrounding world, shows the role and power of symbols in the formation of national identity. In reference literature, in the most general sense, symbols are defined as "something – whether it is an arbitrary or conditional sign, an object, an action or a sound, having cultural significance and ways to express or objectify the object that is denoted, or offer something else because of relationships, association, agreement or random similarity" [10].

The geographical location of Turkey, between the European and Asian continents, determines the influence on the country and the Eastern Mediterranean and Eastern Europe to Central Asia and the Caucasus. The influence of the territorial location is visible throughout the country, including in Istanbul, previously known as Byzantium, as well as Constantinople. The Bosphorus Strait divides the city into the European and Asian parts. At the same time, most of the residents of Istanbul live in the Asian part of the capital. According to the Turkish Statistical Institute, the population of Turkey was 83 614 362 people (per 31.12.2020), including 15 462 452 people live in Istanbul [17].

The country's culture combines traditions and modern conditionalities, religious and secular customs. Despite the fact that in the country cultural customs, social attitudes and lifestyle vary significantly depending on socio-economic status, ethnicity, level of education, etc., in general, the Turks are united by the ideology of Turkish Kemalism. M. Agar in "Bilingualism in Bilingual" (1991) uses culture in local integration with discursive and other cultural flows. The author analyses the relationship between language and culture from three different points of view: linguistic, psychological and sociological. From the first linguistic point of view, language is analysed outside its cultural context. From the second point of view, concepts, language and culture are inseparable, since the individual carries all the linguistic and cultural experience. And from the third point of view, since language can express and/or create "different realities or cultures," the concepts of language and culture are separated [7, pp. 167-182]. In the article, the Turkish language and Turkish culture are considered from the second point of view, as the linguistic and cultural experience of the Turkish people, the Turkish nation. The changes in the Turkish language that have occurred since the founding of the Republic of Turkey in 1923 are very significant and can be said to be progressive. The use of the "new national language" contributes to the rapprochement of the Turkish people, the development of social experience, the formation of a sense of belonging to the nation, erases "differences in national identities" [5, pp. 73-76].

Symbols, according to the dictionary, are "something that means or offers something because of kinship, association, conventionality, or random similarity." In a two-sided respect, when symbols accept dictionary definitions in which, on the one hand, symbols acquire a certain meaning, on the other, they allow the performer and/or the speaker and/or the actor to acquire identities by using these particular symbols in the context of the nation. In other words, the significatum is denoted by denotative, but at the same time indicates denotative in different associations. The linguoculturological approach to the research

makes it possible to study symbols of the Turkish language and Turkish culture in the context of ethnoculture. The study of the world of symbols of the nation falls under the approaches of symbolic interactionism, although it has its own distinctive features both in the cultural aspect and in the codification of symbols [4].

The starting point of the semiotic study is the distinction between "denotative," "significatum" and "sign." Denotative may be a physical object, word or image; significatum is a mental concept denoted by denotative; and an association sign of denotative and significatum. For example, Turkish indicates the designated (nation), however, in other cases denotative indicates that significatum can be associated to a large extent with national conventions, in other words, arbitrarily, as in the case of language, denotative can indicate different significatum levels. These different sense layers are considered by Roland Barthes as the second level of meaning. The author claims that such signs can function in the form of myths in which the sign denotes a number of cultural values and they can cause other associations. Thus, the signs not only denote, but also have a connotative meaning [8, p. 111].

Turkish is the most common Turkic language, spoken by more than 70 million people. Most Turkish is spoken in Turkey, but there are significant groups of native speakers of the Turkish language in Cyprus, Bulgaria, Greece, as well as in Europe. Turkish is an official language in Turkey, Northern Cyprus, recognized as a minority language in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Greece, Iraq, Kosovo, North Macedonia and Romania. The history of the Turkish alphabet began after 1928. In Turkey, the Latin alphabet was introduced and adopted, consisting of 29 letters (21 consonants and 8 vowels). In this modified alphabet representing "modern Turkish", seven letters: Ç, Ş, Ğ, İ, İ, Ö, Ü are changed in comparison with their Latin originals to reflect the actual sounds of colloquial Turkish [15].

Everything from language to actions in everyday life can be taken as symbols that make studying symbols more important, since they are publicly available and convey information and, therefore, demonstrate the cohesion and commitment of the Turks, their values and lifestyle, which are manifested through the use of symbols. Thus, these symbolic markers, as in any nation, represent distinctive means to distinguish themselves from other nations, which can be reduced to the familiar jargon "we and them."

Symbolic characteristics used to determine the identity of the Turkic-speaking people are presented "...reflection in the cultural values of ethnic society mediated in language, national features" [3, p. 48]. The language acts as an important national symbol, but not the only one, since, as noted above, "symbols are in thoughts, actions, reasoning and creativity." Starting with the "tree" of de Saussure, everything is a symbol, although there is no need to associate the "tree" of the sound picture with an object in the forest, which it symbolically represents [11, p. 82].

The national colour of Turkey is represented by the Turks, the Kurds, living mainly in the east of the country, in mountainous areas and having their own separate language – Kurdish; Crimean Tatars, who moved to Turkey from the 18th century, after the annexation of Crimea to Russia; the Greeks who have been living in Turkey since the Byzantine Empire, and who are the only of the many peoples of Turkey Christians; the Iranian people of Zazas or Dymli, their main difference from the Turks and the Kurds is the Shia religion. National minorities in Turkey are also represented by the Albanians, the Gypsies, the Persians, the Russians, the Georgians, the Chechens, the Germans, the Bosnians, the Ukrainians, the Jews, etc., data on the ethnic composition of the country's population have not been published since 1965 [14, pp. 7-11].

Turkey, like any country with a large number of peoples inhabiting it, inevitably forms a single generally accepted cultural environment. Culture is "central to all types of contexts," and understanding these contexts implies that a person knows "cultural meanings..." [13].

Turkish cultural identity cannot be considered without Turkish Kemalism, either as Western or Eastern, or as secular and Islamic, in addition to cumulative diversity as a heritage of successive civilizations. Thus, Turkish culture is a mixture of various elements inherited from the Oghuz Turks of Anatolia and the Ottomans, as well as Greek and Roman heritage. Modern Turkish culture can be called the self-combination of two cultures (established traditional Islamic culture and modern Western culture). For example, this mixture of cultural influences, which were the result of the interaction between the Ottoman Empire and the Islamic world, side by side with Europe, manifests itself in Turkish music. Turkish music was able to take several different musical images from the music of Kurdish, Armenian, Azerbaijani, Greek, Albanian and other nationalities and become ethnically diverse, including the old double tradition of folk songs and light oriental songs that are of Byzantine or Arabic origin. Banned from 1934 to 1943, they have gained great popularity in recent decades, but not as an "authentic" genre, valued by elite, but the genre of Arabesque, combining traditional musical styles. In addition to Arabesque, there are several other styles, including pop, rap, which have become popular since the 90s of the 20th century and protest music, continuing the tradition begun by the opera singer, Armenian by origin, Mehmet Ruhi Su (1912-1985). The singer performed both mystical and Alevian songs, and proved himself as the creator of a new musical style, inspired by protests in Europe and Latin America [2]. Despite all the variety of musical directions, Western classical music for many years had been considered by the Kemalist authority as the only music that reflects the "Turkish spirit", but played a secondary role on the Turkish music scene [9].

Turkish national cuisine is based on centuries-long experience, it is easy to cook and since almost every district of Anatolia has its own specialty, it is diverse. The main meat of Turkish cuisine is mutton. Chopped and charcoal grilled pieces of mutton form shashlyk known in many countries of the world. Doner kebab is another famous Turkish dish, which is a roll of mutton on a spit turned parallel to a hot grill. Eggplant is used in a variety of dishes: from Karnaryak and Hyunkar Begendi to Patlikan salatasi (eggplant salad) and Patlikan dolmasi (eggs packed with lamb meat and rice) with onions, garlic and tomatoes. Turkish specialty is pilaf. In the Black Sea region of Turkey, pilaf is made of rice and small fish anchovy. Berek is a pie of puff pastry with meat, cheese or potatoes. Turkish natural yogurt Chachik is also known as Dolma from grape leaves (sarma), cabbage leaves and green pepper (bieber dolma) filled with spicy rice. Many Turkish sweets contain milk as the main ingredient, for example, Rice Pudding, Chicken Breast, Halva, Baclava, etc. National drinks are coffee and tea, alcoholic drinks are Raki, which is called the "lion's drink." Soups, as a rule, are based on meat broth and served at the beginning of the meal. Lentil soup is the most common and favourite variety, but there are other preferred ones, such as Yaila yoghurt soup and Tarkhana (soup from a fermented mixture of grain and sour milk). Turkey is surrounded by seas, that's why there are many different fish dishes in Turkish cuisine, especially in coastal areas. One of these traditional dishes in the northern Black Sea region is a dish from anchovy, Homsikofte [16].

National symbols play a unifying role because they represent the common identity of the citizens of the country. The national anthem of Turkey and Northern Cyprus "March of Independence" in March 2021 turned 100 years old. Although there is no coat of arms of Turkey as such, instead there is a semi-official emblem: a red oval with the image of a crescent and a star (the name of the country in Turkish is written on the upper edge), the flag of the Republic of Turkey has a long history. The flag of Turkey, like the flags of each country, represents the symbol of the state and reflects the national values of the nation. Symbols of the flag, a red colour, a crescent and a star are mentioned in the legends about the founder of the Ottoman Empire Osman I and Sultan Murad II, related events in Kosovo (1448), in particular. Minor changes in the symbols of the flag of the Ottoman Empire, adopted as the official flag of the state in 1793, were made during the reign of Sultan

Abdul-Majid I in 1842: the eight-pointed star was replaced by the five-pointed one and the shape of the flag was determined. With the formation of the Republic of Turkey in 1936, the shape of the Turkish flag was determined; in 1985, sizes and proportions were determined. It is known that the eight-pointed star on the Turkish flag symbolizes victory. The five-pointed star that was used by Abdul-Majid I for the first time, and which is still used, represents a person. The crescent used on the Turkish flag represents "an Old Turkic thought, Turkic outlook is connected with philosophy of the Creator Gyok Tanry", Tengri, or the Kok Tengri and ideology of the Mongolian tribes which worshipped forces of nature [1, pp. 22-26].

National symbols are important for national identity. While the importance of national symbols may vary, they are easily identifiable. They are recognizable, and used as a means of transmitting the history and culture of a particular people, they inspire pride and unity. Before migrating to Turkey in their homeland in Central Asia, nomadic Turks lived in domed tents corresponding to their natural habitat. These tents later influenced the Turkish architecture and ornamental art. The return to classical Turkish architectural styles, mixed with modern technologies in search of new syntheses, is demonstrated by the Çamlıca Mosque (Turkish Çamlıca Camii), built in 2019, 72 m high with six minarets. It is one of the largest mosques in Turkey and in the world (57,500 sq. m., capacity – 63 000 people). In addition to the mosque, there is a museum, an art gallery, a library, a conference hall, eight art workshops and a parking lot. The cultural and religious complex on the hill of the same name in the Asian part of Istanbul in the district of Üsküdar (the highest point of the city) gained a new face thanks to the mosque, the tower, and now the largest flag of Turkey (almost 1000 sq. m.), raised by 111-meter flagpole during the Ceremony with the participation of the President of the country in 23.04.2021 [12]. The complex is a single national symbol of the Turkish people.

"Some of the cultural traditions are rooted in ancient times, others go back to later periods, forming at each stage of the innovations that arose during the historical process" [6, pp. 102-106]. The symbol of the Turkish people is a collectivist culture, which shows strong loyalty to the family and social groups of its nation. Relations of people with their relatives, neighbours, other Turks living both in the country and abroad are usually closer than those of European or American residents. Friends are often very loyal and regularly provide services to each other.

Each nation has its own special symbols that represent beliefs, values, traditions or other intangible ideas that make this country unique. They help bring the nation together by reminding its people of the history and the most important stages. In the set of primary sources in the article symbols in the Turkish language and Turkish culture, national colour, music, cuisine and state national symbols are considered. The linguoculturological approach made it possible to consider Turkish culture in connection with the Turkish language as identifiers of the Turkish nation. The goal was to introduce the basic concept of a symbol, conducting a semiotic and theoretical analysis, in order to consider the national identity of the Turkish people. It was to be hoped that our study will complement semiotic studies and have a continuation in interpretation as other ethnic groups.

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