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TURKISM AND ITS CHARACTERISTICS IN LITERATURE OF THE TURKIC PEOPLES OF THE 20TH CENTURY

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Abstract

The article examines the reflection of the idea of Turkism in the literature of the Turkic peoples in the 20th century. The issues of Turkism as nationalism and its defensive nature in the struggle for ethnic-national existence, as well as the Turkish mentality are touched upon. In the Soviet period, some propaganda issues were brought to the fore in the appropriation of the literature of the Turkic peoples of the same ethnic origin. Thus, the characteristic features of the phenomena of ethnic thinking were purposefully distorted.

The 20th century is characterized as the awakening of national consciousness and the widespread spread of the ideas of Turkism in the literature of the Turkic peoples. During this period, ethnic consciousness was gradually replaced by national consciousness, and attention began to increase to national factors.

In general, the study shows that the history of each ethnos passes in merciless struggles for its own existence and preservation. Among the means of struggle, the factors that constitute ethnic identity, in particular, the literary factor, are of great importance.

Keywords: Turkism, Jadidism, National Conscience, Turkic Literature, 20th Century.

THE IDEOLOGY OF TURKISM AS A MEANS OF ETHNIC SELF-PRESERVATION

The formation of the Turkic ethnic group, its self-affirmation was followed by wars and conflicts. The history of each group is spent with relentless struggles to preserve its existence. In all cases, the ethnic groups struggle not only physically, but they also fight to preserve their existence. Among the means of struggle, the factors constituting ethnic uniqueness, including the factors of literature and culture are of great importance.

The Tsarist Russia began to fulfill the policy of changing ethnic uniqueness according to the well-thought comprehensive action plan after it enslaved the Turkic people in the 19th century. Various movements such as Jadidism, Qadimism, and Enlightenment began in the socio-political, literary, and cultural life of the Turkic people which is based on the Turkist ideology. In the new period, Turkism was the means of self-preservation.

JADIDISM AND QADIMISM: STRUGGLE FOR NATIONAL EDUCATION

Jadidism began to develop among the Turkic people of Russia from the second half of the 19th century. The Tsarist Russia adopted the policy of training pro-Russian intellectuals in the countries they had invaded. That's why they increase their focus in the field of education. They focused on consistently implementing their comprehensive action plan in order to get into contact with the people of the countries they had invaded, to make easy the process of managing them, and most importantly, to form the Turkic intellectuals according to the educational principles of the dominant ethnic group, that is to change their ways of thinking as a result. So, the Jadid movement prospered widely in the socio-political life of the Turkic people. The process of return to the national thinking was taking on a wide

scale among the Turkic Muslim people of Russia. Establishment of the schools of new type and their gaining influence gave rise to the diversity of opinions and positions among the Turkic intellectuals. Besides the followers of the schools of new type, there were also intellectuals who believed in the importance of preserving the traditional educational methods, and they started the counterpropaganda. They were called Qadimists because they advocated the old traditions. While Qadimists endeavored to keep the traditional educational system, the Jadids tried to give it up completely.

If we accept Jadidism as the phenomenon of the 2nd part of the 19th century, we cannot overlook other movements of that period, especially the Enlightenment. Both Jadidism and Enlightenment are based on ethnical and national interests and prefer upbringing and education in solving actual problems. Enlightenment prefers to educate the nation, while Jadidism prefers the salvation of the nation.

Beginning from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the renaissance of the national conscience and Turkism developed into two directions: 1) The Turkism of the intellectuals of the period which implied the spiritual unity of the Turkic world; 2) Focus on the national factors as the national conscience replacing the ethnic conscience beginning from the 17th and 18th centuries. Jadidism in Tatarstan and Central Asia politicized by gaining Turkist and nationalist behavior. The Jadids really disturbed the Tsarist Russia and the Bolshevik regime. The Jadid movement in later stages of its development had become a great political power inside the empire. In the early 20th century, unlike the Tsarist reactionism in his fight against Jadidism, the Bolshevik regime not only prevented the Jadidism, destroyed them, draw them to his side or made them to run away from the country, but it also endeavored to delete them

from the history of the Turkic peoples, to move the influence of Jadids away from the socio-political, scientific and cultural, literary and philosophic thought by creating an image of the enemy in them for around a century as well.

THE RISE OF TURKIST IDEOLOGY IN TURKEY: GOKALP, YURDAKUL AND SEYFETTIN

In those times, Turkism lived its renaissance in Turkey. In 1908, as a result of the revolution of Young Turks, monarchy turned into constitutional monarchy. The thought of Ottomanism began to grow stronger. In his paper published in *Peyman* in 1909, Ziya Gokalp (1876-1924) wrote that "Ottoman does not mean Turk", and called the countries covering a wide area which speaks Turkic, Turan.

As the Ottoman empire was declining in early 20th century, it does not only lose his lands in Europe, but even the existence of Turkey as a state was in danger. Under these circumstances, the ideas of Turkic solidarity began to develop in Turkey. The Turkists of this time came together in the societies of *Türk Yurdu* (Turkish Homeland) and *Türk Ojaghi* (Turkish Hearth). At this time, Ziya Gokalp (1876-1924) was one of the leading figures of the Turkist movement and the central figure in field of Turkist theory. Z. Gokalp has developed and demonstrated the necessity of creating Turkic unity and has taken practical steps in order to realize it. Ziya Gokalp who was one and the first of the well-known thinkers of Turkey, has systematized knowledge on Turkic ideology for the first time. *The Essentials of Turkism* by him was the program of Turkism. The ideologist who gives the definition "Turkism means elevating the Turkic nation" explains the essence of Turkism, comments on the matters like Turkism in language, aesthetics, morals, law, religion, economy, politics, and philosophy.

In Turkish literature, alongside with Z. Gokalp, there were also other representatives of the Turkist ideology such as Mehmet Emin Yurdakul and Omer Seyfettin. M. Yurdakul (1869-1944) known as "the first national poet of Turkey" tried to instill the national identity in the people.

The late 19th and early 20th centuries are referred as awakening of the national conscience in the national literature and formation of the Turkic literature. One and the first of the prominent members of the national poetry in Turkish literature was M.E. Yurdakul. In M. Emin's works, the life in Turkey in the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century was reflected realistically. The poet has shouted in his loud voice that his language is Turkish language, and his nation is Turkish in a fully conscious manner for the first time among all Ottoman poets.

This time was an extremely hard period for Turkey that was under the attack of invaders. Just in this time, M. Emin managed to influence their psychology by emphasizing the immortality of Turkic spirit, and the fact that it would not submit to the slavery.

In the period of national independency movement in Turkey (1918-1922), M. Emin, as a real patriotic poet of his own nation, chanted the feelings, griefs, sor-

rows of his motherland. M.E. Yurdakul entered the history of the Turkish literature as the founder of Turkish national poetry, with his socio-political activities and literary works, he played a significant role in awakening of social ideas in the national formation of Turkish people and in its national culture.

Turkist ideas were further promoted in O. Seyfettin's (1884-1920) works. Omer Seyfettin created his works during the period of National literature. Omer Seyfettin was an ardent supporter of national language and literature. The paper called "Yeni lisan" ("New Language") by the writer was a kind of concept of the National literature. His tendency to create literature without using unnecessary words, flashy sentences, embellishment was also characteristic for his stories. What topics has the writer who was one of the brightest representatives of the simplification of language and Turkish storytelling written about? He has written about Turkish lifestyle, Turkish women, Turkish children, Turkish peasants, importance of the passing of Turkish customs and traditions to the future generations, the wars waged by the Turkish people, their valor, determination, dignity, the bravery of Turkish soldiers, being martyr in the sake of land, never forgetting the formula of "he who does not oppress is oppressed", the love for language, religion, motherland, and nation, vigilance against the ones who are dividing the Turks, the Turkist ideal and aim...

The ideological movements of the time, including Ottomanism, Islamism, Westernism, Turkism, greatly influenced undoubtedly on the works written in the time of National literature. In O. Seyfettin's short stories, the ideas of Turkism have been advocated more widely. In his paper "Ideology of Turkishness" he writes: "...The nation we belong to is "Turkishness". It means that the Turkish people have two kinds of life: 1. Personal, i.e. the individual life of each Turkish person. 2. Common, i.e. the national life, Turkism which is lived by all Turkish people together... To strengthen this common life, to prepare an unbreakable future for them is the "Ideology of Turkishness" (Teymur 1992: 79). As a real Turkish writer, O. Seyfettin always tried to protect the interests of Turkish people.

TURKISM IN AZERBAIJAN: THE LEGACY OF HUSEYINZADE AND GASPIRALI

In the beginning of the 20th century, Azerbaijan had the ideologies of Turkism and Azerbaijanism, and Turkism was occurring around A. Huseynzade and the journal *Fuyuzat* found by him. We read the following about A. Huseynzade's participation and services to social, political and national matters of Turkey in Z. Gokalp's *Essentials of Turkism*: "Ali bey who came from Russia to Istanbul, explained the essentials of the Turkism in medical school. His poem "Turan" was the first discloser of the ideal Turanism." (Göyalp 1991: 28).

Ali bey Huseynzadeh was the ideologist of Azerbaijani romanticism in 20th century who put forward the common Turkic literary language systematically, who seriously developed this idea advocated it in his works. It was no coincidence that Ismail Gaspirali openly admitted the newspaper *Hayat* ("Life") to be the successor of *Terciman*, as well as Ali bey Huseynzade to be

his spiritual successor (Kəngərli 2004: 163).

After *Hayat* closed, Ali bey Huseynzade took over the director and main writer of a journal called *Fuyuzat* which was also published with the financial support of Z. Taghiyev. The complete set of this journal published until November of 1906 is a valuable source to understand Huseynzade's political and philosophical thoughts and to analyze his writing style. The most striking aspect in Ali bey's struggle in *Fuyuzat* is to contribute and support to defend the Turkism, and purity and unity of Turkic people against Iranism that tried to attract Azeri Turks near, especially via sectarianism for over some hundred years, and Russicism that began to influence relatively recently, for about 50-60 years (Akçura 2010: 210).

Turkism was associated with the name of Ismail Gaspirali at the time. In the times when the Turkic speaking peoples living in a vast territory within Tsarist Russian Empire, in their eternal and everlasting lands, but suffering under the Russian bondage in need of education, progress, science, culture, and eventually, unity, Ismail Gaspirali appeared on the stage of history with his *Terciman* and his motto "Unity in language, thought, and deed." He explained that the Turkic people scattered from the Altai to the Urals, from Central Asia to the Caucasus, from the Volga to the Balkans belong to the same values and it is time for them to own it (Seyfettin 1993: 4). The idea of necessity of a united common literary language has been put forward for the first time by Ismail Gaspirali in the 80's of the 19th century. According to Gaspirali, the identity of a nation begins from its language, and the Turkic peoples must speak the same language, i.e. the common Turkic literary language in order to get to know and love each other, to understand their own national identity, to become a united, strong nation. This kind of an ideal became the ideological basis for the thought of creating the common Turkic language prospered among the Turkic peoples of Russia and Turkey. Gaspirali fulfilled his motto "Unity in language, thought, and deed" via *Terciman*. The struggles of the newspaper *Terciman* in forming a united language for the Turkic world was praiseworthy. The newspaper *Terciman* became the most extraordinary phenomenon in the Turkic world after Hasan bey Zardabi's newspaper *Akinchi*. During its 35 years of publication (1883-1918), it has been the most popular Turkist and Islamist publication that strived to bring together and to elevate the Turkic people living in various parts of the world.

Ismail bey Gaspirali was one of the most prominent Jadids that played a matchless role in creating new way of thinking among the Muslim peoples of Russia. M.A. Rasulzade wrote the following in the newspaper *Istiklal*: "At the time, Ismail bey was the leader of Jadids and *Terciman* was their publication. The most significant one of the innovations that was issued by *Terciman* was the simplified common Turkic language. A Turkic that was understood by the educated people of every Turkic country. *Terciman* gave all its energy to teaching simplified Turkic to all Turkic people, explained the feeling it spread by the motto "Unity in language, thought, and deed" towards the end of its life. Although according to its existence today, the motto

"Unity in language, thought, and deed" is very far from realization as it was imagined by the whole Turkism which intended to unite all Turkic peoples around into a single Turkic state, *Terciman* that make this motto his banner, has undoubtedly played its historical role successfully (Tahirli 2009: 2).

TURKISH LITERATURE IN CENTRAL ASIA DURING THE SOVIET REGIME AND THE BOOK "AZ-YA"

The Jadid movement was dominant in Central Asia as a politicized form of Turkism.

The invasion of most of the Turkic people by the Bolsheviks after Tsarist Russia make the situation more complicated. The Turkic peoples who had relative independence and freedom in the early times like Azerbaijanis, Kazakhs, Turkmens, Uzbeks, Tatars, Bashkirs and so on, were subjected to ruthless surveillance in all fields, especially in literature, culture and arts. In the Soviet period the policy of the Bolshevik-Communist regime of creating the Soviet person in accordance with the model of Russian person prevailed. First of all, by falsifying the history of the Turkic people, they were being separated from their past, and their memory was being erased. The dangerous aspect that was not clear, was that the process of separating the Turkic people from each other began to be replaced by the process of alienation. The interesting point is that alienation was not only conducted between Turkey or the Turkic people outside of the USSR in general and the Turkic people within the empire, but they also paid special attention to implementing it among the Turkic people within it. An analogous situation was also realized in literary life. The power of an artistic word was also used against the people themselves: the historical past was demonstrated in a distorted way, the artistic analysis of the national peculiarities forbidden, instead of ethnic person, political person, i.e. Soviet person was glorified, etc. The artists wrote before the Soviet regime and thinking about the fate and future of their people and country were subjected to spiritual and physical repression. The officers of literature of the regime spiritual poisoning the artists who do not conform to their demands, began to physically destroy them in 1937. The Turkic people lost many of their intellectuals during this process of genocide. The men of letters of the Turkic people subjected to repression, Cho'lpon, A. Qodiriy, A. Ibrahimov, M. Zhumabayev, Shakarim, and the others; apart from the physical destruction, the survivors were under control till the end, e.g., M. Auezov.

A strict censorship regime was applied and the Turkist personalities were referred as the enemies of the people. And the literature of the people taught in Soviet times used to be selected according to ideological and political criteria. Nevertheless, both the literature lived on, and the verbal art continued to be taught. There were objective and subjective insufficiencies, but like the other people, in the literature of the Turkic peoples, the works distinguished by their artistic value and for demonstrating national interests. The artists like A. Qodiriy, Cho'lpon in Uzbekistan, Ch. Aytmatov in Kirghizstan, M. Auezov, O. Suleymenov in Kazakhstan, N. Sarykhanov in Turkmenistan, M. Jalil in Tatarstan tried to conscientiously serve to their own people.

In the Soviet period, Turkism was preserved thanks to the power of ethnic potential of the people. As we have mentioned before, the center of gravity of Turkism was literature. Oljas Süleymenov's works are the best examples of this.

Any other Turkic poet cannot be imagined who felt the ethnic longing of the Turkic people like him, it is the longing for the deserts, steppes, and this longing has an intimate character: Oljas seems like a horseman going from east to west along the old Turkic steps... (Cəfərov 2006: vol.4, 303).

Az-Ya has a special place among O. Süleymenov's works. The work has a special importance for its original reproach to the history of Turkic people, their language, and their socio-political and historical reputation. The book *Az-Ya* consisting of three parts, expresses an objective attitude to every questions within the scientific and national historical principles, draws interest for learning the national aesthetical values and literary cultural history of the Turkic people who have ancient history, and at the same time for shedding light on some points of the cultural and political histories of a lot of people living in Eurasian territory (Quliyev 2025: 628).

The biggest significance of *Az-Ya* was its great influence on the national awakening of the Turkic people. And this work was born from the necessity of conveying the truths about fate of the Turkic people to the future generations. He said the following in one of his speeches: "I came across with the unexpected facts: it seems that the languages seemingly far from each other had historical relationships. For example, the Russian and Turkic languages. Everything began with my research on *The Tale of Igor's Campaign*. How many old Turkic words this work had. But many others did not like my arguments and examples. They used to say that Turkic and Russian are far from each other. They called me as a Pan-Turkist." (Akimova 2016: 10).

It is known from the history that the Turkic ethnic groups had not tried to assimilate the members of other ethnic groups purposefully. Where is ethnic groups who could not stand against the power of the Turkic language and thought had given up some of their ethnical and national factors voluntarily.

Literature has a unique role and importance in the fight against ethnic and national assimilation. Preservation of the language, the literary description of the historical facts and ethnical and national specificities in the novels like *Abay* by M. Auezov, *Bygone Days* by A. Qodiriy, *Turbulent Kur* by I. Shykhly, as well as in the works in various types and genres written by the artists of the second half of the twenty century, was the expression of Turkism. Literature is one of the main bases of strengthening and activating the resistance energy in the ethnic group.

The fact that the Turkic people had the same ethnic

origin, the same mythological, religious and philosophical views, the same lifestyle and way of thinking, the same customs and traditions, has led their literary and moral values to emerge from the same source. This commonness among the literatures of the Turkic peoples may be referred not as only typological similarity, but firstly as common characteristics. All of these once again prove that the studies on the literature of the Turkic people does not only stem from political, but also from national requirements.

CONCLUSION

In modern times, Turkism develops in two directions in the history and literature of the Turkic people. The first direction is continuous theoretical searches and their aim to strengthen the connection between the Turkic peoples. The second one is to continue the traditional Turkism in literature, culture and art. All these serves to the purpose of promoting Turkism and bringing the Turkic people together in terms of moral values.

The modern Turkic states have the potential to have a say among the countries of the world. They do not need to come together within a border to do it. Close friendly connections, political, economic, literary and cultural relations are sufficient to ensure the connections between the people. Therefore, great work is done toward the further enrichment of the common Turkic culture and the improvement of the literary and cultural ties today. In modern times, systematic work is being done in a large scale in order to prevent the closeness between the Turkic peoples and strengthening alienation between them. Despite this, by finding shelter in their Turkic pride, the Turks manifest their national existence in all fields, as well as literature with great determination and will. Behind this will stand the national and moral values that they cherished with great love.

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