

# The Cultural and Anthropological Bases of Culture Ecology of the Turkic Peoples in Central Asia

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**Abstract**—this scientific article considers the peculiarities of ecology of culture and ecological outlook from cultural and anthropological aspect of Turkic languages speaking peoples in the Central Asia. The ecology of culture of Turkic languages speaking peoples in the Central Asia, formed under the influence of climatic, geographical, economic, religious, ethno cultural and political factors and defining the originality of traditions which have laid down in its basis and functioned, as its components, causes an interest and urgency simultaneously, representing the sample of life of the Person in the World by which it is necessary to be guided today.

**Keywords**—ecology of culture, civilization, the Eurasian civilization, Turkic languages speaking peoples, space-time characteristics, the Central Asia

## I. INTRODUCTION

THE ecology of culture is nowadays one of the sharpest phenomena of cultural anthropology. Most puzzling problems are those of real interaction of ecological consciousness with the society's complex of material and practical activity towards the nature. The ecology of culture is a major factor of harmonization of mutual relations of a society and the nature. The investigations show that ancient tribes of Turkic languages speaking peoples in the Central Asia have built qualitative ecology of culture. The concept of ecology of culture of Turkic languages speaking peoples has deep philosophical and historical meaning and can be understood and explained only in the system of terms describing historical process of functioning of steady social structures, existential characteristics, continuity of historical development and qualitative definiteness of its historical stages, and also the cultural and anthropological bases of cultural wealth. The cultural and anthropological approach defines ecology of culture as a way of life of society. And the culture itself defines paradigms of activity of Turkic languages speaking peoples in the Central Asia, their social and ethnic generality.

Each culture creates mechanisms of preservation of a society in the form of norms, doctrines, axiological systems, sacred rituals and traditions, cosmology. Basic element of social life is the ecology of culture which is directed at maintenance of harmonious balance with the nature, submission to space rhythms and carries environmental character. Thereby defines stability of society in dynamics of its historical development and adaptability of its carriers to influence of environment that surrounds them [1].

The traditional values existing in cultures of Turkic languages speaking peoples in the Central Asia submit modern humanity huge possibilities for new discoveries. It is due to the fact that ethnics of Turkic languages speaking peoples in the Central Asia have created the optimal and ecological culture based on ecological norms and traditions in the open spaces of native natural space in the course of mutual relation. The peculiarities of ancient Turkic ecological traditions are expressed in the description of a landscape in cultural and anthropological structure, spatial by district planning; if one managed to master the district spiritually then it was possible to master it in the material and economic sense, too.

The spiritual mastering of territory is regulated by hunting seasons, interdictions for shooting of animals which were considered to be the totems of ancient Turkic languages speaking peoples. Ecological traditions of Turkic languages speaking peoples of the Central Asia are simultaneously twisted with culture of these people since occurrence of their consciousness. At every cultural and historical stage of formation of these ethnics, the ecology everywhere has been connected with all aspects of cultural life of the people. Culture ecology of Turkic languages speaking peoples of the Central Asia in difficult environmental conditions are close on substantial sense with religious practices of ancient Turkic tribes who used to live in Southern Siberia in the 7th century.

The Turkic languages speaking peoples of the Central Asia are descendants of ancient Turkic peoples who had nomadic cattle breeding. The ancestors of the modern Kazakh, ancient Turkic tribes, being people of a nomadic civilization, have left a very important heritage to their present descendants: culture of the ecological relation to surrounding space, tradition of respect for the nature, space and its laws, ideas of harmony of the nature, society and the person [2].

Thus, nomadic is a way of life of nomads within their territories, and not vagrancy «in search of water and grass». Nomads' change of territories means well mastered environment which can occupy big spaces covering large geographical objects subdivided into micro zones of tribal groups, connected with microtoponyms of valleys, lakes, patrimonial natural boundaries and, etc. According to well-known researcher E.U. Baidarov, from the point of view of modern ecology each ethnic culture is harmless, as it is generated thanks to interaction of the person with certain

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natural and landscape environment by means of adaptation to it. Such adaptation assumes harmony of influences on the nature possibilities, the excess of which can be evaluated as transition of ecological compatibility [3].

The ecological world of inhabitants of Great steppe of a median part of Eurasia was already fragile by its origin due to deficiency of humidity. Therefore the following statement is quite fair: among all ecological systems of the world the destiny of steppes is most dramatic, though nomads have created original culture which was well adapted and exactly balanced. The nomadic civilization was its highest display [4].

Ancient Turkic ethnics faced different cultures and have developed classical model of their outlook system which allowed to keep big spaces. Z.Delyoz and F.Gvatari wrote about it that "the smooth space of nomads is a space of the minimum distances: only infinitely close points are homogeneous. This is a space of contact, individual events of contact, space is more tactile than visual in comparison with the lined space of Euclid. The smooth space does not know canals and footpaths. This heterogeneous field corresponds to special type of sets — decentered risomatic sets which do not mark space occupied by them. This space can be maintained, only travelling on it. He cannot be observed from outside, as Euclid space; more likely, it reminds sound or colour scale» [5]. Everywhere, where Central Asian nomads lived in ancient and medieval periods, we can find the traces of their life way in the form of sepulchral barrows, rock paintings, the ritual stone layings made during their ceremony of making sacrifices and praying; stone stellae and sculptures of human figures (balbals, "stone images"). All these various kinds of monuments of archeology and ethnography refer to different times, cover more than three thousand years of the Central Asia history. The monuments narrate about the territory of dwelling of the ancient Turkic people that disperses from widespread opinion on nomadic way of life of these people. They are the certificate of material and spiritual development of the basic part of Oikumena. Therefore the ecology of culture of the ancient Turkic people has been very developed. Its traditions were reproduced and transferred from generation to generations during the millennia.

It is important to notice that the coded type of ecological consciousness and behavior in ecological culture of the people of the Central Asia was realized in the form of traditionally steady stereotypes. The continuity is traced on huge historical sources from the earliest archaeological cultures. Revealing specificity of ecological traditions of the Yakut that has been formed by preservation and adaptation of archaic steppe culture to new environmental and geographical conditions, it is possible to learn unusually high intensity of dialogue of the people with the nature, dependences of people on the nature, dialogues of respect to the native earth, adaptation of the Yakut to a unique East-Siberian natural landscape. Harmony of influences on the peculiarities and possibilities of the nature is the reflection of traditional culture of the people. The originality of ecological traditions of the Yakut arises from specificity of the landscape and moving of one ethnos in a large part of the Eastern Siberia [6]. We define that spatial planning of environment according to its spiritual features and a condition is a basis of ecology of culture in pragmatical interactions with the nature. The Turkic speaking people of the

Central Asia settled and led their household at new places according to the scheme which is in harmony with an ecosystem. The signs of changes in vegetation, in a structure of a vegetative cover, migration of animals defined the level of economic life-support, both in time and in space of the various patrimonial organizations.

The essence of ecology of Central Asian Turkic speaking people in culture, the way of its formation are revealed in the works of Akhmet Tashagyl, Almagul Kanagatova, Aliya Masalimova and Zhuldyz Suleimenova. Nomadic culture is defined in part by a sense of spatial structure defined by a set of artifacts, a system of mutual relations, and a configuration of intracultural elements. It is obvious that the nomadic political identity is based on a «connection [that] has begun hierarchically sub ordinary (asynchronously historical, developed in time) and the beginnings spatially geopolitical (synchronously existing) [7].

The religious and mythological components of social space of a traditional society of Turkic speaking peoples of the Central Asia are fundamentally presented in researches of Martha Olcott [8], Pallas Peter Simon [9], Gideon Sven Andres [10], Atkinson Thomas William [11], Vambery Armini (Herman) [12] and others.

The researches show that the ecology of culture is one of indicators of development of personal values of the ancient Turkic person. In the cultural and anthropological aspect the substantial structure and spiritual consciousness of ecology of culture in system of universal culture of Turkic speaking people have been analyzed, in social and philosophical judgment the basic ways of its formation have been based.

In economic sphere of Turkic speaking people of the Central Asia there was the multistructural subsistence economy having local variations, connected with local environmental conditions and resources. In the field of spiritual creativity there was a heroic epos and totem «Khok bori» (Blue or Sky Wolf) and an esthetic norms, values and valuable orientations. In the language of the monumental texts Turkic budin is the country's peace and concord, the future of the next generation, honour and dignity of Turkic people. The position which describes the whole society in the world perception of the ancient Turks supported unity idea and formed ethnical cultural content of the ancient Turkic human concept. It is easy to notice ethnocentrism and Turkic patriotism in the ancient Turkic world perception. For example as in the text of Kultegin monument: "Because of power given to my father by Tangir the army of my father was like wolf, their enemies were like sheep" [13]. These lines show braveness and heroism of Turks, their belief that their enemies were lower and weaker than they are. They thought that they were the favourites of the creator. This ambitious view can be seen through these lines: "I made peace amongst people in four sides of the world, I made bent down those who had heads and knees" [14]. In the sphere of art there was an «animal style», a monumental sculpture and monumental architecture, petro glyphs and etc. Social space of a traditional society of Turkic speaking people since certain historical time also became its sociopolitical space. The ancient Turks have reflected the given tendency in the heroic epos. In an inscription in honour of Kul-Tegin there is a description of politically organized social space of ancient Turkic khanate.

As human-being lives in a definite space and in a definite period of time concepts of Humanity, Space and Time by intersecting with each other make easier to reveal and thoroughly recognize each of the concept. The main character features which describe Turkic essence are the followings: harmony with the nature which is connected with creator, patriotism which makes to love homeland, strong devotion to folk and people, high spirit which praise independence and sovereignty. In spite the fact that Turks were divided into sovereign tribe unities and khanates from the ancient time the basics of general Turkic world perception and consciousness and super ethnical unity of Turkic people which were deeply intersected with each other put together today's Turkic peoples' cultural anthropological world perception. They are seen through the ancient Turkic scripts monuments which could save vast ethnical cultural and ethnical philosophical data. Language artistry of the monument, depth of concept of the text which shows world perception of the Turkic people show that Iollig Tegin was the real orator of his time.

The ancient Turkic script monument still stays for modern Turkic people as significant educative document which makes the good future for them, as spiritual informative direction creed for super ethnos and individual Turkic personality, as the main national rule to be the country. Only in case of appraisal of high essence of Turkic person, revelation of his cultural anthropological concept, in case of imbibing value sources we may use surely the leading Turkic world perception as the national idea. It shows that in the ancient Turkic cultural artifacts were collected the real source of human and his human-being values in the perception of the ancient Turks. The culture of ancient Turkic runic writing can be considered not only as that appeared synchronously with inscriptions on Stella that reached our time, but also as special and unique world outlook phenomenon that developed at the beginning of our era. Besides historical background which is present in archon texts close to political situation of that time, they contain the description of a myth about an origin of the Turks and the mankind in general. The mythology, which was the initial form of the world outlook in the conditions of nomadic culture before Turkic epoch, has put a basis of a phenomenon of art - "animal style" which has outgrown subsequently in complete outlook, the system of the outlook which has found reflection in original oral creativity, folklore, eloquence and poetry. So the original spiritual phenomenon named "Tengianstvo" has been developed and by which all historical spirit and poetic pathos of the archon-Yenisei products are impregnated. Thus, that mentality and religious outlook that have been developed by the time of formation of the second Turkic khanate in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries and being fixed in runic "the monumental letter" on granite Stella became not only axiomatic, but somewhat sacred. Therefore we can say that the largest monuments of ancient Turkic writings of archon groups are not only the major historical documents for studying of ideology, policy, economy and culture of ancient Turkic tribes, but also the outstanding literary works containing Turkic mythological poetry and consequently comparable with the most ancient sacred texts of other peoples and cultures. In this sense they represent property of world culture. Language of runic letters, being on the grammatical essence a uniform literary language of

various Turkic tribes speaking on dialects, expressed outlook "heavenly Turks" - ancestors of all present Turkic speaking peoples. One of the concepts in Turkic Tengianstvo (sky worship – the first Turkic faith) Umai-Ana is described as one of the universal mythological world perception concepts which had been brought through all centuries-old believes and experiences and which has reached our days. Umai-Ana is considered to be the system of archaic values which fosters people to humanity, cleanness, and good manners. The holiness of Umai-Ana which began from Turkic people archaic consciousness world perception period was brought across the generations through Turkic consciousness. While versatile investigation of Turkic personality in the content of cultural anthropology the list of humanity values of Turkic people world perception consciousness is very large.

The cultural and anthropological bases of ecology of culture of Turkic speaking people of the Central Asia represents the social space of a traditional society of Nomads, including such objects of honoring, as "Sky", "Earth", "Moon", "Sun", a thunder, a lightning, fire and heaven bodies. Sacred mountains, and also an image of "World Mountain" were an organic part of social space of a traditional society of nomads. The image of "a world tree" was an important is religious and mythological component of social space of a traditional society of nomads of the Central Asia. As well as "World Mountain", "the world tree" represented itself as the intermediary between heaven and earth, the world of spirits and the world of people, life and death. According to A.Y. Gurevich, the image of a world tree was the pivotal means of the organization of mythological space of a traditional society of nomads [15]. L.L. Abaeva investigated the genetic structure of religious and mythological components of social space of a traditional society of the people of the Central Asia and she has allocated three historical periods in it. The most ancient period was characterized by judgment of the world in the form of semantic oppositions: top - bottom, right - left, man - female, past- future and etc [16]. Existential characteristics of ancient Turkic peoples reflected the peculiarities of their self-movement in the structural and genetic life, the phenomenon of various times in ethnic variations of the given society. The social space – time was the ethnocultural, religious-mythological, cultural-symbolical, and organized and at the same time dynamic phenomenon for ancient Turkic people under the basic intrinsic maintenance, reflecting special area of spiritual culture of Turkic speaking people of the Central Asia. All basic components of social space of a traditional society of ancient Turkic people like social communities, organization, institutes, relations, religious beliefs, cultural-symbolical concepts, representations were generated in the process of self-organizing and conscious purposeful management; represented the systematic and organized integrity. The considered existential characteristics of a traditional society of ancient Turkic people allow taking one more step to cultural and anthropological judgment of the given society from social and philosophical aspect.

## II. CONCLUSION

Having arisen in an extreme environment, ancient Turkic civilization has created original ecology of culture well adapted with steppe ecology, the highest display of which we

find out in ancient Turkic people outlook and ecological culture of the Central Asia, which have created an original phenomenon of the Eurasian civilization. The research on Nomad studies with application of principles and approaches to ecological culture as to ethno confessional spiritual and ecological tradition allows estimating more adequately the world of "Nomads", to show its real contribution to world culture development. The substantial cultural and historical digression to ecology of culture and the world of values of Turkic speaking people of the Central Asia offered in this article only slightly opens a veil to immense and unlearned phenomenon of ancient Turkic cultures. According to archeologist Aiman Dosymbaeva, it is the culture which was the standard in the system of world values of Europe and Asia in the far Middle Ages and has absorbed all advanced achievements of that time. It is the culture which has served as the source and the beginning of many subsequent achievements of the Turkic peoples of new time [17].

Summing up, we can underline that the cultural and anthropological basis of ancient Central Asian Turkic people culture of ecology generated in the adaptable form of social development was the important factor of stability not only Eurasian civilizations of ancient Turkic ethnics, but also stability of external environment, preservation and reproduction of the Central Asian biodiversity, and it has caused an important role of the ethno ecological traditions, arisen in extreme antiquity, in ethno genesis of ancient Turkic people.

The archaeological monuments involved in the process of researches of culture ecology of Turkic speaking people on the territory of the Central Asia, and also the data of historical, regional, culturological, cultural-anthropological, ethnological and anthropological researches, have allowed deepening and concretizing representations about its ethno genesis, ethno social and spiritually-religious functions.

It became possible thanks to using of a principle of systematization in the scientific research, i.e. the methodological approach according to which archaeological monuments Stella, monumental funeral architecture are integrally connected with a natural site, bear in itself the important spiritual context directed at regulation of relations of the Society and the Nature. The synergetic paradigm combined by principles of a historicism and conceptuality plays an important role in the research of this social and natural system. In the process of the research of cultural and anthropological basis of culture ecology of Turkic speaking people of the Central Asia, including a sub regional ethno cultural areal, it has been revealed that its development was influenced by ancient, archaic both cosmological representations and cults of the ancient Turkic peoples. The ecology of culture of Turkic speaking peoples of the Central Asia as a cultural anthropological category reflects the world as an ordered and complete construction and shows an alive outlook or a generalized live image of the reality. Existential characteristics of ancient Turkic peoples as the cultural and semiotic code for a designation of universal images and ideas, and it acts as a total modeling syncretic symbolical system and as a means of consolidation of a traditional society. The cultural and anthropological basis of culture ecology of Turkic speaking peoples of the Central Asia shows a picture of

the world of the ancient Turks with their space-centered essence which expresses a corresponding frame of reference of the ancient Turks on world source and world order.

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