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Project Name: **FROM SCHOOL TO LIFE** - The Subject Of The Project: **RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES**



WATER AND SYMBOLISM IN TURKISH CULTURE

WATER CULT IN THE FOLKTALES OF TURKISH WORLD

- Water cult, a part of the earth-water and shaped around it, is evaluated at the first place with “earth” among the nature cults of Turks. What lies behind the perception of water as a holy matter is that micro-cosmos and macro-cosmos start and end with water. Accordingly, soul spirits, also mentioned as water owner, are both owners and rulers of water. Water owner is also known as “Su Issı, Su Eezi, Su Anası, Uhun Ecen, Subaba, U İçite, Ukulaan Toyon etc.” in the narratives of Turk folks. Water owner is considered generally as a human being or fish in mythological thought. Water cult reflected to Shamanism almost with its each respect as well. Shamanists believe that water has a spirit like every matter in nature has. That results in prohibit of polluting water, throwing rubbish and spiting into water among folk and also in the belief that the ones violating this prohibit would be punished. In this article, water cult, one of the Turkish nature cults, will be evaluated with the examples that are chosen from the Anatolian, Altai, Azerbaijan, Ardanuç, Adakale, Bashkir, Gagauz, Khakas, Kazakh, Kerkuk, Cyprus, Kirghiz, Kumuk, Uzbek, Uigur, Yakutia folk tales by emphasizing in what way water cult reflected to the folktales of Turkish world.







- Water is one of the many holy things, especially the Holy Qur'an and the Bible it is included in the book as the essence of the universe. According to Eliade, the natural every water that happens, "...thanks to the ancient privilege that it was honored at its origin, for this purpose, it has been blessed if it is prayed to God for this purpose". Water, which faith if it occurs within the system let it come out, it cleanses sins with both purification and rebirth properties; it dissolves forms, and it is the most perfect killer thanks to its power to dissolve and destroy forms.





- In Turkish folk literature and folklore, water is the essence of the universe, as the beginning of the micro and macro cosmos; finds a place for itself in numerous genres, ranging from stories of Dede Korkut , folk tales, legends and fairy tales.





- Like everything in nature, according to animism, water also has a soul. Ergekti(nymph Shulbis, which comes out of the skin at the Uul) who is in Altay fairy tales threatens hero to eat alive. It's because he's bothering himself.



The water fairy statue in the capital Ankara (1827)



- In the fairy tale ‘Mezarda Helva Pişiren Keloğlan’ They throw KELOĞLAN, lasso they tie it up and put it in the water. What goes down let him see. A fairy girl sat down, put her shoulder to the ship, she doesn't let go” . The fairy girl, who holds the ship with her shoulder under the water and does not allow it to move, is a water princess; By not allowing the ship to move forward, she puts people in a difficult situation.





- Nymphs fit almost any shape comfortably, and in the narratives of Turkish peoples they are usually conceived as a girl with long hair. In addition to the positive properties of water as a source of life, it will end life not to forget that it also has power to end life.
- As in these fairy tales nymphs; when they are angered, disrespected, water-related bans are violated, they tend to harm people more.



- In another fairy tale *Gülmez Sultan*, the sultan's son, who is going after the glazed mirror stolen by the sultan of jinn, asks for help from the monster he came across on the way. The monster tells him to apply to 'beautiful of the sea'. The hero finds the mirror he is looking for with the help of this girl. As can be seen from the examples, the nymphs are included in the cast of the fairy tale, mostly to help the fairy-tale heroes



- One of the most powerful indicators of the fact that water is a source of life in Turkish fairy tales is the birth of a child with an apple given by a dervish encountered at the beginning of a fountain. The appearance of the dervish at the head of the water and the removal of childlessness is directly related to the water cult. The motif is one of the invariable motifs of folk narratives and is also clear evidence that water retains the child-giving function it originally had. Because water is a symbol of the womb in mythological thought, the dervish who appeared next to the fountain and gave the apple and disappeared can only be considered a water object that has changed shape and disguised as a human being.



- Due to the undeniable effect of the fact that water is a source of life, it is extremely important in Turkish nature cults the 'water cult', which has a place, is a great phenomenon that occurs in various ways in numerous creations belonging to all cultures and cultures, especially religions and belief systems.



WATER CULT IN TRADITIONAL TURKISH BELIEFS AND THEIR MARKS

- Almost in every period of human history, the water has taken place in the cultures and beliefs of world communities because of its specialties such as purgation, fertility, rebirth, immortality, purity and source of existence. In the traditional Turkish religion aquaculture, which takes part in place water belief, regarded as common cult all Turkish communities. Sacred water sources, identified within the framework of this cult, have been visited by people for specific purposes. The beliefs and practices which are shown during the visits have parallels with the beliefs and practices shown in the other Turkish communities. These beliefs which are according to water underline cure. In other words someone who suffers from some illnesses but don't get medical intervention regard water as a hope. Therefore, in visiting this sacred waters, there people are be on display some belief rituals to achieve their aims.



TRADITIONAL TURKISH BELIEFS-THE CULT OF WATER

- Water, which is included in the beliefs and cultural beliefs of the Turks in the World of faith and culture, has always had a great meaning and value. That is why, in the historical process, the Turks have assigned different meanings to water based on the characteristics it represents. In the Turkish cosmogony, water is considered to be the essence of the first being or beings. In other words, the Turks consider water to be the first and basic core of creation. According to this understanding, the universe is an irregular chaos before the cosmos it is created from its material (water and Earth). Water is considered the main element that causes the formation of the universe with this property.



- In the Central Asian Turks, Oghuz, Siberian and Altay Turkic in their communities, it is forbidden to pollute water by spitting or performing ablutions, and in some cases even use it as a means of cleansing. For example, Ibn Fadlan reports that Oguzes do not use water for cleaning purposes. This custom in the Turks, it was legalized by law by Cengiz Khan in the XVII century. During the reign of Cengiz Khan, the waters were not washed with clothes and containers because they were considered sacred. Laundry was discarded when it got dirty, and containers were cleaned with herbs. Even according to Genghis Khan's law, in some cases, a person who polluted the water would be punished with death. This custom in the Turks comes from the fact that the use of water depends on a ritual.



- One of the most important characteristics of water in the Turkish thought system is that it is the source of life, productivity and fertility. In fact, the rain is called mercy by modern Turkish societies and represents fertility, especially in the spring season. Because the earth and man find life with water, and nature gains vitality with it. Oysters in the sea get their pearls, snakes under the ground get their poison from the same April rain. In addition, as rain, water symbolizes fertility and the power of the Heavenly God.



BELIEFS ABOUT WATER IN PRE-ISLAMIC TURKISH SOCIETIES

- The Turks have performed a number of faith rituals to please the earth-water spirits, to establish good relations with them and to protect themselves from the evils that will come from them. For example, the Sack used to perform rituals once a year for the sky and earth Gods, including at the winter and summer solstices, and for human souls (ancient rulers, alps, ancestors) and earth-water spirits at the beginning of the four seasons. In these rituals, they offered offerings called “adig” to Gods and spirits, jade, cloth, wine and sacrificial meat. In addition, some Chinese sources report that the Huns and the Turkic communities that established a state in Central Asia after the Huns offered sacrifices to the Sky God, the earth-water, the sun and the moon.





- One of the most common beliefs that the Turks display around the water cult is the rituals performed in order to have children. In traditional Turkish beliefs, women who did not have children tried to please the souls of these rivers by releasing milk/wine into dried trees and hoped to have children with their help. For example, women who were infertile in the Kyrgyz Turks and Kazakh Turks would spend the night next to the only tree, spring (well) or water in the sahara and cut sacrifices in order to have children. Tatar women without children used to prostrate and pray by the pool so that they could have children. In Turkish epics and stories, it is also seen that some water-related rituals are exhibited in order to have children.



- After the Turks accepted Islam, they maintained their beliefs about the water cult for a long time and performed various rituals for different purposes besides having children around the water cult. For example, when the Bashkirs wanted to bathe for the first time in a lake or a river, they would tear a thread from their dress or belt and leave it in the water. In addition, a ceremony called “hu köründürü” (showing water) was held for a bride who had just arrived in the village. We see similar beliefs in Kazakh Turks. According to Kazakh customs and beliefs, the first person to cross a river would throw something from a votive neva into the water. In many parts of Anatolia, on the day of hidrellez, women and girls write their wishes on a piece of paper and throw them into the water and believe that their intentions will come true. Again, it was believed that a person who was bewitched by the Turks would have his spell broken if he crossed the sea.



WATER IN ART

- Marbling is an art of decoration made by passing patterns created with specially prepared paints on paper on top of water condensed with clay. Brushes and paints are special.



- According to some sources, he was born in the city of Bukhara in Turkestan and passed to the Ottomans through Iran. In the west, marbling is called "Turkish Paper" or "marble paper". Marbling is made by sprinkling paints obtained from the sap of the given herb or sea-buckthorn plant (kerajin) onto water with an increased consistency, which is made to not collapse to the bottom of the water by adding water and putting it on a paper, as well as shapes occurring on the water surface, or by intervening with a metal-tipped tool called biz.



ART OF EBRU

Marbling is the art of creating colorful patterns by sprinkling and brushing color pigments on a pan of oily water and then transforming this pattern to paper. The special tools of the trade are brushes of horsehair bound to straight rose twigs, a deep tray made of unknotted pinewood, natural earth pigments, cattle gall and tragacanth. It is believed to be invented in the thirteenth century Turkistan. This decorative art then spread to China, India and Persia and Anatolia. Seljuk and Ottoman calligraphers and artists used marbling to decorate books, imperial decrees, official correspondence and documents. New forms and techniques were perfected in the process and Turkey remained the center of marbling for many centuries. Up until the 1920's, marblers had workshops in the Beyazit district of Istanbul, creating for both the local and European market, where it is known as Turkish marble paper.













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