



ETHNOLINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL ASPECTS OF THE MEDIEVAL TURKIC WORLDVIEW BASED ON THE DĪWĀN LUGHĀT AL-TURK (COMPENDIUM)

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Abstract. This article explores the worldview of the medieval Turkic peoples from an ethnolinguistic and cultural perspective, based on Mahmud al-Kashgari's historical-lexicographical work *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk*. The present study examines the conceptual foundations of the ancient Turkic worldview, traditions, belief systems, and social structure as reflected in linguistic data. The spiritual heritage and cultural code of the Turkic people is identified through semantic and cultural analysis of lexical units and paremiological forms (proverbs and sayings). Employing methodologies drawn from the disciplines of ethnolinguistics and cognitive linguistics, the research proffers a scholarly interpretation of the mentality and worldview structure of medieval Turkic society as revealed through language. The objective of the present study is twofold: firstly, to contribute to the understanding of Turkic culture through language, and secondly, to define the national conceptual sphere.

Based on the linguistic data from the *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk*, this study explores the ethnolinguistic and cultural dimensions of the medieval Turkic worldview, with a particular focus on the conceptualization of space and religious continuity. The analysis reveals that early Turkic spatial orientation – both vertical and horizontal – was deeply rooted in ancient traditions, adaptation to the natural environment, and nomadic animal husbandry, as vividly demonstrated by Mahmud al-Kashgari's pioneering circular map. Furthermore, this cartographic and onomastic heritage reflects a sophisticated «linguistic model of the world» that underscores the spatial consciousness of Turkic tribes. Alongside these geographical insights, the paper examines the spiritual universe of the medieval Turks, highlighting a harmonious synthesis where foundational Tengriist beliefs seamlessly converged with Islamic principles. Ultimately, the *Dīwān* serves as a crucial bridge of spiritual continuity, offering invaluable insights into the historical development of Turkic cultural identity and ethnolinguistic heritage.

Keywords: Mahmud al-Kashgari, *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk*, Turkic worldview, linguistic worldview, cultural concept, Old Turkic language, ethnolinguistics, language and cognition.

Introduction

The descendants of the ancient Turks - who once held sway over the “four corners of the world” - have inherited a rich cultural and ethnocognitive legacy that reflects the natural identity and worldview of the medieval Turkic peoples. In this regard, the encyclopedic monument *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk* by Mahmud al-Kashgari holds exceptional significance. This seminal work offers deep insight into the spiritual and material value systems through which Turkic societies comprehended space, time, and existence. As the prominent scholar Ā.T. Qaydar (Kaydar) (1998, p. 34) noted, “If we consider an ethnos and its language as an integrated and intrinsically interconnected phenomenon, language in society functions not only as a means of communication specific to that ethnos but also as a witness to its entire spiritual and cultural wealth. Language internalizes the ethnic’s worldview, customs, and way of life, transmitting them as ancestral heritage - a precious treasure - across generations.” This perspective underscores the conceptual link between linguacultural studies and ethnolinguistics, while also highlighting the relevance of examining the lexical corpus through the macro categories of ‘Nature,’ ‘Human,’ and ‘Society’ in ethnolinguistic and cultural research.

The linguistic worldview of the medieval Turkic peoples is also reflected through the linguistic models of these macro categories. Analyzing the key cultural and ideological concepts found in the language of *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk*, which represent the conceptual values of the objective world in the consciousness of medieval Turks, enables a deeper understanding of both the internal and external structures of the common Turkic conceptual system and its evolutionary development. By examining the linguistic models and underlying semantic structures (archaic meanings) of these concepts, we gain insight into the cognitive frameworks that shaped the Turkic perception of the world. Moreover, studying *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk*, a heritage text of the medieval period, within the framework of anthropocentric linguistics not only reveals extensive conceptual knowledge but also enhances our understanding of the contemporary identity of Turkic peoples. In particular, it provides valuable perspectives on the cognitive characteristics and worldview of the Kazakh people as part of the broader Turkic cultural continuum.

“If worldview is a system of spiritual and practical comprehension of truth (Orynbekov, 1996, p. 85), then language, as a system of concepts recognized in the mind and a reflection of cognition of the real world, serves as a foundation for the formation of worldview. It functions as a golden thread ensuring intergenerational continuity and unity of cognition over an extended chronological period. Every nation perceives and conceptualizes the surrounding world and objects in its own unique way, as each nation differs in terms of its history, culture, national cognition and taste, language, and religion. Language is not merely a mechanism for communication and cognition for humans; it is a conscious phenomenon that conveys information about the real world. The system of spiritual and cultural values passed down from generation to generation forms a complex of universal human civilization through the informational and cumulative functions of language. The cognitive preferences that shape the spiritual values of each historical and social period may undergo slight changes in accordance with the demands and experiences of the younger generation of the next historical era, or, in some cases, remain unchanged, becoming the core of new values and continuing their transmission to subsequent generations. There is no risk of them being completely lost or undergoing unrecognizable transformations. This illustrates the distinctiveness of steppe cognition, or Turkic worldview. As noted, “The nomadic way of life is primarily based on rituals, myths, and legends. The central principle is the dichotomy of ‘us and others,’ with social relations founded on the concept of blood purity” (Yesim, 2004, p. 95).

The worldview of an ethnos, as it passes through each stage of cultural development - continually refined in accordance with the evolving capacity of human reason - can reflect the true nature of the world not only in a logically-positivist manner, but also in ethical, moral, and mental dimensions. From a mythological and religious perspective, the ‘Divine Idea’ became the foundation of the ancient Turkic worldview, while in the medieval period, the influence of Islamic culture was profound. S. G. Klyashtorny described the functional image of Tengri as follows: “Tengri governs both the universe and human destiny: the joy and sorrow inherent in the human condition also emanate from Tengri; he grants the khagan power and wisdom, provides the people with a khagan; punishes those who oppose the khagan; and oversees both state and military affairs, issuing commands to the khagan.” (Klyashtorny, 1981, p.131). The philosophical thought embedded in Mahmud al-Kashgari’s legacy is vividly and comprehensively reflected in the language of his work. Kazakhstani scholar D. Kenzhetai (2005, p. 86) notes: “At a time when Arabic

and Persian languages were at their peak, this work was written to demonstrate the richness of the Turkic language and to teach it to Arabs. Moreover, it is of great value as it conveys information about the Old Turkic language, worldview, customs and traditions, as well as the historical context of that era”.

Research methods.

During the study, a range of comprehensive research methods were employed to describe the worldview structure of the medieval Turkic peoples through the lexical system of *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk*. Using a descriptive method, the linguistic nature of lexemes and cultural-cognitive units in the Old Turkic language was systematically characterized. The comparative-historical method enabled the identification of continuity among Turkic languages and facilitated the study of semantic changes and the evolution of cultural semantics across historical periods.

Ethnolinguistic analysis was employed to examine the concepts and worldview structures preserved in the linguistic consciousness of Turkic peoples. This approach elucidated the interconnection and relevance between language and ethno-cultural identity. Additionally, to expand the theoretical and cognitive foundation of the article, the cognitive method was applied to analyze conceptual structures and cultural codes shaping the medieval Turkic perception of the world. Special attention was given to mythological, symbolic content and elements of religious-spiritual cognition.

To provide a deeper historical and cultural interpretation of the semantic content of lexical units in Old Turkic texts, contextual analysis was utilized. This method allowed for a comprehensive assessment of the semantic field of each linguistic unit by linking it to its historical period of origin and socio-cultural context.

Results and Discussion. Mahmud al-Kashgari’s *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk*, a seminal work that deeply explores the history, wisdom, daily life, traditions, occupations, cognitive patterns, linguistic features, interests, affections, literary history, and cultural heritage of the Turkic peoples, offers a clear reflection of the worldview and way of life of Turkic-speaking communities during the medieval period.

This is evident in the more than 7,500 terms and words, over 240 excerpts from literary works and songs, and around 290 proverbs and sayings cited in the text, all of which convey the Turkic peoples’ understanding of the world, their perception of life, as well as their aesthetic and ethical views, aspirations, and ideals.

In addition to individual words and terms, the work includes general concepts and categories that reveal the broader worldview of the people of that time. This indicates that Mahmud al-Kashgari was not merely preserving the accumulated knowledge and value system of his visionary people, developed over centuries, but was also compiling, systematizing, and transmitting it as a legacy for future generations.

In the Cultural-Philosophical Encyclopedic Dictionary, Tengri (Old Turkic: strong, brave, powerful) is defined as the primary deity figure in the religious beliefs of the ancient Turks, representing an unmanifested, infinite state equated with the sky (Yessim, 2004). The prominent Kazakh scholar A. Seydimbek elaborates on the concept of the Tengri worldview, stating: “Tengriism, as a belief system, was not merely a religion for the Turkic-speaking nomads but primarily a way of life. At the core of Tengriist postulates lies the idea of harmony with nature. For the nomads, it was not about conquering nature, but about establishing mutual understanding with it, which was essential for survival. In the nomadic worldview, Tengri is the boundless blue sky, the eternal object of cognition, and ultimately, the infinite cosmos that can never be fully comprehended” (Seidembek, 1997).

In the Old Turkic inscriptions, it is stated: “When above the blue Tengri and below the dark earth were created, between them humankind was created. Over mankind, my ancestors Bumin Qaghan and Istemi Qaghan sat upon the throne. By ascending the throne, they became guardians and founders of the realm and the law of the Turkic people” (KT. I.1,186). Likewise, another passage reads: “The Turkic Tengri and the sacred Earth-Water declared thus: ‘So that the Turkic people may not perish but endure, Tengri raised up my father Ilterish Qaghan and my mother Ilbilge Khatun, holding them aloft to the heavens’” (BK. I,10, 257).

The fact that such sentences appear at the very beginning of the VI–IX century Turkic written monuments demonstrates the central importance of the Tengri concept in the Turkic worldview. It shows not only the firmness of their religious beliefs but also the frequency of the lexemes *tengri* (“Heaven, God”) and *Turk*, which indicates that Tengriism had become an ideological and mass religion.

Mahmud al-Kashgari wrote: “I saw that Tengri created the nest of fortune for the Turks in their star, and set the cosmos to revolve in their era. Tengri named them ‘Turks,’ and entrusted them with sovereignty. He brought forth the khagans of our time from among the Turks, placing the reins of fate, wisdom, and will of the age and of the people into their hands; He made them leaders of men, supported them in just causes, ennobled those who fought alongside them, and from among the Turks elevated them to fulfill every aspiration, protecting them from the wicked and the unjust.”

In Kashgari’s era, the Karakhanid state had adopted Islam, and Islamic ideology had spread widely. One of the main reasons why Islam was so readily absorbed into the daily life, traditions, and worldview of the Turkic peoples was the pre-existing Tengriist idea. Since the Turks had long believed in the existence of a supreme creator and that He was One, Islam was not alien to them. On the contrary, the term Tengri naturally complemented and became synonymous with the concept of Allah.

For instance, Kashgari begins his work with the following words: “In the name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful! All praise and glory belong to the One Tengri, the possessor of perfect intellect, supreme might, majesty, and sublime station. When the tongues of the most eloquent fell silent, when the finest orators were struck dumb, Allah revealed the Qur’an through Gabriel to Muhammad, clearly distinguishing truth from falsehood. Thus, He provided a guidepost, a beacon showing the straight path.”

An analysis of the language of the manuscript shows that the “idea of Tengri,” which originated in the Hunnic period, continued to occupy a central place in the worldview of the medieval Turks. In the *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk*, the lexeme Tengri appears 64 times in various contexts. These occurrences can be classified into lexical-semantic groups according to their contextual use and semantic scope:

Related to the creative function of Tengri: *Teñri ažun türütti* – “Tengri created the world” (DLT, II, 303); *Teñri ol yerig yaratgan* – “Tengri created the earth” (DLT, III, 352); *Teñri yalñuk türpütti* – “Tengri created humankind” (DLT, II, 303); *Teñri oyl togturdi* – “Tengri gave a son” (DLT, II, 173), etc.

Related to the power and wisdom of Tengri: *Umunç Tengrige tut* – “Place your hope in Tengri” [7,I,133]; *Tengri mening işim etti* – “Tengri made my affairs prosper” (DLT,I,171); *Tengri meni bayuttı* – “Tengri enriched me” (DLT,II,325); *Tengri kar karlattı* – “Tengri sent snow” (DLT,II,347); *Men Tengriden umundum* – “I hoped in Tengri” (DLT,I,206); *Tengri meni ködhezdi* – “Tengri protected me” (DLT,II,162); *Tengri ölüg tırgürdi* – “Tengri revived the dead” (DLT,II,179; III,424); *Ol Tengri seni manga sevtürdi* – “It was Tengri who made you love me” (DLT,II,185); *Tengri meni kutgardı* – “Tengri saved me” (DLT,II,192,201); *Tengri tırgürdi* – “Tengri revived (me/it)” (DLT, II,200); *Tengri bulit agıttı* – “Tengri brought forth clouds” (DLT,I,212); *Tengri akın akıttı* – “Tengri sent forth a flood” (DLT,I,212); *Tengri ot öndürdi* – “Tengri made grass grow” (DLT,I,225); *Tengri yaşın yaşnattı* – “Tengri made lightning flash” (DLT,II,356); *Ol Tengrige kirtkisedi* – “He wished to pray to Tengri” (DLT,I,280); *Tengri meni ulugladı* – “Tengri exalted me” (DLT,I,304); *Ol Tengrige kirtindi* – “He believed in Tengri” (DLT,I,416); *Tengri tağ birle yarlık basurdi* – “Tengri pressed down the earth with mountains” (DLT,II,77; 96); *Ölüg tirildi, Tengri tırgürdi* – “The dead revived, Tengri revived (them)” (DLT,II,324); *Tengri ol yağmur yağıtgan* – “Tengri sent the rain” (DLT,III,53); *Tengri anı kınadı* – “Tengri tormented him” (DLT,III,273); *Men Tengrige tapındım* – “I worshiped Tengri” (DLT,II,140); *Ol Tengrige tapnıgı erdi* – “He had to worship Tengri” (DLT,II,169; 2340); *Kul Tengrige bütti* – “The servant prayed to Tengri” (DLT,II,294); *Kul Tengrige taptı* – “The servant worshiped Tengri” (DLT,II,3; 10); *Kul Tengrige yökündi* – “The servant bowed to Tengri” (DLT,III,84); *Tengri nomı* – “The religion and law of Tengri” (DLT,III,137); *Tengri andag tiledi* – “Tengri so willed it” (DLT,III,271); *Tün kün tapun Tengrige baynamagıl* – “Day and night, do not neglect to worship Tengri” (DLT,III,377); *Tengrige yökünç yökündi* – “He bowed to Tengri” (DLT, III,375); *Kul Tengriden korkdı* – “The servant feared Tengri” (DLT,III,421); *Kul Tengrige kirtgündi* – “The servant believed in Tengri” (DLT,III,423); *Tengrige kirtgün* – “Believe in Tengri” (DLT,III,423); *Tengri yalavaç ıdhtı* – “Tengri sent a prophet” (DLT,III,438); *Umunç Tengrige* – “Hope lies with Tengri” (DLT,III,450); *Kul Tengrige yinçgelendi* – “The servant showed kindness to Tengri” (DLT,III,450). This semantic grouping highlights Tengri’s attributes as a supreme deity—provider of sustenance, wealth, protection, justice, and even resurrection—alongside His role as the ultimate object of faith and worship.

Blessings and curses related to Tengri: *Tengri garğışı anung üze* – “The curse of Tengri be upon him” (DLT, I,461); *Tengri garğağığa ılınma* – “Do not fall under Tengri’s curse” (DLT,III,288); *Tengri anı kargadı* – “Tengri cursed him” (DLT,III,279).

Proverbs and idiomatic expressions related to Tengri: Süsegen udhka Teñri münüz bermes – “Tengri does not give horns to a butting ox” (DLT, III, 364); Begim özin ogurladı, Yarag bilip ogurladı. Ulug Teñri ağırladı, Anın kut kıv türü togdı – “My lord concealed himself, he knew the right moment and hid. The Great Tengri honored him, and from that came prosperity and fortune” (DLT, I, 301). (Interpretation: A leader who acts at the right time finds success and receives Tengri’s blessing, resulting in good fortune); Toyın tapugsak, Teñri sevinşsiz – “Though the shaman-priest may worship, Tengri takes no joy in it” (DLT, III, 377). (This proverb critiques non-Muslim religious leaders who perform rituals, yet whose worship does not please Tengri); Tavar uçun Tengri odhlamadhip, Uya kadaş oğlını çınla boğar – “For the sake of property, without even remembering Tengri, he strangles his own brother’s son” (DLT, I, 86). (This proverb metaphorically describes ruthless greed within kinship, where material wealth is valued even above divine fear and familial bonds). These examples show that the lexeme Tengri functioned both as a synonym for the Creator (comparable to Allah in Islamic contexts) and as a broader cultural symbol. Among certain Turkic tribes, the term was also used for the sky or for anything vast and powerful, demonstrating the multifaceted role of Tengri in the medieval Turkic conceptual system (MK, III, 505).

When discussing the lexeme Tengri, Mahmud al-Kashgari observed: “The God-forsaken infidels call the sky ‘Tengri.’ To them, everything that appears vast or immense—such as high mountains or tall trees—they call ‘Tengri,’ for they worship such things. They even call a learned man ‘Tengrikän.’ May Tengri Himself protect us from their errors.” Through this statement, Kashgari identifies himself as a true descendant of the ancient Turks, who did not worship the sky itself but the Tengri in the sky - the One Creator. The preservation of expressions such as “May Tengri bless,” “May Tengri support,” “Worship of Tengri,” “A being created by Tengri,” “My Lord, created by Tengri,” “Gift of Tengri,” “Homage to Tengri,” as well as anthroponyms and toponyms like Khan Tengri and Tengribergen, demonstrates that linguistic fragments of the Tengriist idea have been preserved in the national language. This testifies to the deep-rooted continuity of a common Turkic spiritual heritage.

When examined within the framework of anthropocentric linguistics, the language of the *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk* reflects not only the specific features of the period in which it was composed, but also the essence and worldview of an entire epoch - one in which the Turkic peoples, now distinct nations, still constituted a unified community. Among the profound cultural concepts preserved in this lexicon is the term *qut*.

Mahmud al-Kashgari defines *qut* as “prosperity, fortune, blessing,” noting that the adjective *qutluq* (“blessed, fortunate”) derives from it (MK, I, 379). He provides illustrative examples: *Uma kelse qut kelir* – “When a guest arrives, prosperity arrives” (DLT, I, 92); *Uluğnı uluğlasa qut bulur* – “If one honors the elders, fortune will come” (MK: I: 358); *Kut kuwiş berse idhim kuliña, Künde işi yükseben yokar awar* – “If my Lord grants his servant prosperity and fortune, his affairs will flourish, rising higher each day” (MK, I, 379).

The sacred character of this lexeme points back to the ancient Turkic worldview, in which *qut* was understood as a divine essence bestowing vitality, sustenance, abundance, wealth, honor, and prestige upon humankind. In the *Dictionary of the Old Turkic Language* (1969, p. 471), the monosyllable *qut* is glossed as “happiness, blessing, good fortune, success, fortunate destiny.”

In several modern Turkic languages, *qut* continues to denote a mystical life-force that departs from a person when they fall ill or die. For instance: Tuvan: *kuwt* – “mythical soul, life-giving power”; Altai: *kuwt* – “soul as vital energy; spirit that grants posterity and happiness”; Khakas: *xuwt* – “the soul of a living person” (DLT, 101).

Some scholars also associate *qut* with the Mother Goddess Umay (Yeskeyeva, 2007, p. 65). In traditional Kazakh culture, the concept is preserved in numerous expressions: *qutty* (“blessed”), *qutsyz* (“deprived of blessing”), *quty qaştı* (“his fortune has fled”), *qutty bolsyn* (“may it be blessed”), *qut-bereke* (“prosperity and abundance”), *qutty qonaq bolu* (“to be a blessed guest”), *qutty ornına qonıdı* (“fortune has settled in its rightful place”), among others.

In summary, the concept of *qut* constitutes an archaic cultural value, formed through centuries of Turkic experience and cognition. It has been transmitted across generations as part of a shared Turkic consciousness and remains embedded within the collective cultural memory.

The ethnolinguistic and cultural features of the *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk* cannot be considered apart from Islam, since the ideological foundation of the Karakhanid state was the Muslim faith. Accordingly, a system of spiritual values was formed, which has continued to the present day. The word Islam itself means “submission, obedience, surrender, being in a state of peace” (Qaïdar, 2013, p. 65). Its terminological meaning is submission to the Almighty Creator Allah, and full acceptance of what the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) brought, taught, and conveyed as religion.

In the language of the monument, the lexeme *ıdhı* (“lord, master”) is used in the sense of “creator” (DLT, I, p. 117). In traditional beliefs, *ıye* (spirit, master) also referred to an invisible force dwelling in or accompanying a person. This gave rise to expressions in Kazakh such as *ıyesi bar* (“it has a spirit/owner”), *ıyesi qystı* (“its spirit pressed/possessed it”), *ıyesi qozdy* (“its spirit stirred”), and others. Concepts such as *Jaratan ıye* (“the Creator”), *Jasagan ıye* (“the Maker”), *Täjir ıye* (“Lord Tengri”), and *Tüp ıye* (“the Primordial Lord”) originated in Tengriist thought but, with the coming of Islam to the Turkic peoples, came to refer exclusively to Allah. Mahmud al-Kashgari defines the lexeme *biti* as “one of the divinely revealed books” (MK: III: 297), without specifying in which Turkic dialects it was used. G. Clauson notes that the Old Turkic word *bitig*, derived from *biti*, was already used in the Old Turkic period to mean “writing, letter, book” (Clauson, 1972, p. 303). In addition, in the eleventh century, the term *bitik* was also applied to an amulet used for protection from misfortune, evidently because sacred texts (verses and surahs from the Qur’an) were inscribed upon it. One of the five pillars of Islam, prayer (*namaz*), appears in the dictionary under the Common Turkic lexeme *yükünč*. The act of performing prayer is recorded as *yükünč etmek* (MK, II, p. 44).

As mortal beings, humans understand that where there is life, there is also death. What remains unknown is how long life will last, in what form it will unfold, when death will come, and by what cause. Thus, for humankind, life and death are opposing concepts. Recognizing that life is fleeting and impermanent, the medieval Turks referred to all transient, deceptive things with the term *arguŝ*, calling the false world *arguŝ aŝun* (MK, I, p. 125). Among the Shigil tribe, the lexeme *aŝun* was used with the dual meaning of “this world” (*bul aŝun*) and “the other world” (*ol aŝun*, i.e., the afterlife) (MK: I: 107). In the monument, the eternal world is expressed as *meŋgü aŝun*. A verse states: *Toyp takı kalmadı meŋgü eren, Aŝun küni yuldızı tutçı toyar* — “Man does not remain forever; though born, he must depart. The sun and stars of the world rise and set” (MK, III, p. 506). This reflects the idea that human life in this world is not everlasting. In such a brief and transient life, one must strive for goodness and righteous deeds. This is encapsulated in the proverb: *Yaljuık oylı yoqazur edzü atı qalır* – “Mankind disappears, but his good name remains” (MK, III, p. 512). Another expression warns against attachment to material wealth: *Yayı erür yaljuıkuı neji tawar, Bilig eri yayısın nelik sewer* – “A man’s property is his enemy; how could a wise man love his foe?” (MK, III, p. 513). In the language of the manuscript, the abode of bliss in the afterlife—paradise bestowed upon the beloved servants of Allah—is referred to as *uŝmak* (MK, I, p. 149), while hell is called *tamu*, as in the phrase *tamu kapuyın aŝar tawar* – “Wealth opens the gate of hell” (MK, III, p. 316).

One of the fundamental pre-Islamic belief systems of the Turkic peoples was shamanism. Its remnants can still be observed among the Karluks. Evidence of this can be found in the widespread early medieval legends about “magical stones” (Syzdykov, 2014, p. 203). In the *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk*, the word *yat* is used to denote the practice of invoking natural phenomena such as rain and wind with the aid of such stones (MK, III, p. 221). Mahmud al-Kashgari notes that this custom was widespread among the Turks, especially among the Yaghma. He recalls witnessing the practice himself: “When a fire broke out, they performed this incantation to extinguish it. By the power of the Great Tengri, snow fell in summer before my very eyes and put out the fire” (MK, III, p. 10). Kashgari further explains: “This is a well-known tradition among the Turks. By reciting prayers over the magical stone, with the might of the Great Tengri, they can raise the wind, bring rain, or summon cold” (MK, II, p. 513). He also records the lexeme *kaŝ* to describe a stone of white or black color, a pure and polished mineral. He cites the proverb: *Kimiŋ bile kaŝ bolsa yaŝın yakmas* – “Lightning will not strike the one who carries a *kaŝ* stone” (MK, III, p. 33). Kashgari explains that people would mount such stones into rings: “Whoever receives such a ring as a gift will not be struck by lightning, for that is its nature. If the stone is wrapped in cloth and thrown into fire, neither the cloth nor the stone will burn—this has been tested. If a thirsty man puts it in his mouth, his thirst will be quenched.” In the Dictionary of the Old Turkic Language, the lexeme *kaŝ* is defined as “the mineral jade” (DTS 1969, p. 431). Among the Kazakhs as well, traditions survive of the “magical stone” (*jaun tas*), believed to be cast down from the sky during times of war. By means of such a stone, the *jadyschy* (sorcerer) was thought to bring down rain, snow, or lightning upon the enemy army. Legends about these stones are found not only among the Oghuz, Karluk, and Kipchak, but also in Chinese and Arabic sources. Chinese chronicles even trace them back to the Hunnic era (Syzdykov, 2014, p. 203).

A study of the manuscript’s language demonstrates that in the eleventh century, within the Turkic world—specifically among the Karluk tribal union and in the Karakhanid state—several religious beliefs coexisted alongside Islam. In the *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk*, Buddhism appears under the lexeme *burhan* (MK: I: 494), while its high-ranking religious leader is referred to as *toyn*. For example, the phrase *toyn burhanka yökündi* – “the monk bowed to the

idol" (MK, III, p. 119). Mahmud al-Kashgari explains the term *toyın* as "the religious head of non-Muslims, equivalent to our imams and muftis; the monk always stands before the idol, reading their books and the decrees of the infidels." He also cites the proverb: *Bir toyın başı agrısa kamug toyın başı agrımas* – "If the head of one monk aches, not all monks' heads will ache" (MK, III, p. 232). This saying, used figuratively, was applied among companions at a meal: if one person refrains from eating out of courtesy, others are invited to continue. The inscription also preserves a proverb critical of non-Muslims: *Toyın tapuysak, teŋri sevinšsiz* – "Though the monk worships, Tengri takes no delight" (MK, III, p. 504). This reflects the notion that non-Muslim religious leaders worshipped the Great Tengri, yet their worship did not please Him. Although the *Diwān* provides only limited data on non-Muslim religions, it does record references to Christianity: their fasting is denoted by the lexeme *paçak* (MK, I, p. 471), and their grave is expressed by *subuzgan* (MK, I, p. 575).

Since humankind lives within particular dimensions of space and time, these categories function as universal concepts that complement and deepen one another. As B.M. Tileberdiyev observes: "The mental essence of space determines its conceptuality, that is, in the conceptual and linguistic consciousness of a person, mental essence operates primarily in the form of concepts. We consider space to represent a generic concept in linguistic consciousness. Its structure includes such concepts as 'sky,' 'earth,' 'water,' and 'mountain,' each of which can be subdivided into further conceptual units" (Tileberdiyev, 2006, p. 20). Accordingly, in the worldview and linguistic consciousness of the medieval Turks, the concept of space also belongs to the class of macroconcepts, consisting of multiple microconcepts. For the Turkic peoples, mastering the mysteries of their environment and understanding the phenomena of the inhabited space, while correlating these with time, was a fundamental condition for survival and existence.

In the language of the monument, the concept of "time" is expressed through the lexemes *šer*, *türk*, and *köš*. In the dictionary, time is represented in the Oghuz dialect by the word *šer*, as in *bu šerlikde kel* – "come at this time" (MK, I, p. 381). Another lexeme used to denote time is *türk*, which signifies the season when fruits have ripened and reached full maturity. For example, *türk üzüm ödi* – "the time of ripened grapes," and *türk yigit* – "a young man who has reached the age of maturity" (MK, I, p. 410). In addition to these, the word *köš* is also employed with the meaning "moment, time," as in *bir köš küdhgil* – "wait for a moment" (MK, I, p. 380).

A. Seidimbek classifies the traditional Turkic perception of time into four categories: (1) ecological time, (2) genealogical time, (3) situational time, and (4) historical time (Seidimbek, 1997, p. 20). Within the category of historical time, the measurement of time was understood through the calendar system, year reckoning, and the *müşel* (twelve-year cycle). In the language of the written monument, a legend is preserved concerning the origin of the medieval Turkic system of year reckoning. It says: "One of the Turkic khagans once attempted to analyze a battle that had taken place several years earlier, but when determining the year in which it occurred, he made an error. Discussing this matter with his people at the council, the khagan declared: 'Just as we erred in dating this event, so too will our descendants make the same mistake. Therefore, let us base our reckoning on the twelve months and the twelve constellations in the sky, and assign each year the name of an animal. From now on, the cycle of years will be calculated according to these names, and this will remain among us forever as a legacy.'" To put this decision into practice, the Khagan organized a great hunt, ordering that all wild animals be driven toward the Ili River, a large and fast-flowing stream. As the animals were chased, some leapt into the water. Twelve species managed to swim across, and their names were assigned to the twelve years of the cycle. The first to cross was the *sişkan* ("rat/mouse"), so the cycle began with the "Year of the Rat" (*sişkan yılı*). The subsequent years were named as follows: *Ud yılı* – Year of the Ox; *Bars yılı* – Year of the Leopard/Tiger; *Tavişyan yılı* – Year of the Hare; *Nek yılı* – Year of the Crocodile/ Dragon (the "Luu/Dragon Year"); *Yılan yılı* – Year of the Snake; *Yund yılı* – Year of the Horse; *Koy yılı* – Year of the Sheep; *Bişin yılı* – Year of the Monkey; *Takaçu yılı* – Year of the Rooster; *It yılı* – Year of the Dog; *Toŋuz yılı* – Year of the Boar/Pig (MK, I, p. 403). Mahmud al-Kashgari further notes that medieval Turkic peoples believed each year carried particular qualities. For instance, because oxen often lock horns, it was thought that wars would be frequent in the Year of the Ox. In the Year of the Rooster, however, provisions would increase and people's livelihoods would prosper. Kashgari also specifies: "This book was written in the month of Muharram of the year 466, which was the Year of the Snake. As this year ends and the year 467 begins, the Year of the Horse will enter. The reckoning of years follows the order we have set forth" (MK, I, p. 403).

Because the Turkic people lived in close harmony with nature, their worldview and way of life developed in direct connection with the natural environment. Mahmud al-Kashgari records that the nomadic Turks divided

the year into four seasons, with each season consisting of three months, each bearing its own name. The early spring month was called *oýlaq ay* (“the month of the kid”), the following month *uluy oýlaq ay* (“the month when the kid grows large”), and the third month *uluy ay* (“the great month”) (MK, I, p. 405). Kashgari explains that the designation *uluy ay* (“great month”) was associated with mid-summer, when the earth became full of abundance: pastures flourished, livestock regained strength and grew fat, and milk production increased, signaling a season of plenty. He also notes that the Turks did not have names for the seven days of the week; the concept of the “week” only became known with the spread of Islam (MK, I, p. 403).

For the medieval Turks, livestock were the very foundation of life, yet the survival and prosperity of the four types of livestock depended on specific spaces (pastures) and particular times (seasons). Accordingly, in the language of the *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk*, we find expressions that mark time in relation to animal husbandry: *At tuşayu boldı* – “It is time to hobble the horse,” *At boşuýu boldı* – “It is time to release the horse” (MK, I, p. 505), *Koy kügi boldı* – “It is time for the sheep to breed” (MK, III, p. 188). Similarly, the phrase *Ol koy tülekinde keldi* – “He came when the sheep were lambing” (MK, I, p. 446) indicates a specific seasonal period, namely spring, when lambing occurs. In the Kazakh language, seasonal time is still expressed through livestock-related imagery: *mal otyýar kez* – “the time when the livestock graze freely” (when people move from winter quarters to summer pastures and the herds are surrounded by lush grass), *qozy piser kez* – “the time when lambs are ready for slaughter” (in summer pastures, when the lambs born in spring have grown to maturity), and *mal ayaqtanar kez* – “the time when livestock become strong on fresh pasture” (when animals feed on new grass in early spring, and young lambs grow strong and steady on their feet). Such expressions demonstrate how closely the temporal worldview of the Turkic peoples was bound to the rhythms of pastoral life.

Conclusion

An analysis of the language of the *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk* shows that the medieval Turkic peoples’ knowledge of space was rooted in the worldview of the ancient Turks. Their understanding of space derived from efforts to grasp the mysteries of natural phenomena, to adapt to environmental conditions, and to facilitate human life through the development of their traditional occupation—animal husbandry.

L.M. Dmitriyeva, in her study of the toponymic system of the Altai, provides the following characterization of space: “In the toponymic image of the world, the category of ‘space’ occupies a particularly important place, since it is a fundamental category in the relationship between human beings and reality. The concept of ‘space’ functions as an integral part of toponymic consciousness, representing the reflection of inner mental perception and its linguistic expression, and thus plays a central role in the toponymic worldview” (Dmitriyeva, 2003, p. 9).

The ability of medieval Turks to master both vertical and horizontal orientations of space is evident in Mahmud al-Kashgari’s circular map, preserved in his monument. This cartographic drawing is considered the earliest Turkic map. Its circular shape demonstrates that the spherical nature of the earth, filled with mysteries and wonders, was not an unfamiliar idea for the Turks. The map provides precise details on the cities, settlements, mountains, rivers, lakes, and seas in the territories inhabited by Turkic tribes - from Rum (Byzantium) to Machin (China). Kashgari also offers descriptions of these regions, addressing their size, boundaries, languages, and geographical features.

As T. Zhanuzakov and Q. Rysbergen note in their research on onomastic space: “Onomastic space is generally composed of the names and designations of real and imagined entities as marked by the linguistic resources of any people or community - that is, by onymic units. These names reflect the ‘linguistic model of the world’ of the given people, formed over centuries of worldview development and national cognition, and they distinguish the surrounding environment accordingly” (Zhanūzaqov& Rysbergen, 2004, p.6).

In this respect, the place names preserved on Kashgari’s map, which reflect the worldview and pathways of the medieval Turkic peoples, constitute invaluable cultural treasures. They continue to hold untapped potential for deepening our understanding of Turkic history and ethnolinguistic heritage.

Religious consciousness occupied a central place in the worldview of the medieval Turks. Their spiritual and cultural universe - encompassing beliefs about the Creator, the origin of humankind, life and death, time and space, justice, the pursuit of a worthy life, Turkic identity and thought, and systems of values - demonstrates how the foundational Tengriist idea of the ancient Turks became interwoven with Islam in a harmonious synthesis. Through his

monumental work *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk*, Mahmud al-Kashgari established a bridge of spiritual continuity between the Turkic worldview and Islam, showing their points of convergence and mutual reinforcement.

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«Диуани лұғат ит-түрк» сөздігі негізінде орта ғасырлық түркі дүниетанымының этнолингвистикалық және мәдени аспектілері

Аңдатпа. Мақалада Махмұд Қашқаридың «Диуани лұғат ит-түрк» атты тарихи-лексикографиялық еңбегі негізінде ортағасырлық түркі халықтарының дүниетанымы этнолингвистикалық және мәдени тұрғыдан қарастырылады. Қарастырылып отырған зерттеу тілдік деректерде көрініс тапқан көне түркілік дүниетанымның дәстүрлердің, наным-сенімдер жүйесі мен әлеуметтік құрылымның концептуалды негіздерін зерделейді. Лексикалық бірліктер мен паремиологиялық формаларға (мақал-мәтелдерге) семантикалық және мәдени талдау жасау арқылы түркі халқының рухани мұрасы мен мәдени коды айқындалады. Этнолингвистика және когнитивті лингвистика пәндерінен алынған әдіснамаларды қолдана отырып, бұл зерттеу ортағасырлық түркі қоғамының тіл арқылы ашылған ділі мен дүниетанымдық құрылымына ғылыми түсіндірме ұсынады. Осы зерттеудің мақсаты екі жақты: біріншіден, тіл арқылы

түркі мәдениетін түсінуге үлес қосу болса, екіншіден, ұлттық концептосфераны анықтау болып табылады. «Диуани лұғат ит-түрк» еңбегінің тілдік мәліметтеріне сүйене отырып, бұл зерттеу ортағасырлық түркі дүниетанымының этнолингвистикалық және мәдени өлшемдерін, әсіресе кеңістікті концептуалды қабылдау мен діни сабақтастық мәселелерін талдайды. Талдау нәтижелері көрсеткендей, көне түркілердің тік және көлденең кеңістікті бағдарлау түсінігі ежелгі дәстүрлерге, табиғи ортаға бейімделуге және көшпелі мал шаруашылығына тікелей байланысты болған, бұл Махмұд Қашқаридың жаңашыл дөңгелек картасынан айқын көрінеді. Сонымен қатар бұл картографиялық және ономастикалық мұра түркі тайпаларының кеңістіктік санасын көрсететін күрделі «дүниенің тілдік моделін» айғақтайды. Мақалада осы географиялық пайымдаулармен қатар ортағасырлық түркілердің рухани әлемі де қарастырылып, ондағы негізгі тәңірлік наным-сенімдердің ислам қағидаттарымен өзара үйлесімді тоғысуы ерекше атап өтіледі. Осылайша «Диуани лұғат ит-түрк» еңбегі түркілік мәдени бірегейлік пен этнолингвистикалық мұраның тарихи даму жолына терең бойлауға мүмкіндік беретін рухани сабақтастықтың маңызды алтын көпірі саналады.

Түйін сөздер: Махмұд Қашқари, «Диуани лұғат ит-түрк», түркі дүниетанымы, дүниенің тілдік моделі, мәдени концепт, көне түркі тілі, этнолингвистика, тіл және таным.

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Этнолингвистические и культурные аспекты средневекового тюркского мировоззрения на основе словаря «Дивани лугат ит-тюрк»

Аннотация. В статье на основе историко-лексикографического труда Махмуда Кашгари «Дивани лугат ит-тюрк» этнолингвистически и культурно рассматривается мировоззрение средневековых тюркских народов. Представленное исследование изучает концептуальные основы древнетюркского мировоззрения, традиций, системы верований и социальной структуры, нашедшие отражение в языковых данных. Путем проведения семантического и культурного анализа лексических единиц и паремнологических форм (поговорок и пословиц) выявляются духовное наследие и культурный код тюркского народа. Используя методологии, заимствованные из таких дисциплин, как этнолингвистика и когнитивная лингвистика, данное исследование предлагает научное объяснение менталитета и мировоззренческой структуры средневекового тюркского общества, раскрывающихся через язык. Цель данного исследования двояка: во-первых, внести вклад в понимание тюркской культуры через язык, а во-вторых, определить национальную концептосферу. Опираясь на языковые сведения труда «Дивани лугат ит-тюрк», данное исследование анализирует этнолингвистические и культурные измерения средневекового тюркского мировоззрения, особенно вопросы концептуального восприятия пространства и религиозной преемственности. Результаты анализа показывают, что представления древних тюрков о вертикальной и горизонтальной пространственной ориентации были напрямую связаны с древними традициями, адаптацией к природной среде и кочевым скотоводством, что отчетливо видно на новаторской круглой карте Махмуда Кашгари. Кроме того, это картографическое и ономастическое наследие свидетельствует о сложной «языковой картине мира», отражающей пространственное сознание тюркских племен. В статье наряду с этими географическими суждениями также рассматривается духовный мир средневековых тюрков, и особо отмечается гармоничное переплетение в нем базовых тенгрианских верований с исламскими догматами. Таким образом, труд «Дивани лугат ит-тюрк» считается важным золотым мостом духовной преемственности, позволяющим глубоко проникнуть в исторический путь развития тюркской культурной идентичности и этнолингвистического наследия.

Ключевые слова: Махмуд Кашгари, «Диван лугат ит-тюрк», тюркское мировоззрение, языковая картина мира, культурный концепт, древнетюркский язык, этнолингвистика, язык и познание.

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