

UOT 7(4/9)

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THE COMMON LANGUAGE OF THE TURKIC WORLD: CARPET PATTERNS

Abstract. In the article, the art of carpet weaving, which is a part of the culture of the Navaho people, who are considered to be American natives, and the Turkic people, was investigated, similar features were discovered, and notes were made about the meanings of the symbols. The common motifs most often seen in Native American and Turkic carpets show that the Turkic woman attaches importance to signs that express her attachment to her home, loyalty, and protection of her homeland. At the same time, it was noted that he pays attention to motives that indicate that he is an important presence in the family. Research like this instills in future generations the importance of preserving past traditions.

Key words: Turkic people, Navaho, carpet, ornament, symbol.

Introduction. Turks and Indians are societies that have adopted the culture of nomadic life and have made the art of carpet weaving an important part of their lives for many years. As explained in many studies; The Indians (American Indians), who are thought to have crossed the Bering Strait and came to the continent, are communities that have cultural and sociological ties with the Turks and are thought to have kinship ties. In recent years, there have been many studies and scientific findings that reinforce this connection. Valuable ideas about the impact of Azerbaijani carpets on American culture have even been reflected in the writings of Azerbaijani scientists [1; 2]. In this study, similarities and differences are noted within the art of carpet weaving, which has an

important place in both cultures, especially between the Navaho people and the Turks.

The interpretation of the main material. Although they are very far apart, there are similarities between the weaving of the Navaho Indian tribes and the Turkic weaving in terms of the motifs and patterns they use. Because Navaho weavers are inspired by Eastern culture, their patterns are similar to Turkic patterns. But interestingly, the symbolic meanings of these motifs are different for the Navaho people. For information, the Navaho (or Dine) is a Navaho-speaking Native American people living in the states of Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah in the United States of America.

According to Navaho legend, Spider Woman taught the members of her tribe to weave on a loom made of sunlight and lightning. Indians believe that this divine person still lives in a sacred nest in Canyon de Chelly, Arizona,

and guides the hands of the weavers. When a girl child is born, the elders rub the child's arms and hands with cobwebs so that her fingers do not get tired when weaving carpets, and the talent of the Spider Woman is passed on to her.

Geometric and graphic (linear) features are common elements found in Navaho rugs. The main feature of these carpets is the large central pattern called the lake (navel) and the edges surrounding it. The main pattern of these carpets is made up of geometric shapes like polygons and hexagons (Fig. 1).

Motifs, such as a large pattern or medal in the



Fig. 1. Two Grey Hills

middle, often contain other geometric features. Stars, crosses, and swastikas, commonly used in Turkic rugs, are also found in Navaho rugs and sand paintings.

The star motif on the rugs I gave as an example represents fertility in Turkic rugs. A woman who weaves a star motif, I am fertile, I have children. He says that I am strong and proud.

The patterns used in Turkic rugs do not carry the same symbolic meanings as those used in Navaho rugs. The bird motif seen in Turkic carpets has different meanings. Birds of prey such as eagles and falcons, found on the Seljuk and Ottoman flags, symbolize power. The bird motif also appears on the Navaho tree of life. The bird motif found in the more complex Turkic tree of life has many different meanings, such as good, happiness, joy and love, spirit of the dead, women, longing, waiting for news, strength. We must not forget that; Birds also symbolize the divine messenger and long life. The phoenix fighting the dragon is the harbinger of spring. The tree of life symbolizes the quest for immortality and hope for life after death (Fig.2).

The tree of life motif, widely used in Turkic carpets, is a symbol of eternity. This motif is a symbol of the search for immortality and the hope of life after death. The tree is one of the sacred plants among the Turks. The tree of life is depicted as being guarded by animals such as lions and eagles, which are believed to have power.

According to belief, the tree of life represents the vertical symbolism of life, which is constantly evolving and ascending to heaven. In a broad sense, it symbolizes



Fig. 2. Navaho - tree of life

the ever-evolving and changing universe. The three elements of the universe; It connects the underground with its roots going deep into the earth, the sky with its lower branches and trunk, and the sky with its upper branches rising to the light. It provides a connection between the earth and the sky.

The “hand on waist” and “ram’s horn” motifs, often used in Native American and Turkish rugs, indicate male and female. The blessing pattern consists of two “hands on waist” motifs showing a woman and two “ram’s horns” motifs showing a man. The eye motif in the middle of the composition was used to protect the family from the evil eye. The hand motif on the waist is a symbol of femininity. It symbolizes not only motherhood and fertility, but also good luck, abundance, destiny, happiness and joy. For this reason, it is the most used and important motive [5].

Hooks and various forms of crosses are often used in Turkic carpets to ward off the evil eye. The stylized eye motif has a similar function, as it is thought to be the best protection against the evil eye of a person.

The best protection against the evil eye is a stylized eye motif. Because it is believed that the human eye has such a protective feature. The simplest form of the eye motif is a triangle. The hand, finger and comb motifs consisting of five dots and five lines are based on the belief that the number five, i.e. the fingers on the hand, protect against the evil eye in Turks. The hand motif, which combines the concepts of fertility and success, is also a sacred motif. Because it symbolizes the hand of the Prophet’s sister. The eye symbol, sometimes seen on the hand, is proof of the hand’s protective function against evil.

The hand motif is also used to protect against witchcraft, and the purpose of the nail is to protect birth and marriage. The comb motif also symbolizes marriage and happiness in Turks.

The combination of white and black motif comes from the In-Yan Far East and indicates that the weaver is married. This motif, which is also found in Navaho weaving, symbolizes love and unity and harmony between men and women. Contrasting colored dots in the motif prove that nothing in nature is completely pure.

The so-called ram’s horn motif expresses heroism, strength and courage in Turkic carpets. This shows that the weaver is happy and is an expression of gratitude to God for his happiness.

Although many books have been written about Navaho weaving, it is difficult to find books that delve into the symbolic meanings of the motifs used in their rugs. “Weaving a Navaho Blanket” by Glades A. Reichard was created after four years spent with a Navaho family who taught her how to weave. But when asked about the meaning of motives, his answer is very simple, “nothing”.

Describing a symbol, Reichard says: “A pattern unit or whole composition that has a certain emotional content or meaning that is immediately and spontaneously recognized by a group of people”. And it continues; “It is possible and even expected that Navaho women add meaning to their patterns” [3, s. 178].

The weavers of this tribe also have different answers to questions about symbolism. They also agree that some of the motifs are simply copies of motifs found on Oriental carpets. Pearl Sunrise, a famous Navaho weaver I interviewed, stated after examining the motifs on Turkic rugs that Navaho motifs are variations of a simple motif. However, regarding the meaning of these motifs, he said that they do not have a certain symbolic meaning. Sunrise notes that each is associated with life and everyday objects, and that their symbolic meaning can only be so rich when connected to their stories of existence, not forgetting to add that each is very sacred and special to the Navaho, weavers prefer to keep it to themselves.

In the 19th century, Yei carpets, woven versions of sand patterns, come to mind. These rights depict the sacred Navaho people Yei in sand paintings. Sand painting is an important part of Navaho religious ceremonies and is performed by Shamans who know the intricate patterns by heart. Patterns must be perfect for the ceremony to be beneficial. But man does not create permanent perfection. Because it is reserved only for the gods. Therefore, sand paintings must be destroyed after they are created [4, s. 78].

When examining the various types of Navaho rugs, the similarities between them and Oriental rugs are immediately apparent. However, there is no similarity of meaning between the motifs. Motifs in Turkic carpets rarely have a sacred meaning. However, in the Navaho weaving tradition, it is quite the opposite.

The religious ceremony is performed by the Shaman and the patient takes his place in the middle of the sand painting. During the ceremony, the

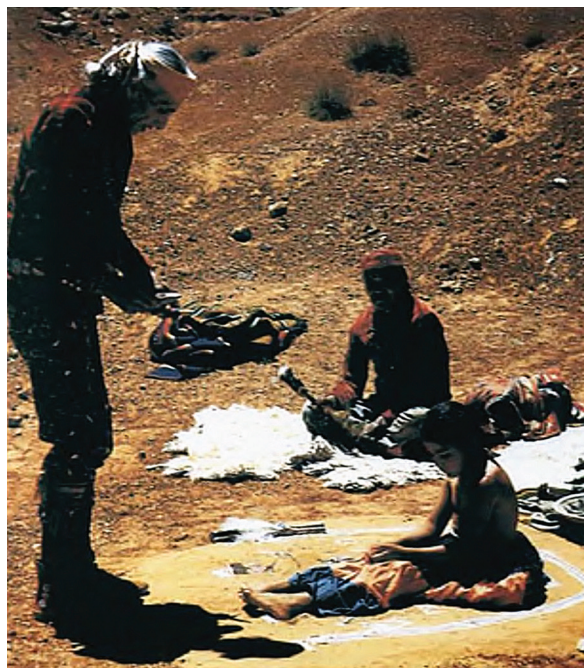


Fig. 3. Sand painting and shaman.

Shaman sings hymns. Foreigners are rarely allowed to take photos during the ceremony (Fig. 3).

Conclusion. However, the Navaho are careful to conceal the meaning of the motifs. This should be understood. Because certain beliefs should be respected without questioning them. The Navaho people, who have been historically oppressed, have decided to hide and keep secrets in order to protect their rich cultural values that have been passed down from generation to generation. This is a good result, as recent studies reveal similarities between Native American peoples and Turks.

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TÜRK DÜNYASININ ORTAQ DİLİ: XALÇA NAXIŞLARI

Məqalədə Amerika yerliləri sayılan Navaho xalqı ilə türk xalqlarının mədəniyyətinin bir parçası olan xalçaçılıq sənəti araşdırılmış, oxşar xüsusiyyətlər aşkarlanmış, simvolların anlamları barəsində qeydlər aparılmışdır. Ən çox yerli Amerika və Türk xalçalarında görülən ortaq motivlər türk qadınının evinə bağlılığını, sədaqətini, yurdunu qorumağı ifadə edən işarələrə önəm verdiyini göstərilib. Bununla yanaşı, onun ailədə önəmli bir varlıq olduğunu bildirən motivlərə əhəmiyyət verdiyinə diqqət çəkmişdir. Bu kimi tədqiqatlar gələcək nəsillərə keçmiş adət-ənənənin qorunub saxlanılmasının nə dərəcədə önəmli olmasını aşılایır.

Açar sözlər: Türk xalqları, Navaho, xalça, ornament, simvol.

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ОБЩИЙ ЯЗЫК ТЮРКСКОГО МИРА: УЗОРЫ КОВРОВ

В статье проведено сравнительное исследование искусства ковроткачества, входящее в культуру народа навахо, считающегося аборигенами Америки, и тюркских народов. Выявлены сходные черты ковровых орнаментов, сделаны выводы о значениях символов. Общие мотивы, чаще всего встречающиеся на индейских и тюркских коврах, показывают, что тюркская женщина придает большое значение знакам, выражающим ее привязанность к дому, верность и защиту своей родины. При этом отмечено, что она обращает внимание на мотивы, указывающие на ее важное присутствие в семье. Проведенное исследование свидетельствует об общности архетипов и определенных культурных традиций тюркских народов и индейцев Америки.

Ключевые слова: тюркские народы, навахо, ковер, орнамент, символ.