

THE ROLE OF “FIRE” IN KYRGYZ CULTURE
РОЛЬ «ОГНЯ» В КЫРГЫЗСКОЙ КУЛЬТУРЕ

Аннотациясы: Бул макалада кыргыз маданиятындагы «от» деген сөздүн мааниси жана анын семантикалык маанилеринин колдонулушу берилген.

Негизги сөздөр: семиотика, маданият, семантика, от, белги, коом, каада, салт, коломто, жаратылыш.

Аннотация: Данная статья рассматривает значение и использование семантических значений слов «огонь» в культуре кыргызского народа.

Ключевые слова: семиотика, культура, семантика, огонь, знак, общество, традиция, камин, природа.

Abstract: This paper deals meaning and using of the semantic meaning of the word “fire” in Kyrgyz culture.

Keywords: semiotics, culture, semantics, fire, sign, society, customs, traditions, fireplace, nature.

Semiotics of culture is a research field within semiotics that attempts to define culture from semiotic perspective and as a type of human symbolic activity, creation of signs and a way of giving meaning to everything around. Therefore here culture is understood as a system of symbols or meaningful signs. Because the main sign system is the linguistic system, the field is usually referred to as semiotics of culture and language. Under this field of study symbols are analyzed and categorized in certain class within the hierarchal system. With postmodernity, metanarratives are no longer as pervasive and thus categorizing these symbols in this postmodern age is more difficult and rather critical.

Culture as a hierarchical semiotic system consisting of set of functions correlated to it, and linguistic codes that are used by social groups to maintain coherence. These codes are viewed as superstructures based on natural language, and here the ability of humans to symbolize is central.

The study received a research ground also in Japan where the idea that culture and nature should not be contrasted and contradicted but rather harmonized was developed.

Cultural semiotics, having been developing as an international science, has expanded also disciplinary. When leaving aside the use of semiotics in disciplines that study culture on the level of method or an aspect (e.g. cultural studies), two

poles between which the development is going on have to be fixed. On the one hand, one can notify the attempts to revise the conceptions pertaining to general semiotics and to analyze their culture-semiotic productivity for the sake of interest of cultural semiotics. On the other hand, there can be notified the globalization of cultural theory that treats both history of mankind (and the semiogenetic period in it) and synchronic typologies. Several conceptions from different countries have not been switched into this context yet. But this means that the connections between culture and semiotics have not frozen yet, they create new forms of knowledge. In 1973, it was possible to write in “Theses on the Semiotic Study of Cultures” about cultural semiotics as a science studying functional correlation between different sign systems. The present volume reflects both interest in different sign systems and cultural texts, and also relationships between sign systems. The editorial board is happy to attend the arrival of new names in our publication and the multitude of viewpoints related to these names. Materials of this collection reflect well the influence of material studied on the way of thought of scholars and choice of method. And like to this collection fits well to celebrate the anniversary of cultural semiotics.

For culture, it is inherent to be diverse, contain different sign systems and texts in complex thread. But at the same time the influence of the media environment on culture is deepening, and due to

this otherwise autonomous sign systems and texts happen to be side by side. They intertwine and transform, and the identification of their elements or signs turns out to be very difficult through one system or one text. This means that the specific conditions of semiosis also force us to talk about intersemiosis, associations of signs and texts that can not be studied hierarchically or that are too difficult to be studied so; however it may be possible to study them complexly or complementarily. On the grounds of this we announce the next issue of Sign System Studies to be thematic and would like to discuss with our dear colleagues about the theme essential to contemporary culture. Taking into account the youth of cultural semiotics and its centeredness at the object, the choice of this theme means an intention to find possibilities of complex analysis, i.e. to search for objects of research enriching cultural

semiotics itself, and at the same time to describe the environment generating them. In cultural semiotics, there are different traditions of researches. Likewise, semiotics has become a natural part of many disciplines pertaining to cultural analysis and cultural theory. Therefore, cultural semiotics is not a detaching boundary here — cultural semiotic and semiotic in culture are, in the global plane, still located in the same space.

The culture is the human's mind and soul of good things. Only someone who assimilates it better we call him/her cultural. Every nation has little or much contribution in creating global culture. To find "fire" it was one of the main points to achieve great progress of human society. Kyrgyz people know how to use fire from ancient times. Topoz master Bolokbay described as the best master of iron who has made weapons of all heroes in epic Manas:

Тоого чапса таш кескен, If it struck a rock, it would split.
Белге чапса баш кескен, If it struck the waist, the head fell.
Шиберге койсо өрт кеткен, If laid on grass, then flames would swell.
Шилтегени мурт кеткен. (II 175-б.) This fine sabre which slew with one slash. (p.454)

Kyrgyz people even knew how to liquate and to use iron with the helping of fire. This kind of metals can cut different kinds of stones. There were a lot of turners and jewelers used the fire between Kyrgyz people. In the epic Semetey is shown our great father's burned tree which used as a cool in wide meaning. Before married, provide all things.

"Alas, alas, alas – ar baleeden kalas" "Go, go, go, get all holy, holy, and let all the bad go away" – Kyrgyz people prayed for fire in some of the customs. We saw sorcerers made a big fire, jumped on fire and licked of reddened crop with tongue, got out devils. Evil spirits are afraid of fire in creed of shamans. This boon banishes darkness. Melt ice and snow. Even before coming into home a new bride turned around the fire according to tradition in villages. Because when turning around light fire

it banishes evil curses from the bride, so it means the cleaning of the bride. "Go, go, go, get all holy, holy, and let all the bad go away". This is "Ysyryk" – branches of bushes which it can be termed as purity. "Khalos" is from Arabic language, it gives the concept of protection. We are talking about the faith of the sacred power of fire.

Still according to this tradition, when nightmares do so called candle branches of shrubs, lit them, prepare seven small cakes, then began to pray. Kyrgyz people considered the fire as sacred force. Our ancestry prohibited bans as: "Do not play with fire!", "Do not kick fire!"

In Kyrgyz language the word "fire" is used generally as a metaphor, brave-hearted person is explained as a hero, deep-eyed person as a clever. There are few lines from songs "Girlhood" – «Кыздар ай»:

Girls, you look like *blazing fires* Өчүргөнгө болбогон,
That we can't put out. *Өрт өңдүүсүң кыздар*, ай.
Girls, you are charming, Бүрдөп турган кайыңдай,
Like a budding birch. (p. 17) Көркөмдүүсүң кыздар, ай. (б. 16)

And "I admire the color of Fall" – «Суктанам күздүн өңүнө»:
Is this *yellow face of fall like fire*, *Сап сары оттой күз өңү*,
A blazing passion that burns bright? Алолоп жанган күйүүбү?
Or is it the yellow of faded love *Жабыгып жетпей өмүрдө*,
That withered, unfulfilled? (p.73) Саргайып бүткөн сүйүүбү? (б.72)

The word “fire” is used widely in Kyrgyz poetry. Even there are several samples in love songs: “You are the light of my soul”, “Burning feeling of my love”.

In Kyrgyz folk songs widely applied to the theme “fire” and reached philosophical concepts describing brightness of things using coloring words.

“The city Kokon was surrounded by fires – so many they looked like stars fallen from the sky” (p. 79) – *Кокон от менен курчалган. Көз жетпей сансыз оттор жылтылдап, асмандын жылдыздары бүт күбүлүп Кокондун тегерегине түшүп калгандай.* “Broken sword”, Т. Касымбеков (234 б.).

“Corol and precious stones, some stone bright like stars others flickered like camps, others still sparkled like striking flink” (p. 130) – Жылдыз болуп күлүндөп, шам болуп үлбүрөп, кээде чакмактын отундай жалтырап күйгөн каухар таштар бары мунда.. «Сынган кылыч», Т.Касымбеков (283 б.).

Kyrgyz people believed that the fire is a source of life, so they appoint that the fire is very necessary. There is no fire in the fireplace without wood in the house. The burning flame in a fireplace means the continuation of family’s life. When there was a big flame in a fireplace, there were full copper of boiling meat. The houses were light, family’s mood was bright, and the life was quiet. That is, it is meant,

that ancient people lived in prosperity. Sometimes different social problems were discussed around the fire. Grandfather’s great advices helped to behave us. People who lived in mountains, they said, if you have flame, you can eat tasty food, but they pointed the flame is not a food, close relationship, lightness like a fire.

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