

Zhyldyz URMANBETOVA

Prof., Kırgızistan-Türkiye Manas Üniversitesi, cildiz.urmanbetova@manas.edu.kg, Bişkek-Kırgızistan

ORCID: 0000-0002-4194-6682

MODERN DÜNYADA KÜLTÜREL SEMBOLLERİN ÖNEMİ¹

Özet

Modern dünya, teknolojik determinizmin gelişiminin zirvesini temsil eder. Bununla birlikte başka bir dünyaya olan arzusuyla ayırt edilen bir dünyadır- yaratıcı ruhun açık ve gizli yanlarının manevi idrak dünyası. Bu yön, özellikle zamanımızın pandemi sonrası dünyasında giderek daha ilgi çekici hale geliyor. Semboller, bir kişinin bilinçli varlığında özel bir yere sahiptir. Daha eksiksiz bir tartışma için, kanıt temelindeki birkaç yönü vurgulamak gereklidir- metodolojik yön, tarihsel-kültürel ve aslında etnik yön. Metodolojik yön, şu soruyu cevaplamaya izin vermesiyle ifade edilir- semboller nelerdir ve insanlar neden onlara ihtiyaç duyarlar. Bu yönü, dünya görüşünün öğretisi olan felsefenin önemini; buna göre, varlığın birliğine dayalı hayatın anlamını ve değerlerini anlamalıdır. Tarihsel-kültürel yön, insan gelişiminin tarihsel zincirinin birliğinin iletkenleri olarak sembollerin önemini ortaya koymaktadır. Bu durumda, insanın öz-bilincinin belirli bir birlik olarak sürekliliğine vurgu yapılmaktadır. Sembollerin etnik yönü, aslında, bireysel bir halkın kültür dünyasına odaklanır. Bu durumda semboller, tarihsel geleneğin dökülmesine izin vermeyen ve manevi çekirdeği destekleyen halkın özel enerjisini taşır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kültür, Sembol, Dünya, Dönüşüm, Tarih.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CULTURAL SYMBOLS IN MODERN WORLD

Abstract

The modern world represents the peak of the development of technological determinism. However, with all this, it is a person who is distinguished by his desire for another world - the world of spiritual realization of his explicit and hidden sides of the creative soul. This aspect is becoming more and more relevant, especially in the post-pandemic world of our time. Symbols occupy a special place in the conscious being of a person. For a more complete argumentation, I will allow myself to highlight several aspects in the evidence base - the methodological aspect, historical-cultural, and ethnic. The methodological aspect is expressed in that it allows answering the question- what are symbols and why do people need them. This aspect presupposes the importance of philosophy, which is the doctrine of the worldview; accordingly, it must understand the meaning and values of life, based on the unity of being. The historical-cultural aspect reveals the significance of symbols as conductors of the unity of the historical chain of human development. In this case, the emphasis is placed on the continuity of the self-consciousness of mankind as a certain unity. The ethnic aspect of symbols, in fact, focuses on the world of culture of an individual people. The symbols in this case carry the special energy of the people, which does not allow the historical tradition to spill and supports the spiritual core.

¹ Bu çalışma, Van Yüzcüncü Yılı Üniversitesi Güzel Sanatlar Fakültesi tarafından 28-30 Eylül 2022 tarihleri arasında düzenlenen "2. Uluslararası Kültür, Sanat ve Toplum Sempozyumu"nda bildirisi olarak sunulmuştur.

Keywords: Culture, Symbol, World, Transformation, History.

1.Introduction

The modern world represents the peak of the development of technological determinism. An ever-newer level of technical and technological progress testifies to the depth and scope of the improvement of human intelligence. The world of more and more new gadgets allows you to achieve an unprecedented level of comfort, naturally, this cannot but attract, and therefore stimulate in achieving more and more perfect benefits of civilization. However, with all this, it is a person who is distinguished by his desire for another world - the world of spiritual realization of his explicit and hidden sides of the creative soul. This aspect is becoming more and more relevant, especially in the post-pandemic world of our time. Value orientations are in the process of change.

It is no coincidence that it was ideas that inspired man, peoples and mankind to the most significant feats and valor. Very often, many people confuse the civilizational world with the world of culture, believing that the achievements of civilization can and do replace the world of culture. However, despite the peak in the development of technological achievements, a person still needs the spiritual world. This was repeatedly written by many philosophical minds in the 19th and 20th centuries - G. Rickert, N. Berdyaev, F. Nietzsche, A. Weber, R. Kroner, E. Husserl ... History continues, and the first quarter of the 21st century is exactly the same reveals the contradictions of the era of information technology and shows the relevance of the spiritual world.

Symbols occupy a special place in the conscious being of a person. What are symbols and why do people need them? Is it an abstraction that no one needs or a special reality concealing the key to discoveries? What is the meaning of the symbol for a person? Does it make sense, and most importantly, why raise the issue of cultural symbols in an era of technological progress? I can immediately answer that not only does it make sense, but there is a clear need to focus on this phenomenon. For a more complete argumentation, I will allow myself to highlight several aspects in the evidence base - the methodological aspect, historical and cultural, and actually ethnic.

2.Aspects of Symbols

2.1.Methodological Aspect of The Existence of Symbols

The methodological aspect is expressed in that it allows answering the question - what are symbols and why do people need them. It is no coincidence that the symbol is called the "language of consciousness" which in moments of cultural crisis is aimed at the symbolic perception of reality (Saussure, 2004: 43). According to the figurative expression of E. Cassirer, man himself is a symbolic animal, since his thinking is not only replete with symbols, but is also based on them. At the same time, he believed that "culture is always symbolic, and it is meaningless to talk about whether there is a reality apart from the symbol. We strive to analyze and comprehend the fundamental ways of thinking, representing, imagining and reproducing that are contained in language, myth, art, religion and even science" (Cassirer, 1995: 209). This means that symbols can act as a method of understanding historical eras, their development and features. Symbolism is elevated to the principle of the action of the spirit, at the same time a person thinks in symbols. That is why, "the problem of human existence is not a problem objective being, but the problem of objective value" (Cassirer, 1995: 148). A person constructs the world in symbolic images, thus understanding the culture of an era, the culture of a people is the understanding and interpretation of the symbols of culture formed in a particular era and among a particular people. Based on this, the methodological value of symbols lies in their ability to project the spirit and specifics of the values of each historical era or period of human development. Accordingly, modernity is also a separate historical epoch, the specificity of which is manifested in the most functional symbols of culture. At the same time, it should be noted that modernity in the projection of the history of mankind is a special period in history due to the unprecedented determination of technological progress. In this regard, the symbols of culture are also undergoing a significant change: the world of gadgets forms deeply technological symbols that manipulate the human mind.

Due to symbols, a person is able to comprehend the world around him. Culture itself is the constant generation of new symbols in a continuous stream, thus culture is always symbolic. In modern times, the world of culture is just as dynamic, and it is precisely by the fact which symbols of culture are functional in the present that one can judge the specifics of the development of the culture of the era. Thus, the methodological aspect is important for the development of the theory of culture. At the same time, it has a direct impact on the very real process of human development, since it contributes to the formation of trends in the formation of more and more new symbols as a projection of the value system of modern man. The most important aspect of the methodology lies in the possibility of projecting the near future based on the cultural preferences of a person in a given era. It is no coincidence that V. Windelband spoke about the prognostic aspect of culture: the creation of a conditional image of the future culture will allow us to correlate the symbols and norms of the historically anticipated culture with the emerging norms of the culture of the near future. Culture needs self-awareness of creative synthesis, “this self-awareness of creative synthesis should be the central point for the development of a worldview” (Windelband, 1995: 65). In every culture of the past, present or future, teleological attitudes are laid down, which are reflected in symbols. The transformation of these norms presupposes and allows culture to develop. In this case, it will be possible to understand the essence of the changes of a person and an era, the interaction of which is reflected in cultural preferences, i.e., symbols. The continuity that exists in the history of human development is the basis for a comparative analysis of cultural symbols as the central category that forms the human world. It turns out that the methodological aspect not only plays the role of a theoretical guide, but also contributes to the practical refraction of the essence of symbols in the surrounding reality.

The methodological aspect presupposes the importance of philosophy, which is the doctrine of the worldview; accordingly, it must understand the meaning and values of life, based on the unity of being. It is no coincidence that there is a concept of “philosophy of symbolic forms”, which incorporates the necessity, importance, meaningfulness of symbols as a guideline in comprehending consciousness and historical reality. Thus, the modern era is no exception and is also subject to analysis, in which the interpretation of modern symbols of culture has priority.

2.2. Historical-Cultural Aspect of The Development of Symbols

The historical-cultural aspect reveals the significance of symbols as conductors of the unity of the historical chain of human development. In this case, the emphasis is placed on the continuity of the self-consciousness of mankind as a certain unity. It turns out that cultural symbols allow each new generation to join the spiritual heritage, not just feeling their belonging to this world of culture but preserving the continuity of the spiritual tradition as the core of the specific development of man and mankind. Culture is a kind of holistic phenomenon; it contains the unity and plurality of the spirit in its manifestations. The integrity of culture stems from the phenomenon of consciousness, which, in its self-fulfillment, manifests itself in culture. This means that culture is doomed to reflect the creative essence of consciousness, thus it appears in the form of embodied forms of consciousness. The separate parts of culture generated by consciousness interact and at the same time oppose each other, they try to be themselves and at the same time parts of the whole - this is the idea of culture. These forms of consciousness project symbols that are realized in culture. Each separate epoch of history simultaneously represents an epoch of culture: history is the foundation of culture, and culture reflects history. Symbols are the link between history and culture.

Symbols, on the one hand, are a unifying force, since there are symbols that, regardless of the historical era, have a fundamental meaning for man and mankind in general. These are the so-called basic symbols, thanks to which culture exists as the second nature, the second world of man. Language, traditions, rituals, artistic images, written texts can be considered such basic symbols. These symbols accompany a person throughout the history of existence. According to these symbols, we can say that, despite the differences, peoples are united by the phenomenon of culture. Thus, the designated basic symbols exist among absolutely all peoples, without them neither a person nor any other subject will be able to reproduce or designate himself in history. In this regard, it makes sense to emphasize again the importance of

philosophy. It is no coincidence that R. Kroner defined philosophy as the soul of culture that creates the totality of cultural areas: “Within culture itself there must be a place, a special area in which consciousness unites all areas in their selfhood: this special area is the philosophy of culture. In it, and only in it, culture becomes an integrity, in it comprehends itself, realizes itself ... only through philosophical reflection does culture become a reality for itself” (Kroner, 1995: 257).

Symbols thus act not only as a uniting culture, but also contribute to its self-improvement. At the same time, as the world spirit, according to Hegel, is refracted in folk spirits, so symbols, along with the function of association, also have the function of difference. In this case, symbols play the role of a specific guideline in the development of various cultural systems, a criterion for the integrity of the culture of a particular people. Accordingly, the symbols of individual cultures are what contributes to the formation of a unique system of spiritual values. As Hegel stated, “a symbol is, first of all, a sign. With a simple designation, the connection between the meaning and its expression is a completely arbitrary combination” (Hegel, 1938: 310). The symbols of individual cultures are not only a projection of a special world, but also a regulator of the development of each individual culture system. In this sense, they already perform a slightly different function.

2.3. Ethnic Aspect of Self-Realization of Symbols

The ethnic aspect of symbols, in fact, focuses on the world of culture of an individual people. The symbols in this case carry the special energy of the people, which does not allow the historical tradition to spill and supports the spiritual core. That is why ethnic memory, as a regulator of the existence of a people in history, contributes to the preservation of ethnic identity. Intergenerational transmission of symbols of culture projects the preservation of a specific world of culture, both in everyday life and in the perspective of historical existence. In this case, the concept of an archetype acquires special significance, representing both a creative synthesis of the symbols of the people, and a historical legend that can unfold as history moves forward. As K.-G. Jung believed, “in reality, it is impossible to get rid of the archetypal premises in a legal way. Since it is not possible to declare archetypes non-existent, each new stage of cultural complication of consciousness conquered affects the task: to find a new interpretation of archetypes that meets its level in order to connect the life of the past that is still present in us with modern life ...” (Jung, 1991: 123). This phrase of K. Jung echoes the categorical significance of N. Berdyaev's “historical tradition”, which is recognized as something a priori, preceding the beginning of the process of historical being, and symbolizing the origins of this process. “Historical tradition is something more than the knowledge of historical life, because the inner life is revealed in symbolic tradition...” (Berdyaev, 1990: 20-21). Each nation, in the course of its historical movement, unwinds the symbols of its mental culture, thereby developing and improving historical traditions that embody a particle of tradition. It is tradition that forms the unity of a person with history, epoch, ethnic culture, reflecting the fate of specific peoples against the backdrop of the common history of mankind. Traditions of an ethno-cultural nature represent the preservation of the special specifics of the world of spirituality.

Symbols in ethnic culture project the formation and development of ethno-cultural identity. According to the researcher Isakova N.V., “Culture is most fully revealed in its ethnic incarnation” (Isakova, 2001: 97). In this case, the symbols not only project the specifics of the mental activity of a certain people but are also the key to the analysis of mental culture. The historical-cultural aspect of the development of symbols is specified in terms of the history of the culture of a particular people. It is no coincidence that the historical memory of the people plays the role of “some kind of spiritual activity, a certain attitude towards the “historical” in historical knowledge, which turns out to be internally, spiritually transformed and spiritualized” (Berdyaev, 1990: 16). Thanks to the action of historical memory, the very soul of the people is preserved in its inseparable connection with the human soul. Memory has the ability in the process of retrospection to revive historical tradition every time. Thus, projecting it onto the epochal fate and forming the historical continuity of times and epochs, going back to its origins. Without memory, the historical existence of a

person, a people, is impossible, since it loses its meaning without touching the tradition, without recognizing the ontological substantiality of spirituality. Ethnic memory implements the process of primary socialization of a person, when an individual is immersed in the language, the system of traditions, the sphere of education in the spirit of traditional rituals and customs, thereby a person identifies himself in the system of ethnocultural traditions, the significance of which is difficult to overestimate.

Ethnocultural symbols play the role of a centering factor within the mental culture of a certain people. In this regard, it should be noted that ethno-cultural symbols, on the one hand, reflect some basic values as the basis of the mental culture of the people, on the other hand, they are subject to the pressure of historical time. Thus, it is necessary to understand that the basic symbols of an ethnos are the basis of mental culture, which performs the function of an ethno-historical legend, developing continuity in the history of existence. At the same time, certain characteristics of ethnic culture do not stand the test of time, leaving some symbols as part of the past. In this sense, it must be admitted that the symbols of ethnic culture are under pressure from the social wind of change. They are to a certain extent dependent on the essence of each new historical epoch. That is why the phenomenon of an identity crisis arises. As G. Bakiyeva stated, “man is not only an ethno-man, but he is also social, i.e., attached to certain social ties and relationships, in the context of historical time, overlapping each other” (Bakiyeva, 2000: 35). From the perspective of social development processes, ethnic identification can change, it is mobile and flexible, which means that social identity is larger than ethnic identity.

An identity crisis is a phenomenon that occurs from time to time in the history of the development of man and mankind, thereby reflecting parallel changes in the man himself and the world around him. The dynamic process of the development of history, in addition to stability, has one of its periods as “a period of bifurcation, splitting, when historical foundations begin to shake in their foundations, historical movement begins, historical catastrophes and cataclysms” (Berdyayev, 1990: 5). Identity crisis is a vast process that includes the contradictions of all existing forms of identity (ethnic, cultural, religious, political, national, civil...). Each of these forms reveals its scales and depths, however, they are not isolated from each other; accordingly, this is a single process of self-awareness of a person, ethnic group, nation, culture, state in the context of historical transformations. Symbols of culture play an important role in resolving the identity crisis.

2.4.Modernity in The Projection of The Transformation of Cultural Symbols

The modern process of human development refers to the period of historical changes and catastrophes. Globalization, proclaimed as an objective trend in the development of being, contains dual trends in the expression of cultural identity and the universality of civilizational norms. The philosophy of global consciousness is specified in refraction to the systems of cultures. The socio-cultural perspective of historical tradition and the dialogue of generations in the present reflects the ratio of traditional and modern in the system of values, and therefore is associated with the existence of cultural symbols.

The practice of socio-cultural reality has brought culture to the forefront of the most pressing problems of being as the basis for the development of society. Now culture is the resonator of the contradictions between man and society, and it is culture that appears as a criterion for the civilization of a nation or state. Thus, culture acts as the ultimate basis for both unity and disagreement in the development of social systems. Another significant point in favor of actualizing the problems of culture is the fact that globalization stimulates the self-sufficiency and development of various cultural systems. Globalization, as its natural continuation, put forward post-globalization as a response to the process of universalization. The main outline of post-globalization is precisely the processes of identification. Cultural integrity, able to preserve their spiritual uniqueness, have the ability not to get lost in the flow of globalization.

The modern world is not a monologue of just one civilizational system, but a dialogue of completely different, deeply unique cultural systems. The 21st century stimulates the process of cultural diversity. This necessarily brings to the forefront of historical development the problem of cultural identification. The 21st century is not a completely separate branch of history, on the contrary, it continues the main trends of all historical development, like all the past centuries, revealing the essence of the existence of man and mankind. At the same time, a feature of modernity is the fact that hitherto the human mind has never reached the level of artificial intelligence, thus all the processes that have accompanied the history of mankind to the present period are the prehistory of perfection and the absolutization of technological progress. It is this factor that acts as a dividing line: in the present, civilizational norms of being function as a dominant of development, while cultural preferences are the background of human existence. Philosophers warned about the possibility of such a development trend as early as the beginning of the 20th century, which unfolded the crisis of the 19th century. According to O. Spengler, “a creative person leaves the union with nature and with each of his creations he moves further and further away from it. Such is his “world history”, the history of the irresistible, fatal split between the human world and the Universe” (Spengler, 1995: 469). This fatal split, as it advances in history, turns into a tragedy of human life. This understanding coincides with Berdyaev’s interpretation that tragedy is a manifestation of the fate of culture.

Historical transformations of human history inevitably give rise to a new class of symbols, but this does not change the fact that cultural symbols even in the present project the features of human development. At the same time, it must be recognized that sometimes symbols turn into simulacra. Human consciousness has become torn, as a result of which fragmentation has become the norm for perceiving the world and reproducing it in value orientations. As J. Baudrillard writes, “Each configuration of value is rethought following it and falls into a higher category of simulacra. Each new order of simulacra subjugates the previous one” (Baudrillard, 2000: 43, 122). The discreteness of the world necessarily gave rise to a torn consciousness, when metaphysical loneliness is associated not only with coming into this world and leaving it, but when it accompanies a person in the context of his social existence. It is no coincidence that alienation has turned from a problem into a phenomenon that reflects the essence of the modern era.

3. Conclusion

Describing the modern world, one can use the phrase of K. Jaspers that “the world has closed. The globe became one. New dangers and opportunities are being discovered. All existing problems have become global problems, the situation has become the situation of all mankind” (Jaspers, 1991: 141). In the present, we live in a world of chaos and bustle, when the devaluation of once unshakable truths has reached an apocalyptic limit. That is why it can be argued that by the end of the twentieth century, the crisis unfolded in full. The 21st century is another story. And in this regard, precisely because the new guidelines in the understanding of man, era and the world were not expressed, the reformatting began to occur chaotically, when each subject in his self-realization was fixated on himself. That is why, and with extraordinary force, the phenomenon of a torn consciousness is unfolding, which is echoed by a single and at the same time discrete world, in which technological determinism plays a dominant role. Accordingly, the cultural symbols of the 21st century turned out to be dependent on the achievements of technogenic civilization. Obviously, the essence and forms of cultural symbols will receive their conceptuality closer to the middle of the century.

At the same time, one can agree with R. Barthes, who considered the symbol as a type of relationship, “connecting the signifier with the signified”, when “he sees the sign in its deep dimension (Barthes, 1994: 15-16). This means that R. Barthes’ connotational associations of F. de Saussure are considered in the context of the paradigm. In any case, and in modern times, despite its technogenic nature of development, symbols are important for a person in the sense of self-awareness, perception and understanding of the surrounding reality. It is no coincidence that Yu.M. Lotman argued that in the symbol “the memory of culture about itself is realized” (Lotman, 1971: 226). Thus, civilizational complications and improvements of being in no way cancel the symbolic nature of culture. On the

contrary, the deeper the penetration of a person into the world of information, the more complicated the symbols that carry out the relationship of a person with the modern world. That is why the functionality of the philosophical study of the essence of cultural symbols in the present is not only significant, it predetermines the understanding of the ongoing transformations in the culture of man and mankind. Accordingly, culture as a world of symbols continues its march in history, reflecting the specifics of its development.

Bibliography

- Bakieva, G. A. (2000). *Social memory and modernity*. Bishkek: Ilim.
- Barthes, R. (1994). *Selected works: Semiotics. Poetics*. Moscow: Progress.
- Baudrillard, J. (2000). *America*. Sankt-Petersburg: Vladimir Dahl.
- Berdyaev, N. A. (1990). *The meaning of history*. Moscow: Thought.
- Cassirer, E. (1995). Philosophy of symbolic forms, S. Y. Levit (Ed.), *Culturology. XX century: Anthology* in (. Moscow: Lawyer, p. 163-212.
- Cassirer, E. (1995). Lectures on Philosophy and Culture. S. Y. Levit (Ed.), *Culturology. XX century: Anthology* in. Moscow: Lawyer, p. 104-162.
- de Saussure, F. (2004). *Course of General Linguistics*. Moscow: Editorial URSS.
- Hegel, G.W.F. (1938). Lectures on aesthetics. *G.W.F. Hegel, Works* in. Moscow: Sotseklit, T.12.
- Isakova, N.V. (2001). *Culture and Man in the Ethnic Space: An Ethnoculturological Approach*. Novosibirsk: MOU GCRO.
- Jaspers, K. (1991). *The meaning and purpose of history*, Moscow: Politizdat.
- Jung, K.-G. (1991). To understanding the baby archetype. *Self-Consciousness of european culture of the 20th century: thinkers and writers of the west on the place of culture in modern society* in. Moscow: Politizdat, p. 119-129.
- Kroner, R. (1995). Self-realization of the spirit. S. Y. Levit (Ed.), *Culturology. XX century: Anthology* in. Moscow: Lawyer, p. 256-280.
- Lotman, Yu. M. Uspensky, B.A. (1971). On the semiotic mechanism of culture. *Yu. M. Lotman Works on sign systems* in. Tartu: Riiklik Ülikool, Issue 5.
- Spengler, O. (1995). Man, and technology. S. Y. Levit (Ed.), *Culturology. XX century: Anthology* in . Moscow: Lawyer, p. 454-496.