

## **TURKISH MYTHOLOGY: STRUCTURE, SYMBOLISM AND CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE**

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**Abstract:** The article examines key aspects of Turkic mythology, including cosmogonic ideas, the structure of the universe, symbolism and their influence on modern culture. Turkic mythology is a multi-layered system of mythological ideas that have formed among various peoples over the centuries.

**Key words:** Mythology, Turkic mythology, culture, cosmogonic ideas, universe, symbolism, upper world, middle world, lower world.

### **Introduction**

Turkic mythology is a rich system of myths and beliefs that reflects the worldview and cultural values of the Turkic peoples. It influences literature, art and folklore, forming cultural identity. The relevance of the study is due to its significant impact on historical memory and modern perception of the world. The purpose of the article is to analyze the key aspects of Turkic mythology, including cosmogonic ideas, the structure of the universe and symbolism, as well as their influence on modern culture.

### **Methods**

The following were used for the study:

Analysis of mythological texts, legends and folklore sources.

- Comparative analysis of mythological images in the context of the cultural traditions of the Turkic peoples.
- Research of the influence of Turkic mythology on modern culture, including literature and art.

### **Results**

The study showed that Turkic mythology has a deep structure and symbolism that reflects the worldview and spiritual ideas of the Turkic peoples.

Cosmogonic ideas Turkic myths about the creation of the world often include motifs of primordial chaos, the separation of heaven and earth, and the appearance of the first people. The myths contain the idea of divine creation, where Tengri or other supreme beings organize the cosmos and create life. For example, in Altai mythology, the creation of the world is associated with Kaira Khan, who gave birth to the Universe from chaos. Трёхуровневая структура мироздания Мир представляется состоящим из трех уровней:

The Upper World (Heaven), where Tengri, the supreme deity, lives, as well as the gods of the sun and moon.

The middle world (Earth), inhabited by people and spirits of nature. Here the main mythological events take place.

The Lower World (Underworld), where Erlik, the god of death and the afterlife, rules.

This model of the universe has parallels with the mythology of other peoples, which testifies to the deep archetypal roots of these ideas.

Symbolism Symbols play an important role in the mythology of the Turkic peoples:

Totem animals - she-wolf (as the progenitor of the Turks), eagle (symbol of power), deer (sacred animal in shamanic cults).

Sacred tree - the world tree, connecting three levels of the universe and symbolizing the axis of the world.

Mountains and rivers - ideas about sacred natural objects that have spiritual significance.

Solar and lunar cult - the perception of heavenly bodies as divine entities.

Mythological motifs are reflected in oral folklore, epics and literature.

Contemporary art, including painting, architecture and ornamentation, draws inspiration from traditional mythological images.

Shamanic rituals and cult practices continue to be preserved in some ethnic groups of Central Asia.

### **Discussion**

The development of Turkic mythology took place over the centuries, forming the cultural heritage of the Turkic peoples. Its influence can be traced in various spheres of life.

The mythological structure of the Turkic worldview has similarities with other traditions:

The shamanism of the peoples of Siberia and Mongolia also includes the concept of three worlds.

North American Indians have ideas about a sacred tree similar to the Turkic world tree.

In ancient Iranian mythology, the heavenly and earthly levels reflect the interaction of good and evil, similar to the myths of Tengri and Erlik.

In recent decades, there has been a revival of interest in Tengrian traditions among the Turkic peoples. This is due to the search for national identity and the restoration of historical memory.

Popularization of shamanic practices and traditional rituals.

Interest in mythology as an element of cultural expression in literature and art. In literature, Turkic mythology is often used to create symbolic images (for example, in the story "Kelin" by E. Tursunov). In the visual arts, sacred symbols such as Tengri, the tree of the world and totem animals continue to inspire artists. Ethnographic research and educational projects help preserve mythological traditions and pass them on to new generations.

Thus, the mythology of the Turkic peoples remains an important element of cultural heritage, influencing modern identity, art and spiritual ideas.

Mythological motifs continue to influence modern culture.

In literature, they are used to create allegories (for example, in the story by E. Tursunov "Kelin"). In art, the symbols of Turkic mythology are reflected in national ornaments, painting and sculpture. Despite the spread of Islam, Tengrian traditions are preserved, especially in the

culture of the Kazakhs and Kyrgyz. A revival of interest in Tengrianism and traditional rituals is observed in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and other countries of Central Asia.

### **Conclusion**

Turkic mythology is an integral part of the cultural heritage of the peoples of Central Asia, possessing a deep philosophical and symbolic structure. It was formed over many centuries, reflecting the worldview of the Turkic peoples, their ideas about the universe, nature and the interaction between people and divine forces.

One of the key aspects of Turkic mythology is its three-level model of the world, including the Upper, Middle and Lower Worlds, as well as sacred symbols such as Tengri, the world tree, totem animals and natural elements. These mythological concepts not only served as the basis for religious beliefs and rituals, but also influenced the formation of traditional social norms and cultural codes. Despite the change of eras and religious systems, elements of Turkic mythology continue to be preserved in the folklore, art and philosophy of the Turkic peoples. In recent decades, there has been a revival of interest in Tengrism, which is associated with the search for national identity and the desire to preserve cultural heritage. Modern researchers pay attention to the study of symbolism, mythological motifs and their influence on art, literature and spiritual traditions. Thus, Turkic mythology remains an important factor in the formation of cultural identity, providing a link between the past and the present. Its study allows for a deeper understanding of the history of the Turkic peoples, their worldview and cultural traditions.

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