

Family-Mark of Identity and Spirituality of the Turkish Community in Romania

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Abstract: The family is one of the important institutions that has survived from the past to the present. In this paper I will try to present the structure and features of the Turkish family starting from the pre-Islamic, Islamic-Ottoman period until the modern period. The solid family structure and the order played an extremely important role in the mobility of the Turkish nation in a very wide geography that shaped history. To this end, I will provide brief information about the Turkish family, its importance to society, marriage ceremonies, communication between family members and other relatives, as well as some traditions specific to the Turkish family. The social structure of the family, the basic dynamics and the main driving force of society differ from society to society, from culture to culture as we will see also in the Turkish family. The ancient Turks, whose life and culture was nomadic, therefore, the structure and life of the family were modelled according to the conditions of nomadic life. Family members had to fight together against difficult living conditions. In this situation, children, girls and boys, have been involved in adult roles since an early age. In the old Turkish family, the man is a person with important functions and duties and the woman is the foundation of human society. The Turkish family in Romania can be presented from two perspectives: the Ottoman Turkish family and the modern Turkish family. By presenting the two components we will notice that the impact of modernism or rather of post-modernism is making its mark more and more, leading to the loss of traditional values that are intertwined with the spiritual crisis

Keywords: Turkish family; pre-Islamic family; early Islamic family; Islamic-Turkish culture.

In my opinion, the study of a nation from a historical, political, social, and cultural point of view should begin with the study of the family, which is as ancient as human history.

The family is a biological, psychological, economic, social, legal system, etc., which ensures continuity of the human species because of biological relationships. Also, it is a group of people who are directly

related to each other and whose adult members take responsibility for childcare.

Furthermore, we can say that the family is an institution that fulfills the function of population renewal, preservation and transmission of national culture, socialization, biological and psychological satisfaction, and the equivalent of a universal institution that preserves the unity of human society.

The meaning and importance of the family in society are as important as the atom for physics and the cell for the biological body.

In this paper, I will try to present brief information about the Turkish family, its importance for society, the marriage ceremonies, the communication between family members and the rest of the relatives, as well as some specific Turkish family traditions.

Throughout human history, no individual has lived on his own. People lived in communities and continued their lives together with other members of these communities. The social structure of the family, which is the basic dynamic, and the main driving force of the society differs from society to society, from culture to culture as we will see in the Turkish family.

The life and culture of ancient Turks were nomadic; therefore, the structure and life of the family were shaped according to the conditions of nomadic life. Family members had to struggle together against difficult living conditions. This situation has led to the fact that both children and women have entered adult roles from an early age.

According to Ziya Gökalp, the pre-Islamic Turkish family can be studied from five perspectives: tribal or clan, social kinship, the genealogical line from the grandfather, paternal families, and finally, the family formed after marriage. In the earliest Turkish family, the man is a person with important functions and duties and the woman is the foundation of human society. The development of civilization and the happiness of human society depend on her.

According to the oldest Turkish belief, "man and woman" are the children of sky and earth. As such, it was a great pity for a woman to be beaten and despised in a tradition in which she was considered so sacred. In Turkish epics, the woman is always along with her man. She is his power and inspiration. Young people are fighting to protect their families. Families must give soldiers to the state; however, in doing so, they see no difference between the benefits of the state and their benefits and consider the benefit of the state to be theirs. This is still the case today.

Since the 9th and 10th centuries, many Turks have changed from the Tengrist faith to the Islamic religion. The two branches of Turkish origin in Romania, the Anatolian Turks, and the Crimean Tatars of the

Muslim religion will keep in the functional structure of the family elements inherited from the pre-Islamic tradition adapted to the Islamic religion, giving birth to the Turkish-Islamic culture specific to the Turkish branches.

The Turkish family in Romania can be presented from two perspectives: the Ottoman Turkish family and the modern Turkish family. By presenting the two components, we can observe that the modernist current, or specifically post-modernism, had a strong impact, by leading to the loss of traditional values. Furthermore, the loss of traditional values is intertwined with a spiritual crisis.

The characteristics of the Turkish family

The structure of the Turkish family is like a state.

1. There are close ties between family members. They support and respect each other in all conditions.

2. The father is the head of the family, and his word is respected.

3. In any case (going to the army, getting married or going on a business trip, sightseeing, etc.), the child asks for the parents' blessing.

4. The house, the family are private properties that must be respected.

5. The wife is respected. The Prophet Muhammad stated, "Behind the footsteps of a mother is heaven. The Kyrgyz legend "Manas" considered the woman the exponent of the honor of a family, of a society. The importance they attached to women is highlighted in the following wish: "First have wealth and health, then the wealth of women. The wife was in control of her possessions and could decide their use. The woman was the source of strength, vigor, and wisdom for her husband.

6. It is forbidden to sell children, which is considered the greatest sin.

7. After marriage, the eldest and middle-aged sons leave the parental home and move to their homes, leaving only the youngest son in the house to carry on the parental home and to take care of their parents. The other sons come regularly with their families to visit; they gather at the parental home which they honor (Gokalp, 2001, p.178).

Types of Turkish marriages

The family is formed after a marriage. Man and woman unite by integrating their lives, ensuring the perpetuation of the human species. Marriage is indeed a phenomenon that concerns the whole society, as well as personally at any time and everywhere in almost every stage of the history of human society, from the most primitive to the most modern. Many social scientists, especially sociologists and anthropologists, have expressed their views on marriage by focusing on different forms of

marriage, which indicate cultural diversity, the historical period, and the needs of human society at that time.

Over time, we find in the Turks different forms of marriage, such as "marriage between relatives of the same blood" (especially between first-degree cousins (endogamy), "marriage with several women" (polygamy), marriage with the sister-in-law after brother's death and marriage between two young men and a woman (monogamy).

Marriage between relatives of the same blood (especially between first-degree cousins (endogamy).

It should be noted that such a marriage is not stipulated in the Qur'an, as it is considered a religious sin. Marriage between relatives was a human creation, the reason being clear, the preservation of family wealth and the continuity of the family tree. It was believed that the bride, who is a relative, would treat her parents-in-law with greater respect than a stranger bride; that the stability of marriage will be maintained, and that the marriage of young people who grew up together will be more lasting and stronger.

In time, consanguineous marriages were banned because many children with disabilities and hereditary diseases were born. Their appearance determined the young Turks to decide for themselves the destinies of founding the future family.

This decision also contributed to the increase in the level of education among young people, which led to the awareness that the marriage bond is a serious bond, based on love and respect for each other.

Marriage to several women

This type of marriage has been observed in all Eastern nations since ancient times, but it was enjoyed only by rulers, inns, emperors, and sultans. With the transition to Islam, the Qur'an has allowed all wealthy people to adopt this type of marriage under certain conditions.

The marriage with several women is stipulated in the sura of Nice and the conditions under which these marriages take place. The number of such spouses shall not exceed four. These marriages will be performed only with orphaned girls or widows to provide protection and only if the man has sufficient wealth to support them equally and in abundance.

To the Turks, generally in the Ottoman period, we will see many of such marriages, but with the law adopted by M.K. Atatürk in marriages are made only between two people, a man, and a woman. Among the Turks in Romania, marriages with several women were quite rare, and currently non-existent.

Marriages between brother-in-law and sister-in-law

Regarding such marriages, they took place only in case of the death of one of the spouses, for the protection of the brother's family, especially the children, until they married and left for their homes. Among the Turks from Dobrogea, such situations were encountered, one of them being the Baiacai family from Măcin when the older brother died, and the younger one had to marry his widowed wife and raise his five children. I met them personally, even becoming in-laws. It was a family which represented a model of social morality in society.

Relations between Turkish family members and the role of each member

Relationships between family members take place in harmony with family values. These values are love, compassion, respect, loyalty, devotion, obedience, solidarity, goodwill, hospitality, sacrifice, chastity, honor, and prayer. Moral, ethical, social, and religious education plays an important role in children's formation.

The father must help the family to meet their basic and educational material needs such as shelter, food, drink, clothing, education, health, fuel to survive. These are not easy to obtain. It takes the opportunity, effort, and time. In this sense, the head of the family is burdened, and as the number of family members increases and the needs increase and the burden becomes heavier. Therefore, the other members strive to lighten their father's burden.

The wife

In the Göktürk era, the word mother was used before the word father: in expressions such as "heed the mother's advice and listen to your father's word." In the history of ancient Turks, we can find writings that show that the wife of Khan had powers of decision when her husband was in the war or went on diplomatic missions.

In general, the wife, the Turkish woman, rode horses and shot with arrows, practiced heavy sports, participated in the war with her husband, and during the quiet period she took care of the upbringing and education of the children. The area of work for the women, according to Rasony, was the untying of the tent, the assembly, the loading on the backs of the animals, in the cart, later in the car (today in the steppe areas of Central Asia), milking the animals, extracting butter and cheese, with leather goods; making felt socks, and other felt garments, embroideries, fabrics, etc. (Rasonyi, 1988: 58). The woman was her husband's nurse not only at home but also outside. She fought alongside her husband in the war when needed.

The mother-wife does not hesitate to make sacrifices for her children, whom she sees as part of her body. There is no day or hour for her not to give herself to raising her child. An old Turkish proverb says "Ana hakkıödenmez" (Mother's sacrifice cannot be rewarded). In one word, no being can find measurable a reward for all the sacrifices made by the mother.

The proverbial saying, the "seven years at home" refers only to the education that the mother gives to the child, which is the moral and civic basis of the future adult. The mother is the one who will stay by her child's side until he leaves his parents' house.

In a Turkish family, the child is raised with love. The father-son or mother-daughter relationship is inseparable. For this reason, it is known that children who are deprived of family love face serious problems in education and even in moral and mental health. Divorces are rare in the Turkish family.

A family that lacks harmony is doomed to failure.

CONCLUSION

The Turkish family has a great responsibility first, towards its members, and in this way towards all the members of the society, which manifests itself in attitudes and behaviors.

The family takes care of:

- to instill the spiritual values of the Islamic religion;
- to love family members, people around;
- to help those in need;
- under the guidance of the mother and the affection of the parents, the future adult learns what compassion is and its application;
- the family takes care to teach him to be correct in relationships with other people;
- makes sure that all members participate in the division of family work.

That is why the common biological, social, and psychological aspects of family members, such as the blood ties between them, living in the same place, adopting the same values, sharing the same joys and sorrows, create and strengthen human feelings within them.

We tried to present the Turkish family in Romania from two perspectives: the Ottoman Turkish family and the modern Turkish family in order to observe that the impact of modernism or rather of post-modernism makes its mark more and more, often managing to lead to the loss of traditional values that is intertwined with the spiritual crisis.

In this sense, the Women's Commission of the Turkish Democratic Union of Romania organizes conferences, seminars, interdisciplinary activities with topics dedicated to the family and its role in society.

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