

ABSTRACT

**of the dissertation work of Turgunbayev Izbassar Yerlanuly on the topic
«Development directions of Turkey's cultural modernization (1923-2020)» for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in the educational program
«8D02209 - Oriental Studies»**

Relevance of the Research. Without a doubt, one of Kazakhstan's top foreign policy priorities is Turkey. Additionally, the foundation and research base, where culture is an essential component of any academic study, have been developed by the historical similarities and contemporary developments in Kazakhstan-Turkey relations. As a result, Turkey has undergone a protracted process of cultural modernization in historical dimensions and is now a model for nation-building for many other nations. The study of Turkey's cultural transition is therefore a pertinent and important research topic in the social sciences and humanities, as sources and historiographic reviews attest.

In the context of theoretical and methodological concerns, historiographic research, and source studies, this dissertation seeks to investigate Turkey's cultural modernization. The gathered materials show that culture is a vital component of public life and a key component of national development, influencing national unity and collective awareness through material and spiritual values. Culture has been a crucial component that has given social institutions vitality and dynamism in the sphere of creating a powerful national state for Turkey, which has worked for a national character since its founding.

The research topic's degree of scholarly development. Turkey has grown to be a significant actor in international relations in the contemporary world of geopolitics and globalization. And a crucial tool in this is culture. Numerous researchers from all over the world have expressed interest in this subject; these can be broadly categorized into Western, Turkish, and Russian-language studies.

Western studies. Bernard Lewis, a British-American orientalist, is notable among Western researchers of Turkey. He mentioned many instances of the shift from Ottomanism to the nation-state when researching Turkey's nation-building. In particular, the author discusses the lexical meaning of the terms «Turks» and «Ottoman nation», highlighting how difficult it is to comprehend M.K. Atatürk's thoughts.

The study of language and the processes of alphabetic development, which were crucial to the union of the Turkish nation and subsequent modernity, is a crucial component of Western historiography. One of M.K. Atatürk's most well-known reforms – the introduction of the Latin alphabet and the elimination of Arabic and Persian words from the Turkish language – is described in one of these papers by Geoffrey Lewis, the first professor of Turkish at Oxford University. F. Tachau and D. Hotham both write about language reform. They supported the reform, arguing

that the Arabic alphabet hindered understanding of Turkish words and that the national language represents the core symbol of independence and dignity.

Western historiography generally concentrates on particular aspects of cultural modernization, such as the public education system, the selection of nation-building strategies, the impact of socioeconomic factors on the evolution of cultural processes, and the uniqueness of interethnic processes, which also had an impact on the modernization process itself.

Turkish studies. In the history of Eastern nations, the late XIX and early XX centuries were marked by national liberation wars and colonized peoples' revolutions. As the Ottoman Empire's descendant, modern Turkey likewise experienced colonial processes that resulted in the division of its land holdings. Here, it is important to highlight the challenges of Turkey's modernization and formation as well as the changes in nation-building brought about by M.K. Atatürk's reforms. Early in the XX century, Turkish scholars documented how immigrants from the Russian Empire united and consolidated the Turkic peoples. Turkish historiography, which aims to uncover facets of Turkic identity in conquered areas, supports this. Among these, Ziya Gökalp's research, which addressed nationality, culture, and civilization, stands out. He considered culture and civilization, the Turkish people, and its destiny as the pioneer of Turkish nation-building. M.K. Atatürk, who progressively carried out modernist reforms, of which culture was a crucial component, accepted some of his ideas. Inspired by his writings as well, Erol Güngör discusses the necessity of a contemporary national theory of culture and explains the distinction between civilization and culture.

Russian-language studies. The issues of cultural modernization in Russian-language historiography, which can be separated into Soviet and contemporary historiography, have been the subject of several studies. The fundamental processes of cultural modernization were first studied from the perspective of Turkey's Jadid movement, which aimed to unite all Turkic peoples. During the Soviet era, Turkish history was considered as the «enemy» of communist ideology.

A.M. Palnikov's research is particularly noteworthy in contemporary historiography. He looks at educational reforms in his piece, particularly the removal of religious instruction. The scholarly study describes the shift to a secular education system that centralizes the control of educational institutions by analyzing different approaches to this activity, such as segmenting the school system into phases and curriculum modifications. M.K. Atatürk's linguistic reform is viewed favorably by Alisa Galeeva. The author discusses the impact of Arabic and Persian and points out that countries either perform language change gradually or cannot accomplish language reform on its own. However, this action was implemented decisively in Turkey's situation.

Aim and Objectives of the Research. This dissertation's aim is to perform a scientific investigation of the theoretical and methodological aspects of the Turkish Republic's cultural transformation as well as the difficulties in putting it into practice, from the creation of the republican system and democratic reforms to current procedures. The following objectives were accomplished in order to reach this aim:

- A comprehensive study of the theoretical and methodological features, historiographic issues, and source analysis of cultural change;
- A rethinking of cultural transformations during the prerequisites and formation of the Turkish Republic, the role of Turkic emigration, and a diachronic and comparative analysis of the difficulties of the transition from Muslim foundations to secular changes;
- A scientific study of the problems of Turkey's cultural transformation from «Turkish humanism» to democratization.
- A comprehensive approach to studying the influence of changes in the political system on the cultural transformation of the Turkish Republic;
- A disclosure of the periodization of cultural change during military coups;
- A scientific approach to studying the impact of the collapse of the USSR on the cultural reorientation of the Turkish Republic toward the Turkic world.
- A scientific analysis of the contemporary cultural transformation of the Turkish Republic within the framework of neo-Ottomanism.

Dissertation's Research Methods. In line with the study's goals and objectives, modernization theory and cultural and civilizational methodologies were chosen to address the problem of Turkish cultural modernization. These strategies used techniques including content analysis, the abstraction method, a retrospective approach utilizing archive sources, and the historicism principle.

The analysis of the materials examined the roles of individuals in implementing cultural modernization in areas such as education, history, language, religion, and their interrelations.

Drawing on the factual material of scholars studying the cultural history of Turkey, this research is based on an analysis of national identity and examines Turkey's experience in synthesizing folk and Western cultural traditions while attempting to preserve its own cultural identity amidst the modernization processes of society, as well as its cultural policy in the Turkic world.

Object and Subject of the Research. The cultural history of the Turkish Republic from 1923 to the present day. Research into the cultural transformation of the Turkish Republic.

Scientific Novelty of the Research. This study explores the direction of Turkey's cultural modernization through a comprehensive analysis of the processes that have become a formative element in nation-building over the country's century-long history. The study yielded the following new findings:

- Turkey in the first half of the XX century transitioned from imperialism to a nation-state. This dissertation analyzes and systematizes scholarly works by Turkish, Western, and Russian-language authors, as well as archival materials and official documents, which form the basis for studying cultural transformations in Turkey.
- In this study, the ideology of Kemalism, as the main factor in Turkey's cultural transformation and modernization, is examined and scientifically substantiated within a periodization framework, as it is during the transitional stages of nation-building that Turkish society attains a sense of national cohesion.
- The period of I. İnönü's rule marked a turning point in the country's cultural policy. Having comprehensively examined this aspect based on specific materials,

an assessment was made of the semantic content and Turkish society's perception of the policy of humanism, which gave impetus to the development of ethno-archaeological science within the Eurocentric framework.

- The post-war period in Turkish history is characterized by the emergence of democratic foundations. The Cold War also exerted strong pressure on the reorientation of modernist processes in Turkish society, which naturally influenced cultural development. Therefore, this aspect is new, as a theoretical comparative analysis of Turkey's political and ideological orientations and cultural modernization was conducted.

- The problem of urbanization and the social conflict between rural and urban areas have influenced the content of various aspects of Turkish culture. These issues have increased the relevance and novelty of scientific research in our time, in the context of globalization in general and urbanization in particular. Thus, the role of three military coups that occurred between the 1960s and 1980s in influencing Turkey's cultural development is analyzed.

- Geopolitical changes in the world led Turkey to reorient its foreign policy and transform its «public diplomacy». These processes influenced not only Turkey's cultural transformation but also the entire Turkic world. This aspect is reflected in the study of the reorientation of Turkey's cultural policy, which moved away from its EU accession policy and systematically focused on Turkic-speaking countries.

- The concept of «neo-Ottomanism» under R.T. Erdogan's leadership, unlike in previous periods, took on a different form and no longer represented an opposition force. Thus, the cultural transformation and modernization of Turkey in the XXI century is examined alongside the neoliberal form of governance adapted to the country's virtually one-party rule by the AKP.

Key points of the Research submitted for defense:

1. In early periods, the study of Turkish history was limited to certain concepts. However, in our time, thanks not only to the expansion of research opportunities but also the emergence of new ones, this research, in addition to Russian-language and Western authors, examined Turkish archival materials and the works of Turkic-speaking scholars.

2. The main focus of modernization in the early post-independence period was the Westernization of society. The transition to a secular model, the Latin alphabet, and the unification of the education system were among the many cultural reforms initiated by M.K. Atatürk, in which Turkic emigration played a significant role.

3. The adaptation of humanism led to the emergence of the ideology of «Turkish humanism» under the reign of I. İnönü, which was based on classical culture. Humanism, which became an important part of the Renaissance and brought about a cultural transformation, became a tool for the latest search for identity. In the field of history, the Central Asian focus shifted to the study of Anatolian roots.

4. A turning point in the country's history was the transition to a multi-party system, particularly the creation of the DP in 1946. Despite the initial criticism of «Turkish humanism», this ideology continued to underpin the cultural policy of the Turkish Republic until the DP came to power in 1950. The country's cultural policy is characterized by a tolerant attitude toward Islam and Western influence,

particularly the United States. English began to be taught in educational institutions, and some universities adopted the American education system.

5. Military coups greatly influenced the cultural life of the Turkish Republic. The ideology of Turkish-Islamic synthesis played a key role in this.

6. The collapse of the USSR led to the emergence of several countries whose language, religion, and other cultural values were similar to those of Turkey. This situation naturally influenced Turkey's cultural policy. Numerous cultural and educational institutions were established, making a significant contribution to the cultural development of the Turkic world.

7. The early 2000s marked the rise to power of the AKP and its neo-Ottomanism policies. The dominance of this ideology was based on government actions such as the construction of various Ottoman-style buildings and the inclusion of the Ottoman language as an elective in the curriculum. Combined with «soft policy», neo-Ottomanism is being used by R.T. Erdoğan to strengthen his regional authority.

Theoretical and practical significance of the Research stems from the presentation of the results of a comprehensive analysis of Turkey's cultural modernization from its founding to the present day. The research's conclusions and outcomes can be extended to other nations dealing with identity and cultural crises as well as to the investigation of subsequent transformation processes in Turkey and the Turkic world. Researchers in the domains of political science, cultural studies, and international relations may also be interested in the dissertation's conclusions. The findings of the research could further influence humanities textbooks and monographs.

Conclusion. The dissertation examines Turkey's cultural modernization from 1923 to 2020, highlighting the major turning points, underlying ideologies, and paths of cultural change. The history of Turkish modernization shows how tradition and modernity, secularism and Islamic resurgence, and international cultural influences interact in a convoluted and confusing way.

A modernization initiative founded on secularism and Westernization was made possible by M.K. Atatürk's reforms. Culture was seen as a tool for creating a new nation and civic identity during this time. But in the decades that followed, especially during the multiparty system and military takeovers, cultural policy became into a platform for ideological conflicts that reflected the conflict between conservative and secular forces.

After the 1980s, amid globalization and economic liberalization, Turkey developed a new cultural dynamic characterized by plural identities and the growing influence of mass media. During the AKP era, cultural policy shifted toward neo-Ottomanism, integrating Islamic and Ottoman heritage into the modern national project through support for cinema, television, architecture, and symbolic reinterpretations of the past.

Thus, Turkey's cultural modernization evolved as a continuous balance of the Western model of modernity with local traditional values. In this environment, culture serves as both a mirror of political upheavals and a fundamental instrument for forging Turkish identity in a changing local and international context.