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THE REFLECTION OF NATIONAL MENTALITY AND VALUES IN THE TRANSFORMATION OF WINGED EXPRESSIONS

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Abstract: This article presents a linguocultural and comparative-typological analysis of the semantic and functional transformation of international and literary winged expressions in the Uzbek and Russian language systems. The study examines the processes through which expressions of ancient and religious-mythological origin, such as *the Augean stables*, *the Gordian knot*, and *the apple of discord*, are reinterpreted and recontextualized within the recipient linguistic environment.

Particular attention is paid to the conceptual transformation of these figurative expressions on the basis of national literary sources, including Alisher Navoi’s epic poem *Saddi Iskandariy* (*Alexander’s Wall*) and Nasiruddin Rabghuzi’s *Qisasi Rabghuzi* (*The Stories of Rabghuzi*). The analysis demonstrates that Russian winged expressions tend to foreground large-scale forms, decisive actions, and radical solutions, whereas their Uzbek equivalents place greater emphasis on spiritual and psychological consequences, cultural restraint and consideration known as *andisha*, patience, and the preservation of interpersonal harmony. These distinctions are interpreted as manifestations of the specific value systems and cultural worldviews of the two linguistic communities.

Keywords: winged expressions, linguoculturology, national mentality, cultural concept, transformation, Gordian knot, Augean stables, apple of discord, *Qisasi Rabghuzi*, system of values.

Introduction

In the context of globalization, linguistic integration and intercultural communication have become central issues in contemporary linguistic research. A nation’s linguistic perception of the world, its accumulated historical experience, moral principles, and national mentality are primarily reflected in its phraseological system, particularly in winged expressions and internationally borrowed idioms.

Winged expressions originating from ancient mythology, Western classical literature, or universal religious sources are not merely transferred from one language into another as ready-made concepts. When they enter a new linguistic and cultural environment, they undergo specific national and cultural transformations. This process of transformation serves as an important linguocultural key to understanding the distinctive worldview, value system, behavioural norms, and ethical principles of each nation.

The relevance of the present study is determined by the fact that the same internationally recognizable expression may acquire different semantic connotations, functional characteristics, and cultural interpretations in different languages. Although such expressions preserve their original mythological or literary foundation, their meanings are adapted to the historical experience, cultural memory, moral ideals, and communicative traditions of the recipient community.

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The purpose of this article is to conduct a comparative-typological analysis of the semantic and functional transformation of international and literary winged expressions in the Uzbek and Russian language systems. Through this analysis, the study seeks to reveal the distinctive features of the national mentality, value orientations, and linguistic worldview of the two peoples from a linguocultural perspective.

Analysis and Discussion

The *Augean Stables*

The phraseological unit *the Augean stables* originates from ancient Greek mythology. According to the myth, King Augeas of Elis possessed enormous herds of cattle, while his stables had remained uncleansed for nearly thirty years. As the sixth of his twelve labours, Heracles (Hercules) diverted the courses of two rivers through the stables, cleansing them within a single day. In its literal sense, the expression denotes an extremely filthy, neglected, and disorderly place, whereas figuratively it refers to a highly complicated situation, accumulated disorder, or long-standing problems that require fundamental resolution.

In Russian, this phraseological unit is widely used and has become deeply integrated into the national linguistic consciousness. Within the Russian cultural worldview, there exists a tendency to associate effective action with solving large-scale problems through decisive and comprehensive measures. Heracles' act of redirecting rivers to eliminate a seemingly insurmountable problem corresponds well to the cultural perception of radical, large-scale solutions. Consequently, the expression frequently appears in Russian journalism and political discourse when referring to the elimination of bureaucratic inefficiency, systemic corruption, or institutional disorder, for example, *to clean the Augean stables of bureaucracy*. In such contexts, the idiom symbolizes society's aspiration for justice, order, and institutional renewal.

The direct equivalent of this expression is rarely encountered in Uzbek discourse. This may be explained by the fact that it entered Uzbek primarily through Russian and European literary traditions and therefore remains largely confined to bookish and intellectual usage. Instead, Uzbek speakers are generally more familiar with the image of the *Gordian Knot*, closely associated with the figure of Alexander the Great.

The *Gordian Knot*

According to the well-known legend, King Gordias of Phrygia fastened the yoke of his chariot with an extraordinarily intricate knot. An ancient prophecy declared that whoever succeeded in untying the knot would become the ruler of Asia. When Alexander the Great arrived, he attempted unsuccessfully to untie it. He then drew his sword and cut through the knot with a single stroke.

Consequently, in Uzbek the expression *Iskandar tuguni* ("Alexander's Knot") or *Gordiy tuguni* ("the Gordian Knot") signifies the solution of an extremely complex or seemingly unsolvable problem through an unconventional, courageous, and decisive action. Metaphorically, it represents the removal of obstacles by determination, strength, and strategic thinking.

Unlike the predominantly political interpretation found in Russian discourse, the image of Alexander occupies a special place in classical Uzbek literature. In Alisher Navoi's *Saddi Iskandariy*, Alexander is portrayed not merely as a conqueror but as an embodiment of wisdom, justice, and enlightened governance. Consequently, the expression acquires broader philosophical meanings connected with mastery over worldly affairs, overcoming human weaknesses, and resolving life's complexities through intellect rather than force. Thus, while Russian discourse often emphasizes decisiveness and radical action, Uzbek cultural interpretation places greater value on wisdom, prudence, and thoughtful decision-making.

The *Apple of Discord*

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The expression *the apple of discord* is an international winged expression denoting the principal cause of conflict, disagreement, hostility, or rivalry between individuals, social groups, or even states. Its origin can be traced to ancient Greek mythology.

According to the myth, Eris, the goddess of discord, was not invited to the wedding of Peleus and Thetis. Offended by this exclusion, she secretly threw a golden apple inscribed *"To the Fairest"* (*Kallisti*) among the assembled gods. The apple immediately provoked a dispute among Hera, Athena, and Aphrodite, each claiming to deserve it. Zeus refused to judge the contest and entrusted the decision to Paris, the prince of Troy. Aphrodite promised Paris the love of the world's most beautiful woman, Helen, in exchange for the apple. Paris awarded the apple to Aphrodite, thereby arousing the hostility of Hera and Athena toward Troy. In Homer's *Iliad*, this episode serves as the mythological justification for the outbreak of the Trojan War.

Subsequently, the symbolic image of the apple became intertwined with Biblical tradition in European culture. As a result, expressions such as *the apple of discord* and *the forbidden fruit is sweet* developed through the interaction of Classical mythology and Christian religious symbolism.

The conceptualization of this image differs considerably in Uzbek culture. Rather than associating the forbidden fruit directly with an apple, Islamic literary and religious traditions usually refer to wheat or, more generally, to the fruit of the prohibited tree. This interpretation is reflected in one of the most significant monuments of Turkic-Islamic literature, Nasiruddin Rabghuzi's *Qisasi Rabghuzi* (*The Stories of Rabghuzi*), where the story of Adam and Eve's expulsion from Paradise is narrated according to Islamic tradition.

Unlike the European interpretation, Rabghuzi's work identifies the prohibited plant as wheat, although in certain passages it is referred to simply as the forbidden tree. According to the narrative, when Adam attempted to swallow a grain of wheat, he suddenly remembered God's prohibition and stopped in fear. Consequently, the grain became lodged in his throat. Whereas in European and Russian cultural tradition the protrusion in the male throat is commonly known as *Adam's apple*, Rabghuzi symbolically associates this anatomical feature with a grain of wheat rather than with an apple.

Moreover, Rabghuzi explains several physiological characteristics, including the prominence of the male larynx and certain aspects of female physiology, through this symbolic image of wheat. Thus, although both Christian and Islamic traditions attribute symbolic significance to the forbidden fruit, the specific cultural images through which this symbolism is represented differ substantially.

Modern biblical scholarship also indicates that neither the Hebrew Bible nor the Qur'an explicitly identifies the forbidden fruit as an apple or as wheat. The widespread European association of the forbidden fruit with an apple emerged much later. During the Middle Ages, artistic depictions of Paradise generally portrayed the fruit without specifying its botanical identity. It was only during the Renaissance that painters such as Albrecht Dürer and Michelangelo consistently represented the forbidden fruit as a red apple. This interpretation was further reinforced by the historical use of the Latin word *malum*, which denotes both "apple" and, through a phonetic coincidence, evokes the concept of evil, thereby strengthening the symbolic connection in European culture.

In contemporary Uzbek texts, the expression *the apple of discord* most frequently appears in translated materials or quotations borrowed from Russian sources. Native Uzbek phraseology, however, more commonly employs expressions containing the words *urug'* ("seed") or *tuxum* ("egg") in combination with *adovat* ("hostility"), emphasizing the idea of sowing the seeds of discord rather than the image of an apple.

For example, in Abdulla Qodiriy's novel *O'tkan kunlar* (*Bygone Days*), one character remarks that only a handful of people "sow the seeds of hostility" between two nations. This metaphor reflects

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a distinctly Uzbek cultural model in which discord is understood not as the consequence of a single object or event but as something deliberately cultivated and gradually spread through human actions.

Conclusion

A comparative analysis of Russian and Uzbek demonstrates that many internationally recognized winged expressions differ substantially in their scope of usage, semantic content, pragmatic function, and emotional colouring. Expressions such as *the Augean stables* and *to cut the Gordian knot*, which are deeply rooted in European and Russian linguistic traditions, generally symbolize the elimination of large-scale social, political, or institutional problems through decisive and radical action. In Uzbek, however, these images remain predominantly literary and undergo conceptual reinterpretation in accordance with the nation's cultural values and ethical norms.

The study further reveals that universal mythological and religious archetypes develop distinct metaphorical representations within different cultural environments. While the Russian and broader European traditions visualize the biblical narrative through the symbolic image of the apple, classical Islamic literary sources, particularly *Qisasi Rabghuzi*, associate the same narrative with wheat. This difference illustrates that the linguistic realization of identical religious or mythological concepts is conditioned not only by textual traditions but also by the historical experience, cultural memory, and philosophical worldview of the speech community.

The findings demonstrate that the transformation of winged expressions extends beyond lexical or semantic adaptation. It represents a complex linguocultural process through which borrowed phraseological units are integrated into the recipient language and reinterpreted according to its national mentality and value system.

Overall, winged expressions should be regarded not merely as stable phraseological units but as cultural codes that preserve and transmit collective historical experience and national identity. Whereas Russian winged expressions generally emphasize large-scale action, determination, and radical solutions to objective reality, their Uzbek counterparts predominantly foreground the spiritual and moral consequences of human actions, the cultural concept of *andisha* (consideration and social propriety), patience, ethical responsibility, and the preservation of interpersonal harmony. These differences confirm that phraseological transformation serves as an important indicator of national mentality and reflects the distinctive cultural worldview embedded in each language.

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