THE SELF/OTHER CONCEPTUAL BINARY IN THE PERSIAN LINGUA-CULTURAL AREA

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In the article the particularities of lingual representation of the SELF / OTHER binary in the Persian lingua-cultural area on the basis of the Persian phraseological fund are researched and interpreted within the terms of cultural codes.

Key words: lingua-cultural area, cultural code, lingual consciousness, lingual representation, idiom.

The anthropocentric nature of contemporary linguistics caused by increasing attention towards human status and communication problems between man and the world, man and other people, provokes interest from linguists towards the conceptual binary oppositions inherent in consciousness of representatives of many lingua-cultures, and the means of their expression. One of these oppositions is "self / other" which is based on axiological antithesis existed in the perception of primitive man, who regarded *something of his/her own* as something positive, safe, and well known on the contrary to *something of another* treated as something negative, unknown, and dangerous [1. P. 197]. The significance of this opposition for every lingua-cultural group can hardly be overestimated as it substantially influences both individual behavior of a single representative of the group, and political and economic life of whole nation, as well as international relations. One may assume, however, that in each lingua-culture this opposition demonstrates a set of specific conceptual features of both universal and ethnical nature, which could be determined when analyzing appropriate language material. It is convenient to structure received information through interpreting them by cultural codes, as we did it on the material of the Persian language within the scope of this research.

The goal of this study is to determine some specific cognitive features of "self / other" binary intrinsic in Persian lingual consciousness and objectified in phraseological thesaurus of the Persian language. It is widely known that phraseology — the most stand-out than any other part of language system — expresses specific features of national ways of thinking, the perception of the world, its categorization and conceptualization.

The "self / other" opposition — together with other oppositions such as "up / down", "far / near", "good / bad", "right / left", etc. — are basic cultural oppositions derived from ancient archetypical concepts. V. Krasnykh believes that these concepts match the so called "cultural codes", which "encrypt" them and establish certain "coordinate scale" determining cultural benchmarks. Thus, cultural code is a macrosystem of characteristics of objects of the world that are joined by some common categorical feature. This is a sort of conceptual "grid", which the culture applies to the surrounding world, and, an individual representing this culture makes use of it to fragment, categorize, structure, and evaluate both outer and inner worlds of him [2. P. 297—298; 3. P. 125].

Researchers today distinguish a great deal of various cultural codes, viz.: botanic, zoomorphic, perceptive, anthropomorphic, somatic, itemed, nutritional, color, dimensional, spatial, time, evaluative, theomorphic (religious), etc. [3. P. 127—128]. Of them, V. Krasnykh regards as basic codes the following ones: somatic, spatial, time, itemed, biomorphic, and spiritual [2. P. 297]. In the result of analyzing selected language material it appeared that "self / other" binary in the Persian thesaurus of idioms can be mostly represented through five cultural codes, namely: somatic, zoomorphic, spatial, anthropic, and religious. Also, there were registered idioms containing the signs of itemed code, however, because of insufficient presence they were omitted. Besides, a phenomenon was detected when several codes coexist within the same idiom, which makes attribution of this idiom to a certain group rather complex.

In the human mind the "self / other" binary is linked with the category of possession, which has wide range of subdued objects and in most languages is realized with the use of structures containing possessive pronouns, or other means expressing appropriate relations. In Persian the idea of *belonging to the speaker* is expressed by structures with personal pronouns, possessive enclitics and reflexive pronouns **xod**, **xiš** (*self*), while *belonging to another person* is expressed by *ezafe* construction with identified pronoun **kas-i** (*somebody*), words **digar(ān)** *another/others*, **mardom** *people*, etc.

Within the frameworks of this study we shall concentrate mostly on the idioms where "self / other" relationships are expressed using names of parts of human body (somatism) or animals (meronyms), i.e. by the signs of somatic and zoomorphic cultural codes. Other codes will be used to illustrate how they can overlap with those two mentioned above in the same idiom.

Somatic cultural code is supposed to be most ancient among others, because a primitive man presumably started realizing the world around him from himself, and then applied obtained knowledge to the rest of the environs [2. P. 297]. The biggest role in realizing this opposition is played by Persian somatic indices **pa** *foot*, **post** *back*, **dast** *hand*, **gardan** *neck*.

Within the group of Persian idioms with somatic index **pā** *foot* and appropriate possessor (somebody's foot) a series of etic ideas was detected. In particular, obtaining independence by a person, striving towards self-reliance, confident standing on own (two) feet, e.g. **pā-ye xod-rā mohkam kardan**. *to consolidate one's position* (lit. strengthen own legs) — is regarded by speakers positively. On the other hand, attempts to intrude into business of another person are considered negatively: **pā az hadd-e (xatt-e, andāze-ye) xod birun nehādan**. (lit. put legs beyond one's boundary (line, size); **pā az gelim-e xod derāztar kardan (birun nehādan)** (lit. stretch legs beyond one's the carpet) [4. P. 86] One may note that two latter idioms also comprise the idea of spatial code: in the first saying "one's own" space is "encrypted" by the words **hadd** *boundary*, **xatt** *line*, **andāze** *size*; in the second one it is limited by size of the carpet. Also, one's attempt to involve other people into dishonest affairs is regarded negatively, *e.g.* **pā-ye kas-i-rā be miyān kešidan** *to involve somebody into something* (lit. to pull one's leg inside something) [4. P. 90]. The idea of non-interference in others' business can also be interpreted by employing elements of itemed code, viz.: the word **kafš** *shoes*: **pā-ye xod-rā az kafš-e man birun kon!** *Stay away! Leave me alone*! (lit.

Get your foot out of my shoe!) [4. P. 86]. The Russians and the Ukrainians feel same negatively about interference into their private business, but to express this idea they use a somatic idiom with **nose** (lit. stick one's nose into another's business). The same idea is fixed in the Persian idiom with the word **angošt** *finger*: **angošt be šir-e kas-i zadan** (lit. to put the finger to one's milk) [4. P. 49].

Several idioms with the word **pa** *foot* are used to express to another person one's admiration and respect: **be pā-ye kas-i narasidan** *to be not good enough for somebody* (lit. not to reach one's foot) [4. P. 92], **pā-ye kas-i nešastan** *to seek somebody's respect* (lit. to sit at somebody's feet), **pā-ye kas-i istādan** *to support somebody* (lit. to stand at somebody's feet) [4. P. 90]

The word of **pošt** *back* in the Persian lingual consciousness is attributed to the help from another person, who is regarded as "one's own": **pošt-aš garm-ast** *he relies on somebody's supporting* (lit. his back is warm); **pošt-e kas-i-rā dāštan** *to protect somebody* (lit. to have one's back); **pošt-aš be šāh kuh (be kuh) ast** *he has strong support* (lit. his back leans on a (big) mountain); **na pošt dārad na mošt** *he has neither support, nor fists* (lit. he has neither back, nor fists) [4. P. 107—108].

The idea of support and assistance from "one's own" people is normally expressed by numerous idioms with the word **dast** *hand* (sometimes in combination with **sar** *head*, **pošt** *back*, **ru** *face*): **dast dāštan** *to have support* (lit. to have a hand); **dast-e yāri derāz kardan** *to give a helping hand* (lit. to stretch a hand of assistance); **dast pošt-e sar dāštan** *to have support, to be protected* (lit. to have a hand under the head); **dast-aš be pošt-aš nemirasad** *he can do nothing by himself* (lit. his hand cannot reach his back) [5. P. 632—633]. To render assistance to "one's own" person one should "touch him/her, his/her head or face": **dast bar sar-o ru-ye kas-i kešidan** (lit. to stroke one's head or face with hand) [4. P. 241] **dast ru-ye kas-i gozāštan** (lit. to put a hand upon somebody) [4. P. 257]. One can "ask somebody for help" making use of itemed code element — flap of clothing, e.g. **dast be dāman-e kasi zadan** (lit. catch / grab someone's clothing flap); **dast-am be dāman-at!** *Help me! Protect me!* (lit. my hand is at your clothing flap) [4. P. 242].

Through somatic idioms comprising the word **dast** *hand* the Persians conceptualize negative aspects of interaction between themselves and others as well. In this case one can often face overlapping of several cultural codes within the same idiom. Thus, in Persian equivalent of English idiom "to reap the fruit of someone else's labor" or Ukrainian "to catch oven heat by someone else's hands" — **be dast-e digar-i (digarān) mār gereftan** (lit. to grab a snake by someone's hand) [5. P. 633] — somatic code coincides with zoomorphic code. Persian version of "be all things to all men" — **dast-aš be arab-o ajam band šode** — (lit. his hand is bound to both the Arab and non-Arab) [4. P. 258] makes use of anthropic code and refers to the time of the Arab invasion. It is based on the cultural and ideological opposition of the Arabs (arab) and non-arabs (ajam), the word most frequently applicable to the Persians.

The Persians are quite negative about intruding into personal space by "others", which is demonstrated in the following idioms: **dast tu āstin-e kas-i zadan** *to spread rumors* (lit. stick the hand into someone's sleeve) [6. P. 207]; **dast derāz kardan be**

kas-i, čiz-i *to encroach upon something/somebody* (lit. to stretch arms towards something/somebody) [4. P. 257]; **dast az sar-e (kačal-e) kas-i bar-nadāštan** (lit. keep one's hand on someone's bold head); **dast az yaqe-ye kas-i bar nadāštan** (lit. keep one's hand on somebody's collar) — to annoy someone [4. P. 253].

The Ukrainians when taking some obligations, "burden" them upon their shoulders. The Persians take them upon their neck (**gardan**): **be gardan gereftan** *to take upon oneself* (lit. take on the neck**); haqq be gardan-am dārid** *I owe you very much* (lit. You have a debt on my neck); **bār-e gardan kas-i šodan** *to impose oneself* (lit. to become a burden on one's neck) [4. P. 59]. One can also put a responsibility on other's neck, as it is mentioned in Moulavi's famous saying:

هر کس... سعی می کند افتخار فتح را نصیب خود کند و رسوائی شکست را به گردن دیگران بیندازد.

Everyone tries to acquire pride of victory, and leave shame of fault to others (lit. ...to put on others' neck) [4. P. 414].

The distinctive feature of involvement of zoomorphic code when conceptualizing "self / other" binary is usage of names of animal's body parts (meronyms) as signs of donor field rather than the names of animals themselves. Thus, meronym **bāl** *wing* is used for expressing the idea of rendering support to someone — which is common in many lingua-cultures: **bāl be bāl-e kas-i dādan** s*upport someone* (lit. put one's wing under the wing of another); **zir-e bāl (par-o bāl) gereftan** *take care about someone* (lit. take someone under one's wing) [4. P. 62]. Nevertheless, one should not abuse help from other people: **be bāl-e digarān parvāz nemitavān kard** *one cannot fly with the wings of others* [7. P. 130].

It is also remarkable that the word **par** *wing* can be used for expressing the idea of danger while opposing "another": **bepā par-eš nagirad-et!** *Behold his wrath falling upon you!* (lit. watch his wing not to hit you!); **par-aš be par-e folān kas gereft / par-aš folān kas-ra gereft** *his anger fell upon someone* (lit. his wing hit someone) [4. P. 102]. When analyzing the inner form of these idioms obviously a picture of birds fighting in the air appears in mind.

While opposing "non-one's own" other scenarios derived from the animal world appear in the Persian lingual consciousness. The elements of these scenarios are demonstrated in the idioms including meronyms such as: **dandān** *teeth*, **nāxon** *claws*, **šāx** *horns*, **dom** *tail*, **panje** *paw with claws*; *claws,* etc. Thus, to "threaten anybody" someone should **dandān nešān dādan (namudan)** (lit. to show teeth) [4. P. 291] and **šāh-o šāne kešidan barāye kas-i** (lit. stretch horns and shoulders) [4. P. 387], which refers to a pose of an animal staying against a rival. Meronym **dandān** *teeth* and **nāxon** *claws* can also be used to express the idea of encroaching on other's belongings: **dandān tiz kardan barāye (be) čiz-i/ nāxon tiz kardan barāye čiz-i** (lit. sharpen teeth / claws for something) [4. P. 291, 578]. The idiom containing the meronym **šāx** *horn*: **šāx dar jib-e kas-i gozāštan** (lit. put horns to one's pocket) means *to provoke, to tempt someone* [4: 386], while the idiom with the word **dom** *tail*: **pā ru-ye dom-e kas-i gozāštan** (lit. put the foot on one's tail) — means *to irritate someone, making someone upset* [4. P. 287]. The word **panje** *paw with claws*; *claws* is also mostly being a part of the idioms having negative semantics: **panje tiz kardan** *to seek a conflict* (lit. sharpen claws) [6. P. 387];

panje be ru-ye kas-i zadan *to be rude, impolite* (towards aged people) (lit. to pinch someone's face with claws) [4. P. 111].

Another meronym from the animal world **pust** *skin* in combination with the words **gušt** *flesh*, **ostoxān** *bones*, and **nāxon** *claws* is used to express the idea of tight contact and close relationships with "one's own" people: **pušt-o gušt-rā az ham jodā kardan** *to separate close people* (lit. separate skin from flesh) [4. P. 112]; **gušt-rā az ostoxān nemitavān jodā kard** *one cannot separate close people* (lit. one cannot separate flesh from bones) [4. P. 517].

Considering the fact that the Persian word **pust** stands for both *skin* and *leather*, and the word **nāxon** — for both *nails* and *claws* these idioms could be classified as somatic ones rather than zoomorphic. In the meaning of *skin* the word **pust** is used in Sa'adi's poem, rather doubtful from the point of view of modern morality:

چون فرو مانی بسختی تن بعجز مده   دشمنان را پوست بر کن دوستان را پوستین

When you are in trouble do not be weak: skin your foes and take the fur jacket off your friends [4. P. 113].

Spatial code, which is linked with fragmenting the space also plays considerable role in implementing "self / other" binary. Very often it can barely be separated from somatic cultural code because there are numerous anthropomorphic metaphors "providing" spatial code [2. P. 299]. The following idioms can demonstrate overlapping of spatial and somatic codes: **dam-e dast** *under the hand*, **dast-aš nemirasad** *he is not able to do (it)* (lit. his hand cannot reach it) [4. P. 113], **tā češm kār mikonad** *as far as eye can see* (lit. till eye works) [5. P. 113]. Beside that we have already seen how these two codes are bound in the somatic idioms mentioned above: **pā az hadd-e (xatt-e, andāze-ye) xod birun nehādan** (lit. stretch legs beyond one's limit (line, size); **pā az gelim-e xod derāztar kardan (birun nehādan)** (lit. stretch legs beyond one's carpet). The general attitude of the Persians towards "their own and non-own space" can be found in the following proverb: **har kas bāyad ru-ye marz-e xod rāh beravad** *Everybody shall keep walking alongside own boundary* [4. P. 553]. Thus, the main idea which could be extracted from spatial idioms is as follows: a man should know his own place in this world, keep his own territory and should not trespass the reasonable limits.

Among Persian proverbs one can find those which depict very special attitude of the Persians to their home, town, country, *e.g.* **hič jā behtar az xāne-ye xod-e ādam nemišavad** *There is no place like home* [8. P. 60], **be šahr-e xiš har kas šahriyār-ast** *Everyone (feels) prince in his home town* [7. P. 256] **hič jā dar jahān behtar az vatan nist** *There is no place in the world better than motherland* [8. P. 60]. At the same time realizing of "one's own territory" can be done with the signs of zoomorphic code, e.g. **har sag-i dar xāne-ye sāheb-aš šir-ast** *Every dog (feels) lion in its master's house* [8. P. 88]; **har sag be lāne šir nar ast** *Every dog in its house (feels) brave as lion* [8. P. 193], **kalāq-i sar-e lāne-ye xod qār qār nemikonad** *A crow does not croak in its nest* [7. P. 256]. In the people's view once you happen to be among "others" you neither should look different, nor should you attract attention: **rafti be šahr-e kurān didi hame kur-and to ham kur šow** *If you come to the town of blinds, and see everybody*

there is blind — go become blind [7. P. 212]. To express the same meaning in Ukrainian the signs of zoomorphic code are used: *If you live with wolves howl like wolves do.*

Within the group of idioms regarded as anthropic code we can distinguish four groups of relations of "self / other" type: (1) relations among people in general, (2) relations among neighbors, (3) relations among relatives, (4) relations "friends — foes". Since detailed analysis of this — most numerous — group of idioms is beyond the scope of present article, it would be enough to provide only some notes relating overlapping of several codes within one idiom. Sa'adi determines general rules of behavior and relations with other people as follows:

جای گل گل باش و جای خار خار   با بدان بد باش با نیکان نیک

With evil ones be evil, with good ones be good/ among roses be a rose, among thorns be a thorn [7. P. 165].

As one can see in these lines biomorphic (or rather plant) code is being used. The signs of zoomorphic code are used in the idioms with the meaning "close people always understand each other": **zabān-e morqān morqān midānand** (lit. language of birds only birds can understand) [4. P. 335]; **kabutar bā kabutar, bāz bā bāz** *Pigeon to pigeon, falcon to falcon.* The latter is derived from the following *beit* by Nizami:

کند همجنس با همجنس پرواز   کبوتر با کبوتر، باز با باز

Together can fly only birds of same type: pigeon with pigeon, falcon with falcon [4. P. 611].

Some aspects of relationships within neighborhood can also be realized through elements of zoomorphic code. Thus, a neighbor should be respected and in no way be blamed in vain: **pā-ye morq-at-rā beband-o hamsāye-rā dozd makon!** (lit. bind legs of your hen and do not make your neighbor a thief) [4. P. 91]. Property of the neighbor makes feel jealous: **āš-e hamsāye rowqan-e qāz dārad** — *there is (always) goose fat in the neighbor's soup*; **morq-e hamsāye qāz-ast / morq-e hamsāye be nazar qāz miāyad** — *neighbor's hen looks like goose* [4. P. 611; 7. P. 207]. A desire to obtain some benefits on the neighbor's account is regarded negatively: **mār-e xāne be dast-e hamsāye gereftan** — *to grab a snake in the house by neighbor's hands* [7. P. 273]. There were determined several idioms including the signs of zoomorphic code within the sub-group "relations among relatives". The idea of own child being the best in the world is expressed by the idiom referring to the fairytale about Aunty Cockroach: **xāle suske be bačče-aš miguyad: qorbān-e dast-o pā-ye boluri-at** *Aunty Cockroach tells her baby: how nice your crystal legs are*! [7. P. 184]. A proverb derived from Arabic describes relationships among relatives very negatively: **al-aqāreb al-'aqāreb** *Relatives are scorpions* [7. P. 248]. Yet, another one in quite straight way declares that relatives will never let each other down despite any temporary quarrels among them: **qoum-o xiš gušt-e ham boxorand, ostoxān-ešān-rā piš-e sag-e (qaribe) nemiandāzand** *Relatives even though eat flesh of each other do not throw bones to dogs* [7. P. 248].

Thus, we have examined some particularities of "self / other" binary represented in the Persian phraseology. Received information was interpreted through cultural codes. While analyzing the linguistic material overlapping of two and more codes within one

idiom was registered; this made distinguishing idioms by codes more difficult. Within the frameworks of this article we paid attention mostly to the idioms including the signs of somatic and zoomorphic codes nevertheless all analyzed material has been added to the statistics results. In the Picture 1 you can see a chart with ratio of five cultural codes when conceptualizing "self / other" binary in the Persian phraseology. One can see that the biggest group is the one comprising idioms with anthropic code (42.7%). However, if we combine somatic (29.8%) and zoomorphic (14.5%) codes — considering that zoomorphic code is mostly represented by the names of animal body parts (meronyms) rather than the names of animals themselves — the share of such combination would estimate 44.3%, which is bigger than the share of anthropic code. This, we believe, in the best way demonstrates specific features of representation of "self / other" binary in the Persian phraseology.

Of course, many questions linked with this conceptual opposition are left beyond the scope of this study. It would be interesting to examine by what means this opposition is represented in different types of discourse, in particular, fiction and political ones. Besides, peculiarities of ethno-nominations demonstrating the attitude of the Persians towards other nations are also worth studying. These aspects are to be researched in the future.
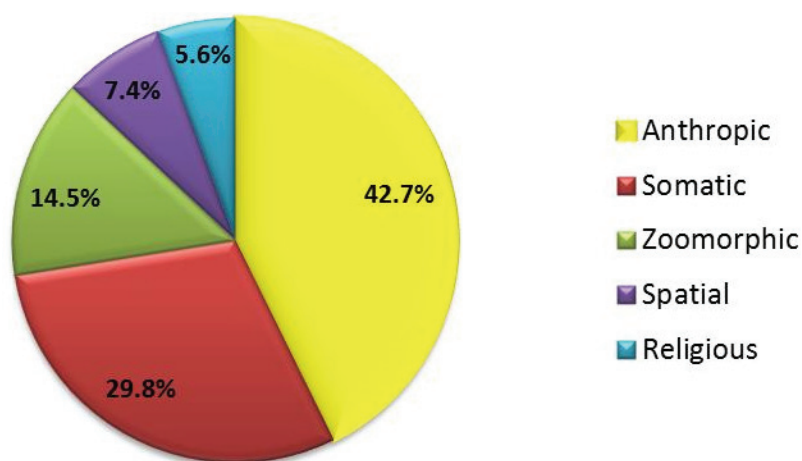

Pic. 1. Ratio of Cultural Codes at Lingual Representation of "self / other" binary in the Persian Phraseology

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КОНЦЕПТУАЛЬНАЯ ОППОЗИЦИЯ «СВОЙ/ЧУЖОЙ» В ПЕРСИДСКОМ ЛИНГВОКУЛЬТУРНОМ ПРОСТРАНСТВЕ

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В статье исследованы и проинтерпретированы в терминах кодов культуры особенности языковой репрезентации концептуальной оппозиции «СВОЙ–ЧУЖОЙ» в персидском лингвокультурном пространстве на материале фразеологического фонда персидского языка.

Ключевые слова: лингвокультурное пространство, код культуры, языковое сознание, языковая репрезентация, фразеологизм.