

**A FEW STUDIES OF THE CHAIR OF ETNOLOGY IN  
THE FACULTY OF LETTERS (DİL VE TARİH-COĞRAFYA  
FAKÜLTESİ) UNIVERSITY OF ANKARA**

Reviewed by Prof. Dr. Nermin ERDENTUG  
Chairman of Ethnology

1. Associate Professor Dr. Orhan Acıpayamlı

"Cutting of the spleen in the folk medicine practised in Turkish Villages and its ethnological explanation"

Journal of Anthropology, Vol. I, No.1, Reprint 1963

In section 1 of this study of Dr. Orhan Acıpayamlı, consisting of two parts, every document connected with the subject is being treated as a sample case. The interpretations the researcher has made by choosing the psycho-sociological method which are usually applied for the study of such subjects, are truly noteworthy. According to Dr. Acıpayamlı, the healing methods connected with the cutting of the spleen operate within the framework of the principle of magic contact and imitation.

\*\*\*

2. Associate Professor Dr. Orhan Acıpayamlı

"Some burial rits among the primitive societies and their explanation"

Journal A.Ü.D.T.C.F., Vol. XX, No. 3-4  
July-December 1962, Reprint 1963.

In this comparative study based on available literature, the researcher has, within a special plan, investigated each of the following categories of practices connected with the immediate environment of the dead and emphasized the reasons behind each of them.

- I. Practices connected with the belongings of the dead.
- II. Practices connected with the animals belonging to the dead.
- III. Practices connected with the wife, children, servants and works of the dead.

In this study Dr. Arpaşyan reached the following conclusion: magic forms the basis of thoughts and practices related to the dead in the primitives. And these practices were originated from the practices of contact. The researcher has, as he did in his other studies, applied the psycho-ecological method in this case, too. He has also made use of stone age data. His interpretations have, thus, added interesting knowledge to the field of general Ethnology.

\*\*\*

3. Azar, late Prof. Dr. Orhan Arpaşyan  
 "Rationalising economics in Turkey"

Journal, A.C.D.T.C.F. Vol. XXI, No. 1-2, 1953.

Reprint 1954.

In this study of the researcher, we see a noteworthy sample of ethnological work. Dr. Arpaşyan has collected his study, consisting of 70 pages, in two sections. In section I where folklore materials are presented, the researcher gives the records and particularly the results of his own observations in the fields which have been previously tackled by a number of other Turkish scholars. The use of abundant material and the way of presentation gives the professional nature of the study. Only, the necessity of using the data obtained from the field-work<sup>1</sup> must be borne in mind by every ethnologist: it is obvious, however, that a long time is needed before this second ideal condition expected of the studies in the field of Ethnology (Social Anthropology).

<sup>1</sup> Fieldwork studies of the chair of Ethnology at the Ankara University were first carried by Prof. Dr. Nevaiin Bedrettin one during the last five years they have been updated on a page scale.

The rain-making ceremonies worked in this study by Dr. Acipayamlı is a subject of vital importance not only for the Turkish peasant communities, but also for the primitive people of the world. Rainmaking ceremonies form a kind of system of which the beliefs and rites of the people surround it. In the first part of the study, Dr. Acipayamlı deals with the changing forms and names of rain-making ceremonies in various geographical areas of Anatolia. In addition, he explains in detail, a) the reasons of rain-making, b) the time of the praying for the rain-making, c) the pre-prayer preparations, d) the ceremony itself, e) the qualifications required of the person bading the praying, the varieties and characteristics of the prayers, f) the ceremonies and feasts during the prayer.

In part II, on the other hand, many evidences (2) showing connections with Central Asia as regards ceremonies, have been recorded: There are surprisingly striking similarities in the ceremonies carried out by children, in the names used and in the objects e.g. dolls used during ceremonies, among all Turkish communities. Especially, the patterns of wearing of clothes inside out and throwing of stones are the most widely applied common forms used in Turkish peasant communities and among the Turkish communities outside Turkey. Finally, according to Dr. Acipayamlı available folklore material points to the Central Asia-Turkey's relationships.

This researcher's view about only help to confirm the results reached by some other scholars<sup>1</sup> who worked on the subject before him. Dr. Acipayamlı, then, in this part, made some interpretations and evaluations of the material he has presented in part I, from the ethnological point of view. He first explained "the causation of rainfall ceremonies and of the types observed by grown up and children. Then he studied the ceremonies in details under three headings: a) the preparation phase of the ceremonies, b) their application phase, and c) the feast and ending phase.

According to Dr. Acipayamlı's finding, the coming into contact of roasted salt, stones, man, coffins, tortoises etc. with water during the ceremony can be seen not only in Turkey, but also all over the world and wherever Turks live. On the other hand, the wearing of

1 Mehmet Fuad Köprülü, Ahmet Ceferoğlu, Abdülkadir İnan.

clothes inside out, and the throwing of stones into water are based on the principle of "imitational magic", e.g. "magic sympathy". In addition, the special local inventions are nothing else but an imitation of rainfall. In other words, rain will fall according to the principle of this imitational magic. In this case, the throwing of stones into water means bringing the stones and water into contact. The contact of stones and water would mean bringing the characteristics of the two substances face to face. Thus rain is caused to fall. Also, the prayer taking place in the ceremony, will have no effect on the result, whatever be matter whether it is raining or not. Because, according to Dr. Acipayamli, none of the characteristics of the prayers used for the ceremonies has any religious aspect to it. The "doçju" of the prayer here may take the place of the power of old magic events. In other words, the religious patterns observed in this great have no influence whatsoever, apart from the psychological one. Thus, the researcher, basing his arguments on many examples has put forward the view that rainfall ceremonies, by way of contact with water, that is, by the principles of contact and imitation (sympathetic magic) have their origin in popular beliefs.

On the other hand, again, according to the researcher, the *ısık* ceremonies wherein stones were used and which are being used in our country, have no connections with Islam, because such ceremonies were also observed by pre-Islamic Turkish communities.

Finally, the ceremonies under consideration operate well within the principle of imitation of the magic. Indeed, the explanation of the essence of these ceremonies in this way, i.e. according to the psycho-sociological method is noteworthy on our part and seems to be a very convincing point of view, too. But, the degree of agreement with Dr. Acipayamli's view will be shown by the repetition of above mentioned studies in foreign countries and especially among the colleagues belonging to the same school of thought.

## 4 - Assoc. Prof. Dr. Orhan Acıpayamlı

"Some customs and beliefs connected with [evil eye] in Anatolia"

A.U.D.T.C.F. Journal, Vol. XX, No. 1-2, 1962.

This study has been made on the beliefs of the Turkish folk of Turkey. The subject of "evil eye" was tackled for the first time in its field. It is an ethnological and, therefore, a scientific research<sup>1</sup>.

Dr. Acıpayamlı, in his study based partly on fieldwork which he did in and around Acıpayam and partly on the available literature, he especially stressed the part of "evil eye" connected with children. In part I of his research consisting of two parts, practices chosen from various areas of Anatolia have been examined in detail.

In part II, Dr. Acıpayamlı takes up the causes of events which he presented in scientific way in part I. At this phase the researcher pointed out that there is an advanced and perfect mechanism in the beliefs of Turkish people, that any change in any of the parts will make itself felt on the whole of the mechanism; the basic of this mechanism is the power of "evil eye". The psycho-sociological method used here, too, led him to the following conclusion: "evil eye" conditioned and brought about by psychological reactions and social values is a product of psycho-sociological life.

With all these studies where Dr. Acıpayamlı analysed some elements of Turkish culture in the field of beliefs and practices, he thus exposed some characteristics of Turkish culture. On the other hand, by giving some explanations about behaviours related to casting of spell, as he did in his last work, he brought some new knowledges to general Ethnology. But it must be remembered that we have to wait and see the repercussions of these studies, especially, of the last study, "evil eye", which is a first reliable guide in its field.

Prof. Dr. Nermin ERDENTUĞ

<sup>1</sup> Even though some Turkish scholars have written about the subject of "evil eye", none of these writings are either ethnological or any other scholars in aim.