

ETHNOCULTURAL POTENTIAL OF THE MEANING OF WORDS (WREATH - CROWN)

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Some lexical units (primarily, specific units) reserve in itself a deep internal form, which can be revealed not only by using own linguistic techniques to examine the nature of words, but by reconstructing a variety of topics related to ethnohistory, ethnopsychology etnoculture of its speaker.

The speaker learns the language, which is a repository of some nation experience and, through it, to some extent the all mankind's experience in the perception of the world. Thus, native speakers inherit the semantic richness of the language, and not only in its active manifestation, but also in its potential depths. In particular, the words bear in itself a much greater semantic potential than really expressed meanings in a particular speech situation. However, any word may potentially bear more new meanings.

One of the fundamental in modern philosophy is O.O. Potebnia's doctrine of the inner form of word and word picture. It unites different areas of the word nature researches - linguistic, literary criticism, folklore, linguo-philosophical. The scientist found a key to comprehensive analysis of the words, having discovered its main feature - the ability to denote the objects singled out by mind and their properties. Language is not just a set of words, but, first of all, lexical system of many subsystems. This system of sign and semantic units for the denotation of real or imaginary things, that is, the realities of the objective world, life, person and society, products, outlook, and religious intentions, which are framed up by specific language means and transferred as a spiritual heritage from generation to generation.

As the researcher noted, "a person would not create a single song or poem, if his/her every word was not ... the poetry itself." [O.O. Potebnia, 1976. - P.154]. He refers to the initial way of human thinking as the mythical. In his view, it is characterized, primarily, by comparison of certain phenomena perceived by man. The word is as if the imprint of the history of our people, their aspirations, ideals and spiritual life of the native speakers. The spiritual and physical life of the individual begins and ends with word.

The language that is constantly changing, enriched, improved, depending on the progress of its speaker, reflects ecology of the ethnos, and its culture, lifestyle, customs, there is a connection between it and thinking process. The word can operate on a semantic-informative, associative-image, on philosophical and ethical-philosophical or conceptual-philosophical levels, and their combination reproduces the level of language development.

The basis of every artistic language system is the words-symbols. As a universal ideal notion in the art system (folk, individual author) symbol, despite its different origins and functioning in the system, becomes a fact of relevant oral and artistic reality, a kind of artistic construct. The linguistic term "symbol" is usually applied to a word of the language which acts as symbol of other words - the denomination, some kind of renaming the notion in the language denoted with the other word in the language. "The symbolic meaning of the word" is unique, because the language reflects extralinguistic patterns, and the word-symbol is associated with the object not directly but associatively, through the other word, one meaning directly aimed at an objective reality.

Ethnolinguistic studies of lexis can trace the history and evolution of culture in its main features and to get some idea of its old structure, because the term in the rite, customs reflects their key points or outlines certain realities.

O.O. Potebnia emphasized that the word can be studied only in the speech, in the context, where it acquires some semantic-stylistic shades. He pointed out: "We usually regard the word in the form, in which it is given in the dictionaries" [O.O. Potebnia, 1976, P.465-466]. The language preserved in itself the archaic elements of philosophy, psychology, culture and, therefore, is a reliable source for the reconstruction of historical forms of human culture. There's a cultural context behind the word- symbol both in terms of expression, and in terms of content, that is the word as a concept has the cultural significance. It has the ability to store a lot of information in a contracted form, fixed in the memory of generations. For example, in Slavic folk culture, we shall say, acts of "twining", "wreathing" created an object "wreath" that has both mythicized and sacral meaning.

The word "crown" for our ancestors embodied specific reality - a closed circle with which, primarily, the sun was associated. There are still such things as "aureole", i.e. a circle formed by

sunrays. Mythology confirms that the form and movement of the celestial body was identified with life, symbolized its eternity and continuity. As for human it meant circular descent. Later this became a symbol of ritual attributes, cf. expression “go under a crown”, which means “to walk down the aisle” “to get married”. The wedding wreath (it was called a crown) that resembled the shape of the sun was a sign of the end of a girl’s maidenhood, that is a transfer to a different status. Lexeme wreath (вінок) (псл. *иѣньсь, иѣнькъ*) is the suffixal derivative from *иѣнь*, connected with *uiti* “twine” [EDUL, Vol.1, 1982-1989, p.400]. conjugate are also the words *вѣнецъ* “crown or caul”; *вѣчаніє* “crowning”. Therefore, some researchers thought it to be the symbol of marital union. However, O.Potebnia denied this definition, argued that “a wreath, as well as maidenhood and the girl, is usually related to marriage, but it is not a symbol or metaphor for marriage. If it was a symbol of marriage, it should be expected that it will remain the decoration of a married woman as well” [Potebnia, 1989, p. 117].

The word-symbol wreath has epithets golden, rue, vinca - according to the material of which it is twined, and for value is the sign of the bride: “A young girl twined a wreath, twined a wreath and took a walk [...] Set off the wreath flowing on the pond” (a song). “The wreath she wore in maidenhood: On this day, it [wreath] is good, but tomorrow it will wither. A young girl is getting married” (a wedding song).

Development of symbolic meanings in the word contributes to the formation of a number of phraseological units. Actualization in the semantic structure of the word of the seme “chastity, virginity” contributes to verbal combination wear a wreath having the symbolic meaning “be virgin”: “You will not wear a wreath any more” (M.Nomys). “She was under the crown, that is that (a proverb), i.e. got married.

A girl who lost her virginity, hence “lost a wreath” that is “deflowered” did not have the right to wear the crown: “A widow beat her daughter: where did you lose your wreath” (a song). Making wedding wreath was accompanied with different solemn and poetic activities. On the wedding eve (at the “hen night”) the girls sing ritual songs twining wreaths. The first bridesmaid sings on behalf of the “bride”:

Twine, girls, for yourselves and for me
For yourselves of the rue,
For me of the vinca...

Taking up twining, the bridesmaids ask for blessing in chorus:

Two flowers of rue,
Bless us, God,
Our father and mother, - We shall start twining a wreath!..

Additional semantics have special properties of the plants that are used for making wreaths. Ceremonial itself is very special ritual, which regulates the cast (girls, women, or wreath twiners), time and place of twining (the house of the bride, wedding eve, hence, the name of the ceremony - wreath twining), the size and shape of the wreath, twining method, additional embellishments (ribbons, coins) etc. All this is a set of ceremonial codes.

On the wedding eve the bride’s friends prepared vinca, rue, viburnum, as a symbol of tenderness, longevity, and twined a wreath of them, which was accompanied with songs, ritual actions. In the modern Ukrainian language vinca is used to denote “herbaceous plant with evergreen leaves and bluish flowers” [DUL, 1980, Vol.1, p. 105]. In the memorials of the Ukrainian language words барвинокъ. барвѣнокъ (vinca) were recorded for the first time in Lexicon Slovonico-Russian since 1642: “hydragogos, ба(р)вѣнокъ трава” [Berynda, 1961, p.21]. According to the EDUL authors, the lexeme is borrowed into the Ukrainian language through Polish and German, where *barvinok through the German language comes from Latin pervinka [EDUL: Vol.1, p. 141]. In the lyric, ritual songs and spells the word барвінок (vinca) is a symbol of “revival, renewal, flush of hope, youth”, which is, obviously, motivated by vinca leaves that do not die in winter. In folklore lexeme барвінок (vinca) is often combined with the names of other plants - basil, cornflower, lovage, mint or tarragon or functionally replace them in similar contexts or ritual magic acts of different local traditions. Vinca

is an attribute of virgins, the wedding crown element. In this regard, the concept acquires a symbolic value “maidenhood; virginity; chastity”. It should be noted that in such cases diminutive forms of the word are found: “Wait, sister, do not espouse [...] there’s rue and little vinca (барвіночок) in the garden; Stay maidenly, One more year” (a wedding song); “I walked in summer, Watered vinca, Vinca, Little Vinca for golden crown” (wedding song).

Rue is another plant that was obligatory in the wedding wreath. In the memorials of the Ukrainian language the word *пойма* is known since the sixteenth century. In the modern Ukrainian language the lexeme *пура* (rue) is used to denote “perennial suffrutex or herbaceous plant” [DUL, Vol. VIII, p.913]. The plant conveys symbolism of maiden chastity. The semantics shift is caused by a tradition of twining a plant into the bridal wreath. Therefore, its use in a symbolic function is directly found mainly in the wedding songs: “They (boyars) will catch me, the young girl, They will recognize me by the rue wreath”. The duty of a girl is not to lose her “rue wreath” and to cherish “her rue”. In this case, the word *пура* (rue) belongs to the same semantic row as the word *рожа* (mallow), which contains constant figurative semes “beauty, chastity, virginity”. Phrasemes *to sow the rue, to plant (water) the rue* have the meaning “to romance, woo; flirt”: *I sow rue. I plant rue. I water rue: Oh, Cossack, I wait for you every day* (a song). Rue is usually associated with a girl ready for marriage, therefore, predicate construction *rue comes up, rue blossoms forth* and word combination *to sow the rue* have symbolic meaning “to be ready for marriage, mature; Oh, if you, girl, got married then, when in steppe aside a road the *rue came up* [...] A girl guessed right, me planted, it rained, *rue came up*, a girl got married. O. Potebnia unites the words “to plant, sow, gather” together for a common meaning of “being in harmony with the sweetheart”. M.Kostomarov assumed the sources of symbolization of the lexeme rue in ancient beliefs to be common to all Slavs, because “the same concept may be traced” [Kostomarov, 1994, p.64].

Another attribute of the wedding crown is a mallow, which is a metaphor to name the sun, equivalent to a proper name: “In the spring songs Sun goddess is a girl called Mallow, or just a flower - red mallow (I.Nechui-Levytskyi). Its ability to be combined with lexeme *червоний* (red) also indicates the symbolic meaning of a word itself - *рожа* (*ружа*) (mallow) “red flower”, “king-flower” and is archaic symbol. Name of a plant *рожа* “flower” is associated with perfection, i.e. the permanent seme “beauty, goodliness, perfection” dominates in the semantic structure.

The symbolic meaning is associated with the symbol of girl, rarely women, so when using the word in a symbolic function high moral and physical qualities were essential: A *mallow* puts forth flowers in the garden, In our yard our *ladv is lovely* (a wedding song), red as a mallow, Red as a mallow; Mallow will overgrow the nettle on the boundaries (M. Nomys).

The combination *mallow in full blossom* includes strong peripheral components - “beauty”, “health”: My beauty is as a mallow in full blossom, Oh, girl, you are a mallow in full blossom! [Dictionary of the Ukrainian language, Vol.4, 1907-1909, p. 291]. Verbs *bloom, put forth flowers, bear blossom* in combination with the word *mallow* and derivatives, activate new additional shades in the meaning of the word-symbol, which are determined by context: put forth flowers - “live better days of one’s life”:

Red mallow, it’s time for you to *put forth flowers*. Young girl, it’s time for you to leave your mother and move to mother-in-law (a wedding song). The seme of the verb reveals figurative meaning “come into flower; be ready for marriage”, which contributes to the simultaneous activation of permanent quality “beauty” in semantic structure of word “*mallow*”.

Viburnum also carries a symbolic load of word associated with a whole range of symbolic interpretations. Viburnum is accreted with a number of associations related to the significance of plants for the Ukrainian people. The word belongs to the Indo-European lexical fund: Bulgarian “калина”, Serbian “калина”, Polish “калина”, Russian “калина”; [EDUL, II, p.350]. It is considered to be a derivative of *калъ* “wet land, marsh, swamp, mud”, as well as it is assumed to have connection with *пел. Kaliti* “temper, heat”. O.O.Potebnia determines word “калина” (viburnum) primarily as a symbol of virginity, beauty and love and associates lexeme denotation “bright, beautiful, hot, red” with the notion of fire. [Potebnia, 1989, p.11]: The girl, dark-haired and rosy, I’m red as a viburnum; as beautiful as a viburnum; girl as a viburnum in a meadow. Verbs “to bloom, put forth flowers, grow and flourish” contribute to the formation of the seme “marriageable girl”: Red *viburnum*, it is time for you to put forth flowers. Young girl, it is time for you to move from your mother to someone else’s mother (a wedding song). Traditionally, the viburnum is used in the wedding ceremonies, the viburnum clusters are twined into the maiden wreath. The word combinations “*to break viburnum*”.

“to spoil viburnum”, “show (someone) viburnum”, “sell viburnum” are related to prohibitive actions on which the people impose “taboo” - lose of chastity, honour.

Some codes are provided for by other wedding ceremonials - unplaiting the bride, which begins with removing the crown, as manifestation of parting with virginity, that is transferring it into a new status.

Synonyms are the words tie up, cover in the meaning of “to head-dress a married woman”. Married women wore no wreath, but according to D.K. Zelenin’s observations, the Slavic people had a belief that a woman with uncovered head could cause harm to household, harvest [Zelenin 1926, p. 315-317]. By form, function and traditions the wreath is closely associated with virgin’s headwear - lubok, korobulia, koda. All they are of circular shape, which leave open the crown of head, but after the wedding they are replaced with headwear with covered tops, which symbolized the marriage. After the wedding, the parents who espoused their last child celebrated the “crowns” (or “parents’ wedding”). The rite represented an action that proved that the family had fulfilled the most honorable duty - brought up their children and helped them on in life. This rite also provided for the wreaths to be put on the parents’ heads, which also symbolized the closed family circle.

Twined wreath may be complemented by ribbons, necklaces. As the amulet, for maintenance of fertility, love, wealth and happiness various items were put or twined into the wreaths: garlic, tarragon, lovage, bread, oats, money, coins. Place and ritual of gathering plants for wreath were also of great importance. For example, vinca was picked up in the woods or specially grown for this purpose. Cutting of plants was accompanied by ritual singing.

Wreaths are the mandatory attribute of Kupalo festival. After the ceremony they were either burned in the Kupalo fire or sent flowing on the water, or put on the tree. Some were kept, because people believed in their healing properties. If the wreath was not used during the year, they were burned before Kupalo eve, because according to legend they did not have medical or purifying properties.

Symbolism of the wreath can be found in the tillage cycle. Finishing harvesting, harvestmen twined a wreath of ears, solemnly brought it to host’s home and accompanied with harvesting songs, put a crown on the host. This meant that busy harvesting season was over. It was also a symbol of a closed circle. Harvesting crown was kept up to New Year in some areas, while in others - to the next harvest in the bam. It was twined of the last cut ears. It was an ordinary-sized wreath round the head. Harvesting wreaths were decorated with ears of oats, barley, viburnum twigs. Before this it was rolled in the field saying: “Wreath was rolling in the field, asked the host to stay in his barn”. The wreath was blessed on the Festival of the Saviour, and when thrashing started, the owner scattered grains from harvesting wreath on the bam-floor and on barrels, thus, sanctifying the bread. Grain from this wreath was added to the seed, believing that this will ensure future harvest.

Analysis of such examples shows that the national language consciousness forms the deep layers of the world outlook. Moreover, means of different languages model the outworld, model of specific national cultures are created. Understanding the relationship of language, consciousness and culture is of methodological importance: reflection of reality is not a “mirror”, it always has a creative, transforming nature. Words-symbols are only conventional, that is they are used to denote the results of the transformed reflection, its modified, socially meaningful expression.

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