

THE CONSTRUCTION OF SOCIAL ORDER IN TURKISH AND JAPANESE CULTURES: A COMPARATIVE ASSESSMENT OF NORMS, RITUALS, AND COLLECTIVE CONSCIOUSNESS

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Abstract: *This study examines, from a comparative sociological perspective, the norms, rituals, and collective consciousness mechanisms through which social order is constructed in Turkish and Japanese cultures. Durkheim's theory of collective consciousness, Goffman's interaction order, and Turner's ritual theory form the fundamental theoretical framework. It argues that tradition, family, and state authority are the supporting elements of social order in Turkish culture, while community harmony, ritual discipline, and hierarchical relationships are the supporting elements in Japanese culture. This study reviews anthropological, historical, and sociological sources on Turkish and Japanese societies and evaluates norms and ritual practices within a theoretical framework using a comparative cultural sociology approach. The aim of the research is to compare the two cultures not hierarchically, but through their internal integrity and sociological functioning.*

Keywords: *Ritual, Collective Consciousness, Turkish Culture, Japanese Culture, Social Order*

Introduction

Social order is constructed through norms, values, rituals, and elements of collective consciousness that guide individuals' behavior. Turkish culture has acquired a multi-layered sociological character through the historical continuity of Central Asian nomadic traditions, Islam, the Ottoman social structure, and the effects of the modernization process. Japanese culture has also formed its own unique sociological structure, rooted in Shinto

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beliefs, with influences from Buddhism, Confucian philosophy, and the Western impact following the Meiji modernization period. In this context, social order in both societies is shaped not only by written rules but also through strong traditional norms, symbolic rituals, and a sense of collective belonging.

The construction of social order is a dynamic process shaped by each society's historical experiences, cultural codes, and collective consciousness. Despite their different geographies and historical conditions, Turkish and Japanese cultures possess strong normative systems and ritualized practices aimed at preserving social cohesion. This study examines, in a comparative manner, how social order is established in Turkish and Japanese societies, and through which normative frameworks and ritual forms it is maintained, drawing on Émile Durkheim's concept of "collective consciousness."

Social order is shaped by the normative structures, cultural practices, and collective consciousness mechanisms that societies have developed over long historical processes. From the perspective of the discipline of sociology, social order is not merely a regularity based on norms; it is also the interplay of rituals, symbolic practices, and shared worlds of meaning. In this context, Turkish and Japanese societies are two unique examples that, despite their culturally distinct origins, are able to maintain social cohesion through strong normative systems and collective practices. This study examines the institutional and cultural foundations upon which social order is built in both cultures, discussing their similarities and differences from a theoretical perspective.

1. Culture

Beliefs, values, norms, and behaviors constitute a whole composed of material and spiritual elements transmitted from one generation to the next. Herskovitz defines culture as "all the values, rituals, symbols, beliefs, and thought systems that are transmitted from generation to generation and learned and shared by the members of a society."¹ Behavior, ways of thinking, habits, morals, beliefs, art, knowledge, law, customs, etc. within a way of life constitute the cultural integrity of that society. Culture is historical, learned and taught. Every society has its own unique culture. Culture is unifying and integrating. Culture is shared collectively by members of society. In a society, the fundamental values of culture are instilled in individuals and groups to ensure social cohesion and harmony.

Culture is the totality of material and spiritual elements that a society collectively creates, adopts, and passes down from generation to generation.

¹ M. J. Herskovitz and A. A. Knopf, *Man and His Works, Economic Anthropology*, New York: 1952, p. 634.

The cognitive dimension of culture is formed by values, value judgments, beliefs, and meanings, while its second dimension, the behavioral dimension, is formed by all written and unwritten rules, attitudes, and behaviors. The third dimension, the material dimension, is formed by all kinds of tools and equipment, geographical conditions, and natural resources. Customs, traditions, and conventions are non-material, deeply rooted cultural elements.

Dominance over a vast geographical region and interaction with numerous states on commercial, political, military, and religious fronts exposed Turkish culture to various influences throughout history, yet cultural transmission continued. Although Islam and Turkish culture acquired a new identity, old traditions and mythological views were also preserved. Japan, on the other hand, being an island nation, has a history that is quite limited compared to the Turks in terms of geographical dominance and diversity of state relations, but it has been quite successful in preserving its cultural values. Japanese culture has also been exposed to multidimensional influences from China, Korea, and America over time, but the Japanese have maintained their cultural identity by incorporating innovations. In this context, it is possible to say that Turkish and Japanese cultures have continued to exist by changing, developing, but drawing sustenance from their roots.

2. Rituals and Society

Just as memory has a function for the individual, culture has a similar function for society. Culture contains knowledge gained through experience about what works and, therefore, what has sufficient value to be passed on to future generations.² Dartiguenave refers to the process of acculturation as ritualization. Culturalization does not correspond to changing the values or behaviors of a society, but rather to the process of endowing a natural given with meaning. The origin of a ritual that refers to a post-culturalization process lies in a society's beliefs, traditions, rules, and habits.³

Rituals play an important role in the daily lives of traditional societies in particular. From an anthropological perspective, when looking at the history of rituals and symbols, it is noteworthy that they have functioned as tools of control mechanisms that have influenced almost every aspect of social life from primitive societies to the present day.⁴ Ritual, as examined

² H. C. Triandis and E. M. Suh, Cultural Influence on Personality, *Annual Review of Psychology*, 53, 2002, p. 135.

³ Ö. Kasap, Ritüel/ Ritüellik Kavramları ve Ritüelliğin Anlamsal Değişimi Üzerine, *Millî Folklor*, 131, 2021, p.125.

⁴ Ş.T. Akman, Hukuk ve Ritüel: Tarihsel, Toplumsal ve Politik Perspektiflerden Hukukun Ritüel ve Semboller Üzerinden Anlamlandırılması, *Hacettepe Hukuk Fakültesi Dergisi*, 14(2), 2024, p. 84.

by Durkheim's social functionalist perspective, is a set of behavioral rules regarding how a person should behave towards sacred things.⁵ Rituals present us with a situation that activates the society's knowledge stores and minds, enabling remembrance. Society gives meaning to the movements and behaviors performed by the ritual leader during the ritual by relating them to its own beliefs or traditional knowledge.⁶ Rituals and belief narratives are nourished by the traditions, thought structures, and needs of the places where they are practiced, taking on new forms specific to the region and enriching the region's belief culture.⁷ In this context, Turkish and Japanese cultures also continue to exist by changing, developing, and enriching themselves through the transmission of mythological ideas, ancient belief systems, customs, and rituals. While both societies share a common structure in terms of preserving their past transmissions within their cultural structures, the difference between them is that the belief in the Sky God, known as the ancient belief system of the Turks, is only kept alive in customs and traditions, whereas Shintoism, which can be described as the indigenous belief of the Japanese, continues to exist as the foundation of Japanese culture.

Rituals constitute the symbolic dimension of social order in Turkish culture. Rites of passage such as birth, circumcision, marriage, and death legitimize changes in an individual's social status at the collective consciousness level. Turner's views on rituals reinforcing social solidarity align with ritual practices in Turkish culture.⁸ In Japanese culture, regardless of religious or social status, collective participation in birth, death, and marriage ceremonies, as well as festivals held throughout the year, is valued as a means of spiritual fulfillment.⁹ These rituals, shaped primarily by Shintoism, play an active role in Japanese daily life.

Rituals are standardized symbolic actions repeated between individuals that shape and direct human relationships by being shaped by social traditions.¹⁰ They correspond to actions that cover up contradictions and form consistent patterns of social behavior. Rituality and sociality are intertwined. Each social group gives its ritual attitude a social form and

⁵ E. Durkheim, *Dini Hayatın İlk Biçimleri*, çev, Fuat Aydın, İstanbul: Ataç Yayınevi, 2005, p. 60.

⁶ S. Köse, Ritüel Bellek, *Motif Akademi Halkbilimi Dergisi*, 14(33), 2021, p. 64.

⁷ E. Akın, Ritüelleri ve İnanç Anlatılarıyla Halk Dininin Özel Bir Görünüm Alanı: Kadın Dindarlığı (Siirt İli Örneği), *Gaziantep University Journal of Social Sciences*, 20(2), 2021, p. 1014.

⁸ See V. Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, Chicago: Aldine Publishing, 1969.

⁹ P. Nosco, Religion and Identity in Japan since 1940, *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 48(2), 2021, p. 218.

¹⁰ P. A. Winn, Legal Ritual, *Law and Critique*, 2(2), 1991, pp. 207-209.

reveals its distinctive features in this way. For example, the clothes it designs and the ways of dressing serve to position it socially. Every ritual is a specific embodiment of individual and social experience.¹¹ Rituals can be classified differently according to their purpose and period. The distinction between rites of passage, calendar rituals, and rituals of crisis or turmoil is one of the most widely accepted forms of classification.¹²

3. Theoretical Framework: Norms, Rituals, and Collective Consciousness

In Turkish culture, the normative structure is largely based on moral values, religious references, and the traditional system of customs and traditions. When evaluated in the context of Durkheim's approach to the function of norms in ensuring social cohesion, norms in Turkish society are internalized patterns of behaviour rather than external pressures that control the individual.¹³ These norms function as a social control mechanism by directly affecting the individual's social status and social acceptance.¹⁴ In Japanese society, which believes that every human being is inherently pure and clean, losing one's purity is seen as spiritual decay and is believed to consume one's life force, leading to death. The magnitude of people's mistakes is subject to different assessments based on their harmful effects. Mistakes that negatively affect the lives of many people lead to exclusion from society. A way of life based on the feeling of shame, where people fear being excluded by those around them, emerges.¹⁵

Durkheim views society as a "moral unity" and argues that the fundamental element sustaining social order is a system of shared values.¹⁶ Norms emerge as the institutionalized form of this value system at the behavioural level. Rituals, as Turner (1969) states, ensure the reproduction of collective consciousness by creating symbolic unity and awareness among community members.

¹¹ Ö. Kasap, Ritüel/ Ritüellik Kavramları ve Ritüelliğin Anlamsal Değişimi Üzerine, *Millî Folklor*, 131, 2021, pp. 126-127.

¹² K. Karaman, Ritüellerin Toplumsal Etkileri, *SDÜ Fen Edebiyat Fakültesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 21, 2010, p. 227.

¹³ See E. Durkheim, *The Rules of Sociological Method*, New York: Free Press, 1982.

¹⁴ See E. Kongar, *Toplumsal Değişme Kuramları ve Türkiye Gerçeği*, İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 2008.

¹⁵ M. Takemitsu, *Issatsu de Wakaru Shintō to Nihon Shinwa*, Japan: Kawade Shobo Shinsha Co., 2013, pp. 24-26.

¹⁶ See E. Durkheim, *Dini Hayatın İlkel Biçimleri*, çev., Fuat Aydın, İstanbul: Ataç Yayınevi, 2005.

3.1. Durkheim and the Function of Collective Consciousness

Durkheim argues that social order should be considered an objective and binding reality, independent of the sum of individuals. According to Durkheim, the fundamental element that holds society together is the collective consciousness formed by the values, beliefs, and norms shared by individuals.¹⁷

Durkheim argues that religion promotes social harmony and solidarity by creating a sense of shared identity and common purpose among its members through collective consciousness. This consciousness is the foundation of the normative framework that maintains social order. In comparing Turkish and Japanese cultures, collective consciousness is an explanatory variable that reveals how it is reproduced through rituals and symbolic practices. Collective consciousness is the set of beliefs, values, and emotions shared by the members of a society. Durkheim defines collective consciousness as the moral bond that holds society together and associates its weakening with social disintegration (anomie).¹⁸ Collective consciousness is embodied through norms and rituals and transmitted from generation to generation. Jan Assmann's theory of cultural memory emphasizes that collective consciousness is constructed not only through everyday practices but also through historical narratives, myths, and symbols.¹⁹ In Turkish society, collective consciousness is shaped around the axes of history, religion, and national identity, while in Japanese society, collective consciousness is built more on social harmony, institutional loyalty, and group affiliation.²⁰

Rituals increase solidarity by keeping the group together, nourishing and strengthening the collective consciousness of the community. One of the central themes in Durkheim's work *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* is the concept of 'collective consciousness'. This concept expresses that religious rituals and symbols are reflections of the collective beliefs and values shared among the members of a society.²¹ According to Durkheim, collective consciousness is the "moral unity"²² formed by shared values, beliefs, and norms that hold society together. The collective consciousness

¹⁷ See E. Durkheim, *The Rules of Sociological Method*, New York: Free Press, 1982.

¹⁸ See E. Durkheim, *The Division of Labor in Society*, New York: Free Press, 1984.

¹⁹ J. Assmann, *Communicative and Cultural Memory*, in *Cultural Memories Knowledge and Space 4*, Ed. P. Meusburger et al, Dordrecht; Heidelberg; London; New York: Springer Business Media B. V. 2011, pp. 15-27.

²⁰ See N. Berkes, *Türkiye'de Çağdaşlaşma*, İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2013; R. Benedict, *The Chrysanthemum and The Sword, Patterns of Japanese Culture*, London: Secker & Warburg, 1947.

²¹ F. Karaarslan, *Ahlak ve Din Anlayışı Bağlamında Emile Durkheim'i Yeniden Düşünmek*, *Bilimname*, 52(2). 2024, p. 170.

²² See E. Durkheim, *The Rules of Sociological Method*, New York: Free Press, 1982.

conceptualized by Durkheim is evident in Turkish society through a strong sense of “us.” National identity, religious affiliation, and historical memory are the fundamental components of collective consciousness. The Ottoman legacy and the ideology of the Republic have contributed to the reconstruction of collective consciousness in different periods.²³ This collective consciousness causes individuals to shape their behaviour not only according to current social norms, but also in line with values inherited from the past. Thus, social order is reproduced within historical continuity.

Japanese society is built on the foundations of collectivism, mutual dependence, empathy, emotionality, introspection, and obedience. While the country is admired worldwide for its success in preserving its own culture in its interactions with other countries, it would not be entirely accurate to say that the traditional structure has remained exactly the same. Although traditions continue largely through the transmission of Shinto beliefs, which can be described as the ancestral religion, the post-war Japanese generation can be characterized as a society that is weaker in social relativism, less socially sensitive, and more egoistic than their parents. The reasons for this situation can be attributed to economic and technological change, education, or the negative effects of the media.²⁴ Indeed, economic and technological change and development, the comfortable life enjoyed by the younger generation, education more suited to the Western style that changed under post-war American influence, and Western culture transmitted to young people through the media have caused Japanese traditional culture to change, leading the younger generation to drift away from their own culture and gravitate toward Western culture. The situation in today's Turkish society is not much different. Traditions that were highly valued in previous generations, such as visiting relatives during religious holidays, holiday celebrations, and hospitality, have been replaced by vacations spent far from relatives and families. In this context, although the old culture continues to be preserved in both societies, it is possible to say that the younger generation is slowly moving away from old traditions and leaning towards Western customs.

3.2. Goffman and the Interaction Pattern

Goffman, on the other hand, approaches everyday interactions by ritualizing them at the micro level. According to Goffman, practices such as greeting, apologizing, or showing respect ensure the reproduction of social order in everyday life.²⁵ This approach provides an important theoretical

²³ See N. Berkes, *Türkiye’de Çağdaşlaşma*, İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2013.

²⁴ T. S. Lebra, *Japanese Patterns of Behavior*, America: University of Hawai’i Press, 1976, p. 257.

²⁵ See E. Goffman, *Interaction Ritual: Essays on Face-to-Face Behavior*, New York: Anchor Books, 1967.

basis for analysing everyday rituals, such as the courtesy rituals in Japanese culture and the hospitality practices in Turkish culture. Goffman (1967) states that social order is constantly being re-established in everyday interactions. Ritualized behaviours and face-to-face relationships are fundamental components of social harmony at the micro level. Interaction patterns such as the rules of politeness in Japan and the practices of hospitality or respect in Turkey can be evaluated in this context.

3.3. Turner and the Ritual Process

Victor Turner views rituals not only as structures that reinforce order, but also as “liminal” spaces where social transformation is possible. According to Turner, rituals are processes in which individuals temporarily detach themselves from hierarchical structures and experience “communities.”²⁶ According to Turner's (1969) ritual process approach, rituals are symbolic processes that reinforce social cohesion. Turkish weddings, military send-off ceremonies, Japanese tea ceremonies, and annual festivals are ritual patterns that enable the reproduction of collective consciousness in this context.

4. The Construction of Social Order in Turkish Culture

Social order in Turkish culture is nourished by both the nomadic steppe tradition and the moral and legal systems that institutionalized after Islam. Historically, the concept of “custom” has been the bearer of normative order, serving as the fundamental reference point that determines standards of behaviour within the community.²⁷ In the modern era, the family, the neighbourhood, and state authority have come to the fore as central elements that ensure social cohesion.

Norms are a set of unwritten rules governing how individuals should behave in a given society and form the building blocks of social order. According to Durkheim, norms function as an external and coercive force on individuals; they enable social stability by limiting individual desires.²⁸

Ritualized practices—such as hospitality, holiday celebrations, and military send-off ceremonies—strengthen solidarity and a sense of belonging among community members. These rituals contribute to the reproduction of shared values by ensuring the continuity of social memory.²⁹ The continuity of social order is constructed through collectively

²⁶ See V. Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, Chicago: Aldine Publishing, 1969.

²⁷ İ. Kafesoğlu, *Türk Millî Kültürü*, İstanbul: Ötüken, 1984, pp. 246-248.

²⁸ See E. Durkheim, *The Rules of Sociological Method*, New York: Free Press, 1982.

²⁹ H. Beşirli, Türk Kültüründe Ritüeller ve Toplumsal Bellek, *Folklor/Edebiyat*, 21(83), 2015, pp. 45-60.

shared norms, rituals, and symbolic worlds of meaning, beyond individual actions. In this context, norms, rituals, and collective consciousness are fundamental sociological mechanisms that ensure both the structural integrity and cultural continuity of societies.

4.1. Rituals and Symbolic Practices

Rituals are patterns of action that are repeated at specific times, carry symbolic meaning, and are shared socially. Durkheim defines rituals as fundamental practices through which collective consciousness is reproduced. According to him, ritual practices bring individuals together, making shared values visible and strengthening social solidarity.³⁰ Rituals are symbolic actions that keep collective consciousness alive in Turkish and Japanese cultures.

- **Religious and Secular Rituals:** Holidays, military send-offs, weddings, and funerals are occasions where social status is reaffirmed and solidarity within the group is strengthened. Rituals such as the “Mevlit” in particular enable religion to function as a platform for social interaction.

- **The Tradition of Ülüş and Cilik:** The “ülüş” (sharing) rituals, originating from the old Turkish state system, form a historical foundation where economic and social justice is symbolically distributed and order is maintained through consent.

In Turkish culture, rituals primarily foster emotional unity and solidarity: Celebrations and sacrificial rituals reinforce religious and social solidarity. Military send-off ceremonies are effective in reproducing collective empathy and the perception of homeland. Hospitality functions as an interaction norm that ensures social harmony in daily life.³¹ It is possible to mention numerous festivals or rituals that keep collective consciousness alive in Japanese society. However, compared to Turkish society, we can say that these rituals known to exist in contemporary Japanese society are cultural practices that play a unifying role in society without carrying religious meaning.³² Although the tradition of sending off soldiers, which holds an important place in Turkish culture, is not practiced in Japanese culture, prayers are offered in jinja (Shinto shrines) for soldiers who sacrificed their lives for their country and are believed to have attained kami status according to Shinto beliefs. These prayers are offered so that

³⁰ See E. Durkheim, *Dini Hayatın İlk Biçimleri*, çev., Fuat Aydın, İstanbul: Ataç Yayınevi, 2005.

³¹ H. Beşirli, Türk Kültüründe Ritüeller ve Toplumsal Bellek, *Folklor/Edebiyat*, 21(83), 2015, pp. 45–60.

³² J. S. Brownlee, *Japanese Historians and the National Myths, 1600-1945: The Age of the Gods and Emperor Jinmu*, Japan: University of Tokyo Press, 1999, pp. 210-247.

their souls may find peace, their sacrifices may be honoured, and the nation may express its gratitude. The most important of these jinjas is Yasukuni Jinja in Tokyo. Some of the warriors prayed for at this jinja are criticized for their ruthless policies towards China and Korea, and foreign countries condemn the respect shown to them by the Japanese people and the rituals performed for them. Despite all condemnation and pressure, the continuation of the rituals by the imperial family and the people ensures that the shrine is seen as a symbol of Japanese militarism and extreme nationalism rather than a sacred monument dedicated to the war victims.³³

4.2. The Reproduction of Collective Consciousness

In Turkish society, collective consciousness is constantly reproduced through shared history, religious values, and practices of social solidarity. These practices can be seen as modern adaptations of what Durkheim termed “elements of mechanical solidarity.” In Japanese society, which is viewed as an extended family, collective consciousness is shaped through hierarchical relationships between classes. Each class (from the emperor to the farmer) has different responsibilities towards those above and below them, and the smooth functioning of society is possible only if individuals belonging to each class fulfill their responsibilities.³⁴

In short, the lives of the Japanese people are shaped around mutual obligations. Since the spiritual reward for one's sacrifices for others is considered important, there is no expectation of reward from the other party. They avoid individualism and competition by pushing their limits in order to fulfil their obligations. In this context, they also prevent feelings of self-pity and self-admiration.³⁵ The Japanese are one of the few societies that have managed to live harmoniously as a respect-based society. The concept of respect applies not only to the people who make up society, but also to every tangible or intangible entity that touches human life to a greater or lesser extent. People doing their jobs in the best possible way while considering the benefit of society, not harming the nature that surrounds their living environment, and not interfering with the habitats of

³³ J. Havlíček, Religion, Politics and National Identity in Modern Japan: Examining the Issue of Yasukuni Shrine, *Religio*. 17(1), 2009, pp. 57-60. <https://hdl.handle.net/11222.digilib/125275>

³⁴ M. Fujiwara, Nihonjin to Shūdan Shugi -Gakkō Shūdan Shugi' ni Chakumoku Shite-, *Wasedaigaku Bunka Kōsō Gakubu Gendai Ningen-ron-kei Okabe Zemi Ronbun/Sotsugyō Kenkyū*, 2018, p. 321. https://k-okabe.waseda.jp/semi-theses/1813Masaatsu_FUJIWARA.pdf

³⁵ R. Benedict, *The Chrysanthemum and The Sword, Patterns of Japanese Culture*, London: Secker & Warburg, 1947, p. 233.

animals are indicators of the understanding of respect that has been passed down from generation to generation in Japanese society.³⁶

5. The Construction of Social Order in Turkish and Japanese Cultures: A Comparative Analysis

In Turkish culture, collective consciousness is centred on family and kinship ties and is “we”-oriented, with solidarity being emotional.³⁷ The concept of “us” in Japanese culture, however, is not limited to the family but extends to encompass the entire society. Kokutai (国体) is a concept that emerged in this context during the Meiji period. The Japanese race is considered a large family nation ruled by the emperor, who, according to Shintoism, is believed to be descended from the gods. With this understanding, every Japanese person is seen as a voluntary servant of the emperor, and showing respect and obedience to superiors under all circumstances is considered equivalent to patriotism. The concept of Kokutai is seen as a unifying element of Japanese national life, and the state takes incentive measures to ensure its acceptance and support by society.³⁸ Japanese nationalism exists through Shintoism and the continuity of the Japanese Empire. The Emperor is seen as the sole person representing the essence of Japanese cultural tradition and as the protector of court culture. In this context, the prevailing view among the general public is that without the Emperor, the Japanese people would have no identity.³⁹

The fundamental principle of Japanese society is respect and obedience towards superiors. In Japan, the father-son relationship, which was foremost in Confucian philosophy focused on human relationships and spread throughout the country in the 7th-8th centuries, is replaced by the ruler-subject relationship, which is normally second in importance. This respect and obedience, deeply ingrained in Japanese nature, is strongly felt in language, behavior, and traditions.⁴⁰ Indeed, their language contains numerous expressions of respect shaped by this understanding. Respect for ancestors is seen as the origin of Japanese identity, and it is believed that if this is lost, identity will also disappear. It is believed that a part of the spirit of the deceased ancestor enters the body of a grandchild and continues to

³⁶ G.A. Cobbold, *Religion in Japan: Shintōism—Buddhism—Christianity*, New York: Society For Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1905, p. 9.

³⁷ See D. Kandiyoti, *Cariyeler, Bacılar, Yurttaşlar: Kimlikler ve Toplumsal Dönüşümler*, İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 1997.

³⁸ W.M. Fridell, The Establishment of Shrine Shintō in Meiji Japan, *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, 2(2-3), 1975, pp. 137-138.

³⁹ S.S. Large, *Emperor Hirohito and Showa Japan: A Political Biography*, London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2003, p. 171.

⁴⁰ E.W. Clement, *A Handbook of Modern Japan*, Chicago: A. C. McClurg & co. 1913, p. 49, 250.

exist. Japanese identity is positioned somewhere between ancestors and grandchildren.⁴¹

In Turkish culture, social control is exercised through the concepts of neighborhood pressure and shaming,⁴² while in Japanese culture, the fear of social exclusion and a culture of shame prevail.⁴³ In Turkish culture, norms are largely internalized culturally through moral values, religious references, and traditional social expectations. In social life, mechanisms such as shame, sin, social condemnation, and social pressure, expressed by Durkheim's concept of "social sanction," regulate individual behaviour not only through legal sanctions but also through social approval and respectability. Norm violations are often punished through shaming, exclusion, or loss of reputation rather than formal penalties. In this sense, the fact that the individual's relationship with society is based on emotional bonds aligns with Durkheim's observations regarding the "external and coercive" nature of norms.

In Japanese society, which is viewed as an extended family, it is important to adapt to nature and other people in order to live peacefully. Mistakes that cause individual harm may result in minor penalties within the framework of social tolerance, while behaviors that harm society as a whole or a large part of it are perceived as selfishness, stubbornness, and obstinacy, resulting in exclusion from society. In this context, we can describe Japanese culture as a lifestyle and aesthetic understanding that emerges while striving to adapt to society and the natural environment.⁴⁴

In Japanese culture, there is a prevailing understanding that things that benefit the public good are more readily accepted in the name of maintaining peace. Individual desires and wishes that could harm social norms are often suppressed. Hayashi Razan, a Confucian scholar known as Japan's first modern historian, despite his opposition to Shinto beliefs, evaluates Shinto from the perspective of Confucian metaphysics in his 1648 work *Shinto Denju Sho* (Selections from Instructions on Shinto), based on the idea that it is in the public interest. Although he opposed the divine origin of the emperor, he chose to censor this idea in his work, believing it would harm society. Furthermore, rather than creating tension between the Confucian Philosophy he advocated and the Japanese ethnic belief of

⁴¹ K. Ishii, *Gendai Nihonjin no Tamashī no Yuku, Meiji Seitoku Kinen Gakkai Kiyō (Fukkan dai 44-gō)*, 2007, pp. 185-190.

⁴² See Z. Gökalp, *Türkçülüğün Esasları*, İstanbul: Ötüken Yayınları, 1913.

⁴³ See R. Benedict, *The Chrysanthemum and The Sword, Patterns of Japanese Culture*, London: Secker & Warburg, 1947.

⁴⁴ S. Ōno, *Nihonjin no Kami*, Dai 2. ban, Tokyo: Kawade Shobo Shinsha Co., Ltd., 2014, pp. 189-190.

Shintoism by expressing these ideas, he desired for Shintoism to coexist with Confucian Philosophy alongside its coexistence with Buddhism.⁴⁵

Despite being shaped by different historical and cultural contexts, Turkish and Japanese societies are amenable to sociological comparison as societies characterized by strong collectivist tendencies, where social order is shaped by group norms rather than individual preferences.⁴⁶ In Turkish culture, rituals are important practices that make social solidarity visible. Rituals fulfil functions such as solidarity, sharing, and emotional integration in social life.⁴⁷ Hospitality, holiday celebrations, and condolence visits, which Goffman refers to as “interaction rituals,” are intensely observed in Turkish society.⁴⁸ Rites of passage such as circumcision, military send-offs, and weddings can be evaluated within the framework of Turner's concept of “liminality.” These practices reinforce both status transformation and individuals' social belonging, not just their special moments.⁴⁹ Both everyday and rites of passage rituals exhibit a context-sensitive and relatively flexible structure.⁵⁰

In Turkish culture, national and religious holidays that foster social solidarity, sharing, and emotional unity are replaced in Japanese culture by festivals shaped by Shintoism. These festivals, which can be described as calendar rituals, originated from rituals performed to communicate with sacred beings called Kami in Shintoism, which has far fewer doctrines than other religions. Throughout the year, festivals with different themes such as the emperor, nature, the elderly, adolescence, children, and the new year are held across the country. While religious leaders emphasize the religious content, the people participate in the festivals and act together, regardless of differences of opinion or personality.⁵¹ While festivals that function similarly but differ spatially are considered the most important palace festivals, their purpose is to strengthen the emperor's political and religious

⁴⁵ J.S. Brownlee, *Japanese Historians and the National Myths, 1600-1945: The Age of the Gods and Emperor Jinmu*, Japan: University of Tokyo Press, 1999, pp. 26-28.

⁴⁶ See G. Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions and Organizations Across Nations* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2001; Ç. Kağıtçıbaşı, *Benlik, Aile ve İnsan Gelişimi: Kültürel Psikoloji*, İstanbul: Koç Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2010.

⁴⁷ See E. Durkheim, *Dini Hayatın İlkel Biçimleri*, çev., Fuat Aydın, İstanbul: Ataç Yayınevi, 2005.

⁴⁸ See E. Goffman, *Interaction Ritual: Essays on Face-to-Face Behavior*, New York: Anchor Books, 1967.

⁴⁹ See V. Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, Chicago: Aldine Publishing, 1969.

⁵⁰ See S. Özbudun, *Ayından Törene: Siyasal İktidarın Kurulma ve Kurumsallaşma Sürecinde Törenlerin İşlevleri*, Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 1997.

⁵¹ M. Ashkenazi, *Matsuri: Festivals of a Japanese Town*, America: University of Hawaii Press, 1993, p. 8.

authority.⁵² The rituals performed by the imperial family in palaces or important shrines that combine nature and culture, and communicated to the entire public through the media, promote psychological collectivism among the Japanese by serving the government's neo-nationalist aims.⁵³ Even after devastating disasters that cause great loss, people do not abandon their festival traditions.⁵⁴ In this context, it is possible to say that festivals are a social tool that prevents conflicts between people, strengthens unity and nationalism, and shapes the social spirit.

Although festivals have religious roots, they are not solely religious practices. In Japanese thought, rather than praying to the gods for a wish or desire and waiting for a result, it is preferred to act in cooperation with the gods. Festivals are the most beautiful examples of this. People participate in festivals where they enjoy food, drink, music, and performing arts with the gods in order to live a happy life. In other words, the prevailing idea is that the country's peace and prosperity can be achieved by combining the powers of the people and the gods.⁵⁵

Holiday visits and condolence practices, in particular, embody Durkheim's approach that "collective consciousness" is reproduced through rituals.⁵⁶ Collective consciousness positions the individual as part of the community rather than as a personal identity; it ensures social cohesion around shared values, beliefs, and emotions.⁵⁷ In Turkish society, the channels for transmitting collective consciousness are shaped around the family, the neighbourhood, religious and national narratives, and shared forms of emotional expression.⁵⁸ Family, kinship, and neighbourhood relationships stand out as the fundamental areas where collective consciousness is embodied in daily life.⁵⁹ The emphasis on "us" takes precedence over individual identity, strengthening social belonging.⁶⁰

⁵² I. Noriyuki, *Shintō no Yukue, Matsuyamadaigaku Ronshū*, 31(1), 2019, p. 59.

⁵³ S. S. Large, *Emperor Hirohito and Showa Japan: A Political Biography*, London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2003, p. 171.

⁵⁴ H. Satō, *Tatari Chi-batsu Tensai Nipponrettō ni Okeru Saika to Shūkyō, Shūkyō Kenkyū*, 86/2, 2012, pp. 152-154.

⁵⁵ M. Takemitsu, *Issatsu de Wakaru Shintō to Nihon Shinwa*, Japan: Kawade Shobo Shinsha Co., 2013, p. 23.

⁵⁶ See E. Durkheim, *Dini Hayatın İlkel Biçimleri*, çev, Fuat Aydın, İstanbul: Ataç Yayinevi, 2005.

⁵⁷ See E. Durkheim, *The Division of Labor in Society*, New York: Free Press, 1984.

⁵⁸ Ç. Kağıtçıbaşı, *Benlik, Aile ve İnsan Gelişimi: Kültürel Psikoloji*, İstanbul: Koç Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2010; A. M. Yel, (2007). *Toplumsal Normlar ve Değerler*, içinde, A. Albayrak (Ed.), *Din Sosyolojisi*, İstanbul: Ensar Yayınları, 2007, pp. 135-158.

⁵⁹ See S. Özbudun, *Ayından törene: Siyasal İktidarın Kurulma ve Kurumsallaşma Sürecinde Törenlerin İşlevleri*, Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 1997.

⁶⁰ See G. Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions and Organizations Across Nations* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2001.

Because the construction of social order in Turkish culture is established through culturally specific means such as emotional attachment and face-to-face relationships, it can exhibit a relatively tolerant and flexible structure towards individual deviations.⁶¹

In Japanese society, family, kinship, and neighbourly relationships play an important role in daily life practices, especially in rituals such as weddings, funerals, and births. Although there was an attempt to change these traditions under American pressure after the war, the concept of family and its associated traditions have continued among the Japanese people in their original form. Obtaining family approval for marriage, the bride's family preparing the dowry, and the exchange of gifts between families during the engagement are routine practices carried out before the wedding.⁶² Although marriages are seen symbolically as the union of two people, they also signify the bonding of families through them. In the future, the two families will serve as each other's helpers and ceremonial supporters.⁶³

In Turkish culture, when a new born baby's umbilical cord falls off, it is traditionally buried in a place chosen by the family with good wishes for the baby. In Japanese society, parents keep it in a box for years and give it to the child when they marry and leave home (optional). A similar practice is the naming of the new born baby. In Turkish society, the practice of naming the baby, which involves family elders whispering the name into the baby's ear as part of Islamic rituals, is reflected in Japanese society as a ceremony called the seventh night celebration (it does not have to be exactly seven days after birth), where close family members celebrate the safe arrival of the new family member and name the baby.⁶⁴

Japanese funeral ceremonies, unlike religious practices in Turkish culture, are conducted according to family traditions without regard to religious beliefs. In Japanese society, individuals are expected to attend funeral ceremonies in all circumstances. Even if it is the funeral of a neighbour, relative, or friend with whom they have no or very little contact, or even a rival or someone with whom they have a feud, people are expected to offer their condolences and take time off work to attend the funeral. Those who fail to fulfil these duties are generally stigmatized and looked down upon socially. The penalties imposed on those who do not attend events such as funerals, memorial services, and grave visits for their relatives are

⁶¹ See Ç. Kağıtçıbaşı, *Benlik, Aile ve İnsan Gelişimi: Kültürel Psikoloji*, İstanbul: Koç Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2010.

⁶² S. Kunio, *Shinzoku Ni Kakawaru Hō to Sosen Sūhai, Kirisuto to Sekai, Tōkyō Kirisutokyōdaigaku Kiyō Dai 12 go*, ISSN0916-9881, 2002, p. 16.

⁶³ J. Hendry, *Understanding Japanese Society*, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 1995, pp. 139-141.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, 134.

quite severe.⁶⁵ While in Turkish society it is also expected that relatives, friends, and neighbours attend funeral ceremonies or pay condolence visits, it is seen that Turkish society is not as strict as Japanese society when it comes to social exclusion.

While norm violation in Turkish society is mostly controlled through moral condemnation and social exclusion, in Japanese society the strongest control mechanism over individuals is the fear of disrupting social harmony.

Conclusion

In Turkish culture, social order is constructed in a multi-layered manner through norms, rituals, and collective consciousness. Thus, while social order in Turkish culture is established primarily through emotional bonds and moral values, in Japanese culture, order is structured around discipline, a sense of duty, and social harmony. This situation demonstrates that the universal sociological mechanisms of social order are realized in different ways depending on the cultural context.

Unlike other societies, the Japanese understanding of spiritual development is based on individuals fulfilling their responsibilities to each other and to the gods, who are considered superior beings. Regardless of their social status, individuals are expected to refrain from selfishness in their daily lives, to suppress their desires, and to be patient. Only by acting in this manner can individuals make positive contributions to society. While individuals in Turkish society are also expected to conform to society and avoid deviance, it cannot be said that they are as self-sacrificing as the Japanese in terms of contributing to society.

In both cultures, social order is maintained through the internalization of norms, the continuity of rituals, and the strong reproduction of collective consciousness. However, the way these processes operate and the relationship between the individual and society are shaped by different sociological logics. In both societies, norms regulate individuals' behaviour through voluntary compliance. Turkish rituals are more emotional and participatory in character, while Japanese rituals are more formal, controlled, and symbolically dense practices. Nevertheless, in both cultures, rituals are fundamental mechanisms that strengthen the individual's bond with the social whole.

⁶⁵ S. Kunio, *Nihonjin no Shūkyō-kan to Sosen Sūhai no Kōzō, Kirisuto to Sekai, Tōkyō Kirisutokyōdaigaku Kiyō Dai 13 go*, 2003, pp. 16, 47.
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