



ANALYSIS OF METAPHORICAL UNITS BASED ON THE CONCEPT OF “HOMELAND” IN FRENCH AND UZBEK

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Abstract

This study explores how the concept of homeland is metaphorically expressed in French and Uzbek, focusing on the terms *patrie* and *vatan*. Using a comparative approach based on cognitive semantics and discourse analysis, the paper identifies several recurring metaphorical models such as the homeland as mother, home, sacred land, and inherited legacy. In addition to these models, the article also discusses the cultural, historical, and ideological factors that influence the formation of these metaphors. The comparison shows that French metaphorical patterns reflect civic and institutional ideas, while Uzbek metaphors convey emotional, spiritual, and identity-centered meanings. Overall, the findings demonstrate that the conceptualization of homeland is closely tied to each society's worldview, offering valuable insights for studies in intercultural communication and linguistic cognition.

Keywords: Conceptual metaphor, homeland, *patrie*, *vatan*, comparative linguistics, cultural cognition.

Introduction

Metaphor functions as an important cognitive tool that helps individuals interpret complex social and cultural ideas. Instead of defining abstract concepts directly, speakers often rely on metaphorical imagery that makes such concepts easier to



grasp. The idea of homeland is a clear example of this process. It is not only a geographic place but also a symbolic space shaped by memory, emotion, and cultural tradition. In Uzbek culture, the word vatan carries strong emotional and spiritual meaning, while in French, patrie is more closely connected with political history and civic identity. Examining these metaphorical expressions therefore helps clarify how each language encodes cultural attitudes toward the homeland. In French, the modern understanding of patrie developed through major political changes such as the Enlightenment and the French Revolution. The metaphors that appear in this context tend to highlight citizenship, responsibility, and national continuity. Expressions like servir la patrie, défendre la patrie, and héritage national reflect a worldview in which the homeland is associated with shared political values and historical duty. These metaphors present the homeland as something maintained by collective action and civic engagement.

A particularly common metaphor in French discourse depicts the homeland as a kind of living, organized body. Phrases such as le cœur de la patrie or les forces vives de la nation portray France as an entity that depends on its people to function. This type of imagery fits well with republican ideals, where citizenship plays a central role in defining national belonging. Because of this, French metaphors tend not to rely on emotional or spiritual imagery; instead, they focus on institutional identity.

Uzbek metaphors related to vatan, however, draw much more heavily from emotional and sacred associations. One of the most deeply rooted metaphors is the homeland as a mother. Expressions like ona yurt highlight a relationship based on warmth, protection, and gratitude. The symbolic role of motherhood in Uzbek culture strongly influences how people speak about the homeland, making this metaphor especially meaningful. Other frequently used expressions, such as muqaddas tuproq and aziz diyor, suggest that the homeland is not only important emotionally but is also spiritually significant.

The maternal metaphor carries particular weight in Uzbek discourse. When speakers use phrases such as vatan ona kabi aziz, they express a sense of loyalty and devotion that goes beyond political obligation. These metaphors frame the homeland as something that deserves respect and care, much like a parent does. This perspective is tied to long-standing cultural values emphasizing family ties and moral commitment.



Another aspect of Uzbek metaphorical language involves associating the homeland with sacredness. Describing the land as muqaddas reflects the spiritual role that territory plays in the cultural imagination. This idea is further reinforced by historical narratives about protecting the homeland and honoring the land of one's ancestors. As a result, the metaphor of homeland as sacred space remains strongly embedded in Uzbek identity.

The differences in metaphorical representation between the two languages reflect their distinct historical and cultural backgrounds. France's national identity developed through political movements and institutional structures, which explains the prominence of civic and rational metaphors. In contrast, Uzbek metaphors are shaped by emotional attachment to the land, family-based social organization, and traditional reverence for ancestry and sacred places.

Despite these differences, there are also common metaphorical patterns. Both languages use the idea of home or place of return to describe the homeland, as seen in *retour au pays* in French and *yurtga qaytish* in Uzbek. These expressions highlight safety, familiarity, and a sense of belonging. Likewise, metaphors related to heritage — *patrimoine national* in French and *bebaho meros* in Uzbek — show that people in both cultures view the homeland as something passed down from earlier generations.

In conclusion, the metaphorical representations of homeland in French and Uzbek reveal meaningful differences in how each culture understands national belonging. French metaphors tend to emphasize civic duty, institutional continuity, and collective responsibility. Uzbek metaphors, on the other hand, highlight emotional closeness, familial imagery, and spiritual depth. These distinctions show that conceptual metaphors provide valuable insight into cultural worldview, offering a deeper understanding of how different societies imagine and express their connection to the homeland.

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