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**TURKIC COGNITION IN RIDDLES IN THE CUMAN DICTIONARY**

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**Abstract:** The article deals with Turkish knowledge in the transmission of riddles in the «Codex Cumanicus» dictionary. In the inner content and semantics of riddles, the knowledge of the Turkic peoples, their perception of the linguistic picture of the world plays an important role. We can see the lexical and semantic commonality of riddles used in the Kazakh language that have survived to this day. In the article, the general knowledge of the Turkic people is explained by the heavenly world, man himself, nature, perception of time and space. This is due to the fact that all Turks perceive the surrounding world in the same way, and according to this, the text of the mystery is compiled according to various signs of hidden objects. The riddles are hidden by colors, properties, signs, and the location of objects such as the moon, stars, sky, clouds, and sun, and, accordingly, the general communication skills of the listeners and the hidden ones make it possible to understand and accept each of them. The other is correct, and solve the puzzle. Knowledge serves a great purpose in concealing human behavior and body parts, behavior, natural phenomena, time, weight and spatial dimensions. The riddles in the «Codex Cumanicus» contain such lore-based themes. At the same time, it is shown that it is necessary to pay attention to criticism, quality, type, function, movement of the object, which is the basis for creating riddles, and analyze them. Since the «Codex Cumanicus» monument is a common relic of the Turkic peoples, it includes that knowledge is common to the Turks of that period, and that the Turkic knowledge of that period is characteristic of today's branches of individual Turkic languages, including the Kazakh language. The article completes a series of studies on the «Codex Cumanicus» and mysteries.

**Keywords:** Codex Cumanicus, dictionary, riddles, linguistic cognition, worldview, metaphor, imagery, continuity

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**ҚҰМАНДАР СӨЗДІГІНДЕГІ ЖҰМБАҚТАРДАҒЫ ТҮРКІЛІК КОГНИЦИЯ**

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**Түйін:** Мақалада «Codex Cumanicus» сөздігіндегі жұмбақтардың берілуіндегі түркілік таным қарастырылған. Жұмбақтардың ішкі мазмұны мен семантикасында түркі жұртының танымы, әлемнің тілдік бейнесін қабылдауы үлкен рөл ойнайды. Бүгінгі күнге дейін жеткен, қазақ тілінде қолданылатын жұмбақтардың да лексикалық, семантикалық ортақтығын көреміз. Мақалада түркі жұртына ортақ танымды аспан әлемімен, адамның өзімен, табиғатпен, уақыт пен кеңістікті қабылдауымен түсіндіруге болады. Себебі қоршаған әлемді барлық түркі жұрты бірдей қабылдайды және соған сәйкес жасырылған заттардың түрлі белгілеріне қарай жұмбақ мәтіні құрастырылады. Ай, жұлдыз, аспан, бұлт, күн секілді заттардың түр-түсіне, қасиеттеріне, белгілеріне, орналасқан жеріне орай жұмбақтар жасырылады, соған сәйкес тыңдаушылар жасырушылардың ортақ коммуникативтік аялық білімдері бір-бірін дұрыс түсініп, қабылдауға, жұмбақты шешуге мүмкіндік береді. Адамның мінез-құлқы мен дене мүшелерін жасыруға, жүріс-тұрыстарын, табиғаттың құбылыстарын жасыруға, уақыт, салмақ, аралық өлшемдерін жасыруға таным үлкен қызмет етеді. «Codex Cumanicus» жазба ескерткіші құрамындағы жұмбақтар таным негізінде осындай тақырыптарды қамтыған. Сонымен қатар жұмбақтардың жасалуына тірек болатын заттың сынына, сапасына, түріне, қызметіне, қимылына назар аударып, олардың талдануы қажеттігі көрсетілген. «Codex Cumanicus» ескерткіші түркі жұртына ортақ жәдігер болғандықтан, таным да сол кезеңдегі түркілерге ортақ екендігі, сол кезеңдегі түркілік таным бүгінгі күнгі жекелеген түркі тілдерінің тармақтарына, оның ішінде қазақ тіліне де тән екендігі қамтылған. Мақала «Codex Cumanicus» және жұмбақтарға қатысты жазылған зерттеулер қатарын толықтырады.

**Кілт сөздер:** «Codex Cumanicus», сөздік, жұмбақтар, тілдік когниция, дүниетаным, метафора, бейне, сабақтастық

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**ТЮРКСКАЯ КОГНИЦИЯ В ЗАГАДКАХ В СЛОВАРЕ КУМАНОВ**

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**Аннотация:** В статье рассматриваются турецкие знания в передаче загадок в словаре «Codex Cumanicus». Во внутреннем содержании и семантике загадок большую роль играет знание тюркских народов, их восприятие языковой картины мира. Мы можем видеть лексическую и семантическую общность загадок, используемых в казахском языке, дошедших до наших дней. В статье общие знания тюркского народа объясняются небесным миром, самим человеком, природой, восприятием времени и пространства. Это связано с тем, что все тюрки воспринимают окружающий мир одинаково, и согласно этому текст мистерии составляется по различным признакам скрытых предметов. Загадки спрятаны по цветам, свойствам, знакам и расположению таких объектов, как луна, звезды, небо, облака и солнце, и, соответственно, общие коммуникативные навыки слушателей и спрятавшихся позволяют понять и принять каждую из них. другой правильно, и решить загадку. Знание служит великой цели в сокрытии человеческого поведения и частей тела, поведения, природных явлений, времени, веса и пространственных измерений. Загадки в «Codex Cumanicus» содержат такие темы, основанные на знаниях. При этом показано, что необходимо обращать внимание на критику, качество, тип, функцию, движение предмета, являющегося основой для создания загадок, и анализировать их. Поскольку памятник «Codex Cumanicus» является общей реликвией тюркских народов, в него включено, что знания являются общими для тюрков того периода, и что тюркские знания того периода характерны для сегодняшних ветвей отдельных тюркских языков, в том числе

казахский язык. Статья дополняет серию исследований, посвященных «Codex Cumanicus» и тайнам.

**Ключевые слова:** Codex Cumanicus, словарь, загадки, языковая когниция, мировоззрение, метафора, образ, преемственность

### **Introduction**

The Codex Cumanicus may be regarded as a medieval Kipchak monument that conveys the worldview of the Turkic peoples as a whole and embodies a distinct Turkic cultural code. This monument shows that the history of the Cumans was closely intertwined with the histories of the Khazars, Pechenegs, and Massagetae. It addresses issues shared by the tribes that inhabited the Great Turan and the Cumans, including onomastic and toponymic features, as well as religious and political views and aspects of social life. The manuscript consists of two parts. In the second part, the main text of the Codex is presented together with its Latin translations. In the third part, a dictionary is provided, comprising 2,838 entries: Cuman–Latin, Persian–Latin, and German–Latin. The dictionary section also includes appendices, a bibliography, and corrections to the information contained in the text.

In the Codex Cumanicus, one can find riddles that are still used in modern Kazakh. The continued presence of these riddles in contemporary Kazakh indicates that the foundations of our historical heritage are rooted in the Kipchaks. If the Kazakhs' ultimate origins are indeed connected with the Kipchaks, then it is natural that the riddles recorded in the dictionary should display clear similarities. We consider the Turkic cognition manifested in the riddles of the Cuman dictionary to be common to the broader Turkic world. The shared nature of Turkic cognition reflects the affinity of worldview and perspectives among Turkic-speaking peoples of common origin.

### **Materials and Methods**

The «Codex Cumanicus» is an exceptional work of shared significance for the Turkic world and possesses considerable historical value. Many scholars worldwide have devoted extensive research to this monument, examining it from different perspectives, including K.Grenbek, G.Gabain, V.Drimba, A.Garkavets, A.Quryshzhanuly, S.Duisenov and others.

«The Codex Cumanicus, which is presently housed in the Library of St. Mark, in Venice, Cod. Mar. Lat. DXLIX, is not one but several unrelated (except in the broadest sense) works which were ultimately combined under one cover. The Codex may be divided into two distinct and independent parts: I) a practical handbook of the Cuman language with glossaries in Italo-Latin, Persian and Cuman II) a mixed collection of religious texts, linguistic data and folkloric materials (the Cuman Riddles), stemming from a number of hands, with translations into Latin and a dialect of Eastern Middle High German. It is also clear that a number of subsequent hands made contributions to both sections» [15].

The edition prepared by G. Kun is close to an exact copy of the original and is among the most complete [5]. Each lexical item is re-registered according to the Latin alphabet and provided with a Latin translation. Many entries are presented in a comparative manner alongside cognate words from other Turkic languages (especially Chagatai, Uyghur, and Tatar), with interrelated forms appearing throughout. The «Codex Cumanicus» was published for the third time in 1887 in Saint Petersburg in a German translation. The translator was the renowned Turkologist V.V. Radlov; however, this edition was not complete. Radlov selected excerpts from different parts of Kun's edition, transcribed them in a manner modeled on the Russian alphabet, and translated them into German. The internal structure of that publication is as follows: (1) Preface, which discusses the content of 15 riddles used in the Cuman language; (2) Cuman-German dictionary (2,217 entries); (3) selected syntactic constructions; (4) Cuman texts and their translations; (5) a list of words (3,024 entries); (6) corrigenda (33 words). Because it was produced on the basis of Cyrillic script, Radlov's transcription remains convenient for contemporary readers. However, the external

form and meanings of certain words are not consistently rendered at an adequate level. In particular, Radlov's assertion that the Cuman language contained the sound «ts» and his systematic use of «ts» in place of «ch» proved to be a highly erroneous view.

The fourth edition of the «Codex Cumanicus» was prepared by the Danish scholar Karl Grenbek. In 1936, he published the original version of the manuscript, that is, he issued the facsimile of the manuscript in its original form. It was titled as a selection from the Codices of St. Mark. The «Codex Cumanicus» contains proto-forms of riddles that exist in our language today. Riddles occur among all peoples of the world and have taken shape as a literary genre. Even ancient philosophers offered their own assessments of riddles. Aristotle, considering their internal content and formation, drew attention to their nature as an «interlocking metaphor» [16]. Depending on whether a riddle consists of two, three, or four lines, it has been described as a «small form of folk poetry». Although regarded as folk creations, it is known that riddles also had authors; however, at the time, they were not recorded and were not attributed to a specific individual, which is why they came to be considered folk works. While once classified as a folklore genre, newly created riddles today often have identifiable authors. Therefore, there are grounds to consider such works not as folklore, but as part of authored children's literature.

The origin of riddles may stem from naming an object or phenomenon indirectly-by hinting and concealing rather than naming it directly. This suggests that their roots lie deep in the past. In the dictionary of the Kipchak language titled «Codex Cumanicus», compiled in the second half of the 13th century, riddles are included. When analyzed, these riddles closely resemble Kazakh riddles. For example: *Aq küymäniñ avzu yoq. Ol, yumurtqa* [18]. In the Kazakh version: «In the open steppe, a white yurt with no mouth or nose» (it is an egg). The word *küymä* itself serves as evidence that such a term existed at that time. If we date the Codex Cumanicus to the late 13th and early 14th centuries, then the riddle tradition reflected there must have emerged earlier.

Early examples of modern Kazakh riddles are also found in the dictionary *Diwani lughat at-turk* by the medieval encyclopedist Mahmut Qashqari. In general, the collection of riddles was connected with the gathering of other cultural and literary values of the Kazakhs. This work, begun in the second half of the 19th century, became systematically associated with the educational activities of Sh. Ualikhanov and Y. Altynsarin. The collection *Qazaq zhumbaqtary* («Kazakh Riddles»), compiled by the Russian researcher A.V.Vasilev [4,4], S.A. Amanzholov, the onomastic scholar T. Zhanuzakuly, and Q. Sattarov and others [1], was repeatedly expanded and republished.

Over time, Kazakh authors themselves composed riddles, thereby enriching the corpus of written children's literature. Abai, Shakarim, and Sultanmakhmut produced a number of riddles within this area of children's genres. The contributions of Zhaqan Smaqov, Muzafar Alimbaev, Qadyr Myrzaliev, and Qastek Baianbaev are also substantial. The riddles of these authors represent a legitimate continuation of the riddles recorded in the «Codex Cumanicus».

This article identifies features shared by the riddles of the Codex Cumanicus and modern Kazakh riddles. The riddle texts in the «Codex Cumanicus» are comparatively analyzed against their contemporary Kazakh counterparts. The study employs the comparative-historical method, descriptive analysis, lexico-semantic analysis, and approaches to textual interpretation. In addition, structural characteristics of riddles (verse vs. prose patterns), metaphorical models, and cognitive categories (nature, human, everyday life, the celestial world, etc.) are systematized, and their continuity with analogous patterns in Kazakh is established. The conclusions are drawn on the basis of published editions of the manuscript texts and the transcription variants proposed by researchers.

### **Results and Discussion**

Although the riddles in the text of the Codex Cumanicus have been studied comparatively against riddles in modern Turkic languages, they have not been examined from a cognitive perspective. Turkologists V. Bang, Yu. Nemet, G. Kun, A. Samoylovich, and S. E. Malov focused

on the reading of the riddles and paid particular attention to the transcription of their vocabulary. In line with the Russian-language development of Turkological scholarship at that time, issues related to translating the riddles were also discussed. A. Titce also published a work in English devoted to the «Codex Cumanicus» [13, p. 227].

«Contribution made in source-language references: Grønbech's references to the source languages of words contain omissions and errors. Osman Nedim Tuna states in the introduction to the translated edition: «Some words that are Mongolian but whose source was not indicated were marked by adding an abbreviated source label next to them». Although this contribution is commendable, Grønbech's incorrect attribution of the Turkish word top to F. (= Persian) was left uncorrected, and the reference aram. (= Aramaic) provided in the original work for kelepen, keleppen on p. 96 was also omitted» [13, p. 234].

In Kazakh scholarship, there are views and remarks regarding the riddles found in the Codex Cumanicus. The titles of works produced in Kazakhstan that address this topic are listed in Sh. Sh. Sarybaev's book *Qazaq til bilimi adabietinin korsetkishi «Index of Literature in Kazakh Linguistics»* [17, pp. 171–188]. It is also noted that: «In the second part of the Codex Cumanicus - the «Book of Missionaries» - there is the earliest collection in history consisting of 47 Turkic riddles» [2, pp. 218–227].

Kazakh riddles reflect the worldview and figurative thinking of the people. Our community created riddles on the basis of accumulated life knowledge and experience. Riddles were recognized as a form of verbal art that expresses human knowledge and wisdom. «...therefore, young people choosing a spouse, poets, and respected wise figures in the community—such as eloquent speakers and judges (bi), and others—would send riddles to one another, test their intellect, and compare their understanding» [3, p. 112].

«Across all these languages, there exists a body of source studies, historiographical, and other literature that is not very extensive, but sufficiently informative» [5, p. 89].

The view that «among the texts of the Codex, the most extensively studied part is the riddles» was expressed by Abzhan Quryshzhanuly [14, p. 43].

The theme of nature in the riddles

Many riddles are formed on the basis of:

the quality of an object «If you slaughter it, water flows instead of blood» - melon;

the action/behavior of an object «A living clock cries out» - donkey».

Such riddles often coincide with proverbs and sayings as well e.g., «Though it is shiny on the outside, it trembles on the inside».

Riddles are typically composed in verse, in prose, or in a dialogic/contest form resembling aitys. They may also be presented figuratively. This is the first characteristic of a riddle. For instance: «A white yurt in the open steppe, a yurt with no mouth or nose» (this is an egg). However, riddles do not always appear in figurative form; some are framed as direct questions. We can also observe that riddles expressed in the manner of eloquent speech likewise preserve rhyme e.g., «What is ag'at? What is sag'at?».

*Categories underlying the formation of riddles (Figure 2)*

### **Riddles within the theme of nature**

Animals and birds frequently serve as the basis of riddles, for example: «It does not burn in fire and does not sink in water» (ice).

*Tenridän tüskän toqmaciğ –*

*dört ayaqlı maymacıq.*

*Ol, kirpi*

«Tap, tap: tamyzyq, tamadyrğan tamyzyq, kölegesi bar köyedirgen tamyzyq». (It is a butterfly.)

### **Riddles expressed through metaphor**

*Kökçä ulaqim kögende semirir. Ol, qavun [qauun].*

The Kazakh version reads: «My mottled-blue lamb grows fat while tied to the tether.» Here, the melon is metaphorically represented as a «mottled-blue lamb». This metaphor may be understood as reflecting the worldview of Turkic communities who combined livestock breeding with a gradual shift toward sedentary life and the cultivation of crops; the comparison of a melon to a mottled lamb emerges from that experiential horizon. Worldview arises from how humans perceive the world, experience it, and comprehend its linguistic image.

«Kögen is a wool rope used to line up and tether small livestock (sheep, goats, lambs, kids). The rope is stretched between two stakes driven into the ground; along its length, loops are attached, and each animal is tied to a loop. Kögen is most commonly used during the milking of sheep and goats. After milking-or after the mothers leave for pasture-the young animals are released from the tether» [19].

The way a melon grows by trailing along its vines is correlated with the image of a mottled lamb «fattening» on the tether. Thus, expressing the hidden object through metaphor-by means of an equivalent figurative substitute-is a product of folk cognition. The paradigm of background knowledge, which becomes visible through human development and is closely connected with everyday life and livelihood, provides the foundation for cognitive studies. In concealing meanings in riddles, the human capacity for linguistic innovation reveals a cognitive ability for imagery. Metaphorization draws attention to the universal nature of the process of conceptual integration.

As Q.Zhubanov, who studied the history of Kazakh linguistics, noted: «To know the history of a language means to know the path along which it has grown and developed. Hence, it is necessary to understand what changes our language underwent over a long course, and why. Knowing the past is not an end in itself; it is one way of mastering the language» [11, 112]. By evaluating the «grown and developed» foundations of language, the urgent problems of linguistic science can be expected to find their solutions. Today, one area in Kazakh linguistics that requires focused and thorough research is the history of the formation of linguistic theory in Kazakh studies, the developmental features of different linguistic branches, and their place and contribution at the global level. From this perspective, examining how diverse linguistic concepts became established and considering their substantive characteristics comprehensively is especially important [12, 142].

*Kün altundan älc i keliyir [keliyrir] – kümis bïryi tarta keliyir [keliyr];  
ay altundan elc i keliyir – altun bïryi tarata keliyer. Ol, a[ydïnlik?].*

«Envoys come from beneath the sun-playing a silver pipe; envoys come from beneath the moon-playing a golden pipe. These are radiance, light, rays. This is a swan».

In this riddle it is said that an envoy comes from before the sun. Since the answer is aydynlyq-a swan-the envoy and the swan are metaphorically aligned. Because the swan symbolizes goodness, warmth, and love, these phenomena are metaphorically presented in the form of an “envoy” who brings them.

In Kazakh tradition, the camel is called the «ship of the desert». In the «Codex Cumanicus», it is likewise likened to a cart: *Araba – s aq! – tas araba s aq ete tüs ti. Ol, tövä* an answer that reflects Turkic cognition. In calling the camel the “ship of the desert,” an unknown author’s mode of thought was shaped on the basis of the people’s collective reasoning. There are grounds to regard the riddles of the «Codex Cumanicus» as rich in cognitive features and abundant in distinctive linguistic facts within the text. The central meaning and idea of a riddle becomes its main thematic focus.

Researchers propose the following criteria for those who understand and interpret a text:  
information is conveyed through the text, and attention is concentrated on it;  
the conditions and state of logical perception are retained in memory;  
the concept is recognized as a logical category;

the correspondence of time and space between the author and the work is maintained [12, 11].

*Al pac<sup>^</sup>ali, yabovli, altun bas<sup>^</sup>li, c<sup>^</sup>oxmarli. Ol - tyrna-dir.*

*Tav üstündä talas<sup>^</sup>man, tayayï bar bes<sup>^</sup> batman. Ol, tülküç<sup>^</sup>iginiñ [=tülküç<sup>^</sup>ikniñ] tüpegin.*

*Kec<sup>^</sup>e kelir qara ula<sup>a</sup>, erte barir qara ula<sup>a</sup>*

*Kec<sup>^</sup>e barir qara ula<sup>a</sup>, erte kelir qara ula<sup>a</sup>]. [Ol], tüñlik.*

### **Plants as the basis of riddles within the concept of nature**

*Biti-biti-bitidim,*

*bes<sup>^</sup> ayac<sup>^</sup>ya bitisdim,*

*könesuvum yuvursdim,*

*kök yibekim cirmasdim.*

*Ol, qina-dir.*

*'apc<sup>^</sup>ac<sup>^</sup>iq üstündä c<sup>^</sup>apc<sup>^</sup>ac<sup>^</sup>iq. Ol, amıs<sup>^</sup>-dir.*

### **Cosmological motifs within the “sky world” concept**

Cosmogony can also serve as the basis of riddles:

*Silevsin yayï silkip bolmas, sirma tonum bügüp bolmas. Ol, yulduz.*

«You cannot shake off the frost from the lynx; you cannot fold my gold-embroidered fur coat.”

These are stars.

### **Food and dishes as the basis of riddles within the concept of nature**

*Aq küymäniñ avzu yoq. Ol, yumurtqa.*

«A white yurt has no gate (no doorway)». This is an egg.

*Alan-qulan buv [=tuv] turur – ayri ayac<sup>^</sup>tan yav tamar;*

*qulan-alan tuv turur – quv ayac<sup>^</sup>tan yav tamar.*

«A bunčuk (banner/standard) stands this way-fat drips from a split branch; the bunčuk stands that way-fat drips from a hollow» (This is a ram roasting on a spit.)

A people's mentality and their view of the surrounding world and human society can be traced through linguistic forms. Their entire life, worldview, and stable expressions-memorized and used in an unchanged form-are preserved in riddles, proverbs, sayings, and symbols. V. von Humboldt stated that “as long as a people has its language, it has its spirit; as long as it has its spirit, it has its language; and it is difficult for me to imagine anything equivalent to these.” Thus, language and spirit, being, and worldview are inseparable categories.

«Although objects and phenomena in the world are shared by all people inhabiting the earth, each nation adapts those objects and phenomena to its culture, cognition, and way of being, and names them in accordance with its level of understanding and capacity for cognition» [12, 142].

*Uzun ayac<sup>^</sup> bas<sup>^</sup>ında ulu bitiv bitidim; kemsän ovlu kelgäy dep, kemsän turup saıladıñ. Ol, qarmaq bile baliq.*

// «At the end of a long pole I wrote a great letter; hoping that the unlucky/scaly one would come, I stood and waited for the unfortunate/scaly one». This is a fishing rod and a fish.

Aleksandr Garkavets provides the following excerpt:

«Codex Cumanicus» *Yügüniñiz, oylanlarim, aytiñiz kensi yazıqi- ñizni... Sen, tin atam, Bey Teñri erki bile benim yazuqimdan bos<sup>^</sup>atqil» [5].*

This work includes the worship practices, hymns, and riddles of the Kipchaks of the 13th–14th centuries.

We also observe that certain linguistic turns of phrase that Kazakhs today use as proverbs and sayings were used as riddles during the Kipchak period. For example: *Avzum ac<sup>^</sup>sam, öpkäm körünir*. The explanation reads: *es<sup>^</sup>ik ac<sup>^</sup>sa, ot körüngän-dir*-«If the mouth opens, the lungs are seen», meaning the fire visible when the door is opened. In modern Kazakh cognition, this expression functions as a proverb meaning that one's inner state becomes apparent. This Turkic cognitive pattern continues to the present day, and may be explained by the steppe-dwellers' close association with notions such as fire, water, and the steppe.

*Señseñ ayri bas<sup>^</sup>ında sesgiz qoysan inis bar... Ol, quysmic<sup>^</sup> // “On the head of a seņseñ hide*

there are burrows of eight rabbits... This is *segizköz*.”

«From the sacrum in humans, blood vessels and spinal nerves emerge through anterior and posterior openings; in animals, through upper and lower openings. Their number depends on the number of vertebrae that form the bone» [10, p. 480]. Thus, the riddle text is grounded in the object’s distinctive features and in the cognition required to recognize them. This riddle indicates that the Turkic world possessed medical cognition and knowledge; even the naming of *segizköz* demonstrates the precision of Turkic conceptualization.

*Tenridän tüs kân toqmacıq – dört ayaqlı maymacıq. Ol, kirpi.*

// «A little toqmachyq fallen from Tengri, with four clumsy legs». This is a hedgehog.

Not only the Turkic world, but humanity at large associated the hedgehog’s spines with needles, and thus used the name *toqmachyq*. The following example shows that the word *toqmachyq* is used not in Kazakh, but has remained in use in Turkmen to the present day:

«Buxaradagı ‘BCT Cluster’ paxta-toqmaşılıq klasteri...» [20].

This example confirms the continued currency of the lexeme *toqmachyq* in Turkmen.

## Results and discussion

The «Codex Cumanicus» is a distinctive source that brings together the lexical, grammatical, and cultural layers of the medieval Kipchak language into a single continuum. The riddles contained in this written heritage provide valuable material not only as folkloric texts but also as cognitive units that reveal the Kipchak society’s worldview, its relationship to the material world, and its patterns of thinking. Therefore, by comparatively studying the riddles of the Codex Cumanicus alongside riddles in contemporary Turkic languages- especially Kazakh riddles-it becomes possible to demonstrate historical continuity and shared cultural-cognitive commonality.

### 1. Genre nature and functions of riddle texts

A key feature of the riddles in the Codex is that most of them are presented in a short, concise, and figurative form. This directly corresponds to the classical structure of Kazakh riddles. The poetic nature of riddles, their reliance on metaphor, and their indirect description of the referent-without naming it explicitly-are common phenomena in both the medieval Kipchak tradition and modern Kazakh folklore.

At the same time, while some riddles are expressed in verse form, others are closer to prose and are even constructed through syntactic patterns reminiscent of oratorical speech. This mixed form suggests that the riddle genre has been multilayered since its earliest stages.

### 2. Lexical correspondences and historical continuity

A number of names and images in the riddles of the Codex clearly correspond to riddle patterns in modern Kazakh. For example, the model «*Aq küymäniñ avzu yoq. Ol, yumurtqa*» is very close-both semantically and structurally-to the Kazakh riddle «A white yurt in the open steppe, a yurt with no mouth or nose» Here, the representation of an egg through the image of a «white yurt» indicates that a folk metaphor has become a stable model.

This fact demonstrates that the Kipchak-language riddles are connected with the archaic layer that forms the foundational basis of Kazakh riddles. Hence, riddles are not merely a genre of entertainment; they function as historical carriers of linguistic and cultural information.

### 3. Cognitive categories: nature, the human, and everyday life

In terms of content, the riddles of the Codex cluster around several major conceptual domains. Among the most frequent are natural phenomena, animals, plants, food names, and the sky/celestial world.

Riddles related to nature are typically formed through an object’s external features (color, shape), movement (motion, change), or function. As in Kazakh riddles, the categories of «quality» and «action» appear as primary means of constructing riddle texts.

Animal imagery also occupies a prominent place. For instance, in the hedgehog riddle «*Tenridän tüs kân toqmacıq – dört ayaqlı maymacıq*», descriptive characterization co-occurs with

an emotionally colored evaluation. This reflects a Turkic worldview marked by a close relationship with nature.

In riddles involving plants, it is important that elements associated with sedentary life become noticeable. For example, the “mottled-blue sheep” metaphor in the melon riddle suggests that a nomadic community sought to conceptualize a new agricultural product through an image familiar from its own experience. This phenomenon shares a common basis with Kazakh texts such as “My mottled-blue sheep grows fat while tied to the tether.”

#### 4. Metaphorical models and conceptual similarity

The principal poetic core of the Codex riddles is metaphor. Here, the referent is presented through the image of another object: an egg as a «white yurt» a melon as a «mottled-blue sheep» a swan as an «envoy», a camel as a «cart», and so forth-forming an established system of comparisons.

Many of these models have also been preserved in modern Kazakh riddles. In other words, metaphor formation is not merely a linguistic phenomenon; it is the outcome of a stable cognitive system through which a people perceives the world. From this perspective, comparing the riddles of the Codex Cumanicus with modern Kazakh riddles demonstrates the existence of a shared cognitive code.

#### 5. Sociocultural knowledge and background information

Another important feature of riddles is that they preserve cultural information characteristic of a particular historical period. For example, terms such as küymä and kögen are not only words but also evidence of everyday life and social experience of the time. Their use within riddle texts indicates that material culture in daily life is encoded (fixed/encoded) through language.

In addition, the presence of allusions to human anatomy or medical knowledge in some riddles suggests that the Turkic worldview was not limited to everyday (household) experience. Such data imply that the Kipchak society possessed a system of practical knowledge.

#### 6. Research tradition and issues in scholarly circulation

For a long time, issues of reading, transcribing, and translating the riddle texts of the Codex Cumanicus remained among the central directions of Turkological scholarship. Most researchers prioritized the phonetic and graphic characteristics of the text and the sound forms of words. This is understandable, because the manuscript contains multiple linguistic layers and shows the influence of several authorial hands.

However, at the present stage it has become increasingly important to consider riddles not only as linguistic material but also as cognitive and cultural texts. Riddles are linguistic-cultural units that reveal a people’s ways of classifying the world, the logic of thinking, and the specific features of naming objects and phenomena.

#### 7. Continuity with modern Kazakh riddles

The results of the comparative analysis clearly demonstrate that the riddles of the Codex Cumanicus are close to modern Kazakh riddles in structural, thematic, and metaphorical terms. This proximity arises primarily from a shared nomadic way of life, a nature-oriented worldview, and the uninterrupted continuity of folk poetic tradition.

Accordingly, there are solid grounds to view Kazakh riddles as a direct continuation of the riddle tradition recorded in the Codex Cumanicus. The preservation of the riddle genre is one of the indicators confirming the resilience of the cultural memory of Turkic peoples and the continuity of historical cognition.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, the Turkic cognitive worldview reflected in the riddles contained in the Cuman dictionary is common to the Turkic world as a whole. The first shared feature is life in the vast open steppe; the second is close co-existence with livestock and animals; the third is strong ties with agriculture; and the fourth is the overall similarity of ways of living and everyday

practices. The cognition embodied in the riddles encompasses broad concepts such as the celestial world, the human, nature, and time and space. In terms of the celestial-world domain, riddles are grounded in folklore whose answers include the moon, stars, the sky, the blue vault of heaven, lightning, and clouds. Riddles related to the human domain constitute a type of folklore based on human character, body parts, actions, and patterns of behavior. Riddles related to nature represent a folklore type grounded in natural phenomena, objects found in nature, and processes characteristic of them. Riddles related to time and space include notions such as clocks, measures of time, distance/intervals, and units of weight and measurement.

The categories that serve as the basis for riddle formation can be associated with an object's features, qualities, type, function, and movement/action. Overall, because the «Codex Cumanicus» is a shared cultural artifact of the Turkic world, the cognitive worldview reflected in it was likewise common to Turkic peoples of that period. We consider that this Turkic cognition of the time is also characteristic of the branches of present-day Turkic languages, including the Kazakh language.

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