PARALLEL FORMS OF KOMAN RIDDLES IN TURKIC
FOLKLORE**Dilshoda Kulieva***Lecturer of Innerfaculty Department**Namangan State University**Namangan, Uzbekistan**E-mail: kulievadilshoda98@gmail.com*

ABOUT ARTICLE

Key words: coman riddles; Codex cumanicus; turkic nation's folklore; conservative; changing functional nature; kuymaniq; quymon; chair; yurt;

Received: 08.12.24**Accepted:** 10.12.24**Published:** 12.12.24

Abstract: this article discusses the coman riddles saved in the modern turkic folk riddles. Codex cumanicus is a manuscript kept in Italy nowadays, and it has riddles in a collection form. The number of the riddles is 47 and some of which are present in today's turkic nation's literature by changing its shape or without any change. The research analyzes them by comparing and contrasting their form and meaning. Also, the answers to the riddles are considered as they are an important part of them. The result shows that there are many riddles kept their form and meaning, also there are some which kept their form but changed their function, and finally, some which kept their meaning but changed the form. In conclusion, we can say that coman riddles are still living in modern turkic nations literature in different forms.

Introduction

The Cuman riddles are an ancient folklore source dating back to the late 13th and early 14th centuries. One of the main reasons for studying them is that they contain a collection of riddles, an important genre in Turkic folklore, and they represent one of the earliest collections of such riddles. The Codex Cumanicus manuscript is a shared literary heritage of the Turkic peoples, and the folklore materials within it are directly relevant to the oral literary traditions of Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Bashkir, Azerbaijani, Tatar, Turkmen, Karakalpak, and many other Turkic nations [5.22]. These riddles have played a significant role in the development of riddles across

all Turkic peoples. Therefore, along with the riddles in the manuscript, it is important to identify structural-semantic changes that occurred in the evolutionary development of artistic texts of riddles from related nations.

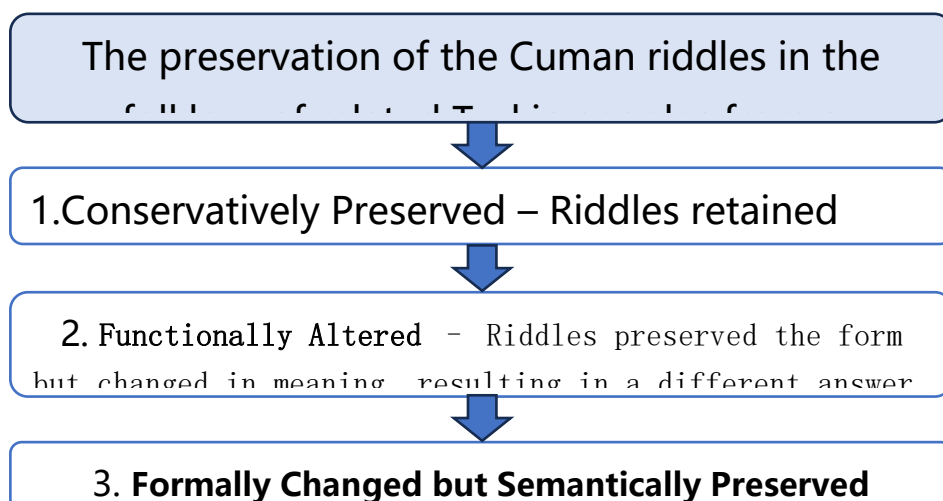
An Australian researcher, A. Tietze, compared some of the manuscript's riddles with their forms in the folklore of related nations, accomplishing this task to some extent, but not systematically. Additionally, he did not give adequate attention to the folklore of Uzbek, Kyrgyz, Karakalpak, Azerbaijani, and Turkmen peoples, focusing mainly on translating the Cuman riddles into English.

Folklorist M. Juraeva, in her doctoral dissertation on philology, *The Genesis of Uzbek Riddles* [5.21], explained six of the Cuman riddles and their parallel forms in Uzbek folklore. However, there are other Uzbek riddles found in the manuscript that have not yet been analyzed. This research aims to classify the forms of Cuman riddles preserved in the folklore of related nations and to present precise conclusions about the ways in which they have been preserved. Solving this issue will provide the main outcomes of the study.

Methods. In conducting the research, the methods of comparative analysis and comprehensive analysis were used. By referencing the Uzbek, Kyrgyz, Kazakh, Karakalpak, Turkish, Turkmen, Azerbaijani, and Tatar folklore, parallel forms of the Cuman riddles were identified. Additionally, these parallel riddles were analyzed by comparing how closely they matched the Cuman riddles in terms of preserving answer options and wording.

Results.

The results are systematically presented in the following table.



The findings indicate that the Cuman riddles have been largely preserved in the folklore of the analyzed nations, though not all have retained their original form. Specifically, riddles that have maintained their original structure were categorized as *conservatively preserved riddles*. These riddles retain both the appearance and meaning of the original Cuman riddles.

Riddles that preserved the form but whose function has changed were classified as *riddles with altered functional nature*. Most riddles fall into this category, with functional changes often resulting from shifts in social relations and changes in the population's lifestyle. Additionally, there are some Cuman riddles that have retained the meaning but changed in form, which led us to categorize them separately as *riddles that have changed in form but preserved in meaning*, as they do not fit into the previous two categories in terms of appearance and meaning.

Discussion

The findings indicate that the Cuman riddles have been preserved to a considerable extent in the folklore of the analyzed nations, though not all have retained their exact original form. Specifically, riddles that have preserved both their form and content were categorized as conservatively preserved riddles. This category includes riddles such as V, XI, XXI, XXVII, XXVIII, XXXVIII, and XL, which maintain both the appearance and meaning of the original Cuman riddles. Below, we will analyze them.

The Uzbek scholar M. Juraeva, in her research, noted that the riddle about the "egg," specifically the riddle "ak kuymaniq avzu joh (ol – jumurtka)", has been preserved in a conservative form. According to her, this riddle appears in Uzbek folklore as "Oq quymonning og'zi yo'q" (an egg). In the text, the word "quymon" refers to a type of dish prepared with eggs and flour, commonly known as "quymon" or "chimchaquymon" in the Bukhara dialect. This term is related to the literary word "quymoq" [5.27]. However, the word "kuymaniq" in the Cuman riddle does not refer to a dish, as evidenced by Turkologists' translations. For example, G. Guner defined this word as "tent" [16.18], while S. Malov interpreted it as "shape, form, image" [6.347]. H. Mahmutov associated it with the word "otaw", a structure of importance in nomadic Turkic life [9.88]. A. Inon mentioned that in the Bashkir language, it means "a dome-shaped bridal tent on wheels" [3.358]. This riddle also appears in various forms in Uzbek folklore, though these variations retain the meaning but not the exact form of the Cuman riddle. For example:

- 1) Oq o'tov, og'zi butov.
- 2) Mening bir o'tovim bor, Oynasi, eshigi yo'q.
- 3) Oy dalada oq o'tov, og'zi burni yo'q o'tov [11.72].

Over time, the object of comparison has changed from a "tent" to a "box" or "house," as seen in the following versions:

- 4) Oq sandiq, og'zi yo'q sandiq.
- 5) Oq uycha, eshigi ochilguncha.
- 6) Eshigi yo'q, oq chumboq.

7) Birgina uycha, teshigi ham, eshigi ham yo'q [11.73].

In Turkmen folklore, several conservatively preserved forms of the Cuman riddle also exist, where the object of comparison is similarly a tent, dome, or house:

- 1) Ak atamyň agzy bitik. (egg)
- 2) Akja kümmez, agzy ýok. (egg)
- 3) Ak öyüň işigi hem ýok, Deşigi hem ýok. (egg) [10.104].

In Azerbaijani folklore:

- 1) Ağ günbez, qapisi yox. (egg)
- 2) Ağca motal, ağzi yox (egg) [14.93].

In Tatar folklore, parallel forms use the terms "toshpo'lat" and "gumbaz":

- 1) Кечкенә генә ак ташпулат, Ишеге дә юк, тишеге дә юк (Йомырка)
- 2) Ак гембэзле бер таш мэчет бар, Керергэ ишеге юк, Гембэзен ватып керэлэр. (Йомырка) [8.111].

In Kyrgyz folklore, riddles about eggs closely resemble the Cuman riddle in form and meaning, with the comparison object referred to as "box," "tent," or "house."

In Karakalpak folklore, the word *mashit* (mosque) appears in addition to "box" and "tent":

- 1) Куў тақырда ақ сандық, Аўзы-мурны жоқ сандық. (egg)
- 2) Аўзи жоқ, ақ мешит. (egg)
- 3) Есиги де жоқ, тесиги де жоқ. Ақ отаў. (egg) [7.76].

Kazakh folklore uses the phrase "o'tov":

Айдалада ақ отау, ауыз мұрны жоқ отау. (egg) [1.34].

It is clear from the above that the hidden denotations and characteristics of the Cuman riddle are preserved in various forms across related Turkic folklores. For example, attributes like the egg's white color, dome shape, and lack of an opening appear consistently across Turkic riddles. We can conclude that the Cuman riddle about "egg" from "Codex Cumanicus" served as a foundational influence in the development of egg-related riddles in Turkic folklore. Its conservative form is preserved in Uzbek folklore, while other related Turkic folklores have altered its form while maintaining its meaning.

b) Functionally altered riddles: This category includes riddles that resemble the Cuman riddle in form but have changed in meaning or answer due to shifts in lifestyle, worldview, and mentality among Turkic communities.

However, today they have different solutions. This change is related to the evolution of lifestyle, activities, worldview, and way of thinking among the peoples. This category includes

riddles I, XV, XXIV, XXXI, and XXXV. For example, let us consider riddle I, which originally had the answer "butterfly" and was a four-line poetic riddle:

tap tap tamyzik,
tamadirgan tamizik
kolagasi b...
kojedirgan tamyzik. (Answer: butterfly) [4.61].

In modern versions, this riddle often appears with the answer "mirror" instead. For instance, consider the Turkmen variant:

Dam-damğam,
Damdiran damğam,
Gülbahar içinde
Güldüren damğam. (Answer: mirror).

There are two Eastern Turkic variants, one of which closely resembles the Cuman riddle:

Tabulyamu tabulyam,
Tamcib tuyan tabulyam,
Kolangidan josurnub
Kulub tuyan tabulyam. (Answer: mirror) [1.87].

Another mirror-related riddle in these cultures has a slightly different third line:

Tam tam tabilyam,
Tamib turyan tabilyam,
Aq sarajni icida
Kulub turyan tabilyam. (Answer: mirror) [1.87].

There are three Kazakh riddles about mirrors that retain elements of the Cuman riddle.

The first one was recorded in the Turgay region in northwestern Kazakhstan:

Таб табанак-табанак,
Табани залирак қожанақ,
Қуленкесе комустен,
Кулуп торғар қожанақ. (Answer: mirror) [1.96].

The third Kazakh riddle, while differing in the first two lines, retains certain elements in the third line:

Ҳәрре отир лажлим кус,
Берли отир лажлим кус,
Коленкеси комистен,
Кулип турян лажлим кус. (Answer: mirror) [1.96].

A similar Karakalpak riddle is also about mirrors:

Арман отир лепийна,

Берман отир лепийна,

Коленкеси гумистен,

Кулип отир лепийна. (Answer: mirror) [7.104].

In the following Uzbek riddles, many elements of the Cuman riddle are preserved:

Топ-тобоноқ, тобоноқ,

Тобони уо‘қ қуyonoқ,

Қуyonog‘i kumushdan,

Kulib turgan buvishdan. (Answer: mirror) [11.87].

Another Uzbek riddle, with the exception of the third line, is almost identical to the Cuman riddle:

Том, том, томчи,

Томиб тurgan томчи,

Аynи sahar ichida,

Kulib turgan томчи. (Answer: mirror) [11.125].

The following riddles, which contain an extended second part that could serve as separate riddles about a mirror, are also found in the Crimean Tatar and Ottoman Turkish traditions. The Crimean Tatar version is:

Тап надир, тапис надир?

Гулбаҳарда гумус надир?

На жардадир, на гоктадирр,

Гумла олам исиндадир. (Answer: mirror) [12.15].

In Turkish folk riddles, the first two lines are quite similar:

Тар мидир, тапш мидир,

Гүл мүдүр, гүмүш мүдүр,

Kadınların dizindedir. (Answer: mirror) [13.81].

Among related riddles in the Turkic-speaking nations, both Eastern Turkic variants are nearly identical to the Cuman riddle, though the third line in the second riddle (*Aq sarajni icida*) is slightly different. Excluding this line, the Cuman riddle retains its form in Eastern Turkic riddles.

As for the three Kazakh riddles, the first two are quite similar to each other and also to the Cuman riddle. However, the third Kazakh riddle includes the third line of the Cuman riddle (*Kolenkesi komisten*), similar to the Karakalpak riddle (*Kolenkesi gumisten*). Although the

third lines of the last two riddles contain elements from the Cuman riddle, the answers align with those found in the Kazakh and Eastern Turkic riddles.

Among related Turkic riddles, Uzbek riddles incorporate nearly all elements of the Cuman riddle, making it no exaggeration to say that they have preserved its features. When comparing Uzbek riddles, we find that the Cuman riddle has been nearly preserved. The Crimean Tatar and Ottoman Turkish riddles primarily retain elements of the Cuman riddle in the first line. Thus, it is evident that the Cuman riddle has preserved its characteristics in all related Turkic riddles. In all the examples mentioned above, we find numerous elements of the Cuman riddle.

c) Formally Changed but Semantically Preserved Riddles

The Cuman riddles have preserved their meaning, although their form has changed over time. In this category, riddles share the same answer but have undergone modifications in certain words or expanded text, with additional lines over time. This category includes riddles IV, XVII, XVIII, XXII, XXXVI, XXXIX, XLI, and XLIII.

For instance, certain elements of the two-line riddle IV about a "pit" can be found in Kyrgyz, Karakalpak, and Turkmen riddles. The Kyrgyz riddles about the pit are as follows:

1. *Жонсоң жоон, Кессең узун.*
2. *Ичи тоқ, көлөкөсү жок.*
3. *Өзү бар, саясы жок. (Pit) [2.113].*

In Turkmen riddles:

1. *Agzy asmanda, Içi pasmanda. (Pit)*
2. *Içi dok, kölegesi ýok. (Pit) [10.114].*

In Karakalpak: *Жумысы тоқ, коленкеси жоқ. (Pit) Аўзи аспанда, жумысы паспанда. (Pit) [7.104].*

The meaning of the Cuman riddle suggests fullness and immovability. Similarly, the Kyrgyz riddle uses expressions like "full inside" or "deep inside," reflecting the pit's placement underground with no shadow, a feature also found in Tatar and Karakalpak riddles. This shows that riddles with the same answer and meaning in each of these cultures likely reflect a shared concept. The tradition of digging pits for grain storage, to protect it from rodents, exists among these Turkic groups and suggests that this practice was also common among the Cumans.

In conducting this research, we believe it is essential to consult the archive collections of the selected nations. The riddles analyzed here are those published in folklore collections, yet it is important to note that field recordings or archival collections of riddles from the mentioned cultures could further expand our findings. We hope that the present research will serve as a foundation for future studies in this area.

Conclusion

This research demonstrates that the Cuman riddles are a shared oral literary heritage among Turkic peoples. We observed that these riddles have been preserved in modern Turkic literature in three forms: conservatively, with a functional change, or with a change in form but preserved meaning. The Cuman riddles play a significant scientific and practical role in the development of Uzbek riddles and other Turkic riddles, highlighting their importance in the study of shared Turkic folklore traditions.

REFERENCES:

- [1]. Аманжолов С. Қазақ жумбақтары. –Алматы.: Ана тили. ЖШС. 2003. – С.34.
- [2]. Ибраимов К. Акматалиев А. Табышмактар. «Эл адабияты» сериясынын 14-тому. – Бишкек.: «Шам» басмасы, 2002. –С. 47.
- [3]. Inan A. Codex Cumanicus bilmecelesine dair. // A. Inan. Makaleler ve incelemeler. I. –Ankara.;Turk tarix kurumu basimleri. 1978. –S. 358.
- [4]. Жафаров Б. Кодекс Куманикус – Туркий халқлар ёзма обидаси Ф.ф.б.ф. доктори (PhD) илмий даражасини олиш учун ёзилган Диссертация. – Тошкент, 2017. – Б. 61.
- [5]. Жўраева М. Ўзбек Халқ Топишмоқларининг Генезиси. Филология фанлари бўйича фалсафа доктори (PhD) дисс. Тошкент. 2017 – Б. 23.
- [6]. Малов, С. К истории и критике Codex Cumanicus. *Изв. АН СССР. Отд. гуманитарных -наук.*, 1930. – С. 347-375
- [7]. Мақсетов, Қ. Қарақалпақ фольклоры. III том. Қарақалпақ халық жумбақлары. – Некис.:Қарақалпақстан. 1978. – Б.104.
- [8]. Мехмутов, Х. Татар халық табышмақлары. –Казан.:Татарстан китап нешрияты. 2014 – Б.111.
- [9]. Махмутов Х. Татарские параллели куманских загадок. // Советская тюркология. – Баку, 1971. -№3.-С.87-96.
- [10]. Nury Seyidow Türkmen Halk Matallary. –Aşgabat.: «MIRAS», 2005. – S.174.
- [11]. Хусаинова, З. *Топишмоқлар / Ўзбек халқ ижоди.* –Тошкент.: Адабиёт ва санъат нашриёти. 1981. – Б.125.
- [12]. Titse A. The Koman Riddles and Turkic Folklore. – Berkeley, 1966. –P. 15.
- [13]. Prof. Dr. Şükrü ELÇİN. TÜRK BİLMECELERİ. Mas Matbaacılık – ANKARA.: Kültür Bakanlığı, 1989 – B. 81.
- [14]. Seyidov N, Tapmacalar. –Baku.: Serq-Qerb. 2004. – Б. 93.
- [15]. Guner ,G.Kuman bilmecelesinin söz varlığı ve dil hususiyetleri üzerine bir inceleme. *Uluslararası türk lehçe araştırmaları dergisi* (türklad), 4. cilt, 1. sayı, –Turkiye, 2020. –S.16-41.