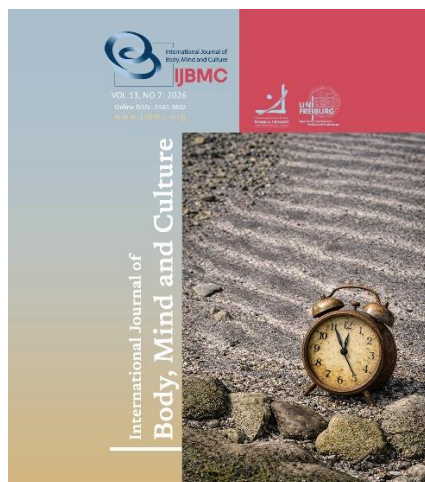


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The Horse as a Cultural-Psychological Symbol in the Turkic Worldview: A Linguistic Analysis of Mamluk-Kipchak Written Sources

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The horse occupies a central place in the Turkic worldview as a symbol of mobility, courage, freedom, honor, social prestige, and cultural identity. In nomadic Turkic culture, horse-related language reflects not only practical knowledge but also collective memory, embodied experience, and cultural-psychological meanings. This study aimed to examine the horse concept as an ethnolinguistic and cultural-psychological symbol in Mamluk-Kipchak written sources.

Methods and Materials: This qualitative study used historical-comparative, semantic, ethnolinguistic, and cultural-psychological analysis. The primary materials were the Mamluk-Kipchak written monuments Baitaratu'l-vazih, Munyat al-Ghuzat, Kitab fi Riyazat al-Khayl, and Kitab fi 'Ilm al-Nushshab. Horse-related lexical units were identified, classified, and interpreted according to their semantic features, historical continuity, cultural meanings, and symbolic functions. Additional lexicographic, ethnographic, and recent scholarly sources were used to contextualize the findings within Turkic and Kazakh cultural traditions.

Findings: The analysis showed that horse-related vocabulary in Mamluk-Kipchak sources forms a multilayered cultural-cognitive system. Terms related to horse age, sex, color, breed, function, care, riding, and warfare demonstrate lexical continuity with modern Kipchak languages, especially Kazakh. These lexical units also encode cultural values such as honor, loyalty, courage, dignity, bodily mastery, and social belonging. The horse appears not only as an economic or military resource but also as a symbolic mediator between body, mind, and culture.

Conclusion: Horse-related terminology in Mamluk-Kipchak written heritage reflects the cultural memory, psychological meanings, and symbolic consciousness of nomadic Turkic society. The horse concept functions as a cultural-psychological code through which Turkic communities expressed identity, morality, embodiment, and worldview.

Keywords: Horse Concept, Cultural Psychology, Turkic Worldview, Ethnolinguistics, Cultural Memory.

Introduction

The horse occupies a central place in the cultural memory, symbolic imagination, and psychological world of many societies. Across different civilizations, it has been associated with mobility, power, warfare, status, sacredness, and the relationship between humans and the natural environment. In the Eurasian steppe, however, the horse acquired a particularly deep cultural and psychological significance. It was not merely a means of transportation or an economic resource, but a symbolic mediator through which communities expressed freedom, courage, honor, social prestige, bodily mastery, and collective identity. Recent archaeological and genetic studies have shown that the history of horse domestication and the spread of domestic horses were closely connected with major transformations in mobility, warfare, communication, and social organization across Eurasia (Librado et al., 2021; Taylor & Barrón-Ortiz, 2021).

From the perspective of cultural psychology, symbols, rituals, narratives, and culturally marked lexical units are not merely external cultural products. They function as psychological tools through which communities organize experience, transmit values, construct identity, and interpret the relationship between the self, society, body, and world. Cultural identity is closely connected with collective memory and material or symbolic artifacts, because communities remember and reconstruct their past through culturally meaningful objects, images, texts, and practices (Heersmink, 2023). In this sense, horse-related language can be understood not only as vocabulary but also as a symbolic system that preserves collective emotions, moral expectations, social norms, and models of personhood.

In the Turkic worldview, the horse developed into a complex cultural-psychological symbol. It represents freedom, courage, nobility, movement, loyalty, honor, dignity, and social authority. For nomadic and semi-nomadic Turkic communities, human life was deeply connected with the horse from childhood to adulthood, from everyday labor to military campaigns, and from rituals to oral poetry. This relationship was embodied as well as symbolic: riding, training, caring for, and classifying horses required bodily skill, discipline, perception, and emotional attachment. Therefore, the horse mediated the relationship between body, mind,

and culture. Bodily mastery appeared in riding and warfare; psychological qualities appeared in courage, pride, self-control, loyalty, and honor; and cultural meaning appeared in rituals, proverbs, heroic narratives, and collective identity.

In Kazakh cultural consciousness, the horse continues to function as a powerful symbol of identity, dignity, resistance, and historical continuity. Recent research on Kazakhstan's colonial and postcolonial history emphasizes that the horse appears in literature, poetry, and cultural discourse as a symbol through which national identity and cultural resistance are articulated (Tokshylykova et al., 2024). This symbolic role is important for cultural psychology because it shows how a community uses a culturally familiar image to preserve self-understanding, dignity, and continuity during historical change.

The psychological and cultural significance of the horse is especially visible in language. Horse-related vocabulary in Turkic languages does not represent a simple lexical field; rather, it forms a highly developed semantic system that reflects ecological knowledge, social experience, practical skills, emotional evaluation, and cultural values. In the Kazakh linguistic worldview, horse terms classify animals according to age, sex, color, breed, function, physical quality, temperament, speed, and social use. Recent linguistic-cultural research on the domain *zhylqy* in Kazakh shows that horse terminology constitutes a highly informative semantic system shaped by communicative need, lexical precision, and culturally specific knowledge (Muldagaliyeva et al., 2026). Thus, the richness of horse vocabulary reflects not only the practical importance of the animal but also the cognitive organization of cultural experience.

The concept of cultural code is central to understanding the symbolic and psychological status of the horse in Turkic culture. Cultural codes are systems of signs, meanings, values, and practices through which a community preserves and transmits its collective worldview. Recent studies of Kazakh and Turkish linguocultural consciousness show that national-cultural codes are reflected in lexical units, symbolic meanings, connotations, and culturally marked expressions, and that such codes reveal the worldview, mentality, and value system of a people (Kurmangali et al., 2025). From this perspective, the horse can be interpreted as one of

the key ethnocultural and cultural-psychological codes of the Turkic worldview.

The Mamluk-Kipchak written heritage provides particularly valuable material for examining this code. The Mamluk-Kipchak texts produced in the medieval period preserve an important layer of the Kipchak language and reflect the linguistic, military, social, and cultural environment of the Kipchak-speaking Mamluk world. Written monuments such as *Baitaratu'l-vazih*, *Munyat al-Ghuzat*, *Kitab fi Riyazat al-Khayl*, and *Kitab fi 'Ilm al-Nushshab* contain extensive information on horses, horse breeding, horsemanship, veterinary knowledge, mounted combat, and military practice. Recent research on Mamluk-Kipchak written monuments confirms that *Baitaratu'l-vazih* is particularly important for studying horse breeding, veterinary vocabulary, and the scientific lexicon of the Kipchak language (Batyrbekova et al., 2024). These texts are therefore significant not only as linguistic documents but also as sources that reveal the cultural psychology of medieval Turkic communities.

The relevance of Mamluk-Kipchak written monuments is also connected with the historical continuity between medieval Kipchak and modern Kipchak languages, including Kazakh. The analysis of lexical units recorded in these manuscripts makes it possible to identify phonetic, semantic, and functional continuities between medieval written forms and modern Kazakh equivalents. Horse-related terminology is especially important in this regard because it belongs to one of the most stable and culturally significant lexical layers of Turkic languages. The preservation and transformation of such terms reveal not only linguistic development but also the continuity of cultural knowledge, symbolic meanings, and psychological patterns of value formation.

Horse-related vocabulary in Mamluk-Kipchak sources reflects several interconnected domains of medieval Turkic life. First, it reflects military culture, because horses were essential to mounted warfare, cavalry training, archery, and battlefield mobility. Second, it reflects economic life, because horse breeding, care, treatment, and classification formed part of the broader pastoral system. Third, it reflects social hierarchy, because horses signified status, prestige, authority, and personal honor. Fourth, it reflects ritual and symbolic thought, because horses were associated with blessings,

taboos, funerary practices, heroic imagery, mythological representations, and moral values. Thus, the horse appears in these sources as a practical animal, a lexical unit, a cultural symbol, and a psychological model of social identity.

This cultural-psychological interpretation is also important because it connects language with embodied experience. The Turkic relationship with the horse was not abstract; it was lived through movement, riding, training, care, warfare, competition, ritual, and everyday labor. Such embodied practices shaped emotional meanings and social expectations. A skilled rider was not only technically competent but also disciplined, courageous, honorable, and socially respected. In this way, horse-related terms encode cultural models of the body, masculinity, courage, loyalty, and social belonging. The horse therefore becomes a symbolic bridge between physical practice and psychological meaning.

Previous studies of Turkic and Kazakh linguistic heritage have examined horse-related vocabulary, phraseology, and cultural symbolism from historical, ethnographic, and lexicographic perspectives. However, there remains a need for a more integrated approach that connects Mamluk-Kipchak written sources with cultural psychology, collective memory, identity formation, and symbolic meaning-making. Such an approach allows the researcher to move beyond the description of isolated lexical units and to examine how horse-related language constructs a system of meanings related to selfhood, honor, social order, memory, and nomadic civilization.

Accordingly, the aim of this article is to examine the horse concept in the Turkic worldview as a cultural-psychological and ethnolinguistic symbol through the linguistic analysis of Mamluk-Kipchak written sources. The study analyzes horse-related lexical units found in *Baitaratu'l-vazih*, *Munyat al-Ghuzat*, *Kitab fi Riyazat al-Khayl*, and *Kitab fi 'Ilm al-Nushshab*, with attention to their historical-semantic characteristics, ethnolinguistic meanings, and continuity in modern Kipchak languages. By interpreting these lexical units as cultural-cognitive and psychological codes, the article demonstrates that horse-related terminology in Mamluk-Kipchak heritage reflects not only the lexical composition of medieval Kipchak but also the worldview, cultural memory, embodied experience, emotional values, and symbolic consciousness of nomadic Turkic society.

Methods and Materials

Study Design

This study employed a qualitative linguistic, ethnolinguistic, and cultural-psychological research design. The purpose of the study was not to measure psychological variables experimentally, but to examine how horse-related lexical units in Mamluk-Kipchak written sources function as carriers of cultural memory, collective identity, embodied experience, moral values, and symbolic meaning in the Turkic worldview. Therefore, the study combined historical-comparative linguistics, ethnolinguistic analysis, semantic analysis, and cultural-psychological interpretation.

This design was appropriate because the horse concept in Turkic culture cannot be understood only as a lexical category. It is also a symbolic and cultural-psychological construct through which nomadic communities expressed social status, honor, freedom, courage, bodily mastery, loyalty, and continuity with ancestral memory. In this regard, language was treated not merely as a system of signs, but as a medium through which cultural experience, collective emotions, and worldview are preserved and transmitted across generations.

Research Materials

The primary materials of the study consisted of medieval Mamluk-Kipchak written monuments containing horse-related terminology, equestrian knowledge, military vocabulary, and veterinary information. The main sources analyzed were: *Baitaratu'l-vazih*, *Munyat al-Ghuzat*, *Kitab fi Riyazat al-Khayl* and *Kitab fi 'Ilm al-Nushshab*.

These texts were selected because they contain extensive lexical material related to horses, horse breeding, horse care, riding, mounted warfare, veterinary medicine, and military training. They also preserve an important medieval layer of the Kipchak language and provide valuable evidence for examining the historical continuity between Mamluk-Kipchak and modern Kipchak languages, especially Kazakh.

In addition to the primary manuscripts, the study used lexicographic, historical, and ethnocultural sources to clarify the meanings, origins, and cultural functions of horse-related terms. These included the *Old Turkic Dictionary*, Mahmud al-Kashgari's *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk*, historical dictionaries of the Kazakh language,

phraseological dictionaries, ethnolinguistic works, and studies on Kazakh customs, rituals, and horse-related cultural practices.

Recent studies on Mamluk-Kipchak written monuments, Kazakh horse terminology, cultural codes, horse symbolism, and the history of horse domestication were also used to strengthen the contemporary theoretical basis of the analysis (Batyrbekova et al., 2024; Kurmangali et al., 2025; Librado et al., 2021; Muldagaliyeva et al., 2026; Taylor & Barrón-Ortiz, 2021; Tokshylykova et al., 2024).

Selection Criteria

Horse-related lexical units were selected from the Mamluk-Kipchak written sources according to the following criteria: lexical units directly denoting horses or horse categories; terms related to horse age, sex, color, breed, physical condition, temperament, and function; words and expressions connected with horse care, veterinary practice, riding, training, and warfare; lexical units with clear continuity or semantic parallels in modern Kipchak languages, especially Kazakh; phraseological, symbolic, or culturally marked units associated with the horse; terms reflecting cultural-psychological meanings such as honor, courage, freedom, prestige, loyalty, bodily discipline, and social identity.

The selected units were not treated as isolated words. Instead, they were analyzed as elements of a broader cultural-cognitive system that reflects the interaction between language, body, mind, and culture in the Turkic worldview.

Analytical Procedure

The analysis was conducted in several stages.

First, horse-related lexical units were identified and extracted from the selected Mamluk-Kipchak written monuments. At this stage, attention was given to the textual context in which each unit appeared, including whether the term was used in relation to horse classification, care, training, riding, warfare, or symbolic meaning.

Second, the extracted units were classified semantically. The classification included categories such as general horse terms, age-related terms, sex-related terms, color terms, breed names, functional designations, veterinary terms, riding and training vocabulary, and military-equestrian terminology. This

stage helped identify the internal structure of the horse-related lexical field in the Mamluk-Kipchak sources.

Third, historical-comparative analysis was used to examine the continuity of selected terms in modern Kipchak languages, especially Kazakh. Phonetic, morphological, and semantic correspondences were considered in order to determine whether the medieval terms had been preserved, transformed, narrowed, expanded, or replaced in later linguistic development.

Fourth, ethnolinguistic analysis was applied to interpret the cultural meanings of the selected terms. Horse-related vocabulary was examined in relation to nomadic economy, military culture, social hierarchy, rituals, customs, taboos, proverbs, phraseological expressions, and heroic narratives. This made it possible to understand how lexical units preserve information about the social and cultural life of Turkic peoples.

Fifth, cultural-psychological interpretation was used to identify the symbolic and psychological meanings encoded in horse-related language. In this stage, the horse was analyzed as a cultural-psychological symbol associated with collective memory, cultural identity, embodied experience, courage, honor, dignity, freedom, loyalty, and social belonging. Particular attention was paid to the way horse-related terms reflect cultural models of personhood, bodily mastery, emotional value, and moral evaluation.

Finally, the results of the linguistic, ethnolinguistic, semantic, and cultural-psychological analyses were synthesized to explain the role of the horse concept as an ethnocultural and psychological code in the Turkic worldview.

Methods of Analysis

The study used four interconnected methods:

Historical-comparative analysis was used to compare horse-related lexical units in Mamluk-Kipchak written monuments with their equivalents in modern Kipchak languages. This method helped identify lexical continuity, phonetic variation, and semantic development.

Semantic analysis was used to determine the meanings, semantic fields, and functional categories of horse-related terms. It allowed the study to distinguish between general horse terms, specialized equestrian vocabulary, veterinary terms, military terminology, and symbolic expressions.

Ethnolinguistic analysis was used to interpret horse-related vocabulary as linguistic evidence of cultural experience. Through this method, lexical units were examined as markers of nomadic life, social structure, ritual practice, moral norms, and traditional knowledge.

Cultural-psychological analysis was used to examine the horse as a symbolic mediator of collective identity and psychological meaning. This method focused on how horse-related language reflects culturally shared emotions, values, body-related practices, social expectations, and models of selfhood within the Turkic worldview.

Cultural-Psychological Framework

The cultural-psychological framework of the study was based on the assumption that culturally marked lexical units are not merely linguistic forms but symbolic tools through which communities organize experience and transmit collective meanings. In this framework, the horse concept was examined through five interrelated dimensions: *Collective memory*: the horse as a carrier of ancestral experience and historical continuity; *Cultural identity*: the horse as a marker of Turkic and Kazakh self-understanding; *Embodied experience*: the horse as connected with riding, movement, warfare, bodily discipline, and practical skill; *Moral and emotional values*: the horse as associated with courage, loyalty, honor, dignity, pride, and shame; *Social symbolism*: the horse as a sign of status, authority, prestige, and belonging.

This framework made it possible to connect linguistic data with broader psychological and cultural meanings. Thus, the analysis moved beyond the description of horse terminology and examined how such terminology reflects the cultural psychology of nomadic Turkic society.

Trustworthiness of the Analysis

To strengthen the trustworthiness of the qualitative analysis, the study relied on triangulation of primary manuscript evidence, historical dictionaries, ethnographic materials, phraseological data, and recent scholarly studies. The interpretation of lexical units was checked against their textual context, historical usage, and cultural function. In addition, the analysis avoided treating modern meanings as automatically identical to medieval meanings; instead, continuity and change were examined through historical-comparative and semantic analysis.

The study also distinguished between linguistic evidence and interpretive cultural-psychological analysis. Lexical forms, textual occurrences, and dictionary meanings were used as the basis of analysis, while symbolic and psychological interpretations were developed only where supported by ethnolinguistic, cultural, or contextual evidence.

Scope and Limitations

This study is limited to selected Mamluk-Kipchak written monuments and horse-related lexical units recorded in those sources. Therefore, it does not claim to cover all horse-related vocabulary in the entire Turkic linguistic tradition. In addition, because the study is qualitative and text-based, it does not include experimental psychological measurement or field interviews. Its contribution lies in showing how linguistic evidence from medieval written sources can be interpreted through ethnolinguistic and cultural-psychological perspectives.

Despite these limitations, the selected materials provide a strong basis for examining the horse as a cultural-cognitive and psychological code in the Turkic worldview. The combination of historical, linguistic, ethnocultural, and cultural-psychological analysis enables a more comprehensive understanding of how horse-related terminology preserves the worldview, values, and collective memory of nomadic Turkic society.

Findings and Results

The analysis of horse-related lexical units in the selected Mamluk-Kipchak written monuments showed that the horse concept occupies a central place in the Turkic worldview as a linguistic, cultural, and psychological symbol. The findings indicate that horse-related vocabulary in *Baitaratu'l-vazih*, *Munyat al-Ghuzat*, *Kitab fi Riyazat al-Khayl*, and *Kitab fi 'Ilm al-Nushshab* does not merely denote an animal or a practical object of nomadic life. Rather, it constitutes a complex ethnolinguistic and cultural-psychological system through which medieval Kipchak-speaking communities expressed mobility, social status, military discipline, bodily mastery, honor, courage, loyalty, and collective identity.

The findings are presented in six thematic categories: lexical continuity of horse-related terms, semantic classification of the horse concept, military and practical

functions of horse terminology, cultural and ritual meanings, phraseological and symbolic representations, and the cultural-psychological function of the horse as a code of Turkic identity.

Lexical Continuity of Horse-Related Terms

The first major finding concerns the continuity of horse-related vocabulary from Old Turkic and Mamluk-Kipchak sources to modern Kipchak languages, especially Kazakh. The term *at* appears as one of the most stable lexical units in the Turkic linguistic tradition. In the medieval sources examined, *at* is used predominantly in the meaning of "horse," although earlier Turkic sources also show that the word could carry additional meanings such as name, title, or designation.

The frequent occurrence of *at* in Mamluk-Kipchak texts demonstrates that the horse was a central object of practical, military, and symbolic life. Its preservation in modern Kazakh and other Kipchak languages indicates strong lexical continuity. This continuity is not only phonetic or semantic; it also reflects the preservation of cultural knowledge. The word *at* continued to carry associations with mobility, riding, warfare, social prestige, and personal honor. Thus, the lexical stability of *at* reflects the stability of the horse concept within the Turkic cultural worldview.

In the analyzed monuments, several horse-related terms show continuity with modern Kazakh, including terms referring to horse age, sex, function, and type. Examples include *ayyır* / *aıgyr* "stallion," *qulun* "foal," *tay* "young horse," *qısraq* / *qıstraq*, and other terms connected with horse classification. These lexical units demonstrate that medieval Kipchak-speaking communities possessed a detailed and systematic vocabulary for describing horses according to practical and cultural criteria.

Semantic Classification of the Horse Concept

The second finding concerns the semantic richness of the horse-related lexical field. The analyzed sources show that the horse was classified according to several dimensions: age, sex, color, breed, function, physical quality, temperament, and use. This classification demonstrates that the horse was not perceived as a general or undifferentiated animal. Instead, it was understood through a refined system of distinctions based on practical experience, ecological knowledge, and cultural value.

Horse terms in the Mamluk-Kipchak and Kazakh linguistic traditions include general designations, age-related categories, sex-related categories, color terms, breed names, and functional labels. For example, horses could be distinguished as riding horses, warhorses, racehorses, companion horses, Arabian horses, Persian horses, or horses used in campaigns. Such differentiation reflects a highly developed equestrian culture in which horses were evaluated according to their physical qualities, endurance, speed, temperament, and social function.

This semantic system also has cultural-psychological significance. The act of naming and classifying horses reflects how Turkic communities organized their experience of the world. A horse was not simply “livestock”; it was a being with character, quality, function, and symbolic meaning. The precise lexical classification of horses therefore reveals a cultural model of attention, perception, and evaluation. It shows how language encoded practical intelligence, emotional attachment, and social expectations related to horses.

Military and Practical Functions of Horse Terminology

The third finding relates to the military and practical functions of horse-related vocabulary. The Mamluk-Kipchak written monuments examined in this study contain extensive information about horsemanship, cavalry training, mounted warfare, horse care, and veterinary knowledge. This is especially evident in texts such as *Munyat al-Ghuzat*, *Kitab fi Riyazat al-Khayl*, and *Baitaratu'l-vazih*, which reflect the military-administrative environment of the Mamluk-Kipchak world.

In these sources, the horse appears as an essential component of military discipline and warrior identity. Mounted combat required not only a strong and well-trained horse but also a rider capable of bodily control, balance, courage, and technical skill. Horse-related vocabulary therefore reflects a close relationship between body, movement, and psychological readiness. The warrior's ability to remain steady on the horse, control movement, use weapons while mounted, and endure combat conditions demonstrates that horsemanship was both a physical and mental discipline.

The practical vocabulary related to horse care and veterinary treatment also shows that the Mamluk-Kipchak tradition preserved specialized knowledge about equine health, training, and management. The

presence of baytarname and furūsiyya-related terminology indicates that horse care was treated as a serious field of knowledge. This practical knowledge had cultural significance because the strength of the military, the prestige of rulers, and the mobility of society depended heavily on horses.

Cultural and Ritual Meanings of the Horse

The fourth finding concerns the ritual and cultural meanings associated with horses. The analysis shows that in Turkic and Kazakh culture, the horse was not limited to economic, military, or transportation functions. It was deeply embedded in customs, rituals, prohibitions, blessings, funerary practices, child-related traditions, and social ceremonies.

Horse-related rituals and customs reflect the sacred and moral status of the horse in nomadic society. Practices such as dedicating a foal, using horsehair as a protective charm, associating horses with funerary rites, and observing prohibitions against mistreating horses show that the animal was treated as a culturally meaningful being. These practices indicate that the horse mediated relationships between humans, ancestors, society, and the spiritual world.

The ritual dimension of the horse also reveals the moral order of Turkic society. Respecting the horse was associated with respecting social values such as honor, dignity, loyalty, and responsibility. Conversely, losing a horse, mistreating a horse, or violating horse-related customs could be perceived as shameful or dangerous. Thus, horse-related practices functioned as a system of cultural education, transmitting moral norms and social expectations across generations.

Phraseological and Symbolic Representations

The fifth finding concerns the representation of the horse in phraseological units, proverbs, idiomatic expressions, and literary examples. Kazakh contains a large number of fixed expressions and proverbs built around the word *at*. These expressions show that the horse is one of the central symbolic images through which Kazakh speakers conceptualize human character, social status, morality, success, misfortune, and honor.

Phraseological units involving the horse often express culturally significant meanings such as readiness, courage, anger, movement, prestige, and social identity. Proverbs and idioms related to horses are not merely decorative elements of speech; they preserve cultural judgments about human behavior. For example,

expressions that connect a rider with his horse suggest that the horse reflects the character, dignity, and social standing of its owner.

Literary examples also confirm the symbolic significance of the horse. In Kazakh literature and oral tradition, the horse frequently appears as the hero's companion, a marker of nobility, a symbol of masculine dignity, and a sign of emotional and moral strength. The loss of a horse is often represented not only as material loss but also as a symbolic injury to honor and identity. Therefore, literary and phraseological data support the conclusion that the horse functions as a central cultural symbol in the Turkic worldview.

The Horse as a Cultural-Psychological Code

The sixth and most important finding is that the horse functions as a cultural-psychological code in the Turkic worldview. This means that horse-related language preserves not only historical and lexical information but also psychological meanings related to collective memory, embodied experience, social belonging, moral emotion, and identity.

From a cultural-psychological perspective, the horse represents a symbolic bridge between body, mind, and culture. At the bodily level, the horse is connected with riding, movement, balance, training, warfare, and physical discipline. At the psychological level, it is associated with courage, pride, loyalty, freedom, dignity, self-control, and emotional attachment. At the cultural level, it is linked to rituals, social hierarchy, heroic narratives, proverbs, customs, and collective memory.

The horse also functions as a model of personhood. In Turkic culture, the skilled rider is not simply someone who controls an animal; he is someone who embodies discipline, bravery, honor, and social responsibility. The horse therefore becomes part of the cultural imagination of the ideal person. Through horse-related terms and

expressions, society transmits expectations about strength, loyalty, nobility, courage, and dignity.

This finding is especially important for linking the article to cultural psychology. The horse concept demonstrates how language can encode culturally shared emotions and identity structures. Horse-related vocabulary in Mamluk-Kipchak sources reflects how nomadic communities understood the relationship between human beings and the world around them. It also shows how cultural meanings are preserved through lexical continuity, symbolic expressions, and ritual practices.

Integrated Findings

Overall, the findings demonstrate that horse-related vocabulary in Mamluk-Kipchak written sources constitutes a multilayered linguistic and cultural system. At the linguistic level, it reflects lexical continuity between medieval Kipchak and modern Kipchak languages. At the semantic level, it shows a detailed classification of horses according to age, sex, color, breed, function, and quality. At the ethnolinguistic level, it preserves information about nomadic economy, military practice, ritual life, and social hierarchy. At the cultural-psychological level, it encodes collective memory, identity, embodied experience, moral values, and symbolic meanings.

The analysis confirms that the horse concept in the Turkic worldview cannot be reduced to a utilitarian or economic category. In the Mamluk-Kipchak written heritage, the horse appears as a practical necessity, a military resource, a lexical category, a ritual object, a symbol of honor, and a psychological marker of cultural identity. Therefore, horse-related terminology should be understood as an ethnocultural and cultural-psychological code that reveals the worldview, values, and historical memory of nomadic Turkic society.

Table 1

Main thematic findings of the analysis

Thematic category	Main finding	Cultural-psychological meaning
Lexical continuity	Horse-related terms, especially <i>at</i> , show continuity from Old Turkic and Mamluk-Kipchak to modern Kazakh	Preservation of cultural memory through language
Semantic classification	Horses are classified by age, sex, color, breed, function, quality, and temperament	Cultural attention, perception, and practical knowledge
Military function	Horse terminology reflects cavalry training, mounted warfare, and warrior discipline	Bodily mastery, courage, self-control, and warrior identity
Practical knowledge	Veterinary and horse-care terms show specialized equestrian knowledge	Social organization and responsibility toward valued animals

Ritual meaning	Horses appear in customs, taboos, blessings, funerary practices, and protective rituals	Moral order, sacred value, and intergenerational transmission
Phraseology and proverbs	Horse-related idioms and proverbs express honor, dignity, misfortune, success, and social status	Collective emotions and culturally shared moral judgments
Symbolic identity	The horse represents freedom, nobility, loyalty, prestige, and cultural continuity	Cultural self, collective identity, and historical belonging

The study shows that horse-related lexical units in Mamluk-Kipchak written sources are not only linguistic evidence of medieval Kipchak vocabulary but also culturally meaningful signs that reflect the psychological and symbolic structure of Turkic nomadic life. The horse concept connects language with memory, body, emotion, morality, and identity. Through this concept, the Turkic worldview expresses an integrated understanding of human dignity, social order, ancestral continuity, and embodied cultural experience.

Discussion and Conclusion

The findings of this study demonstrate that horse-related lexical units in Mamluk-Kipchak written sources represent more than a specialized vocabulary of animal husbandry, warfare, or veterinary knowledge. They constitute a cultural-psychological code through which the Turkic worldview organized meanings related to mobility, courage, honor, bodily mastery, social prestige, loyalty, and collective identity. From this perspective, the horse should not be interpreted merely as an economic resource or military instrument; rather, it functioned as a symbolic mediator between body, mind, and culture in nomadic Turkic society.

The linguistic data analyzed in this study show that the concept of the horse was deeply embedded in the everyday, military, ritual, and emotional life of Turkic communities. Terms related to horse age, sex, color, breed, function, temperament, and physical condition reveal a refined system of cultural perception. Such lexical precision indicates that the horse occupied a central position in the cognitive organization of nomadic life. This interpretation is consistent with recent linguistic-cultural research showing that the Kazakh domain *zhylqy* forms a highly informative semantic system shaped by communicative need, cultural experience, and the importance of the horse in daily life (Muldagaliyeva et al., 2026). The extensive classification of horses therefore reflects not only practical knowledge but also culturally learned patterns of attention, evaluation, and meaning-making.

One of the most important findings of the study is the continuity of the term *at* and other horse-related lexical units from Old Turkic and Mamluk-Kipchak sources into modern Kipchak languages, especially Kazakh. This continuity suggests that horse-related vocabulary belongs to one of the most stable and culturally significant lexical layers of Turkic languages. The preservation of these terms is not only a linguistic phenomenon but also a form of cultural memory. Through lexical continuity, the experience of nomadic mobility, military organization, pastoral life, and symbolic values has been transmitted across generations. Recent research on national-cultural codes in Kazakh and Turkish confirms that culturally marked linguistic units reflect worldview, mentality, national values, and cultural consciousness (Kurmagali et al., 2025). In this sense, horse-related vocabulary operates as a verbal archive of collective memory and identity.

The Mamluk-Kipchak sources examined in this article are especially significant because they preserve a medieval layer of Kipchak linguistic and cultural consciousness. Texts such as *Baitaratu'l-vazih*, *Munyat al-Ghuzat*, *Kitab fi Riyazat al-Khayl*, and *Kitab fi 'Ilm al-Nushshab* contain knowledge related to horsemanship, horse care, veterinary practice, mounted combat, and military training. Recent scholarship on Mamluk-Kipchak written monuments confirms the importance of *Baitaratu'l-vazih* for studying horse breeding, veterinary terminology, and the historical written heritage of the Kipchak language (Batyrbekova et al., 2024). Therefore, these monuments should be treated not merely as linguistic sources but also as documents of cultural psychology, because they reveal how a community encoded bodily practice, emotional value, social order, and symbolic meaning into language.

The military dimension of horse-related terminology also has cultural-psychological significance. In the Mamluk-Kipchak context, the horse was inseparable from the identity of the warrior. Mounted warfare required balance, bodily discipline, courage, endurance, self-control, and trust between rider and horse. Thus, horse terminology reflects not only military technique

but also a model of personhood. The ideal rider was not simply a person who could control an animal; he embodied discipline, bravery, honor, and social responsibility. In this regard, the horse functioned as an extension of the warrior's body and as a symbolic measure of psychological and moral strength.

The ritual and symbolic dimensions of horse-related language further confirm the horse's role as a cultural-psychological code. In Kazakh and broader Turkic traditions, horses appear in blessings, prohibitions, funerary customs, child-related rituals, heroic narratives, games, and idiomatic expressions. These practices reveal that the horse mediated relationships between humans, ancestors, social order, and the sacred. Respecting the horse was associated with moral dignity, while losing, dishonoring, or mistreating a horse could symbolize shame, misfortune, or a disruption of social order. Recent research on the horse as a symbol of cultural identity and resistance in Kazakhstan emphasizes that the horse continues to operate as a powerful sign of identity, dignity, historical continuity, and cultural resistance in Kazakh literature and cultural memory (Tokshylykova et al., 2024). This supports the interpretation that horse symbolism remains psychologically active in the construction of collective self-understanding.

From the perspective of cultural psychology, these findings show how language preserves collective emotions and moral evaluations. Horse-related proverbs, idioms, and symbolic expressions do not simply describe reality; they teach members of the community how to evaluate courage, loyalty, dignity, pride, honor, and social belonging. In this sense, horse-related language contributes to cultural education. It transmits models of proper behavior, emotional response, social hierarchy, and moral responsibility. The horse becomes a symbolic object through which the community defines what it means to be noble, brave, loyal, honorable, and socially worthy.

The results also show that the horse concept links embodied experience with cultural identity. Riding, training, racing, caring for, and fighting on horseback were not abstract cultural ideas; they were embodied practices. Through these practices, individuals learned balance, coordination, endurance, discipline, and control. At the same time, these bodily practices acquired psychological and cultural meanings: they became signs

of courage, maturity, masculinity, authority, and belonging. Therefore, the horse concept is especially valuable for a body-mind-culture interpretation. It demonstrates how bodily skill becomes psychologically meaningful and culturally symbolic.

The broader historical importance of the horse also supports this interpretation. Recent archaeological and genetic studies have shown that the development and spread of domestic horses were connected with large-scale transformations in mobility, warfare, and communication across Eurasia (Librado et al., 2021). At the same time, newer studies have urged caution in interpreting early horse domestication evidence at Botai, showing that the history of horse-human relations in Central Asia is complex and requires careful interdisciplinary analysis (Taylor & Barrón-Ortiz, 2021). These findings are relevant to the present study because they show that the horse was not only a local cultural object but also a factor in wider historical transformations.

The present study contributes to the existing literature by connecting historical linguistics, ethnohistorics, and cultural psychology. Previous studies have often described horse-related terms from lexical, historical, or ethnographic perspectives. This article extends that approach by interpreting horse-related vocabulary as a system of cultural-psychological meanings. The horse concept in Mamluk-Kipchak written sources encodes collective memory, embodied experience, emotional values, social expectations, and cultural identity. Thus, the study demonstrates that medieval lexical material can be used not only for reconstructing linguistic history but also for understanding the symbolic organization of cultural consciousness.

However, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the study is based on selected Mamluk-Kipchak written sources and does not claim to cover the entire Turkic linguistic tradition. Second, because the study is text-based and qualitative, it does not include field interviews, psychological measurement, or contemporary ethnographic observation. Third, some symbolic interpretations require further comparison with oral traditions, ritual practices, and modern cultural discourse. Future research could expand the analysis by comparing horse-related concepts across different Turkic languages, examining contemporary Kazakh

cultural narratives, and exploring how horse symbolism continues to shape identity, emotion, and cultural memory in modern society.

Overall, the discussion confirms that the horse concept in the Turkic worldview is a multilayered symbolic system. It combines language, memory, body, emotion, social order, and identity. In the Mamluk-Kipchak written heritage, the horse appears simultaneously as a practical animal, a military resource, a lexical category, a ritual object, a moral symbol, and a psychological marker of cultural belonging. Therefore, horse-related terminology should be understood as an ethnolinguistic and cultural-psychological code that reveals the worldview and symbolic consciousness of nomadic Turkic society.

Revised Conclusion

This study examined the horse concept in the Turkic worldview through a linguistic, ethnolinguistic, and cultural-psychological analysis of Mamluk-Kipchak written sources. The analysis showed that horse-related lexical units in *Baitaratu'l-vazih*, *Munyat al-Ghuzat*, *Kitab fi Riyazat al-Khayl*, and *Kitab fi 'Ilm al-Nushshab* represent more than technical vocabulary. They function as cultural signs that preserve knowledge about horsemanship, veterinary practice, warfare, social hierarchy, ritual life, and symbolic values in medieval Kipchak-speaking society.

The study found that the horse concept occupies a central place in the Turkic cultural and psychological worldview. Horse-related terminology reflects practical knowledge, but it also encodes deeper meanings related to freedom, courage, honor, loyalty, prestige, bodily mastery, and collective identity. The continuity of terms such as *at* from Old Turkic and Mamluk-Kipchak sources to modern Kazakh demonstrates the long-term stability of this cultural concept. This continuity reveals that language functions as a repository of historical memory and cultural consciousness.

The findings also indicate that the horse served as a symbolic bridge between body, mind, and culture. At the bodily level, the horse was connected with riding, movement, training, warfare, and physical discipline. At the psychological level, it represented courage, dignity, self-control, pride, and loyalty. At the cultural level, it appeared in rituals, proverbs, idioms, heroic narratives, social customs, and national identity. Therefore, the horse concept can be understood as a cultural-

psychological code through which Turkic communities expressed models of personhood, social belonging, and moral value.

The Mamluk-Kipchak written heritage is especially valuable for such an analysis because it preserves a medieval layer of Turkic linguistic consciousness. These texts show how equestrian knowledge, military practice, and cultural symbolism were encoded in language. They also demonstrate the historical continuity between medieval Kipchak and modern Kipchak languages, particularly Kazakh. The horse-related vocabulary recorded in these monuments provides evidence not only for lexical development but also for the persistence of cultural meanings across time.

In conclusion, the horse in the Turkic worldview should be interpreted not only as an animal, a military resource, or an economic asset, but as a symbolic and psychological center of nomadic cultural life. Horse-related language reveals how Turkic communities understood the relationship between human beings, the body, society, ancestors, and the natural world. By analyzing this vocabulary through cultural psychology, the study shows that the Mamluk-Kipchak written monuments preserve not only linguistic history but also the emotional, moral, and symbolic structure of nomadic Turkic identity.

Future studies should expand this analysis by comparing horse-related terminology across Turkic languages, examining oral traditions and ritual practices, and investigating how the symbolic meaning of the horse continues to shape Kazakh identity and cultural memory in contemporary contexts. Such research would further clarify the role of culturally marked language in preserving collective memory, emotional values, and national worldview.

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Declaration of Interest

The authors of this article declared no conflict of interest.

Ethical Considerations

The study protocol adhered to the principles outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki, which provides guidelines for ethical research involving human participants. Ethical considerations in this study were that participation was entirely optional.

Transparency of Data

In accordance with the principles of transparency and open research, we declare that all data and materials used in this study are available upon request.

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Authors' Contributions

All authors equally contribute to this study.

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