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The token *mal* 'cattle' in the Altai language in comparison with other Turkic and Mongolian languages

Abstract

The lexical and semantic group of cattle breeding terms is very diverse in its origin with Turkic and Mongolian parallels observed in it proving the historical contact of these ethnic groups. This article examines the etymological, comparative and lexical-semantic aspects of cattle names in the Turkic languages of Siberia and Mongolia. The functioning patterns of the lexemes *mal* and *kenje* in these languages are described. Using the example of the Altai lexeme *mal* 'cattle' in comparison with the data from other Turkic and Mongolian languages, the expansion or narrowing of the word meaning is shown. Thus, in the Altai literary language, particularly in the Altai-Kizhi dialect, *mal* is used in most cases in relation to a horse, whereas in the Telengit dialect of the Altai language it has a broader meaning applied both to the general notion of cattle, and in relation to big and small cattle. The lexeme *kenje* in its different phonetic variants (*kenjä ~ kenche ~ henche ~ henz*) in all the languages under consideration is used to name cattle born later than the due date, but in some languages, a secondary nominative meaning has developed on an associative basis. In the modern Altai language, this word goes out of active use, it is preserved only in the Telengit dialect. The lexeme *mal* goes back to the Mongolian borrowing, and *kenje* is considered a Turkism.

Keywords: vocabulary, Turkic languages of Siberia, Altai language, Mongolian languages, vocabulary of cattle breeding, lexical parallels

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