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Ethnonyms in Europe and Asia: Studies in History and Anthropology

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The Formation of Modern Turkic ‘Ethnic’ Groups in Central and Inner Asia

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International Asian studies, including Asian studies in Hungary, have examined several livestock breeding and horse-riding nomadic groups which provide additional data for hypotheses concerning the social structure of the pre-Conquest Hungarians. Some important questions related to the early history of Hungarians cannot be examined due to the lack of written historical data. But we do have written data related to Central and Inner Asia (the so-called Steppe Region) from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and sometimes from much earlier periods.¹ One of these problems is the relationship between etic and emic terms for various “peoples.” Another is the appearance of ethnonyms on different levels (ethnic, sub-ethnic, clan, and sub-clan)² among various ethnic groups. One might well wonder whether it is really appropriate to use ethnonyms as designations for these ethnic groups. After all, several modern ethnic groups were formed only in recent times, and the ethnonyms which are used to refer to them (today autonyms) are the result of political (not ethnic) processes, and they are sometimes the decision of a small group. Similar processes can be observed in Europe in early medieval times.³ Ethnic names have also undergone rapid changes, and it is interesting to observe attempts to create a national history for these modern ethnic groups, and the obvious shortcomings of these attempts.

Keywords: ethnos, conic clan system, Turkic, Inner Asia, Central Asia, Mongolic

Before one begins to take a closer look at the formation of modern Turkic ethnic groups, one should consider how Hungarian ethnology tried to define the notion of “ethnos” in the twentieth century, drawing on the theories of Russian scholars like Shirokogoroff⁴ and Bromlei.⁵ Mihály Sárkány argues that “ethnos” (ethnic group) is a “form of cooperation which includes all spheres of life.”⁶ It constitutes a broader group than a real or fictive kinship group, and the members of this group considers themselves one “people.” They express this sense of belonging through the use of an ethnonym. The characteristics of this cooperation and sense of community include:

1 See: Atwood, “Rashid al-Din’s comparative ethnography.”

2 I do not use the term “tribe” in the meaning of “clan.” Tribe is a social organization based on political alliances, not genealogy, while a clan is based on biological relations (see Fried, *The Notion of Tribe*).

3 Pohl-Reimitz, *Strategies of Distinction*; Gillet, *On Barbarian Identity*.

4 Shirokogoroff, *Ethnical Unit and Milieu*.

5 Bromley, *K karakteristike poniatia*; idem; *Etnos i etnografiia*.

6 Sárkány, “Kultúra, etnikum, etnikai csoport.”

1) A communication system: this system contains special tools and methods which would be difficult for others to develop intentionally. Different communication systems help separate social groups from one another. Common language has a prominent role, but language is not the most complicated element of a communication system for outsiders to acquire (these elements, rather, include tradition, folklore, beliefs, worldview, religion, etc.).

2) Biological ties: exchange of wives,⁷ ethnic endogamy.⁸

3) Common military activity: willingness to undertake or participate in group military endeavors can have both ethnical and political motives.

These criteria are difficult to apply to the nomadic peoples of the Steppe. It is almost impossible to apply them to some of the modern ethnic groups. Various communication systems can be observed not on the ethnic level but rather on a regional level, e.g. Central Asia, the northern Caucasus, Volga-Kama, and Altay-Sayan. Biological ties and ethnic endogamy can exist between separate ethnic groups, e.g. the Kazak–Kyrgyz, Tuva–Uriankhai, Daur–Solon, and Buriad–Khamnigan. This is clearly reflected in their system of kinship and their common kinship terms, e.g. the widespread Mongolic *quda* term for “marrying clans” instead of the ancient Turkic “tüngür.” The so-called conic clan system⁹ existed in the Mongol Era (the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries) and has survived to the present day, together with its identity and hierarchy. The major characteristics of the clan system are the following:

1) terms for the patri-linear clan	
clan	<i>urny</i> “seed” ¹
sub-clan	<i>söngök</i> “bone” ²
2) clan member’s relation to various clans	
own or paternal clan	<i>öz yurt</i> “own people” ³
maternal clan	<i>taqay/ tayay</i> or <i>nayaču</i> (Mongolic) ⁴ <i>yurt</i>
in-laws or wife’s clan	<i>qadın/ qayın yurt</i>
clan of a married woman	<i>törkün</i> (Mongolic <i>törküm</i>)
“marrying clans” ⁵ clan members related by the marriage of other clan members, not by their own marriage	<i>quda</i> (Mongolic word, Old Turkic: <i>tüngür</i>)

7 Lévi-Strauss, *The Elementary Structures of Kinship*.

8 Shirokogoroff, *Ethnical Unit and Milieu*.

9 Conic clan system is a hierarchical system that has the ruling clan (*töre*) at its peak. Beneath it there are the so-called marrying clans (*quda-söngök*) in a widening structure (like a cone). Clans intend to go higher in the hierarchy through marriages to people from clans of higher rank.

- 1 The word *urny* is a Turkic loan in Mongolian, but it is used only as a synonym for other words (hendiadys) meaning “relatives” (*töröl-urny, sadun-urny*).
- 2 See Mongol *lasan*, or “bone.” Among Eastern Mongol groups (Buriad and Bargu) *aimay* (“clan”) and *oboy/omoy* (“sub-clan”) is used (see Manchu *hala* and *mokeon*). Among the *Khalkha* ethnic group, the clan system disappeared during Manchu times (the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries).
- 3 Within their own clan, everyone is brothers or sisters with one another (differentiated only by age and sex).
- 4 The word *taqay/taşay* is of Turkic origin (see Kyrgyz *taay/taş*), while *nayaçu* is Mongolic (see Kazak *nayaşı*).
- 5 People related through the marriages of other members (children or siblings) of their particular clans (so-called marrying clan). These marrying clans stand close to each other in the hierarchy of the conic clan system.

The names of the various clans show intermingling among modern ethnic groups of the Turkic and Mongolic peoples. They clearly show that the integration of clans into tribes and larger political unions took place mainly for political reasons and not ethnic or linguistic considerations. The clan names of some modern Turkic ethnic groups include the following (the linguistic origin and the possible meanings of the various clan names are given in brackets):

Main Kazak clans among the three tribal unions (*jüz*)

Ulı (“Old”) Jüz	<i>duwlat, alban</i> (Mongolic)
Orta (“Middle”) Jüz	<i>nayman, kerey, kongirat, jalayır, argın</i> (Mongolic) <i>kıpsak, kanglı</i> (Turkic)
Kişi (“Young”) Jüz	<i>tabın</i> (Mongolic) <i>taş, aday</i> (Turkic) <i>nogaylı, şerkeş</i> (Nogay and Circassian)
Independent clans:	
1) <i>töre</i>	ruling clan of the Chingisids (Borjigid)
2) <i>koja</i>	“Khoja,” Muslim teacher (Arabic and Persian)

Major Bashkurt (Bashkir) clans

Southeast	<i>böryän, öbürän, düngäwer-yurmatı, kıpsak-tamyan</i>
Northeast	<i>tabın</i> (Mongolic), <i>katay-kalmak</i> (Kitay/Chinese and Kalmak/Mongol)
West	<i>meng: tađ, kirgäđ, kanglı</i> (Turkic origin: Kyrgyz and Kangly), <i>yänäy</i> ¹
1 The <i>yänäy</i> clan’s name is the Bashkurt version of the proper name Janay, derived from Persian <i>jān</i> meaning “soul.” It is not related to the Hungarian clan name Jenő (see Mándoky, Newcomers from the East, 287–92). The <i>yurmatı</i> clan’s name, in contrast, may be related to the Hungarian clan name Gyarmat.	

Major Kyrgyz clans

<i>Sol kanat</i> ('Left Wing')	<i>bugu, bagıš</i> (totem names 'deer' and 'elk/moose') <i>kušū, sayak, solto</i> (Turkic) <i>munduz, döölös, mongguš</i> (Siberian Turkic) ¹ <i>kitay</i> ('Kitay/Chinese') <i>mongoldor</i> ('Mongols')
<i>Ong kanat</i> ('Right Wing')	<i>kongurat, noygut, abat, teyit</i> (Mongolic) ² <i>adigine-sart</i> (Tajik)
<i>İkikilik</i> ('Middle'):	<i>kipčak</i> (Turkic) <i>yidirša</i> (Tajik)
Mongolic: <i>Sart-kalmak</i>	Muslim Kalmak (Oirad) (autonym: <i>xoton</i> 'Muslim') ³
<p>1 One finds similar clan names among the clans of Altay and Tuva (Altay <i>töölös, mundus</i>, Tuva <i>mongguš</i>).</p> <p>2 The final <i>-t</i> is from the Mongolic plural <i>-d</i>, see the ethnonyms Oirad, Buriad.</p> <p>3 The Muslim group speaking Oirad-Mongol dialect moved to Ysyk-köl (Kyrgyzstan) in the nineteenth century. They live in villages around the city of Karakol: Chelpek and Börü-bashy. See Somfai, "Kalmak."</p>	

Several historically recorded Mongolic clans (*nayman, kerey, jalayır, kongirat, dumlat*) and Turkic clans (*kanğlı, taz, sayak*) have survived to the present day, while other names which were used as names for tribal unions and nomadic states have become clan names again (pl. *kipčak, kitay, mongol*). Many clan names are used as ethnic names (*kirgiz, nogay, čerkes, monggol, kalmak, sart*). This clearly shows that the system of names is dynamic.

There are several Turkic and Mongolic ethnic groups in Central and Inner Asia that only came into existence after the Mongol Era (fifteenth and sixteenth centuries), and their formation is well-documented. The Mongol Ulus System was an ethnically and linguistically diverse political union inhabited by various nomadic and settled peoples. This new political framework made it necessary to have a common language as a means of communication. The ruling clan (*töre*) of the Chingisids was Mongolic but in the steppe region between the Altay Mountains and the Lower part of Danube (Dobrudja), called *Dašt-i qipčaq* in Persian sources and Cumania in Latin since the eleventh century, Kypchak Turkic was the *lingua franca* even for non-Turkic peoples (see Codex Cumanicus). Settled peoples in major trade centers (e.g. East Iranians of Central Asia: Sart, Sughdi, and Saka) were also under strong Turkic influence.

In the Mongol Era, the former political framework was replaced by the Ulus system.¹⁰ Nomadic clans were organized into new tribal and political unions,

10 After the death of Chingis Khan, the Mongol Empire was divided into partial empires (*ulus*) among his sons: Jochi, Chagadai/Chagatay, Ögüdei, and Tolui. Jochi received the *Dašt-i Qipčaq*, Chagatay received

where one finds mainly Mongolic and Turkic clan names, but they were not independent ethnic groups. The ruling (*töre*) and leading clans (Kazak *ak süyek*) of the Mongols were assimilated linguistically by the Kypchak Turks, creating a new linguistic and ethnic unity among the nomads of the Jochi Ulus. Their language developed into modern Kazak, Karakalpak, and Nogay. The same is true of the nomads of the Chagatay Ulus. Its nomadic population spoke various dialects of modern Kyrgyz: Ala-taw Kyrgyz, a Pamir-Alay Kypchak. Although linguistically unified, these clans were of different origin and did not have a common ethnic identity. They only had an identity on a clan (genealogical) and tribal (political) level, although they started to use common languages.

The acceptance of Islam also had a great impact on the identity of the nomads. The khans, the Chingisid Mongol elite, accepted Islam as the official religion in the fourteenth century in the two abovementioned nomadic states (Ulus). There are written sources on the narratives of Islamization regarding Özbek khan (1313–41) in the Jochi Ulus and Tarmashirin (1331–34) in the Chagatay Ulus.¹¹ Islam religious identity became more important, and this process strengthened the assimilation of the Mongol elite to the Turkic majority. Mongol as a political name disappeared very early in the Jochi Ulus (replaced by Özbek, Kazak, Nogay, etc.), but it was preserved longer in the Chagatay Ulus. The Eastern part of Central Asia (inhabited by nomads of the Tien Shan Mountains and settled peoples of the Tarim Basin) was called Moghulistan (“Mongol land”). The Western part (inhabited by nomads of Syr-darya and settled peoples of Khwarazm) was called Turkestan (Turk land), although they were both inhabited by linguistically Turkic ethnic groups. Beginning in the nineteenth century, the term Turkestan was also applied to Ferghana and Mawara-an-nahr by the Russians. Iranian languages (Khwarazmi, Sughdi, and Saka) formerly used in the region disappeared. Persian was only dominant in some cultural centers (Bukhara, Samarqand, and Herat).

Temür (Persian *Tīmūr-i lang* “the lame,” 1370–1405) was from the Mongolic Barlas clan, but his descendant Bābur considered himself a Turk (see *Bābur-nāma*) although his dynasty that conquered India was called Moghul (Mongol) Dynasty (1526–1858). In the Jochi Ulus the “People of Özbek” (Persian *Ozbekeya*) became more accepted instead of Moghul/Mongol. Babur also referred to the Nomads of Dašt-i Qipčāq as Özbeks. There was a common language and culture

Māwarāʾal-nahr, Farghāna and Tārim, Tolui received the central territories (Karakorum), and Ögedei received the north of China (Kitad or Kitay).

11 DeWeese, *Islamization and Native Religion in the Golden Horde*; Biran, “The Chagataids and Islam.”

among the peoples of these new political units, but the nomads had no ethnic identity as we define it nowadays. But they were Muslims and clearly separated themselves from the Turco-Mongol peoples of the Buddhist successor states of the Mongol Empire: Oirad (Tibet and Jungaria), Khalkha, or the Late Yuan Dynasty (Inner Asian Mongols), who lost power in China (1271–1368) but ruled the steppe until the Manchu conquest (1691). Muslim successor states of the Mongol Empire considered them “pagan” (*kalmak*) enemies. The Buddhist regions of Turfan were occupied on that ground by the Chagatay Ulus at the end of the fourteenth century (Kumul, Hami in Chinese, was occupied only in 1513).

Similar processes occurred in the West too. The Muslim population of Volga Bulgaria was linguistically assimilated by the nomads (Kypchak Turkic), as was the settled population of former Khazaria (the northern Caucasus and the Caspian Sea). Khazaria had a significant Oghur (Bulghar Turkic) population, and Alania also had multilingual peoples (only the Ossetians preserved their East Iranian language).

It would be misleading to create an ethnic history for these modern Turkic groups based on the history of their languages, because they were formed on political and cultural levels. The disintegration of the Mongol Ulus system (in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries)¹² sparked new political processes which led to the formation of modern ethnic groups, while branches of modern Turkic languages (Oghuz, Kypchak, Karluk, Kyrgyz, and Uighur) had existed long before that era. People were usually mentioned in the written sources by their political and not their ethnic names, so these names can also be misleading. On the other hand, several political terms originate from the names of ruling clans (e.g. Türk, Oguz, Kypchak, Karluk, Kyrgyz, Uighur, Mongol, Oirad, etc.). Other external names were also used, e.g. *tatar*, *türkmen*, *kalmak*, *sart*, *uriangqai*, *taranči*, *estek* (Ostiak), and *burut*. After the disintegration of the Jochi Ulus, new political terms emerged. Nomadic clans to the west of the Jayik (Ural) River (north of the Caspian Sea) started to form the independent Nogay Horde. Central territories by the Syr-darya (to the east of Aral Lake) became the Özbek Horde. Rebellious eastern clans founded the Kazak Horde in the Jeti-suw region (to the south of Balkash Lake). One finds these names among modern

12 Temür (1370–1405) basically destroyed the political power of the Jochi and Chagatay Ulus. From the Jochi Ulus, the Nogai, Özbek, and Kazak Hordes separated, as did the Crimean, Kazan, Haji-Tarqan, and Khwarazm khanates. The Chagatay Ulus also disintegrated: Moghulistan (Tarim, Turfan, and nomadic Kyrgyz), Māwarāʾal-nahr and Ferghana. The Iranian Ilkhan (1357) and Chinese Yuan (1368) states had disappeared earlier.

Turkic ethnonyms, but in their first uses they were merely political terms. The ruling clans were still Mongols (mainly Chingisid). After the conquest of the Shibanid dynasty¹³ in Central Asia in the sixteenth century, the name Özbek was gradually accepted by some local sedentary Turkic groups (*sart*) as an ethnic name. Vámbéry rightfully notes that originally Uzbeks lived in Khwarazm, and they spoke an Oghuz dialect (Khwarazmi and Khorasani). The sedentary Turkic population of Māwarāʾal-nahr and Farghāna was called *sart* before the Soviet era. The sedentary Turks from the Tarim, Turfan, and Ili Valleys (today the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region in China) were similar in language and culture to the *sart* of Farghāna. They were called *taranči* (“peasant”) by the Jungar (Oirad) Mongols, while the nomadic Turks also called them *sart*.

The Kazak Horde was established in the Jeti-suw region (1456) as a vassal state to Moghulistan. During the reign of Qasim khan (1511–18), Kazaks spread their influence to the west of the Dašt-i Qipčāq and started a power struggle with the neighboring nomadic states:

- 1) Moghulistan
- 2) Özbek Horde: Shibanid Bukhara and Sibir Khanate
- 3) Nogay Horde.

During the reign of Haqq-Nazar (1537–80), the newly founded Russian Empire crushed the Nogay Horde and occupied Qazan (1552) and Haji-Tarqan or Astrakhan (1556). The Kazak Khanate pushed the Nogays out of Central Asia and reached the Edil (Volga) River. Some Nogay clans rebelled against the Kazaks and joined the Özbek Khanate (the Karakalpaks are their descendants).¹⁴ Meanwhile, a new nomadic state, the Jungar (Jöün-gar), was established by the Oirad-Mongols (1634–1758), who attacked the Kazak Khanate (with the help of Russia) and caused it to split into three tribal unions (Ulī, Orta and Kiši Jüz). It would be strange to state that the ethnic group now called Kazak did not exist before the emergence of the Kazak Khanate. It existed, but it was referred to by a different name (Kypchak, Tatar). Culturally and linguistically, the ethnic group was formed during the times of the Golden Horde (Ak and Kök Orda). Interestingly, the Russians called the Kazaks “Kirgiz” until Soviet times, while the Kyrgyz were called “*kara-kirgiz*.”

13 The Shibanids ruled Māwarāʾal-nahr (centred in Bukhara) between 1505 and 1598, and the ruled Khwārazm (Khiwa) between 1511 and 1695.

14 During the reign of Tawakkul khan, the Kazaks conquered Tashkent. The Kazak Esim khan (1598–1628) and the *amir* of Bukhara were fighting for the city. In 1598, the Mangyit (Mangyud) clan seized power in Bukhara, while the Karakalpaks from the Nogay Horde joined the Khwārazm (Khiwa) Khanate.

The name Kyrgyz is found in a seventh-century Turkic runic inscription, but the next known use in the historical sources from Central Asia dates from the sixteenth century, when it was used in the *Tārīh-i Rašīdī* for example. Mirza Mohammed Haidār Dughlat (1500–51), the author of this chronicle, mentions Mohammed Kyrgyz as the leader of the rebellious nomads of Moghulistān (Tianshan and the Pamir Mountains). Kyrgyz was a political term for the nomads who rebelled against the Chagatay (Muslim Mongol/Moghul) central power. The Buddhist Mongols (*kalmak*) called the Kyrgyz “*burut*,” or “wrong faith” (Muslim), on the basis of their religious identity.¹⁵

Meanwhile, there was another Kyrgyz tribal union by the Yenisei (Kem) River which tried to oppose Russian advances in Siberia (1667–79) until their defeat in 1703 and the annexation of the Minusinsk Basin. Some of these Yenisei Kyrgyz migrated to Tuva (Altay-Sayan region), others to Chichgar in Manchuria (Fuyu Kyrgyz). The remaining Turkic clans (Yenisei Kyrgyz) were called the Tatars of Minusinsk by the Russians, and soon this became their autonym (*tadarlar*). In Soviet times, their official name (exonym) changed. They became Khakas after their Chinese name “*xiaqiashi*,” or Kyrgyz.

The following is a summary of the various names and terms (autonyms and exonyms) as they appear on the ethnic and clan level among the Turkic and Mongolic peoples. Modern ethnonyms can be divided into six different groups:

1) Former clan names

Modern ethnic name	clan name among other ethnic groups
Uighur (east Turkestani Sart/Taranchi)	Tofa (reindeer-keeping Tuva) clan
Kyrgyz (nomads of the Tianshan)	Tuva and Bashkurt (Bashkir) clan
Salyr (north Tibetan Muslim Turks)	Turkmen clan

2) Names of political units (Horde, Turkic Orda).

Özbek (west Turkestani and Khwarazmi Sart)	Özbek Khanate (Shibanid) nomadic state after the Jochid Özbek khan (1313–41)
Kazak (Nomads east of the Volga)	Kazak Khanate (Toka-Temürid) nomadic state, Rebellious (<i>kazak</i>) state (1456) against the Özbeks
Nogay (Nomads west of the Volga)	Nogay Horde nomadic state founded by the sons of Edige Manghid Amir (1440) after the Nogai Khan (1270–1300)

15 Its possible etymology is from Oirad-Mongol: *burni-d*, “untrue ones” or “people of other faith” (other than Buddhism).

3) Ancient ethnic or general names

official name (autonym)	name found in early sources (language)
Bashkir (<i>başqort</i>)	<i>başyird/ bajiyir/ bajiyid</i> (Arabic, Persian, Mongol) ¹
Tuva (<i>tıba</i>)	<i>tubas</i> (Mongol) ²
Turkmen (<i>türkmen</i>) ³	<i>torkemān/ turkomān</i> (Arabic, Persian) ⁴

1 The *başyird/ bajiyir/ bajiyid* name can be found in various forms in Arabic, Persian and Mongol sources also. For *bajiyid* (plural of *bajiyir*) see Ligeti, *Histoire secrète*, 205, 235. For *başjirt/ basjirt* and its various forms see al-Işṭakhrī, *Kitāb al-Masālik*, 225; for *bāşghird* forms see Ibn Faḍlān, *Riḥla*, 18.

2 The *tubas* are mentioned among the “people of the forest” (*hoi-yin irgen*) in the *Secret History of the Mongols* (the oldest surviving work of literature in Mongolian). The Mongols called the Tuva and their assimilated Mongolic groups *uriangqai*.

3 We can find Turkmen clans among the Kazak and Nogay (*türikpen*). The Turkmens of Stavropol (*türikpen*, Russian *trukhmen*) number around 15,000 and are considered a distinct ethnic group, although they speak Nogay.

4 The name *türkmen* probably referred to the Oghuz-Turks, who were in contact with the Persian-speaking population of Iran, Azerbaijan, Khorasan, and Khwārazm (Persian *tork-e imān* means “Muslim Turk”).

4) External names (exonyms)

External names can become the autonym of a particular ethnic group or can be used as an alternative name with the passing of time.

External names (exonyms) (source language)	Their original autonoms (official names)
<i>kalmak</i> (Turkic name) ¹	<i>oirad</i> or <i>öörd</i> (Oirad Mongol/Kalmyk) <i>oyrot. altay-kızi, telengit</i> (Altaiets)
<i>tatar</i> (Russian name) ²	<i>bulgar, büsürmen</i> “Muslim Bolgar” (Tatar) <i>kazanlı</i> “people of Kazan” (Tatar) <i>kırımli</i> “people of Crimea” (Crimean Tatar) <i>xirgıs</i> (Khakas)
<i>uriangqai/ uraangqay</i> (Mongol name) ³	<i>tıba</i> (Tuva) <i>saxa</i> (Yakut)

1 Originally *kalmak* meant “pagan” (Arabic *kāfir*) in Turkic languages (see Somfai Kara, “Kalmak,” 170).

2 The settled Turkic population along the Volga used to be called *bulghari*. Tsar Catherine II (1762–96) ordered that they be called Tatars. Some settled groups were also called Nogay by the Kazaks.

3 Tuva and Yakut also use *urāngqay* as an alternative autonym (*tıba-urāngqay, saxa-urāngqay*).

5) Created names (by Soviet ethnography)

Khakas (Yenisei Kyrgys)	from the Chinese <i>xiajiashi</i> (Kyrgys)
Altaiets (<i>Oyrot: altay-kızi, telengit</i>)	after the name of the Altay Mountains

6) Names deriving from geographical terms:

<i>tawlu</i> (Karachay-Balkar)	“mountain-dweller” ¹
<i>kumuk</i> / <i>kumuklu</i> (Kumuk)	after the name of the region Kumukh ²
<i>saxa</i> (Yakut)	“peripheral” (Turkic and Mongolic <i>yaqa</i> “edge”) ³

1 Neighboring groups also call them “mountain people” (Ossetian *xaxägtä*, Circassian *qušba*, Swan *savar*). This ethnic group was only divided by Soviet ethnography. The *malqarlı* live to the east of Elbrus Mountain, the *karaçaylı* to the west of it. The *tawlu* people also use *alan* as an autonym (compare with the Ossetian *asiag*, “As people,” also used for *tawlu*). The *as* and *alan* were ethnic names of the Iranian tribes that lived with the Cumans before the Mongol Conquest (1236).

2 The city of Kumukh was the center of the Daghestani Emirate or Shamkhal State (734–1560). Later, Tarki (1560–1867) near modern Makhachkala (Anjikala), became the center of the state.

3 The name *yaqa* is the Buriad version of *saxa*. Its plural form *yaqud* is the etymology for the Russian name Yakut.

Ethnic terms (ethnonyms or clan names) that appear on different levels among the Turkic and Mongolic peoples.

Usage of various names	Meaning
I) Kyrgyz:	
1) <i>kirgiz</i>	Central Asian Muslim Kyrgyz ¹
2) <i>xirgis</i>	Khakas (after the Chinese <i>xiajiasi</i> meaning ‘Kyrgys’)
II) Uighur:	
1) <i>uygur</i>	east Turkestani peasant or settled Turk (<i>tarançı, sart</i>) ²
2) <i>yugur</i>	Buddhist or yellow Uighur (<i>kara yugur/sira yogur</i>) ³
3) <i>uigur</i>	Reindeer-keeping Tuva (<i>soyod/uriangxai/tofa/tsaatan</i>)
III) Tatar:	
1) <i>tatar</i>	various settled Turkic speaking groups (Russian term) ⁴ <i>kazan, kirim, aštarxan, sibir</i>
2) <i>tadar</i>	Autonym for the Khakas (former Russian name)
IV) Sart:	
1) <i>sart</i>	settled Turkic (<i>uygur, özbek, tajik</i>)
2) <i>sart</i>	Huizu or Khoton (Muslim of China) ⁵
3) <i>sarta/santa</i>	Dongxiang (Mongolic Muslim)
4) <i>sartıl</i>	Khalkha Mongol clan

1 Oirad Mongols called the Muslim Nomads of Turkestan *burut*. Russians called the Kazakhs *kirgiz* and the Kyrgyz *kara-kirgiz* before Soviet times.

2 Sedentary Turks were called *sart* by Kazaks and Kyrgyz in east Turkestan (Tarim Basin or *Yette-seher*, “Seven towns”) and the Ili Valley. Oirad-Mongols called them *tariançı*, or “peasant,” hence their former name, *tarançı*. Their Uighur ethnonym was introduced in 1921 at the suggestion of Russian Turkologist Sergei Malov. Modern Uighurs are closely related to eastern Uzbeks (*sart*) and not related to the former Buddhist Uighur population of Turfan and Kumul.

- 3 The western group of Yugur speaks a Turkic language (close to Tuva), and the eastern group speaks a White Mongol (*šigan-monggul*) dialect (close to Huzhu Monguor).
- 4 The Russians used to call all the Turkic population of the Golden Horde (Jochi Ulus) Tatar (Kazak, Crimea, Astrakhan, Tobolsk/Siberia). Some of these groups use Tatar as an autonym today.
- 5 The Muslim population of northern Tibet (Qinghai, Gansu) is called *sart/sarta* by the Turkic and Mongolic (Yugurs and White Mongols) groups. Among them, one finds the Chinese *huižū*, the Mongolic *dongxiang* and *bonan* (*ba'o'an*), and the Turkic *salır*.

The following exonyms used by the Kazaks and Oirads shed light on the system of ethnic names, but also make it more complex.

1) Exonyms of various peoples in Kazak

Modern ethnonyms	exonyms used by the Kazaks
Bashkir (<i>bašqort</i>)	<i>estek</i> (Ostiak or Ugor) ¹
Tatar (<i>tatar</i>)	<i>nogay</i> (living in the Nogay Orda)
Özbek and Uygur (<i>oʻzbek/uygʻur</i>)	<i>sart</i> (settled merchants)
Oirad (<i>oirad/öörä</i>)	<i>kalmak</i> (meaning “infidel, non-Muslim”) ²
Altay Turk (<i>altay-kızi/ telengit</i>)	<i>kalmak</i> (meaning “infidel, non-Muslim”)

1 It is possible that Kypchak-Turks had a reason for calling the Bashkir *estek* (Ostyak). They might be related to the Ugric peoples, but switched to Kypchak during the times of the Golden Horde.

2 The Oirads of the Volga (Kalmykia, Russia) use the Turkic name *kalmak* as an autonym (Oirad *qalimaq* pronounced *xal'mäg*, Russian *kalmyk*).

2) Exonyms of various peoples in Oirad-Mongol

Modern ethnonyms	exonyms used by the Oirads
Kyrgyz (can also mean Kazak before 1920)	<i>burund</i> (“not Buddhist, Muslim nomad”)
Nogay (can also mean Tatar)	<i>manggud</i> (after the name of Edige’s clan)
Uighur (East Turkestani Sart)	<i>tarianči</i> (“peasant”)
other Muslim peoples	<i>xoton</i> (Oirad-speaking)

The system of exonyms is also clearly complex. Oirad-Mongols call the Nogays *mangyad*, while Buriad-Mongols use that name for the Russians (Cossacks). The Buriad’s neighbors, the Khakas, call the Russians *xaxax* (Kazak), while their autonym is *tadar* (Tatar).

So-called “ethnogenesis” is a problematic term because ethnic groups (people with a common ethnic identity) are not created “by themselves” (*genesis*). Rather, the creation of an “ethnic” group is the result of long-term cultural and political processes. The ethnic identity of a certain group is recognized due to political and

economic exigencies in a particular region. Ethnic identities, if there was such a thing among the peoples of Inner Asia, were formed according to subjective (not objective) criteria, so they cannot be defined in precise terms. The various ethnic names (internal and external) have political meanings: they come from the names of tribal unions or the name of their leaders (e.g. Özbek khan and Nogay emir). Siberian indigenous peoples, who lived in classical clan societies (organized around extended families), had no political or ethnic autonyms. We only find exonyms describing them. They referred to themselves with general terms:

Nganasan	<i>nya</i> "relatives"
Gilyak	<i>nyivbu</i> "people"
Gold/Nanai	<i>na-ni</i> "local people"
Tunguz	<i>even/ewen-ki</i> "gathering"

Nomadic states were ethnically and linguistically diverse political units, so they needed a common language (*lingua franca*) which soon spread to cover a vast territory. Groups that were ethnically and culturally distinct became linguistically homogeneous among the peoples of the Jochi and Chagatay Ulus (e.g. the Kazak, Bulghar, Bashkir, Nogay, Kumuk, Tawlu, Kyrgyz, and Sart). On the other hand, several modern ethnonyms come from exonyms used by colonizing powers (Russia, China), but they were accepted by the peoples to which they were ascribed and now are used as autonyms (e.g. Tatar, Kalmak, and Uighur). Thus, one must be very careful when using the notions of *ethnos* and *ethnogenesis* as concepts with which to structure narratives of the early history of the Hungarians. Ethnic identity and ethnicity are cultural phenomena which change dynamically over time according to society and political system. Only vague information is available concerning the culture, society, and political system of the pre-Conquest Hungarians. Given the lack of internal written sources, no conclusions can be drawn concerning ethnic identity and ethnicity in their society. The sparse available data can be better analyzed with the use of analogies and parallel models from the nomadic societies of the Steppe.

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