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## THE ROLE OF TAMGA SYSTEMS IN THE STUDY OF THE ETHNIC HISTORY OF NOMADIC TRIBES

Any nation throughout history has its own distinctive symbols in beliefs, culture, customs, and traditions that have been with them since ancient times. For some, it is represented by a battle cry, for others by a tamga, for a third by a special worldview, beliefs, as well as ideas and beliefs associated with color. And the study of each of them separately through a part of the history of the people, its ethnic history, territorial location, features of settlement and relations with neighboring people, interactions, etc. make it possible to obtain additional information on these problems.

Any tamga consists of signs caused by the perception of information in the history of mankind, in its nature. Such tamgas, in turn, are found on the territory of Kazakhstan. A distinctive feature of the tribe is that such tamgas initially performed the duties of defenders of the tribes, and then became their separate tamgas. In addition, tribal tamgas can provide quite important information about their ethnic structure and composition when studying the history of Turkic tribes and ethnic groups that have preserved a tribal and nomadic way of life. In the article, tamgas and signs were used as source material for the study of ethnic, political and other problems.

**Key words:** tamga, symbol, Turkic peoples, ethnonym, Central Asia.

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### Көшпелі ру-тайпалардың этникалық тарихын зерттеудегі таңбалық жүйелердің орны

Тарих бетінде орын алған кез-келген халықтың ертеден өздерімен бірге жасап келе жатқан наным-сенімдеріндегі, мәдениетіндегі, ғұрпындағы, салт-дәстүріндегі ерекше белгілері болады. Ол бірінде ұранмен беріліп отырса, екінші бірінде таңбамен, ал үшіншісінде ғұрпындағы айрықша дүниетаным, сенімімен, сондай-ақ түр-түске байланысты қабылдау, сену жолдарымен көрініс тауып отырады. Ал олардың әрқайсысын жекелеп зерттеу сол халықтың тарихының бір бөлшегі арқылы, оның этникалық тарихындағы, территориялық орналасуы, қоныс тепкен аумақтың ерекшеліктері мен көршілес елдерімен қарым-қатынасы, өзара ықпалдастығы, және т.б. мәселелерінің көлеңкелі қырлары мен ашылған тұстарына қосымша ақпараттар болатыны анық.

Кез-келген таңба адамзат тарихындағы, оның табиғатындағы ақпараттардың қабылдануынан туындаған белгілерден тұрады. Мұндай таңбалар өз кезегінде Қазақстан аумағында көптеп кездеседі. Ру-тайпалардың ерекше белгісі саналатыны мұндай таңбалар алғашында ру-тайпалардың қорғаушысы міндетін атқарып, кейін келе олардың жеке таңбасына айналған болуы да мүмкін. Және де тайпалардың таңбалары тайпалық және көшпелі өмір салтын сақтаған түркі тайпалары мен этникалық топтарының тарихын зерттеуде олардың этникалық құрылымы мен құрамы туралы айтарлықтай маңызды мәліметтер бере алады. Мақалада этникалық, саяси және т.б. мәселелерді зерттеуде таңбалар мен белгілер дерек-материал ретінде пайдаланылды.

**Түйін сөздер:** таңба, белгі, түркі халықтары, этноним, Орталық Азия.

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### Роль тамговых систем в изучении этнической истории кочевых племен

Каждый народ на протяжении истории имеет свои отличительные символы в верованиях, культуре, обычаях и традициях. У одних она выражается ураном (боевым кличем), у других тамгой, а у третьих особым мировоззрением, верованиями, а также представлениями и убеждениями,

связанными с цветом. Изучение каждого из них в отдельности через призму истории народа, его этнической истории, территориального расположения, особенностей расселения и его отношений с соседними странами, взаимоотношениями между собой и т.д. дают возможность получить дополнительные сведения по данной проблематике.

Каждая тамга состоит из знаков, определяемых восприятием информации в его природе. Отличительной особенностью родов и племен является то, что такие тамги, возможно, изначально носили в себе защитную функцию, а затем стали их личными символами. Изучение тамг родов и племен предоставляет возможность получить важные сведения об этнической структуре и составе тюркских племен и этнических групп, сохранивших племенной и кочевой образ жизни. В статье тамги и знаки использовались в качестве источникового материала при изучении этнических, политических и других проблем.

**Ключевые слова:** тамга, символ, тюркские народы, этноним, Центральная Азия.

## Introduction

Symbolic features and differences were inherent in all tribal unions and states that inhabited the territory of Kazakhstan and Central Asia in the early and Middle Ages. For example, in some tribes it took place in connection with their own generic symbols, in others it was expressed by slogans, and in others it was determined by the peculiarities of customs and traditions. As N. Aristov noted, « ... ancestral splits and names, including tamgas and slogans, and traditions and legends all-everything has been preserved in the nature of the monuments of the people's own past by nomads who had no written literature» (Aristov, 1895). Therefore, in the disclosure of early history, it is important to consider traditions, symbols and slogans as the main data of the study. Since some pages of the history of any nation remain in oral literature, beliefs, traditions, the art of painting and monuments, we reveal everything that is hidden in them, bringing them to the pages of history. Almost all of them today are a symbolic reflection and part of the history of tribes, nations, and people (Khabizhanova, 2021).

When studying the problem of ethnogenesis, it is obvious that semiotic science can come to the fore and come to the rescue. Semiotics studies certain tamgas and symbols. And when considering the ethnic history of the Kazakh people, the study of various historical symbols and signs directly related to the tribes from which its roots spread leads to some discoveries and historical additions. And among the research scientists there were Turkic opinions about the period in which the symbols found in the history of Kazakh clans occurred. Mentioned at the Kazakh researchers, continuing the opinion of N.A. Aristov, say: «in our opinion, the truth itself is close to the fact that it was these conclusions that gave rise to generic tamgas – the political and economic needs of the life of the Turks of the early Middle Ages» (Kazak ru-taypalarinin tarihi, 2008).

The word “Tamga” is found among the Turkic-speaking peoples and Caucasians. Kabardians called this word “damygye” Adygei “tamygya”, Abaza “damygya”, “adamyg”, in Russian literature it is written as “brand”. In his work, E. M. Turgunbayev, referring to the genealogy of Kazakh tribes, noted that the tamga should also be given great attention: “... the etymology of the word tamga is to surprise, that is, to be surprised. Maybe the root, to know, to decide. Graphic information encoded in tamga from the Runo-Tomsk concept, which is based on the ancient philosophy of the proto-Turks, and its meaning should be solved using the law of nature, logic. The mystery of the Runo-Tomsk concept is solved with the help of information corresponding to the hieroglyphic alphabetic text. The basic location of the Tash-Oguz tamgas or outer tamgas is known. The outer tamgas are part of the Sarmatian and Alan tamgas” (Turgunbayev, 2016).

The symbol not only distinguished the tribes, but also played a symbolic role, since the history of nomads is closely connected with animal husbandry, but also the breadth that each country invests in its herd.

The well-known Swedish scientist G. Jarring studied the tamga of the Turkic peoples in Central Asia. The peoples of Southern Siberia and Altai, Kyrgyz, Kazakhs have enough literary data on this issue. There are various terms referring to only one meaning of the sign, for example, “En-in-im”, but they have never been used in the meaning of “branding animals” than *tamy'a*, instead attaching the meaning of “a segment in the ear” (Jarring, 1981).

The author cites the following terms:

- *en* (kirg.) – a sign, an incision in the livestock, a sign of private property; (a sign of ownership);
- *in* (kirg.) – a sign placed on the ear of livestock that gives a mark of ownership when tribes are divided;

- *im* (alt.)- The sign on the ear of livestock means ownership.

Hudson explains the use of the tamga within the tribes in his own way, making no distinction between “tamga” and “en”. Mahmud Kashgari has a report on the use of symbols among the Turks, but it does not specify where the stamp (tamga) and the segment (sign, width).

So, in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, among the Altai and South Siberian nomadic pastoralists, the tamga (meaning private affiliation) was previously widely used.

### Materials and methods

The theoretical basis for studying the problem lies in the fact that the system of thinking and perception in the worldview of the Turkic peoples is reflected in the form of tamgas and signs as part of their ethnic and ethno-cultural history. The study traces the tradition of historical analysis of tamga systems among nomadic tribes based on the scientific works of researchers of this problem. The main methods of research are historical comparative analysis, semiotic analysis. In addition to written sources, the source base also includes tamg systems found on the surface of material sources.

### Research results and discussion

Some of the characteristic features left on this territory by the tribes located along the Amu Darya and Syr Darya rivers resemble modern Kazakh and Turkmen tamgas. Among them: Tabyñ, Tama, Adai, Kete, Bekdeli, Bayandyr, Ysyk, etc.

This means that A. Dzhikiev meant the tamga of the Adai clan the opinion that the Adai tamga was borrowed from the medieval Turkmens from the tamga “kazayakly” the word is inappropriate, which can be explained as follows: in smaller genera known as quantitative numbers, the genus Adai, can not be used as the marking mark is an extract from small genera (Dzhikiyev, 1972). In addition, the salors found in the Turkmens are branches of the Oguz. In this regard, the idea of external influence on the tamga of the Adai who inhabited the territory of Kazakhstan is incorrect.

N. Aristov, when systematically displaying the generic tamgas of the Kyrgyz-Kazakhs, indicates that a circle is two circles, i.e. two circles, hemispherical, only one vertical line, two vertical lines, the connection of a circle and a semicircle with one and two, sometimes three vertical lines, the

image of an angle, consists of a connection of four vertical lines (four corners) and has complicated forms.

According to Rashid Ad-Din, the tamgas were marked under Kun Khan, who was considered the son and heir of Oguz Khan in the legend, that is, they marked order, wealth, herds and invented it so that others would not encroach on him. And A.N. Kharuzin considers the tamga as a sign indicating the sign of the Genus, and not private property. The only characteristic feature of the Turkic ulus is the generic tamga. By the tamga of the genus, you can determine the ethnic name of this country, its functions.

In M. Kashgari’s work “Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk”, the ethnic composition of the Oguz is listed below: “Kinik, kayag, bayundur, yua – yua, salgur, bautili, bugduz, bayat, yazgyr, aimur, karabuluk, alguluk, ndir, urgir – yuragir, tutyрка, ulayundlug, Tugar – tyger, bazhanak, chuvuly, chabni, charukluk” (Mahmud Kashgari, 1997). It is easy to notice that the composition of the Oguz tribes and tribal tamgas in the representation of M. Kashgari coincide with the existing Kazakh tamgas. For example, the generic tamgas of the Oguz tribes are similar to the tamgas of the Kazakh tribes sadyr, matai, similar to Kayagi – Kanlylar; Bayundyurds – Konyrat, Sary – Uysun, Girei; Ibaldyks – Sunaki; Salgurls – Adai, Alshyn; Igdir-Zhappas, etc. Here, the study of tribal tamgas pushes us to the conclusion that historical research should approach from a new angle to identify those moments that we do not pay attention to. At the same time Yu. A. Zuev said: “Comparison of generic tamgas of the times of M. Kashgari and Rashid Ad-Din with tamgas of Turkic and Mongolian tribes of a later period could provide the most valuable material necessary for studying the ethnogenesis of the peoples of Central Asia” (Zuev, 2002).

According to such scientists as N.A. Aristov, M. Tynyshbaev, S. Amanzholov, when considering the tamgas of clans and tribes, it is important to keep in mind that when certain tribes leave the former tribe, or join another tribe, or become a separate people, additional signs and symbols are gradually added to their tamgas.

In the course of his research, S. Ye. Azhigali refers the tamgas to the first elements of the text. He gives information that tamgas are the only information element on the western edges of the monuments – on tombstones, chests, saganatams, on the tombstones of Shopan-ata, Karaman-ata, Koshkar-ata. In the monuments of Mangyshlak of the XII-XV centuries there are tamgas of Turkmen

tribes of Oguz origin (Istoriya i kul'tura Aralo-Kaspiya, 2001). It should be noted that the tamgas of salors, choudors, igdyr, bayyndyr are very similar to the symbols of the "Oguz children". In the work of S. E. Azhigali "An essay on the cultural heritage of the Aral-Caspian region", published in the electronic journal "Electronic scientific publication Almanac Space and Time", it is said that the symbols remaining on the pages of memorial monuments are an invariable attribute. The researcher points out the similarity in the symbol of the Igdyr tribe of Turkmens, along with the Adai and Tabyr tribes. Being interested in the question of the origin of ancestral signs – symbols depicted on tombstones, the author particularly dwells on the historical, cultural, ethnographic significance of memorial and cult complexes of the studied region (Azhigali, 2014). Due to the fact that the history of monuments here is rich in multifaceted historical legends and traditions, an important historical, cultural, ethnographic significance is that the burial place of many major figures who lived in the past centuries is represented by ornaments with various images, tamgas. For example, the characteristic features of the tribes who lived in the Oguz-Kipchak period are visible on the historical structures of Mangystau and Ustyurt. Also, on the basis of these data, the former sign system of the Kazakhs of the Younger Zhuz is being restored. Therefore, the Aral and Caspian medieval architectural monuments are of great importance as a historical source studying the history of the Oguz.

At the same time, we must not forget that the Oguz occupied an important place in the ethnogenesis of the Turkic peoples, primarily because they are also among the Turkic tribes. Therefore, at the origins of this historical continuity, one can find in natural sources and ancient letter paintings dating from the era of the Saks, symbols of the clans-tribes that are part of the Bayuly. For example, here you can find the tamga Z of the Zhappas tribe, the tamga V of the Sherkesh, Esentemir tribes. Such comparative analyses can be done by placing the symbols of the tribes of the Oguz union and the Kazakh tribes of the Younger Zhuz side by side. Another notable problem is that in most cases, the tamga signs of the genera in the composition of the Younger Zhuz can also be found in the historical monuments of Western Mongolia, Orkhon, Talas. This in itself proves that these tribes inhabited these regions at the time of their ancestors.

In the search for a name or ethnic affinity of one kind or another, we make mistakes, believing that the

situation that puts us at a dead end between early names and modern word formations is the same. In order not to succumb to such mistakes, it is necessary to comprehensively consider their history. For example, which clan owned this sign and which places does its migration area include when conducting research on generic signs, which are unique historical features of tribal tribes, both in the case when the names of the tribes do not match in the name, and when such names coincide? – it is necessary to consider by asking questions. Historical symbols preserved since the time of the Oguz will help in this. "Of the tribal tamgas reflected in the monument on the Taihar rock, we find the tribal tamgas of the Baybakty and Zhappas tribes. Along with other names from the monument of Karauyl Kyzyl, one can also include generic tamgas of the named tribes" (Sartkozhauly, 2007).

In this regard, it should be noted the value of the monographic work of Karzhaubai Sartkozhaevich. In this work comparative symbols of the most ancient tribes are given. Having carried out their scientific analysis, it is possible to determine the traces of the Oguz in this region based on a comparison of the tamga taken as an Oguz component with tamga in the Kazakh tribes.

"Based on the above data, we can conclude that the ethnic history of the ancient Aylin tribe developed in the Syr Darya and the Aral Sea region. In accordance with this, the ethnic ties of the Aylin Bashkirs with the Karakalpaks and Turkmens are only the subsequent inertia of early processes. The origin of the Ailins is connected with the Oguz. In the genealogical structure of the early Oguz, compiled by Rashid Ad-Din, the tribe of yaraz / yapaz-yappaz-yabpaz/, duker, durge and yairly / yagirly-yagairly-yagalbayly / are united into a part of ailun (crescent), which received the name of the second son of Oguz" (Kuzeev, 2010). As can be seen from this place, shown in the source of Rashid Ad-Din, is the second child of Oguz "Moon". Among other tribal associations mentioned in the composition of the Moon, there are the names "Yaraz" and "Yairly". Analyzing these names, we can make assumptions that Yaraz – Zhappas, Yairly – Zhagbayly.

Such historical continuity can be seen in Tama, another tribe in Zhetyru.

It is known that the ancestors of Tama lived in the Altai-Sayan region, which may come from the Tumat tribe, which is noted in the studies of Rashid Ad-Din. This hypothesis was first proposed by the researchers Kh. Argynbaev, M. Mukanov, V. Vostrov.

Taking into account the fact that in the Middle Ages the Tama tribe, spreading from the Black

Sea region, and many Kypchak-Oguz tribes under the Turkic and West-Eastern Turkic Khaganates turned the Altai-Sayan region into a zone of their consolidation, the establishment of the state, this allows us to agree with the above opinion.

According to the works of M. Kashgari and Rashid Ad-Din, the tamgas of early Turkmen

tribes spread from Oguz Khan can be seen in the monuments.

In his work, S. Azhigali compiled tables of Kazakh tamgas from the monuments of Western Kazakhstan, taking into account the images of the monuments of the Mangistau plateau and written sources.

**Table 1** – Tamgas of Oguz tribes in the works of Mahmud Kashgari “Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk” and Rashid Ad-Din “The Compendium of Chronicles” (Kazak ru-taypalarinin tarihi, 2007)

№	Oguz tribes (according to M. Kashgari)	Tribal tamgas	Oghuz tribes (according to Rashid Ad-Din)	Tribal tamgas
1	2	3	4	5
1	Kunyk-kunyki	𐰇 (animal symbol)	Kaye	𐰇
	Kayag-kayak	𐰇	Bayat	𐰇
1.2	Bayundur-bayundyr	𐰇	Al-karauly	𐰇
	Iva-iba (iuva-yiba)	𐰇	Kara-uyli	𐰇
	Salgur-Salgir	𐰇	Yazer	𐰇
	Afshar-afshar	𐰇	Duker	𐰇
	Bektili-Bektili	𐰇	Dordirga	𐰇
	Bugduz-bukduz	𐰇	Yaparly	𐰇
	Bayat-bayat	𐰇	Aushar	𐰇
	Jazgyr-jazgyr	𐰇	Kyzyk	𐰇
	Eimur	𐰇	Bek-Deli	𐰇
	Kara bolik	𐰇	Karkyn	𐰇
	Alka bolik	𐰇	Bayandur	𐰇
	Igdir	𐰇	Bichina	𐰇
	Uregir (yuregir)	𐰇	Jauldur	𐰇
	Tutyрка	𐰇	Chibni	𐰇
	Ulay-undlyg	𐰇	Salor (Salyr)	𐰇

Table continuation

№	Oguz tribes (according to M. Kashgari)	Tribal tamgas	Oghuz tribes (according to Rashid Ad-Din)	Tribal tamgas
	Tugger		Imur	
	Beshenek		Alayutly	
	Zhuvaldar		Urkiz	
	Zherpy-zhepny		Bekdir	
	Zharuklyg (few numbers)	unknown symbols	Ukduz	
			Yiva	
			Kynyk	

Table 2 – Tamgas on West Kazakhstan monuments (Azhigali, 2002)

№	Tamga	Tribe	Necropolis	A source
1		Adai	Shopan-ata, etc.	Epigraph of monuments; Levshin, Materials on the history of the Kazakh SSR, vol. IV (MIC)
2		-//-	Masat-Ata, Oglandy, Beleulu, Asrep-Musrep	EM
3		-//-	Khan Cemetery (Horde)	EM
4		-//-	Kokey 2	EM
5		-//-	Kusshi-Ata Koshkar-Ata	EM
6		-//-	Kusshi-Ata	EM
7		-//-	Kushche-beyit	EM
		-//-	Kushche-beyit	EM
8		Zhappas	Kushche-beyit, Karasakal, Karakol Main Cemetery	EM

## Conclusion

All these monuments are an important source in the study of the nomadic period, as well as in the creation of a true picture of the ethnocultural situation in the era of the tribes. The study of the characteristics of the Kazakh tribes and clans, especially tribal tamgas, allows to reveal the depths of the ethnic history of the people, to draw conclusions and conclusions about their common historical roots with the Oguz tribes. The tamgas

of clans and tribes make it possible to determine the past history of each of them and how they are connected with each other and the significance of the Oguz community in this important issue.

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