# Use of Nicknames in Ancient Turkic Sources and their Analysis

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**Abstract:** Nicknames, as a secondary name, occupy a significant place in the lexical resource of the language. Anthroponymic units – person's names, surnames, patronymics, nicknames, pseudonyms, nisbas -  names that developed from person's place of birth, titles having been recorded also in the ancient sources of our language, have come down to us with the historcial development and alterations of their tradition. These units were revealed in stone incriptions, especially, in the manuscripts written during the reign of the Second Turkic Kaghanate. This small research is devoted to the linguistic analysis of nicknames and titles, their linguistic development and description in the manuscripts of the Second Turkic Kaghanate.

**Keywords:** person's names, surnames, patronymics, nicknames, pseudonyms, names that developed from person's place of birth, titles, job titles, secondary names, stone inscriptions.

İt is widely known that antroponymics is a science that examines and summarizes all actions, aspirations, concepts carried out to name items and objects, person and characters, and speech activities carried out in this direction throughout the social and cultural history of mankind. Therefore, this subject, as it has been aforementioned several times, analyses the historical, source-etymological, national-cultural feautures of people's names, surnames, nicknames, pseudonyms, titles, epithets, the names of tribe-generations and dynasties, anthroponymic units. As a famous Turkish anthroponymist, Ibrakhim Shakhin has pointed out, "not only people's name, surname, names of dynasties, pseudonyms, titles, but also codified names may serve as an object of investigation in a certain study of anthroponymics. İn addition, topics such as the structure of these names, their etymology, the historical development and alterations in the tradition of naming people are a reaserch area of anthroponymics. Such studies can be carried out on the names of majority people in a certain region or inbetween a certain period of time, and moreover, the names of people taken separately from history and present, and the relationship of the subjects described by these names can be examined chronologically". Like all ethnicities of the world, the history of Turkic nations is very abundant and colourful. Turkic generations and tribes had contact with other ethnic groups at certain stages of their historical development, and these contacts had such a reflection in their language and history that they left a significant mark in national culture, in particular, in naming traditions. The study of linguo-anthropological and linguo-anthroponymic abundancy of the Turkic world has a long history that rich factual materials with a detailed systematic-structural description on the history, semantics and application of anthroponyms have been introduced into scientific circulation during this process. According to historical conditions, the development of anthroponyms occupy an important place in the life of Turkic people. From this point of view, the ancient anthroponyms, in particular, nicknames, titles are undoubtedly interesting. Nowadays, the onomasiological aspect of the original name is more clearly manifested in the process of linguistic communication and practice, because common nouns appear only in the natural language that has semiotic units Lexpressed by sounds. "In order to express general concepts, a human had first to learn to generalise and create words, and only after that adopt the technique of differentiating similar events, similar objects and naming people" [1]. This skill human needed to

master occurs in parallel with culture, social processes, traditions, religion, customs, resettlements and ethnic intermingling, and these processes leave their own mark in anthroponymical system.

In every society it is one of the major factors for people to choose a name for a child in forming a member of a society, and during this process the obstacles connected with a person's sexual-biological characteristics and ethnic origin is overcome: it also turns out that these characteristics are not necessarily expressed by names. In our point of view, human's personality and his name correspond to each other; the saying "name similar to body" was not born in vain in our nation. In the earliest age (months) a person gets used to the name that is given to him, and this name remains in his mind for the rest of his life: it never changes, not considering into account some exceptional cases and, naturally, it becomes unique identification code of his personality.

It doesn't matter, whether the Turkic parents are Christians, Muslims, Buddhist or Shamanists, they believe that while choosing a name, they will give their child a program of wishes, including dreams, demands, and aims that he will meet in the future. This process is related to different periods of socio-cultural life, and also provides a good understanding of the social function of anthroponymic units that reflect the events in political or cultural life of the country.

Not only the individual features of the person, but also the combination of his name and fate is the main thesis in the life of Turkic people. Actually, a name (onym) expresses ethnic and aesthetic relationships formed in a certain society: it contains a lot of cultural information related to that socium.

Although person himself does not express anything in the linguistic picture of the world, the approach of anthropo-centrism remains unchanged even other traditional directions are chosen. Therefore, it becomes possible to study the secret of a person's name by combining the information collected from several humanitarian sciences, like philosophy, sociology, culturology. İt is well known that there existed strong ethno-linguistic relationships of ancient Uzbeks with ancient Turkish, Karluk-Chigil, Kipchak, Oghuz ethnic groups and such kind of situation left a remarkable mark in the formation of anthroponymic system of our language. İn addition to this, close relationships of Turkic ethnos with people speaking Eastern Iranian languages, Persian-Tajik people who existed in Central Asia in ancient times have remarkably influenced the anthroponymic system of our language [2;23].

For this reason, we can see the influence of such ethno-political and ethno-cultural processes on Uzbek names, and nicknames that are related to the former ones and are part of them.

Anthroponymy in the language of ancient Turkic-Runic inscriptions that go back to the VI-VIII centuries and the nicknames that constitute a significant part of them are worth of interest. According to E.A.Musabekova who has seriously learnt this topic, in the language of ancient Turkic people the formation of names (people's names), nicknames and titles happened within the framework of such linguistic units as "our own/foreign". The names of "our own" type were represented by traditional names. What about the names of "foreign" type, they had "different, unusual" character, and they changed traditional, ordinary way of naming the individuals, frame and type of naming. And at this point, the additional components in ancient Turkic names like titles, depictions and nicknames began to appear [3; 209].

The process and the need to recognize/introduce (naming) a person by a name always occurred in ancient Turkic people by referring to images and associations familiar to them from the external world or mythological fantastic world. At the result, choosing the of name/nickname depends on historical context, cultural traditions and customs, imaginations and discretion of the family members. While giving a name to child, the person who chooses the name seems to program the destiny of him with the help of this name: by giving the name of historical hero or famous person,

good forces of the nature, the names of favorable days, events, places that remain in the memory of the people, this person will find for the child a guide and patron who will accompany him throughout his life. By doing so, the name given to a child appears as a unique carrier of the values of the family or society. For example, in his work "The Secret History of the Mongols", a historian Djuvaini notes following names of the Naimans and Keraites who belonged to ancient Turkic tribes before they converted to Islamic religion: *Altin-Ashuk* (*"altin"* – golden, *"ashuk"* – a game instrument that is made of animal's bone), *Kuchulukkhan* (ancient Turkic *kuchlug* – strong, powerful, bahadir), *Yeditughluk* (ancient Turkic *"yetti tughluk"* – owning seven flags), *Inanch Bilgakhan* (ancient Turkic *"Inanch"* – faith, religion, *"bilga"*- wise, knowledgeable, intelligent), *Elkutur* (*"el"* – government, nation, *"kutur"* – ancient Turkic verb *kutmoq* – to rule, keep in obedience; there also existed other names related to the word *el* – governmnet, nation, society: *Elbugha, Eltemur, Elchur,* (the first components in these names expressed the government, and the second component – a sacred animal, object or social title), *Olukyasun* (ancient Turkic *"oluk"* – dead, *"yasun"* – bone; this name was, perhaps allegorical, *Chaghatay* (ancient Turkic "chagha" – child, *"-tay"* - means caressing, diminutive suffix, meaning "a little boy").

Hence, in ancient Turkic people name was given to a person based on various social motives in connection with his life, place in the hierarchy of the society and the government, even though, mostly the components of positive connotation stand out, sometimes the people who were cursed by the nation were given names (nicknames) consisting of a negative meaning. If we pay attention to the system of people's names of ancient Naimans and Keraites, it is not difficult to notice that their names constituted of two components, and the second one is equal on semantics to a nickname carrying a descriptive meaning. In addition, the onimization of ordinary appellatives of the folk language is characterized by transferring the words like *"altın"* –gold, *"oshiq"*, *"kuchlug"*, *"yetti tughluk"*, *"inanch"*, *"bilga"*, *"el"*, *"kutur"*, *"oluk"* – *"yasun"*, *"chagha"* to people's names (nicknames). In ancient Turkic people, there was a unique mechanism of the onomization of apellatives, their transfer to onyms – people's names and nicknames.

During the ancient Turkic Kaghanate, especially, during the reign of the Second Turkic Kaghanate that was established in the middle of the VII century, it is remarkable that the system of names, titles, job titles was created and they had a nickname-epithetic character. It is known that the First Turkic Kaghanate fell under the influence of China in the 30's of the VII century, as it is noted in Kul Tegin manuscript, "the Turkic became slaves to the Tabgach. Your son, who was supposed to be a prince, became a servant, your daughter, who was supposed to be a princess, became a servant. Turkic beks abandoned their Turkic names, took the names of Tabgaches and Turkic beks abandoned their Turkic names, took the names of the Tabgach, and obeyed to the Tabgach Kaghan" (stone inscription of Kul Tegin, big manuscript, the seventh line). Because of such ethnic catastrophe, we study the anthroponymic units of the First Turkic Kaghanate's period through the discrete information remained in the ancient Turkic inscriptions which were created during the period of the Second Turkic Kaghanate: *Bumin kaghan, İstemi kaghan, Ishbara kaghan, Mukan kaghan, Taspar kaghan* [4; 180]. Naturally, in this anthroponymic line there is no word carrying additional meaning to the name of the person other than the word *"kaghan"* that expresses the title.

However, during the period of the Second Turkic Kaghanate, as far as it was an independent, souverin state and had an imperial character, like different transformations took place in the life of the society, important changes occured in the system of the names, titles and nicknames of ancient Turkic people: now we see that titles and nicknames appeared as a result of socio-political needs and cultural interaction. Although the name of Bilga *Tonyukuk*, a wise minister and adviser to the government, who served a lot in the restoration of the Second Kaghanate and in the war against China, is a translation of the Chinese word *Yuanzhang - "the first jewel"* [5;68], his title Bilga

(wise, intelligent) is attached to his name like a praising nickname - wise Tonyukuk, who was brought up in China and knew the language and socio-political anatomy of this country from the inside, played an important role in getting rid of the Turkic people from the Chinese yoke. As both advisor and minister of Elterish Khan, he played key roles in the victory over the Chinese forces, and that is the reason why he was given the honorary title of Bilga. İt is not for nothing the inscription of Bilga Tonyukuk begins with following phrases: "I am wise Tonyukuk, was brought up in China. (Those times) Turkic people were obeying the Chinese" – "Bilgä Tonyuquq, ben özüm Tabgʻachqa qılıntım. Türk budun Tabgʻachqa körür erti" (BKh, the first line). By changing his Chinese name "Yuanzhang" into "Tonyukuk", as a wise minister and advisor, he started to fight against the complexity and served enourmously to Kutlugh (Elterish) Kaghan and Turkic nation with the help of his Chinese education and intelligence.

As it was aforementioned, during the period of the Second Turkic Kaghanate (Eastern Turkic Kaghanate) in ancient Turkic people the anthroponymic system consisting of names, nicknames and titles began to develop.

The founder of the Eastern Turkic Kaghanate was Kutlugh Elterish whose name from birth was Kutlugh, and the title "Elterish" (el – government, terish – to unite, to collect; the one who united, founded the nation (state) was given to him by people after many years of his fights to unite Turkic people and tribes around himself, to found the government [6;62].

There can be seen the exposition of the anthroponyms such as names, titles, job titles and nicknames of the kaghans, princes, advisors, commandors, leaders of the tribes in the manuscripts created during the period of the Second Turkic Kaghanate like Bilga Tonyukuk, Kul Tegin, Bilga Kaghan manuscripts. İn all of them the title or nickname was given to an ordinary politician, soldier or the representative of the tribe for their heroism, service to the state, these names were not chosen randomly. Ancient Turkic people had a certain anthroponymic system to honour those who served their nation and state with dedication, showed selflessness, and perhaps, this system was used for the people who were repretsentatives of political or military elite, or for the ordinary citizens who became a hero, wise and intelligent politician, skillful commander in the social hierarchy.

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\* This table was created on the basis of information expounded in the following sources and dictionaries: Малов С.Е.Енисейская письменность тюрков. Тексты и переводы. -М.-Л. 1952; Малов С.Е. Памятники древнетюркской письменности Монголии и Киргизии. М.-Л. 1959; Севортян Э.В. Этимологический словарь тюркских языков Т. 1-1У .М. 1974-1989; Кононов А.Н. Грамматика тюркских памятников VI-VIII веков. – Ленинград: Наука, 1980; Раджабов А.А. Об Онгинском памятнике и о слове " капаган" //Уч.зап. Аз.ГУ Серия языка и лит-ры. 1966, №5. С. 79-85; Раджабов А.А. Об Онгинском памятнике// СТ, 1970, №2. С. 33-43; Кляшторный С.Г, Саввинов Д. Т. Древнетюркские этнополитические объединения и их значения в этногенезе народов Средней Азии и Казахстана// Проблемы этногенеза и этнической истории народов Центральной Азии и Казахстана. М., 1988. С. 66-70; Кляшторный С.Г. Кангюйская топонимика в орхонских текстах // СЭ, 1951, №3. С 54-63 Кляшторный С.Г. Новые эпиграфические работы в Монголии (1969-1976) // История и культура Центральной Азии. М., 1983. -С. 118-133 Тихонов Д. И. О терминах эль и будун в древнеуйгурских документах //Исследования по истории культуры народов Востока. М.-Л., 1960. -С.250-255; Сыдыков С. Собственные имена в орхоно-енисейских памятниках//Тюркологические исследования. Фрунзе, 1985. С. 47-66; Махпиров В. Древнетюркская ономастика. Алматы,1990.

**Table 2. The anthroponymic system of ancient Turkic people (period of the Second Kaghanate**

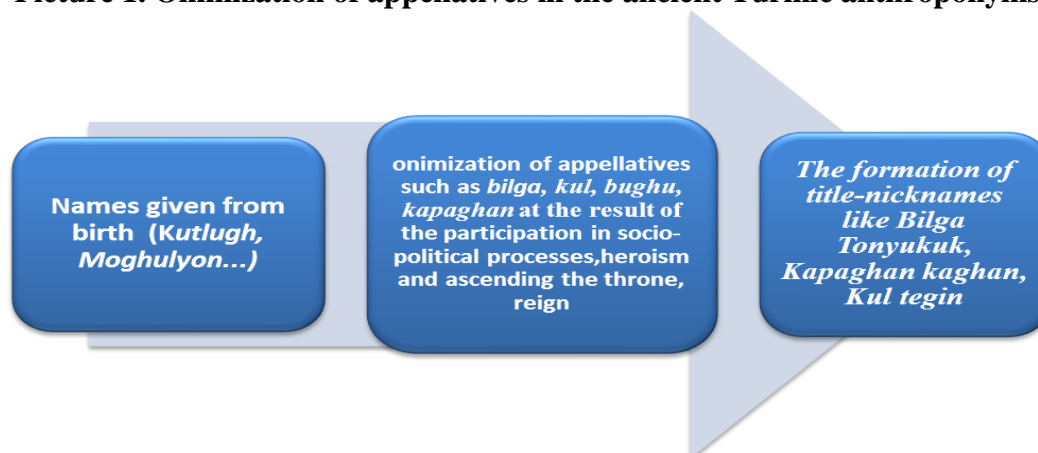| № | Name+title+nickname | Meaning | Description |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Bilga Tonyukuk | "the first jewel", translation of old Chinese Yuanzhan | Was given for wisdom and entrepreneurship |
| 2. | Kutlugh Elterish kaghan | el – state, terish –to unite; to collect; the khagan who united the nation (state) | Was given for the reconstruction of Ancient Turkic state, unit of Turkic tribes under one flag |
| 3. | Bag Chor - Kapaghan kaghan | Elterish kaghan's brother, ascended the throne after him. Original name was Bag Chor, came into the head of the state with the name Kapaghan kaghan. Kopaghan gives the meaning warrior, conqueror. | İn the period of the Second Kaghanate, it seems that the tradition of naming the heads of the state with a special adjective or nickname was formed. |
| 4. | Bugu kaghan | Bugu -"wise, entrepreneur" kaghan. From the old Turkic word bugu, bogu" (magician, clever, trickster). This epithet was added to the names of toher historical personalities, e.g. there is information about a commander Bugu Tarkhan in ancient Uighur manuscripts. | Kapaghan kaghan's son, the crown prince ascended the throne for a short period with this name. But he was dethroned and killed by the rightful heir to the throne, Elterish kaghan's son Moghulyon and brother Kul Tegin. |
| 5. | Moghulyon, Bilga kaghan Turk Bilga kaghan, Bulgha Kaghan | Original name was Moghulyon, the son of Elterish kaghan after Kapaghan kaghan, Bilga kaghan – wise, intelligent kaghan; ascended the throne with this name. His names Turk Bilga kaghan and Bulga kaghan are found in the memorandum of Bilga Kaghan and Bilga Tonyukuk | İllegally ascended the throne. He may have received the title Bilga kaghan in imitation of Bugu kaghan. For the fact that he ruled the state during 18 years (716-734), reached outstanding results in strengthening and expanding the state, he received the title Turk Bilga kaghan, im the meaning very entrepreneur kaghan (Bulgha kaghan from old Turkic verb bul (to find); a man of resource. |
| 6. | Kul Tegin | From old Turkic word "kul/kulug" meaning "famous, noble". This title-nickname was given statesmen or commanders who stood after the kaghan. This title is met in other Turkic memorandums: Kul Bilge – an Uighur kaghan who reigned in | Kul Tegin played an important role in his brother, official heir of the throne, Moghulyon's ascencion to the throne as Bilga kaghan and in his 18-year reign. Therefore, he was given the title Kul "a famous, rich prince". He could not ascend the throne, |

| | | 682-712 years, Kuli Chur – the leader of the Tardushes, Kul tudun – one of the Turkic beks. | because he died two years before his brother Bilga kaghan, and remained in history under this name. Birth name is unknown. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 7. | İdjan kaghan, Tengri kaghan | The meaning of Idjan is unknown, but it is known that this name was given from birth; the meaning of Tengri is identical to its modern meaning (Tangri - Ijanning ma'nosi ma'lum emas, u tug'ilishdan berilgan ot ekanligi ma'lum; Tengrining ma'nosi hozirgisi bilan aynan, Tangri (the mighty God who created). This name is also given to children in Turkic nations up at present. | These are the names of the princes who ascended the throne after the death of Bilga kaghan, but could not get title or nickname. They reigned for during seven years in total (734-741-yy.) and were killed by their uncle Kutlugh Yabghu. The reign of Yabghu did not last long, at the result of the invasions of Uighurs, Tardushes and Basmils, the Kaghanate was restored and replaced by Uighur Kaghanate. |
| 8. | Kutlugh yabghu | He was given the title yabghu that means "general", because he was the representative of Kaghan's family and the commander of the army. | The kaghanate was restored in 742 by the invasions of Uighurs, Tardushes and Basmils, Kutlugh yabghu was dethroned without receiving the title of kaghan. |

İt is clear from the table that in the anthroponymic system formed during the period of the Second Turkic Kaghanate, the names given from birth were in use by only the lower layers of the population, but in order to honor the people who served their nation and motherland with dedication, showed selflessness there was another anthroponymic system as an alternative of the former one and the latter system was used for the ordinary citizens who became a hero, wise and intelligent politician, skillful commander in the social hierarchy or for the people who were repretsentatives of political or military elite. This case, in its own turn, evidences that the old Turkic anthroponymic system existed in the form of title+adjective+nickname=name, but not in the form name+title+adjective+title, i.e. the anthroponymic units such as Kutlugh Eltarish kaghan or Turk Bilga kaghan , Bulgha kaghan consist of job title, epithet, nickname, title; the nickname is a part of an official name. All of these were formed based on certain approaches of the structure of anthroponyms and their semantics of old Turkic people. The name of the hero or kaghan constitutes of two components that are semantically related to each other. The former component carries the main meaning of the name, it becomes people's name by the onimization of appellatives that express such features as heroism, wisdom, entrepreneurship, while the latter component represents his place in the society's hierarchy. This two-component name ignores the name given from birth, even makes it get forgotten. We have written above that at the result of appearance of tumultuous names in Arabians, real name of the historical person was forgotten. However, in the history of anthroponymic history of the Turkic people, as it is aforeseen, this case repeated in a quite different way.

Ancient Turkic people, as other Asian nations, did not have patronyms (surnames); the semantic value of the multi-componental names consisted of person's name or nickname, only.

İn general, in the ancient Turkic anthroponymics because of the onimization of ancient Turkic appellatives the formation of the people's names can be depicted as in the following piture.

**Picture 1. Onimization of appellatives in the ancient Turmic anthroponyms.**



As the Turkic people gradually accepted the Islamic faith, like the cultural-identification codes of the ethnos changed (being a member of the umma, the Muslim world, assimilating the cultural, military and political successes achieved by the Muslim civilization...),  that fundamentally changed its linguistic and cultural world, including onomastics , and especially anthroponymics. Now, in parallel with ancient Turkic anthroponyms, ready-made forms of male and female names, borrowed from Arabic and Persian, began to be used. These anthroponymic patterns adopted from a foreign language were now used by people who knew those languages after they asked for their meaning.

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