

ETNOLOGİYA – ETHNOLOGY

UOT: 39

BÖRŞİ: BÖYÜK KÖÇ TARİXİ

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Xülasə: *Məqalə qazax tayfalarından birinin tarixinə həsr edilmişdir. Börşi tayfasının nümayəndələri Akmola vilayətinin Xurqaljin rayonu ərazisində yaşayırlar. Coğrafi xəritəyə baxsaq, bura Tengiz gölünə tökülən Nura çayının mənsəyidir, yəni Qazaxıstan Respublikasının ən mərkəzi hissəsidir. Xeyli ərazisi kiçik təpələr, gözəl göllər və şam meşələrindən ibarət olan Böyük Avrasiya çölünün yarım-səhrələrlə birləşdiyi bu hissəsi poetik olaraq Sarı-Arka adlanır.*

Börşinin daxil olduğu Argın konfederasiyası qazaxların etnik tərkibində ən qədimlərdən biridir ki, bunu təkcə tarixi ənənələr deyil, həm də DNT materialları sübut edir. Argınların üstünlük təşkil etdiyi haploqrupları G-1 (80%), R1a1 (10%), Börşi I 2a 2a M-223 haploqrupu onları Avropa, eləcə də Ari xalqlarına yaxınlaşdırır.

Şifahi ənənədən topladığımız materiallar Börşilərin mənşəyini özünəməxsus şəkildə izah edir. Ola bilsin ki, onlar canavarı totem kimi qəbul etmiş o qədim tayfaların nəslindəndirlər.

Yuxarıda deyilənlərdən bəzi nəticələr çıxarmaq olar. Fikrimizcə, yuxarıda göstərilən materiallar qurd totemli qədim tayfanın – Börşi (Kaz.), Borça (Aroq.), Borgianın (İtal.) – mənşəyi Avrasiya çölünün mərkəzi zonası ilə bağlı olan son dərəcə maraqlı tarixçəsindən xəbər verə bilər. Tale elə gətirib ki, onlar tarixlərinin lap əvvəlindən dəfələrlə əhəmiyyət daşıyan hadisələrdə iştirak ediblər. Əvvəlcə bu tayfanın bir hissəsi Orta Asiyanın şərq hissəsinə köç etmiş və Şərqi Hun imperiyasının yürüşlərində iştirak etmişlər ki, bu da heç də təsadüfi olmamışdır. Sonralar təbii fəlakətlər və imperiyanın məğlubiyyəti nəticəsində onlar yenidən Mərkəzi Qazaxıstan çöllərinə qayıtmağa məcbur olurlar. Daha sonra “Xalqların böyük köçü” zamanı bu tayfa Qərbi Hun İmperiyasının yürüşlərində iştirak edərək Krıma və Qafqaza yayılmış və İspaniyanın şimal-şərqində məskunlaşmışlar.

Açar sözlər: *Börşi tayfası, Burç-oğlu, Borçalı, şifahi ənənə, qurd totem kimi, Tengiz gölü, Xalqların böyük köçü, Qərbi Hun İmperiyası*

BORSHI: A GREAT NOMAD HISTORY

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Abstract: *The article is devoted to the history of one of the kazakh tribes. Representatives of the Börşi tribe live on the territory of the Khurgaldzhin district, Akmola region. According to the geographical map, this is the mouth of the Nura River, which flows into Lake Tengiz, that is, it is the most central part of the Republic of Kazakhstan. This part of the Great Eurasian steppe, a significant area of which is occupied by small hills, with beautiful lakes and pine forests, where the steppe is combined with semi-deserts and called by the poetic name Sary-Arka.*

The Argyn confederation, which includes Börşi, is one of the oldest in the ethnic composition of the Kazakhs, which is proved not only by historical traditions, but also by DNA materials. The predominant haplogroups of the Argyns are G-1 (80%), R1a1 (10%), haplogroup Börşi I 2a 2a M-223 bring them closer to the European, as well as to the Aryan peoples.

The materials we collected by oral tradition explain the origin of the Börşi in a peculiar way, perhaps they are the descendants of those ancient tribes that had a wolf as a totem.

From all of the above, some conclusions can be drawn. In our opinion, the above materials may indicate an extremely interesting history of the ancient tribe - Börşi (Kaz.), Borchа (Arog.), Borgia (Ital.) with a wolf totem, the origins of which are associated with the central zone of the Eurasian steppe. They took part in outstanding events more than once from the very beginning of their history not just by accident. At first, part of this tribe migrated to the eastern part of Central Asia and took part in the historical affairs of the Eastern Hunnic Empire. Subsequently, natural disasters and the defeat of the empire forced them to return back to the steppes of Central Kazakhstan, then during the "Great Migration of Nations" this tribe participates in the affairs of the Western Hun Empire, and spreads to the Crimea and the Caucasus, and stops in the territory of northeastern Spain.

Keywords: *Börşi tribe, Burch-ogly, Borchaly, oral tradition, wolf as a totem, Lake Tengiz, Great Migration of Nations, Western Hun Empire*

БОРЧИ: ИСТОРИЯ ВЕЛИКОГО КОЧЕВЬЯ

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Резюме: Эта статья посвящена истории одного из казахских племен. Представители племени *Börşi* живут на территории Хургалджинского района, Акмолинской области. Если посмотреть на географическую карту, то это устье р.Нура, которая впадает в оз.Тенгиз, то есть это самая центральная часть Республики Казахстан. Эту часть Великой Евразийской степи, значительное пространство которой занимают мелкосопочники, с прекрасными озерами и сосновыми борами, где степь сочетается с полупустынями казахи называют поэтическим именем Сары-Арқа.

Аргынская конфедерация, куда относится *Börşi*, является одной из древнейших в этническом составе казахов, что доказывается не только историческими преданиями, но и материалами ДНК. Преобладающие гаплогруппы Аргынов G-1(80 проц), R1a1(10 проц), гаплогруппа Борчи I 2a 2a M-223 сближают их с европейскими, а также с арийскими народами

Собранные нами материалы по устной традиции объясняют происхождение *Börşi* своеобразно, возможно они являются потомками тех древних племен которые имели в качестве тотема – волка

Из всего вышеизложенного можно сделать некоторые выводы. На наш взгляд, выше приведенные материалы могут свидетельствовать о чрезвычайно интересной истории древнего племени – *Börşi* (каз.), *Borcha* (арог.), *Borgia* (итал.) с тотемом волка, истоки которой связаны с центральной зоной Евразийской степи. Судьбе было угодно что они с самого начала своей истории не раз принимали участие в выдающихся событиях. Сначала часть этого племени мигрировала в восточную часть Центральной Азии и приняла участие в исторических делах Восточно-гуннской империи. В последующем природные катаклизмы и разгром империи вынудили их возвратиться обратно в степи Центрального Казахстана, затем в ходе «Великого переселения народов» это племя участвует в делах Западно-Гуннской империи, и распространяется на Крым и Кавказ, и останавливается на территории северо-восточной Испании.

Ключевые слова: племя Борчи, Бурчу оглы. Борчалы, устная традиция, волк как тотем, море Тенгиз, Великое переселение народов, Западно-гуннская империя

BORSHI: A GREAT NOMAD HISTORY

Introduction

In 2016, my students asked me to write a preface to the genealogical tables of the *Börşi* (Borshi) tribe. I did not agree immediately, because I did not want to get involved with the clan problems of the Kazakhs, but I got very carried away. Genealogical materials allowed me to find separate branches of this tribe in different parts of Eurasia. The history experienced by this tribe, its participation in

the great migrations, the disintegration of the tribe and resettlement for almost two millennia loomed gradually. Of course, over time, the contours of this story will be revealed more clearly, but I decided to present what we have today.

As sources, we turned primarily to the oral tradition of the Kazakhs, secondly, to toponymical materials and legends, and thirdly, to the written sources of the Middle Ages. The article also uses the research of contemporary authors on various issues related to the history of the Börşi tribe.

In the very center of the Great Steppe

Representatives of the Börşi tribe live on the territory of the Khurgaldzhin district, Akmola region. If according to the geographical map, then this is the mouth of the Nura River, which flows into Lake Tengiz, that is, it is the most central part of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

This part of the Great Eurasian steppe, a significant area of which is occupied by small hills, with beautiful lakes and pine forests, where the steppe is combined with semi-deserts, is called by the Kazakhs by the poetic name Sary-Arka. The plain spaces of Sary-Arka, covered with grass-feather grass vegetation, have always served as a convenient habitat for societies whose economy is focused on animal husbandry. Sary-Arka (*Yellow or Golden Upland*) is the geographical name of North-Central Kazakhstan as a whole, and the term “Arka” is usually used in relation to the entire steppe zone of Eurasia, which means a hill or ridge. Compare other Greek word Arkadia which is an idyllic space whose inhabitants lead a simple pastoral life. From “Arkadia” – the Latin expression “*Et in Arkadia ego*”.

The number of Kazakh Börşi is small, at the beginning of the 20th century they were consisted of two administrative villages – Saryozen and Sabyнды, about a thousand people each. Börşi are part of the union of six Kuandyk tribes (Agys, Kalkaman, Börşi, Temesh, Altai, Karpyk), which in turn is the eldest in the Bes Meiram union and is part of the Argyn confederation. It is interesting that we find one of the early ancestors of Börşi – Meiram sopy in the genealogy of the Yakuts (Sakha), where such taxonomic links are presented: «*Оксуну, от него Мэйэрэм суну, от него Хорохой, от него Аргын, от него Айал, от него Орос куол жулжыган, от него Туорт угул, от него Хайаран, от него Омогой и Элдей*».¹ Omogoy and Eldey are the first ancestors of the Yakuts, from which it should be assumed that the origin of the Kazakhs and Yakuts has common roots and the collapse of a one nation happened a long time ago. The Argyn confederation, which includes Börşi, is one of the oldest in the ethnic composition of the Kazakhs, which is proved not only by historical traditions, but also by DNA materials. The predominant haplogroups of the Argyns are G-1 (80%), R1a1 (10%), haplogroup Börşi I 2a 2a M-223 bring them closer to the European, as well as to the Aryan

¹ Georgiy Ustinovich Ergis. **Historical legends and stories of the Yakuts**. Moscow: Academy of sciences of the USSR, 1960.

peoples.² Neighboring tribal groups call Börşi “Kotyr Börşi”, which is pejorative in the opinion of the Börşi themselves (in the modern Kazakh language “kotyr” means a growth over a sore). Based on the fact that this word is found in the toponymy of the Crimea and the Caucasus (the river Kotyr, the village of Kotyr Börşi, etc.) we believe that in ancient times the word “kotyr” had a completely different meaning.

Börşi genealogically consists of three groups, two of them, the descendants of Zholaman and Alatau, live in the Kazakh steppes, and the representatives of the third group, the descendants of Ayapbergen, according to the stories of our informants, allegedly moved to China long ago, therefore there are no contacts with them. Based on this, we can assume that some fragments of the early history of Börşi are really connected with the eastern part of the Great Steppe. As indirect evidence, we can cite the name of one of the villages of Börşi – Saryozen, which means the Yellow River, i.e. Huang He in Chinese. In the places of residence of modern Börşi, there is no river with this name, probably this name was introduced by their early ancestors, who fought as part of the Huns for the Ordos plains and the valleys of the Yellow River.

On the shores of Lake Tengiz, in addition to Börşi, we meet representatives of other clans – Altai, Tortuyl, Temesh from the Argyn confederation. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries Börşi due to their small number, adjoined the latter group. But we also have materials at our disposal that testify to the cohabitation of Börşi and Temesh in the Crimea and the Caucasus, as well as in Eastern Europe.

Tribe with wolf totem

The materials we collected by oral tradition explain the origin of the Börşi in a peculiar way; perhaps they are the descendants of those ancient tribes that had a wolf as a totem.

Motai aksakal from the city of Turkestan: *“They say that the name of our distant ancestor is Zhaksylyk ... He was a thunderstorm of wolves, as soon as he appears in front of the wolves preparing to attack the horses, the wolves become like cute ones. He could hit his heavy whip right in the forehead and lay them down. Since then, wolves have stopped attacking horses. The herders who watched all this said:*

*– Here he is the real patron saint (pir) of wolves-bori, he should be called Börşi! After that people began to call him Börşi, and his real name was forgotten”.*³

A well-known connoisseur of the oral tradition Sagyndyk aksakal in the Khorgaldzhin-Tengiz district reports the following: *“In ancient times, an event was held in which all outstanding representatives of the three Kazakh zhuzes took part (zhuz – administrative-territorial unit, region – Zh.A.). To the very center of this*

² Sanzhar Zharkeshov. **Homo nomadius**. The key to the forgotten stories of ancient civilizations. Astana: “Big Dream”, 2021.

³ Zhambyl Artykbaev. **“Expedition materials from own archive”**. 2016.

meeting, at the head of a group of people, a heroic-looking man, dressed entirely in clothes made of wolf skins, drove up. People around me started to wonder:

– Who is he? Those who knew said:

– He is an outstanding batyr named Zhaksylyk from the Kuandyk-Argyn clans. He is the patron saint (pir) of wolves. He hunts only male wolves (arlan bori) and dresses from head to toe. Boots, fur coat, headdress are all made from the skin of a male wolf. They say that from that moment on, people began to call him Börşi, and his real name was forgotten”.⁴

In this regard, we would like to draw a parallel with the “Secret Tale of the Mongols” where in the original, that is, in the unadapted text, the following is said: “Genghis Khan’s ancestor was Borte-Chino, that is, the Gray Wolf, born at the behest of the Highest Heaven (Deere Tenkeri-ece). His wife was Koai-Maral. They came from beyond Tengiz sea (Tenkis ketulju ireba)”.⁵

Whether this story has anything to do with Börşi is difficult to say, but it probably has. Among the offspring of Borte-Chino and Koai-Maral there is a character named Borji-Kidai-Merkan, who is known in the Kazakh oral tradition as Qiyat-Borzhigin, an offshoot of Qiyats with a wolf totem. Qiyat (khion, hon, chionit, qiyat) is the oldest tribe dating back to the khions of the times of the Avesta.⁶ Great historians of the East, for example Abilhazy Khan, considered the ancestor of the Kiyats a man named Kiyat, who, together with his relative Nukus, escaped from the invasion of the legendary Suiynych Khan in the area of Yergene.⁷ In Kazakh legends, Dombauyl Mergen is considered the ancestor of the kiyats. One of the fragments of the oral tradition says that Dombauyl was expelled from his kingdom.⁸ However, in the “Secret History of the Mongols” the name of Dombauyl (Dobun-Merkan) is also mentioned as one of the founders of the Borjigins.

Does the son of Naku-Bayan, Boorchı, the first associate of Genghis Khan, have anything to do with Börşi who introduced himself in their first meeting with the words “I will help you! My father is Naku-Bayan. I am his only son, and I am called Boorchı” remains a big question.⁹

Where is the indigenous Börşi yurt (homeland)?

In our opinion, the indigenous Börşi yurt is in Central Kazakhstan, where representatives of this tribe still live. How they could end up on the banks of the

⁴ Zhambyl Artykbaev. “Expedition materials from own archive”. 2016.

⁵ **The secret story of the Mongols.** Anonymous Mongolian Chronicle of 1240. Translated by P.A. Darvayev, 1990.

⁶ Zhambyl Artykbaev. **The story of Dombauyl from the Kiyat tribe** (the experience of interpreting the myth), 2021. 9-23.

⁷ Abul-Ghazi. **Pedigree tree of the Turks.** Composition of Abul-Gazi, Khan of Khiva. Kazan: Translation and foreword by G.S.Sablukov, with afterwords and note. N.F.Katanova, 1906.

⁸ Zhambyl Artykbaev. **The story of Dombauyl from the Kiyat tribe** (the experience of interpreting the myth), 2021.

⁹ **The secret story of the Mongols.** Anonymous Mongolian Chronicle of 1240. Translated by P.A.Darvayev, 1990.

Huang is a big mystery to us. But the fact is unambiguously proved by oral tradition and toponymic materials. Among the Manchus (chzhurchzhen, shurshlt) there are tribes called borchzhi, they are also among the western Mongols – borchzhi and borchit.¹⁰ In the valley of Huanghe (Saryozen) there is a deposit of silver Borch, in the upper reaches of the river Onon there is a locality Botokan-Borch. All this suggests that the Börşi had a great relationship with the eastern regions of Central Asia.

Probably, the Börşi were part of those tribes that left the territory of the Great Steppe for East Turkestan in the middle of the 2nd millennium BC. Archaeological studies have noted that at this time, overpopulation and the resulting surplus of the population leaned on the productive forces, which forced a number of groups from among the steppe tribes to undertake migrations to the west and south. The struggle for pastures and the difficult migrations of the Aryan tribes are also mentioned in the “Avesta”.¹¹ Probably, we should talk about the beginning of a new round of migration activity of the peoples of the Great Steppe. The first wave of migration, as is known, is associated with the collapse of the Indo-European community at the end of the 4th – 3rd millennium BC.¹² Indo-Europeans spread to the south-west of Europe (Greeks, Thracians), to the south, i.e. to Asia Minor (Hittites, etc.), to the west of Europe (Celts, etc.), the movements of tribes to Western Europe (Germanic tribes) are considered later, as well as to the forests of the Baltic states (Lithuanians and Latvians).

Thus, migrations of the II millennium BC constitute the second wave. The nature of the movement of the steppe tribes, the direction of the routes, the peculiarities of life, and as a result, the symbiosis that appeared during the conquest of settled regions testify to the existence of a certain pattern. The reasons for the permanent incursions of the steppe tribes into settled regions are associated with challenges both from the outside and from the inside. Their penetration into India, Iran and East Turkestan happened gradually and slowly, their interaction with the local population was peaceful and painless. But at the same time, the results of this movement for local cultures were revolutionary. In Chinese historiography, the civilization of China, which appeared in the 2nd millennium BC, is regarded as the era of Shang-Yin domination, which, as L.V.Vasiliev writes, “owes a lot to cultural influences from outside”.¹³

¹⁰ Yelena Pavlovna Lebedeva. “**To the question of the tribal composition of the Mongols**”. В Philology and history of the Mongolian peoples. In memory of Academician Boris Yakovlevich Vladimirtsov, 219-227. “**Publishing House of Eastern Literature**”, 1958.

¹¹ Ivan Mixailovich Steblin-Kamenskiy. **Avesta: Selected Hymns**. From Videvdat. Moscow: Дружба Народов, 1993.

¹² Dyakonov İqor Mixaylovich, Valentina Dmitrievna Neronova, İrina Svetsitskaya. **Ancient world history**. Early antiquity. Moscow, 1982.

¹³ Leonid Serqeevich Vasilyev. **Problems of the genesis of Chinese civilization**. Moscow: “Найка”, 1976.

Before the Shang-Yin era, the Chinese did not know horses, chariots, or other attributes of the steppe civilization at all. This suggests that the Great Steppe, as the closest neighbor, played an important role in the genesis of Chinese civilization. Most of the monuments of Yin writing are made on “fortune-telling” bones. Usually the priest-soothsayer took the bones of the animal, scratched a question on them with a sharp tool and put the bone on the fire. According to the location of the cracks formed after firing, the fortuneteller guessed the answer. The Kazakhs also have a similar tradition; usually, a lamb shoulder blade (scapula) is taken for divination. One of the Yin inscriptions dates back to the end of the Yin Dynasty (XIV-XI centuries BC) and contains valuable data on the economy of the Chinese: “Ten people from the Tu tribe graze cattle on our lands. ... cattle are also driven from the lands of the Lü (Lu) tribe to the western pastures ... Wang (the ruler) went on a campaign to Lü and ordered many slaves to be equipped to fight Lü”.¹⁴ This fact testifies to the difficult relationship between the nomadic and sedentary population in the Huang He basin.

When did Börşi return to their old camps in Sary-Arka? In our opinion, this is due to the fall of the Eastern Hunnic Empire, which was created by nomadic tribes in the eastern part of the Great Steppe. In the 70s BC, natural disasters, coupled with the aggression of China, greatly complicated the situation, which provoked separatism and subsequent disintegration. Bichurin N.Ya. in his extracts from *Qianhanshu* (ch. 94) writes the following: “But it happened that during one day snow fell up to ten feet deep... Why did the Dinlins, taking advantage of the weakness of the Huns, attacked them from the north their lands from the east, the Usuns from the west. These three peoples slaughtered several tens of thousands of people, and received as booty several tens of thousands of horses and a great many bulls and sheep. In addition, 3/10 of both people and livestock died of starvation. The Huns came to extreme impotence. The possessions subject to them were set aside from them, and the Huns were not able to carry out raids. After this, the Chinese entered with 3000 cavalry, and entered the lands of the Huns by three roads. They took several thousand prisoners and returned; and the Huns could not repay them with a raid from their side...”¹⁵

Thus begins the “Great Migration of Nations” from east to west. It was the beginning of a new era – the era of the Middle Ages and feudalism in Europe. Grandiose migrations of the Huns are connected with the formation of new states, ethnic structures and cultural trends in the vast territory of Eurasia.

One of the directions of movement of the steppe tribes at the beginning of our era is connected with Europe. In the 70s of the 4th century, the Huns appeared in the steppes of southeastern Europe and, having crossed the Kerch Strait, smashed the Bosporan kingdom. The onslaught of the Huns was unexpected and stunning that even historians of the 4th-6th centuries considered the question of

¹⁴ Struve Vasily Vasilyevich. **Anthology on the history of the ancient world**. Ed. Vasily Vasilyevich Struve. Moscow, 1956.

¹⁵ Nikita Yakovlevich, Bichurin. **Collection of information about the peoples who lived in Central Asia** in ancient times. Moscow, 1851.

where this formidable union of tribes came from. Waves of the steppe peoples of the German world (Ostergoths, Visigoths, Vandals), the Scythian, Sarmatian world (Alans) poured into Europe one after another, and after them the Huns themselves. Jerome, being in Palestine, writes in one of his letters: “The Roman army, the winner and ruler of the world, is defeated by those, they are afraid of those, they are horrified by those ... they consider themselves already dead”. We are talking in this case about the defeats of the Roman troops in Western Asia, Syria, etc.

Probably, the core of the Hunnic movement was made up of a few warlike tribes of Central Asia. But as they move to the West, the composition of the Hunnic migrants is significantly replenished at the expense of local peoples. Jordan's work well reflects all the main routes of the Huns' movement – this is from the North Caucasus to the Don and the Dnieper, further to the Balkans, south to Syria and Constantinople, to the western territories of Orleans (France) and Milan (Italy).¹⁶ Such is the orbit of movement of the Huns themselves in the course of the rapid conquest of Europe. The main thing is, apparently, that the military successes of the Huns in Western Europe set in motion a huge number of peoples. This was the beginning of new structural processes in the Eurasian continent.

The route of the Huns through Central Asia is virtually impossible to reconstruct. Perhaps the bulk of the Hun migrants went through the territory of modern Northern Kazakhstan and southern Siberia, then through the Urals and the Volga region they went to Europe. This version is confirmed both in oral sources and in the results of archaeological excavations on the territory of Kazakhstan.¹⁷

The second direction should be associated with the south, where the nomadic Hunnic tribes followed the Yuechzhi. Somewhere in the Turkestan-Tashkent oasis, a new association could have formed, known in the sources as the Ephthalites or White Huns, who then moved further to the South, Southeast Asia. The beginning of the power of the White Huns in the territory of Central Asia is associated with the name of Ak Sibar, who ruled in 420-470. Under him, Tokharistan and Badakhshan joined the empire.

Thus, the era of the Huns is one of the most active periods of the Great Steppe. All our materials show that Börşi Borshi participated in this process very actively:

– Firstly, as we already wrote, according to genealogical legends, one of the branches of Börşi remains in China, that is, Zholaman, Alatay migrated to Sary Arka, and the descendants of Ayapbergen remained in Huanghe (Saryozen);

– Secondly, we find Börşi groups on the territory of Siberia and the Altai Mountains, probably some parts that have lagged behind the main mass. First of all, this is the Shushensky (Shusha – the name of one of the large divisions of Börşi) district on the Yenisei River, on the territory of the Krasnoyarsk Territory of the Russian Federation, as well as the village and station Börşi on the territory of

¹⁶ Jordan. **Getica**. Saint Petersburg: Aletya, 1997.

¹⁷ Zhambyl Artykbaev. **Nomads of Eurasia in the kaleidoscope of centuries and millennia**. Saint-Petersburg: «Мажор», 2005.

Burlinsky (“Burlinsky” from the Kazakh: Bori – wolf) district of Gorno – Altai Autonomous Region of the Russian Federation;

– Thirdly, in the toponymy of the Crimea, the Caucasus, Southern Europe, we find the villages and settlements of Börşi.

Below we proceed to present the specific facts and hypothetical concepts of Börşi in the European part in greater detail.

Cumans Borsi

The habitat of this historical Börşi group is the southern regions of the Russian Federation and Ukraine, and especially in the territory of the Bryansk region of the Russian Federation. If we draw a straight line between Moscow and Kyiv, then on the south side of this line we find several toponyms associated with Börşi. These are “Borcha”, “Borchikha”, “Borchuk”, “Borcha-Bala”, etc. We believe that during the period of the Huns’ movement to the West, separate groups of Huns settled in the spaces convenient for life and economy between the Caspian and Black Seas, as well as in the northern coast of the latter. Subsequently, they received the name “Cumans (Polovtsy)” in the Slavic chronicles, and thus entered historiography. At the same time, an erroneous statement was formed in modern historiography identifying the Polovtsy with the Kypchaks, although the latter appeared in Eastern Europe around the first half of the 11th century.¹⁸

It should be taken into account that late migrants Kipchaks, populating this territory, assimilated their predecessors, including Börşi. Professor of the Rutgers University of the USA P. Golden, for many years he studied the history and tribal composition of the Cumans, Kypshaks and Kangly. One of his articles is called “Kuman-Kipchak tribes and clans”, where, along with other tribes, Börşi is listed: “*In Russian sources, this name is written as Burchevichi, in al-Dimashki – Burj oğlu. Nuwayri, Ibn Khaldun write-Burj oğlu. Sources give a contradictory location of this tribe: some point to the area between the Dnieper and Orel, others point to the steppes of Khorezm. In the historical literature there is still no convincing explanation of the etymology of the word Burch (Burj).*”¹⁹

Tatar historian D. Iskhakov in the article “South-East of Tatarstan: the problem of studying the ethnic history of the region in the 17th-18th centuries” based on an interesting medieval source “Daftar – and Chingiz-name” based on the reduction of the manuscript “Burchevich”, “Burch-oğly” connects with the pre-Mongolian active ethnonym “burch”: “It seems to me that this ethnonym finds an analogy with the Kypchak pre-Mongolian ethnonym “burch” – “borch” (from it – Burch oğlu or Burchevichi)”.²⁰

¹⁸ Serzhan Musatayevich Akhinzhanov. **Kypchaks in the history of medieval Kazakhstan**. Almaty: “Nauka”, 1989.

¹⁹ Peter Benjamin Golden. “**Cumanica IV: The Cumano-Qıpçaq Clans and Tribes**”. B Eurasiae Medii Aevi, 110-125. 1995-1997.

²⁰ David, Iskhakov. “**South-East of Tatarstan: the problem of studying the ethnic history of the region in the 17th-18th centuries**”. B Almat. Almatyevsk. Idel-Press, 2003.

Thus, based on the above information, we can state that under the name “Burj, or Burch oğly” a large group of Börşi in the 11th-12th centuries inhabited the territory from the Dnieper in the north to Khorezm in the south.

Borsi in Crimea

In Crimea, as maps of the 19th and the first half of the 20th century show, there are a lot of villages associated with the eponym Börşi (Borchi). Basically, this is the central part of Crimea, that is, Akmechet (modern: Simferopol) and its environs. The village of Borchi (in the map it is exactly Borchi, not Börşi) is mentioned in the “Memorial Book of the Tauride Province” dated 1892 (coordinates – 45-21-15 N34-10-30 E). In 1948, this village was renamed Gromovka (modern: Polyushkino). Near the village of Börşi is the German-Tatar village of Börşi-Kondarakı. This village was renamed Kolpino in 1948 (coordinates – 45-32-15 N34-29-15 E). In the Krasnogvardeisky region of Crimea, the name Börşi occurs several times: Uluk (Buyuk) Börşi, Kichik Börşi (modern: Dalneye), Kotur Börşi. The last aul is considered very old.²¹

Along with the toponym Börşi, in the Crimea we also meet the names of various offshoots of Börşi, such as Shusha. The village with this name, as well as Shusha-German (Mezhevoe) were in the Pervomaisky district (according to the old administrative division, this is the territory of the Akzhar volost of the Perekop district (Or bugazy), etc.

Indigenous toponyms of Crimea were completely renamed in 1948, after the eviction of the Crimean Tatars and other aboriginal ethnic groups from the acquired places. For this reason, in order to identify the villages of Borshi, we turned to the old maps of the Crimea and conducted research on them. In general, the toponymy of the old Crimea is very rich in ancient eponyms, for example, the name of the tribe “Kypshak” is found in 27 cases, “Kiyat” – 26, “Konyrat” – 19, “Naiman” – 17, “Uysyn” (kyrgyz, kyryk, tama) – 13, “Kenegez” – II, “Kurleut” – 9, “Alshyn, as” – 8, “Oirat and Kerey” – 7, “Merkit” – 6, “Argyn”, “Baryn”, “Zhaychi”, “Ichki”, “Kanly” and “Sidzheut” occurs 5 times each. It turns out that it is not in vain that in the Kazakh oral tradition there are such expressions-wishes: “Ұлың Ұрымға, қызың Қырымға”, that is, “Son to Urum (modern: Turkey), daughter to Crimea”; and also “Қырым мен Ұрымға барып келдің бе?”, i.e. “Where did you disappear, did you go to the Crimea and Urum?” – the latter is a saying that we often hear in childhood, when you leave the household, you disappear with friends. At the same time, it should be noted that some toponyms of the Crimea are found in the Argyn genealogical construction. This is probably due to the fact that the Argyns did not populate this territory immediately, but in separate waves. Börşi were probably part of the first waves, which led to the consolidation of their own names like Börşi, Uluk Börşi, Kichik Börşi, etc.

²¹ Sergei Mukhin. 1817, **Old names and disappeared cities of Crimea. Toponymic map.**, 2009.

We assume that Börşi ended up in the Crimea during the Great Migration of Peoples in the 3rd-4th centuries. Researcher Bushakov V.A. distinguishes four stages of the settlement of Crimea by Turkic-speaking peoples: “The Tatars of Crimea themselves divided the Turkic population of the peninsula into “*sheernen dag khalkii*” (residents of Simferopol, Karasubazar, Feodosia and Evpatoria, speaking the Kipchak dialect, and residents of the mountains and the sea coast – descendants of the ancient population, speaking the Ottoman dialect and “*dala khalkii*” – (the inhabitants of the steppes are the descendants of the tribes that came with the Mongol conquerors), as well as the Nogais who settled in the steppe Crimea in the 15th century under Khan Seadat-Girey”.²² Of course, the Börşi, who lived in the very center, belong to the category of the early Turks – “*sheernen dag halki*”.

Borsi in the Caucasus

Firstly, this is the Kazakh region of Azerbaijan, secondly, Mountainous Karabakh and its capital Shusha, and everything around Karabakh from the Armenian side, thirdly, south of Karabakh – the Araks and one of the tributaries of the Kotyr (Kotyr Börşi), fourthly, the border regions between Azerbaijan and Iran - Karaket, Karakoyun (on the territory of Kazakhstani Börşi there is also this ancient toponym – Karakoyun), Bergyshet, Shalbulak, Karkar, Taty, etc., the modern name is Kvemo-Kartli, fifthly, in the south of Dagestan – Khnov, Börşi (Burzh), Burshi-Maka.

Around the 3rd century AD, the advanced groups of the Huns ended up on the northern shores of the Caspian Sea. Then it remains to go towards Derbent. At that time, the “12th Legion” of the Roman Empire was watching the situations in the very center of the Caucasus. The Huns had to oust this legion and this is how the “Borchali steppe” appeared, divided today between Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia. Medieval sources, including Gardizi, call this territory “Börşi sholi”, that is, the Börşi Desert. The Persians called the population of this steppe “Gurdman”, that is, the Wolves are people, the Georgians – “Gurdis Khevi” – the Wolf Steppe. In historiography, the population of this territory is called “bunturks”, which means proto-Turks. The famous Azerbaijani brand “Kazakh Carpets” is the cultural and historical heritage of Borchaly. Shusha, the former capital of Karabakh, is the birthplace of many outstanding cultural figures of Azerbaijan (Uzeir Hajibeyov, Bulbul, etc.). As the American researcher Ronald Sunu writes, “the appearance of Azerbaijani mugham is associated with Shusha”.²³

Börşi is found in the Caucasus among the Kumyk people as a princely title “Burchi (Burchi)-biy”. The researcher Idrisov Yu. connects this term with the medieval Kypchak tribe Burdzhoglu: “*The name of the Kazakh clan Bersh and the Kumyk princely title Burshi-biy are etymologically interconnected with the name of the Kypchak clan Burdzhoglu. The presence of the Turkic Argun clan in the North-*

²² Valeriı Anatoliıfovych Bushakov. **Turkic ethnooikonymy of Crimea**. Moscow, 1991.

²³ Grigor Sunu, Ronald. В **Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia**, создатель Ronald G.Sunu, 39-63. Diane Publishing, 1996.

Eastern Caucasus is evidenced by the river and the city of Argun in the foothills of Chechnya, in close proximity to the Kumyk settlements of the Grozny and Gudermes regions of Chechnya".²⁴ The researcher connects "Borchi // Burj oğly" with the Kazakh tribe Bersh, but it is appropriate to emphasize the similarity with the Börşi tribe, which is a part of the Argyn tribal union.

Borsi in Egypt

Egypt (Mysyr) and Syria (Sham, Damascus) are related to the medieval history of Börşi. Since this topic has not been previously considered in historical science, let's start with a major historical figure from the Mamluks, who played a significant role in the history of Egypt. We are talking about the Sultan Baybars from the Burj oğly family, that is, Börşi. Some historians, for example, Shikhabuddin al-Nuwayri in the encyclopedia "Nihayat al-arab fi funun al-adab" writes that "The fourth Turkic ruler of Egypt, the real king of Baybars as-Salihi from the tribe of Elborili (Al-Buruli)".²⁵ We wrote above that the eponym Borchi originates from the word "Buri" – a male wolf. Al-Buruli – means the same – a descendant of a male wolf.

It is known that Baybars was taken from the territory of Crimea in childhood. During the Mongol invasion, his relatives asked the Bulgar Khan Anar to accept them and allocate a piece of land. However, the khan acted treacherously with them, singled out a valley between two mountains for the Crimean Börşi, and then attacked them. Börşi were partially killed, partially captured. One of the relatives of the Sultan Baybars, being captured with him in Egypt, Baisary recalls: "Among those who were captured were Baybars and I. At that time he was about fourteen years old. The prisoners were sent to the slave market in the city of Siuas in Asia Minor, where we parted, and then met in Aleppo at the Khan ibn Kylysh bazaar".²⁶

Baybars was known for its wars against the crusaders, the capture of the king of France at the Battle of Mansuri, the victory over the Mongol-Naiman troops led by Ketbuka noyon. Under him, the mosque of Medina, the mosque of Kubba al-Sahra in Jerusalem, the mosque of al-Azhar in Cairo were restored. Readers know that hundreds of caravanserais, madrasahs and mosques, bridges were built on his orders, a new architectural style was developed in the Muslim East. We are interested in the fact that the sultan built a magnificent mosque in the Baybars Crimea in 1260-1270. P.Keppen, who traveled around the Crimea in the second half of the 18th century, notes the exceptional beauty of this mosque, built of marble, and the dome was covered with porphyry. Unfortunately, after the Russian invasion, among the many sights of the Old Crimea (Solkhat), the Baybars mosque was destroyed.

²⁴ Yusup Idrissov. **Kazakh-Kumyk interethnic relations**. Moscow, 2010.

²⁵ Vladimir Qustavovich Tizengauzen. **Collection of materials relating to the history of the Golden Horde**. T.I. Saint-Petersburg, 1884.

²⁶ Saki. **Kipchak Mamluks**. Astana, 2006.

Another interesting fact. The successor of the Baybars sultan in Egypt, Sultan Kalauyn, continued the work of his predecessor, helping the Crimea. He also came from the Crimea, and was also from the Börşi tribe. The historian Al-Makrizi (1356-1441) writes about Qalauyn: “He comes from Dasht-i Kipchak. From the tribe of Burj oğly (in this case, “oğly” means the son of Börşi). Came to Cairo as a child. He was bought by one of the *beks* of the Sultan Aksunkar for a thousand dinars, which is why he was called “Al-Alfi”, that is, “Thousander”.²⁷

Thus, the example of two prominent people, the sultans of Baybars and Kalauyn, testifies to the outstanding role of Börşi in the history of Memluk Egypt.

Spanish Borsi

A number of sources allow us to assume that the Börşi were at the forefront of the “Great Migration of Nations” and earlier than other Huns ended up in Eastern Europe. The most outstanding event of that era was the Battle of Catalaun, which took place in 451 in France. According to Jordanes, in the historical confrontation between Rome and the Huns, the Goths were the most affected, since some of them supported Rome, the other supported the Huns. “In the Battle of Catalaun, blood flowed like a river”, Jordan writes, 165 thousand people died on both sides, not counting 15 thousand Gepids and Franks”.²⁸ Nevertheless, it was this battle that opened the way for the Huns to Western Europe. Separate groups of Huns, probably the White Huns (Argyn), advanced even further and, displacing the Visigoths, occupied the north-eastern part of Spain. In our opinion, the Kingdom of Aragon arose precisely on the territory that the Börşi occupied as part of the White Huns, evidence of which is the town of Borja, not far from Saragossa, the capital of Aragon.

Catalonia and Valencia were then part of this kingdom. In the era of the reconquista (IX-XII centuries), as B. Tenenbaum notes: “*Jaime the First, the young and valiant king of Aragon, captured Valencia and established his rule in it, and the treasures and land possessions that he inherited, as was due by law and custom, he divided with his barons. One of them was Don Esteban de Borcha, who famously wore his coat of arms – a mighty red bull trampling a green field. He got Xativa, the second largest and most important city of Valencia, and there he moved and settled with all his relatives. From him, the Borja clan led its ancestry and was one of the leading in Valencia. However, the family was called not only Borja (in the original Spanish transliteration – J.A.), but also Borja, in the Catalan way (in Aragon itself Borcha, which is very close to the Kazakh version – Börşi, in neighboring possessions (Catalonia, Valencia) – (Borja – J.A.). The Borja family put down strong roots in the newly conquered Valencia – Don Esteban had numerous offspring, and his entire clan served the Aragonese kings with both the sword and the council and prospered, dividing into branches*”.²⁹

²⁷ Saki. **Kipchak Mamluks**. Astana, 2006.

²⁸ Jordan. **Getica**. Saint petersburg: Aleteya, 1997.

²⁹ Boris Tennenbaum. **Great Borgias. Evil geniuses**. Moscow: “ӘКМО”, 2012.

The French historian I. Klula connects the origin of the Borgia clan (Borzha, Börşi, Borcha, Bordzhi) with shepherding: “Their coat of arms depicts a bull with “the color of the chops”, as it was called in heraldry, that is, red: the animal, a symbol of their shepherd origin, was the epitome of the formidable courage of a warlike race”.³⁰ After the expulsion of the Arabs from Spain, in which Esteban de Borja especially distinguished himself, the Borja tribe (in Italian - Borgia) became close to the Italian aristocrats: “In the XIV century, the senior branch of the Borja left the conquered lands, reaching the Kingdom of Naples, but their younger branches remained in Spain”.³¹

We cannot unequivocally state the close relationship between the Kazakh Börşi clan and the Spanish Borcha, but the fact that both of them are connected with the broader concept of Argyn (Aragon) surprises us very much. Secondly, we are amazed by the phonetic coincidence of the self-names of Aragonese Borcha and Kazakh Börşi. Thirdly, the bull of the “color of the chops” on the coat of arms of the Spanish Borcha is also sacred among the Kazakh Börşi. There is even a saying “*Altai-Argynnyn sauri*”, that is, “Altai is the Argyn bull”, we are talking about the Altai tribe, with which Börşi are brothers. Both of these militant groups are part of the Argyn confederation, and constitute its senior branch.

Borsi in Italy

It is known that one of the branches of Börşi from Spain came to the south of Italy, where he built the Borja castle. Gradually they moved to the north of Italy and took a prominent place in the history of this state. Historically, the name of the Italian Borgia (Borshi, Borcha) is usually associated with such concepts as the Vatican, luxury, murder, debauchery, dizzying ups and downs. However, the name Borgia also reminds us of the great artists and poets of the Renaissance, such as Leonardo da Vinci, Niccolò Machiavelli and others. In addition, we should not forget that this noble family from Aragon gave the Catholic world two popes and two dozen cardinals, and a large number of scientists and culture.

Everyone notes that Borgia has always gone its own way, despite obstacles and public opinion. They were not understood by their contemporaries, but their life invariably arouses interest among posterity.

What is the fate of the Börşi remaining in the Great Steppe?

Kazakh Börşi still live in the places where their first ancestors lived. This is the very center of the Great Eurasian Steppe, at the mouth of the Nura River, in the area that bears the ancient name of Khurgaldzhin (translated as tin-lead), on the shore of Lake Tengiz.

We found one isolated and rather numerous Börşi group in the Burlinsky district of the Gorno-Altai region of the Russian Federation. However, we did not

³⁰ Ivan Cloulas. **The Borgias**. Translated by Gilda Roberts Barnes. Nobel books. Franklin Watts, 1993.

³¹ Ivan Cloulas. **A.g.k.**

manage to link Kazakh and Russian Börşi genealogically. Perhaps the Altai Börşi lived in those places for a very long time and the names of common ancestors were not preserved in the pedigrees.

According to our information, Börşi also lived in the neighboring Kyrgyz Republic in the past. It is believed that these are those Börşi who took part in the anti-Russian resistance, as part of the detachments of Kenesary (1807-1847), the last Khan of the Kazakhs and were captured by the Kyrgyz during the retreat.

I found small groups of Börşi in the south of Kazakhstan, in the small towns of Karnak, Shornak. It is next to the ancient capital of the Kazakhs, Turkestan. Some Börşi families served in the residence of the Kazakh khans, gradually settled down (the settled are called *sart*), other families ended up in this area after fierce wars against the Russian occupation of Central Kazakhstan in the first half of the 19th century.³²

This is the history of Börşi in a nutshell. Certainly, there are gaps in our narrative. To fill them, new research and expeditions are needed. For example, I would like to get acquainted with the oral tradition and dialects of the Aragonese language. It would be useful to work with the inhabitants of the Börşi auls of Crimea. Unfortunately, the situation in those areas is very difficult due to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, besides, a significant part of the Crimean population moved to Turkey long ago (E.A. n.d.).

From all of the above, some conclusions can be drawn. In our opinion, the above materials may indicate an extremely interesting history of the ancient tribe - Börşi (Kaz.), Borcha (Arog.), Borgia (Ital.) with a wolf totem, the origins of which are associated with the central zone of the Eurasian steppe. They took part in outstanding events more than once from the very beginning of their history not just by accident. At first, part of this tribe migrated to the eastern part of Central Asia and took part in the historical affairs of the Eastern Hunnic Empire. Subsequently, natural disasters and the defeat of the empire forced them to return back to the steppes of Central Kazakhstan, then during the "Great Migration of Nations" this tribe participates in the affairs of the Western Hun Empire, and spreads to the Crimea and the Caucasus, and stops in the territory of northeastern Spain.

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