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THE SYSTEM OF KINSHIP AND AFFINITY TERMS IN MIDDLE MONGOLIAN*

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This paper deals with the structural analysis of the system of kinship and affinity terms in Middle Mongolian based on all known lexicographical and narrative sources. The system of kinship and affinity terms is seen as a separate lexical group which is to be studied by methods of structural semantics, in particular by the method of componential analysis. This method is for the first time applied to the study of Middle Mongolian vocabulary. The meaning of each kinship or affinity term is defined in the meta-language of componential analysis in its two varieties, main structural features of the system are discovered and defined, the dialectal distribution, inter- and intradialectal lexical differences among the terms are described and presented in the form of tables. The morphological classification of the terms is given, the question of the polysemy of some of them is touched upon. The author comes to the conclusion that East Middle Mongolian dialects and their system of kinship and affinity terms could be in a more archaic stage of development than the language of West Middle Mongolian literary monuments. The results of the semantic analysis are compared with some historical and ethnographical data on the Mongolian social structure of the imperial period (in particular on kinship system and marriage rules).

Key words: Mongolic languages, Middle Mongolian, kinship terms, componential analysis, social structure, Mongolian empire.

The historical lexicology of the Mongolic languages, in particular, of Middle Mongolian (further MMo.) as the earliest chronological stage of their development, remains one of the least investigated fields of research in Mongolian studies. It was not until recently that some works dealing with a careful study of certain lexical groups in MMo. began to appear. First of all, a number of articles by V. Rybatzki (2003; 2004;

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2005) and his excellent monograph *Die Personennamen und Titel der mittelmongolischen Dokumente* (Rybatzki 2006) should be mentioned here. But such an important lexical group as MMo. terms of kinship and affinity is still given insufficient attention from the specialists. There is not a single paper where attempt would be made to examine thoroughly the use of these terms in MMo. in general or in some of its single monuments. In order to fill this gap the author turned to the topic of the present paper.

The problem was addressed on the basis of the analysis of all known MMo. monuments which were accessible to us. During the past 15–20 years considerable progress has been made in their study owing to the publication of some newly found texts and large collections of already known literary monuments, a number of lexicographical sources from different archives (for example, Chinese–Mongolian dictionaries of the 13th–17th centuries) and some new revised editions of the most important MMo. monuments (such as the *Secret History of the Mongols*, *Muqaddimat al-Adab*, the Leyden manuscript of 1343 etc.). All these categories of monuments and their publications were used by us as the sources of linguistic material. In accordance with the classification traditional for Mongolian studies these monuments were subdivided into two dialect groups – East Middle Mongolian and West Middle Mongolian (Table 1).[1] This classification seemed to be initially based exclusively on the geographical distribution of the corresponding monuments, but lately it found convincing confirmation in the area of historical phonetics, morphology, syntax and lexicology of Mongolian languages (see Sanžeev 1953, pp. 22–26; Poppe 1965, pp. 21–24; Kuzmenkov 1993, p. 324; Šongqor 1996, pp. 34–35; Ozawa 1998; Гarudi 2001, pp. 44–55).[2] Although MMo. dialectology still makes its first steps, and its basic problems require an in-depth and thorough study, we found it expedient to accept this classification in its basic principles, especially as our own material only confirms its heuristic value.

The main part of the sources is constituted by lexicographical monuments. They consist of various Mongolian–foreign and foreign–Mongolian dictionaries where MMo. linguistic material is transcribed by means of other scripts (Chinese, Arab or Armenian) and supplied with translations and glosses. Dealing with the sources of this category we tried to follow as close as possible the sense expressed by the translations of Mongolian words and phrases into foreign languages which are the only reliable means to establish the meaning of a lexical unit in the absence of a distributive context. As for narrative sources, we tried to rely not only on the intralineal glosses (where they exist, e.g. in SHM or HyT), but also on the general context in which the forms in question are used, that is to employ a distributive method of linguistic study as applied to the vocabulary. In most cases the data, obtained by the distributive method and by the method of the analysis of glosses, mutually verified each other, but there were some exceptions when one method gave results, somewhat different

[1] All monuments included in Table 1 are supplied with abbreviations under which they will be mentioned below, and also with main bibliographical data.

[2] In some works three and even four MMo. dialects are distinguished, but this is redundant and not verified by the sources.

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Table 1. The sources of the linguistic material

Monuments of East Middle Mongolian dialects	Monuments of West Middle Mongolian dialects
BLk – Chinese–Mongolian dictionary 北虜考 *Beilu kao* from the work 武備志 *Wu bei zhi* by Mao Yuanyi (1621) (Manduqu 1995, pp. 599–691). Apparently one of the copies of Yy. HyG – Chinese–Mongolian dictionary 華夷譯語 *Huayi yiyu* by Huo Yuanjie and Mashayihei (1389): the glossary (Manduqu 1995, pp. 151–275; Kuribayashi 2003, pp. 3–63; J̌ančiv–Byambacend 2003, pp. 23–47). HyT – Chinese–Mongolian dictionary 華夷譯語 *Huayi yiyu* by Huo Yuanjie and Mashayihei (1389): the texts (Manduqu 1998; Kuribayashi 2003, pp. 64–116; J̌ančiv–Byambacend 2003, pp. 49–78). Ph – Mongolian texts in 'Phags-pa script (13th–14th centuries) (J̌ančiv 2002; Tömörtogoo 2002a; Hugejiletu–Sarula 2004). SHM – The *Secret History of the Mongols* (mid-13th century) (Pankratov 1962; Rachewiltz 1972; 2004). Yb – Chinese–Mongolian dictionary 譯部 *Yibu* from the work 盧龍塞略 *Lulong sailüe* by Guo Zaoqing (1610) (Manduqu 1995, pp. 379–598). Yy – Chinese–Mongolian dictionary 譯語 *Yiyu* from the work 登壇必究 *Dengtan bijiu* by Wang Minhe (1598) (Manduqu 1995, pp. 277–377). ZYy – Chinese–Mongolian dictionary 至元譯語 *Zhiyuan yiyu* (alias 蒙古譯語 *Menggu yiyu*) from the work 事林廣記 *Shilin guangji* by Chen Yuanliang (1264 or 1330) (Kara 1990; Ligeti 1990; Manduqu 1995, pp. 35–149).	IM – Arabic–Mongolian dictionary *Kitāb Ḥilyat al-Insān wa ġalbat al-Lisān* by Ǧamāl al-Dīn ibn al-Muhannā (early 14th century) (Melioranskij 1904; Poppe 1938, pp. 432–451; Weiers 1972; Tömörtogoo 2002b). MA – Arabic–Persian–Turkic–Mongolian dictionary *Muqaddimat al-Adab* (14th century) (Poppe 1938; Tömörtogoo 2002b; Islomov–Kanno–Khasanov–Kuribayashi–Saitô 2008; Saitô 2008). MP – Mongol words in mediaeval Persian writings (Doerfer 1963–1975). AL – Mongol–Persian and Arabic–Mongolian dictionary *Kitāb Majmū' Turjumān Turkī wa-'ajamī wa-Muǧalī* by Xalīl b. Muḥammad b. Jūsuf al-Qunawī (?) (1343) (Poppe 1927–1928; Tömörtogoo 2002b; Saitô 2006). KG – Armenian–Mongol glossary from the work by Kirakos of Gandzak (1241) (Ligeti 1965). RH – Arabic–Persian–Turkic–Greek–Armenian–Mongol dictionary *Rasūlid Hexaglot* by al-Malik al-Afḍal al-'Abbās b. 'Alī (between 1363 and 1377) (Golden 2000). VdI – Arabic–Persian–Turkic–Mongolian dictionary *Šāmil al-Luġa* by Ḥasan b. Ḥusain b. 'Imād al-Qarāḥiṣārī (late 15th–early 16th century) (Ligeti 1962; 1963; Tömörtogoo 2002b). In A. K. Borovkov's opinion, it is an abridged copy of one of the versions of MA (Borovkov 1965).

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from those produced by another. In such cases we always gave preference to the results of distributive analysis as the most effective and reliable tool for the study of lexical semantics. A special category of the sources is represented by MMo. lexical borrowings in other languages, in particular, in New Persian, where there is a significant layer of borrowings from MMo. terminology of kinship and affinity.

The genre classification of MMo. literary monuments used for our purposes is presented in the Table 2.

Table 2. The genre classification of Middle Mongolian literary monuments

Lexicographical	Narrative	Other
KG, ZYy, IM, AL, RH, HyG, MA, VdI, Yy, Yb, BLk	SHM, Ph, HyT	MP

As a result of the analysis of all kinds of MMo. monuments 35 kinship terms and 26 affinity terms were isolated which according to their morphological structure can be subdivided into four categories: *elementary* (independent words not dissolved into meaningful components), *complex* (kinship or affinity terms modified by other kinship or affinity terms in the form of a stem), *composite* (stems in combination with any determinative which it is not by itself a kinship or affinity term) and *descriptive* (formed by the combination of several elementary or composite terms where the modifying element is expressed by the genitive) (Table 3). The most extensive category is composed by the elementary terms (22 out of 35 kinship terms and 15 out of 26 affinity terms) which are primary both in the diachronic (since the majority of them enters into the basic vocabulary of Mongolic languages) and in the structural (since three other categories of terms are built on their base) sense.

According to the method of meaning representation accepted in ethnolinguistics and structural semantics all MMo. kinship and affinity terms were subjected to componential analysis in its two varieties. The first one is the notation system traditional for Western kinship studies which makes it possible to represent the meaning of each term in the form of a combination of several literal symbols expressing all basic types of the relations of kinship and affinity. Furthermore, one more version of the meta-language of the componential analysis was used for our purposes. This version operates with the system of several variables, or differential features (DF), with a particular set of values peculiar to each of them. For MMo. system of kinship and affinity terms the following 10 variables proved to be relevant: binary features "nature of kinship connection", "sex of the alter", "sex of the connector", "sex of Ego", "laterality of the alter", "relative age of the alter", "linearity of the alter", "relative age of the connector" and gradual features "genealogical generation" (values from +4 to –2) and "genealogical distance (rank)" (values from 0 to 6) (Table 4).

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Table 3. The morphological classification of kinship and affinity terms in Middle Mongolian

Elementary	Complex	Composite	Descriptive
*boroqai, γolinmuču[q], elinčük, ebüge(n), emege(n), ečige, eke, ebin, abaqa, naqaču, aqa, de'ü, egeči, döyi, üye, ke'üken, kö'ü(n), nu'u(n), öki(n), yin, (h)ači, je'e, berigen, ajin, baja, qadum, ere, *küirü, jitūr, eme, gergei, beri, qadun, *törgün, güregen, qaya, quda*	*ečē ečē, aγa ečē, aqai egeči, dewü ečē, aγa eke, naqaču egeči, abu'a berigen, qadum ečige, qadum eke, abulin eme, berigen eme, de'ü beri, kürigen aqai, kürigen dö'ü, χadun dö'ü, qadum egeči, qadum de'ün*	*yeke ečege, yeke eke*	*yeke ečge ekīn, yeke ekeyin eke, ečgeyin deü, ekeyin ökin digü, *kūni kü'ün, ečgeīn eme*

Table 4. Symbols of the componential meta-language of variables and their values

1. Nature of kinship connection
1.1. – blood relatives
1.2. – affinal relatives

2. Genealogical generation
2.1. – 0 generation
2.2. – +1 generations
2.3. – +2 generation
2.4. – +3 generation
2.5. – +4 generation
2.6. – –1 generations
2.7. – –2 generation

3. Genealogical distance (rank)
3.0. – 0 rank
3.1. – 1 rank
3.2. – 2 rank
3.3. – 3 rank
3.4. – 4 rank
3.5. – 5 rank
3.6. – 6 rank

4. Sex of the alter
4.1. – male
4.2. – female

5. Sex of the connector
5.1. – male
5.2. – female

6. Sex of Ego
6.1. – male
6.2. – female

7. Laterality of the alter
7.1. – patrilateral
7.2. – matrilateral

8. Relative age of the alter
8.1. – elder
8.2. – younger

9. Linearity of the alter
9.1. – lineal
9.2. – collateral

10. Relative age of the connector
10.1. – elder
10.2. – younger

The results of the componential analysis of both types are presented in two tables: one for the kinship terms (Table 5), another for the affinity terms (Table 6). It is to be emphasised that not simply lexical units but their combinations with specific meanings, i.e. lexical-semantic variants (LSV), were included into the tables

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Table 5. Componential analysis of kinship terms in Middle Mongolian

Form	Variants	Translation	Extension	Intension									Monuments
boroqai	*borqai, boroχai*	paternal great-great-grandfather	FaFaFaFa	1.1	2.5	3.4	4.1	5.1	–	7.1	–	9.1	–	SHM, MP, HyG, Yb
γolinmuču[q]	–	paternal great-great-grandfather	FaFaFaFa	1.1	2.5	3.4	4.1	5.1	–	7.1	–	9.1	–	Yy, BLk
elinčük	*elenčik, elinčik, elinmüčü[k]*	paternal great-grandfather	FaFaFa	1.1	2.4	3.3	4.1	5.1	–	7.1	–	9.1	–	SHM, MP, HyG, Yy, Yb, BLk
ebüge(n)	*öbüge(n)*	paternal grandfather	FaFa	1.1	2.3	3.2	4.1	5.1	–	7.1	–	9.1	–	SHM, ZYy, MP, HyG, Yy, Yb, BLk
yeke ečege	–	paternal grandfather	FaFa	1.1	2.3	3.2	4.1	5.1	–	7.1	–	9.1	–	AL
ečē ečē	*ačā ačā*	paternal grandfather	FaFa	1.1	2.3	3.2	4.1	5.1	–	7.1	–	9.1	–	IM
emege(n)	*emügen, ömege eke*	paternal grandmother	FaMo	1.1	2.3	3.2	4.2	5.1	–	7.1	–	9.1	–	SHM, ZYy, HyG, Yy, Yb, BLk
yeke eke	–	paternal grandmother	FaMo	1.1	2.3	3.2	4.2	5.1	–	7.1	–	9.1	–	MA
yeke ečge ekīn	–	maternal grandfather	MoFa	1.1	2.3	3.2	4.1	5.2	–	7.2	–	9.1	–	AL

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yeke ekeyin eke	–	maternal grand-mother	MoMo	1.1	2.3	3.2	4.2	5.2	–	7.2	–	9.1	–	AL
ečige	*ečge, ečke, ečike, ečē, eǰige, öǰige*	father	Fa	1.1	2.2	3.1	4.1	–	–	7.1	–	9.1	–	SHM, KG, ZYy, MP, IM, AL, RH, HyG, HyT, MA, VdI,Yy, Yb, BLk
eke	*ege, öke*	mother	Mo	1.1	2.2	3.1	4.2	–	–	7.2	–	9.1	–	SHM, KG, ZYy, MP, IM, AL, RH, HyG, HyT, MA, VdI, Yy, Yb, BLk
ebin	–	father's elder brother	FaElBr	1.1	2.2	3.3	4.1	5.1	–	7.1	8.1	9.2	–	SHM, ZYy, HyG, Yy, Yb, BLk
abaqa 1	*abaχa, abu-χa, abu'a*	father's younger brother	FaYoBr	1.1	2.2	3.3	4.1	5.1	–	7.1	8.2	9.2	–	SHM, ZYy, HyG, Yy, Yb, BLk
abaqa 2	*abaya*	father's brother	FaBr	1.1	2.2	3.3	4.1	5.1	–	7.1	–	9.2	–	RH, MP, MA
ečgeyin deü	–	father's brother[3]	FaBr	1.1	2.2	3.3	4.1	5.1	–	7.1	–	9.2	–	AL
aya ečē	*aya ačā*	father's brother	FaBr	1.1	2.2	3.3	4.1	5.1	–	7.1	–	9.2	–	IM

[3] On the basis of the meanings of the component parts of this descriptive term, it would be possible to assume it to have the meaning 'father's junior brother'; however, in AL it is clearly opposed to the term *abaqa* as the designation of a paternal uncle to the name of a mother's brother.

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Form	Variants	Translation	Extension	Intension									Monuments
aqai egeči	*aχai egeči*	father's sister	FaSi	1.1	2.2	3.3	4.2	5.1	–	7.1	–	9.2	–	HyG, Yb
dewü ečē	*dü ejē*	father's sister	FaSi	1.1	2.2	3.3	4.2	5.1	–	7.1	–	9.2	–	IM
naqaču	*naχaču, naγaču, naχaju*	mother's brother	MoBr	1.1	2.2	3.3	4.1	5.2	–	7.2	–	9.2	–	SHM, ZYy, MP, RH, HyG, MA, Yy, Yb, BLk
aya eke	–	mother's brother	MoBr	1.1	2.2	3.3	4.1	5.2	–	7.2	–	9.2	–	IM
abaqa 3	–	mother's brother	MoBr	1.1	2.2	3.3	4.1	5.2	–	7.2	–	9.2	–	AL
naqaču egeči	*naχaču egeči*	mother's sister	MoSi	1.1	2.2	3.3	4.2	5.2	–	7.2	–	9.2	–	HyG, Yb
ekeyin ökin digü	–	mother's sister	MoSi	1.1	2.2	3.3	4.2	5.2	–	7.2	–	9.2	–	AL
aqa 1	*aχa, aya, aχai*	male relative older than Ego, but younger than Ego's parents	ElBr, Fa-YoBr, Fa-ElBrSo, Fa-FaElBrSoSo … Fa^nEl-$BrSo^n$	1.1	–	–	4.1	–	–	–	–	–	–	SHM, ZYy, Ph, MP, IM, AL, RH, HyG, MA, Yy, Yb, BLk
de'ü 1	*deün, dewü, de'ü, diyü keün, dü, deü'ü*	male relative younger than Ego, but older than Ego's children	YoBr, El-BrSo, Fa-YoBrSo, FaFaYoBr-SoSo … $Fa^nYoBrSo^n$	1.1	–	–	4.1	–	–	–	–	–	–	SHM, ZYy, Ph, IM, AL, RH, HyG, HyT, MA, Yy, Yb, BLk

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aγa	–	brother	Br	1.1	2.1	3.2	4.1	–	–	–	9.2	–	KG
egeči 1	*ekeči, ekeǰi, ökeči*	elder sister	ElSi	1.1	2.1	3.2	4.2	–	–	8.1	9.2	–	SHM, ZYy, AL, HyG, MA, Yy, Yb, BLk
döyi	*düi*	younger sister	YoSi	1.1	2.1	3.2	4.2	–	–	8.2	9.2	–	SHM, ZYy, HyG, Yb
de'ü 2	*de'ū, dū, diyü ökün, ökin deü'ü*	younger sister	YoSi	1.1	2.1	3.2	4.2	–	–	8.2	9.2	–	AL, MA, Yy, Yb, BLk
egeči 2	*ekeči*	sister	Si	1.1	2.1	3.2	4.2	–	–	–	9.2	–	KG, RH
de'ü 3	*dū, ökin de'ü*	sister	Si	1.1	2.1	3.2	4.2	–	–	–	9.2	–	IM, AL
üye 1	–	paternal cousin	FaBrSo	1.1	2.1	3.4	4.1	5.1	–	7.1	–	9.2	–	ZYy
ke'üken 1	*kö'üken, kūken*	child	Ch	1.1	2.6	3.1	–	–	–	–	–	9.1	–	SHM, RH, HyG, HyT, MA, Yb
kö'ü(n) 1	*kü'ūn, kö-be'ün, kö'ün šibawun*	child	Ch	1.1	2.6	3.1	–	–	–	–	–	9.1	–	SHM, HyT, MA, Yy, BLk
nu'u(n)	–	child	Ch	1.1	2.6	3.1	–	–	–	–	–	9.1	–	ZYy, HyG, Yb
ke'üken 2	*kö'üken, kūken*	son	So	1.1	2.6	3.1	4.1	–	–	–	–	9.1	–	SHM, AL, MA

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Form	Variants	Translation	Extension	Intension										Monuments
kö'ü(n) 2	*ke'ün, kün, kü'ün, kewün, keü'ü, köbe-wün, köbe'ün, kübe'ün*	son	So	1.1	2.6	3.1	4.1	–	–	–	–	9.1	–	SHM, Ph, IM, AL, RH, HyG, HyT, MP, VdI, Yy, Yb, BLk
öki(n)	*ökün, ökin kün, *ökin kö'üken,*[4] *ökin kö'ün,*[5] *öken kögen*	daughter	Da	1.1	2.6	3.1	4.2	–	–	–	–	9.1	–	SHM, ZYy, IM, AL, RH, HyG, HyT, MA, VdI, Yy, Yb, BLk
yin	–	brother's child	BrCh	1.1	2.6	3.3	–	5.1	–	–	–	9.2	–	ZYy, HyG, Yb
je'e 1	*jeye, jē keü'ü*	sister's child	SiCh	1.1	2.6	3.3	–	5.2	–	–	–	9.2	–	HyG, Yy, Yb, BLk
(h)ači	*ači keü, hači kö'ün*	grandchild (son's son)	SoSo	1.1	2.7	3.2	4.1	5.1	–	–	–	9.1	–	HyG, HyT, ZYy, Yy, Yb, BLk
**künī kü'ün*[6]	–	grandchild (son's son)	SoSo	1.1	2.7	3.2	4.1	5.1	–	–	–	9.1	–	MA
je'e 2	*jē*	daughter's child	DaCh	1.1	2.7	3.2	–	5.2	–	–	–	9.1	–	SHM, Yb

[4] It occurs only as pl. *ökin kö'üket* in [HyT 3:18a4].
[5] It occurs only as pl. *ökin kö'üt* in [HyT 3:18b1-2].
[6] It occurs only as pl. *künī kü'üt* in [MA 333b3].

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Table 6. Componential analysis of affinity terms in Middle Mongolian

Form	Variants	Translation	Extension	Intension										Monuments
berigen 1	*berigen eke*	father's wife	FaWi	1.2	2.2	3.1	4.2	5.1	–	–	–	–	–	IM, MP
ečgeīn eme[7]	–	father's wife	FaWi	1.2	2.2	3.1	4.2	5.1	–	–	–	–	–	AL
abu'a berigen	*abuχa berigen*	father's brother's wife	FaBrWi	1.2	2.2	3.3	4.2	5.1	–	–	–	–	–	Yy, Yb, BLk
aǰin	–	father's brother's wife	FaBrWi	1.2	2.2	3.3	4.2	5.1	–	–	–	–	–	ZYy
baǰa 1	–	mother's sister's husband	MoSiHu	1.2	2.2	3.3	4.1	5.2	–	–	–	–	–	HyG, Yb
qadum ečige	*qadun ečige, χadun ečige, χadun ečike, χatun eǰige, qadam ečge*	father-in-law (wife's father)	WiFa	1.2	2.2	3.1	4.1	5.2	6.1	–	–	–	–	ZYy, AL, RH, HyG, MA, Yy, Yb, BLk
qadum 1	–	father-in-law (wife's father)	WiFa	1.2	2.2	3.1	4.1	5.2	6.1	–	–	–	–	IM

[7] The term *ekeīn ere* 'mother's husband' [AL] which is symmetrical to *ečgeīn eme* should be understood in the meaning 'step-father' because of the absence of polyandry among the mediaeval Mongols. Therefore we do not include it in the table and place it in the category of terms of artificial kinship.

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Form	Variants	Translation	Extension	Intension										Monuments
qadum eke	*qadun eke, χadun eke, χatun eke*	mother-in-law (wife's mother)	WiMo	1.2	2.2	3.1	4.2	5.2	6.1	–	–	–	–	IM, RH, HyG, Yy, Yb, BLk
aqa 2	–	husband's male relative older than he, but younger than his parents	HuElBr, HuFaYoBr, HuFaElBrSo, HuFaFaElBr-SoSo … Hu-Fa^{n}ElBrSo^{n}	1.2	–	–	4.1	–	6.2	–	–	–	–	SHM
ere	–	husband	Hu	1.2	2.1	3.0	4.1	–	6.2	–	–	–	–	SHM, MA
**küirü*[8]	–	husband	Hu	1.2	2.1	3.0	4.1	–	6.2	–	–	–	–	Yb
abulin eme	–	first, senior wife	ElWi	1.2	2.1	3.0	4.2	–	6.1	–	8.1	–	–	SHM
ǰitūr	–	junior wife	YoWi	1.2	2.1	3.0	4.2	–	6.1	–	8.2	–	–	RH
eme	*eme kö'ü(n), emen*	wife	Wi	1.2	2.1	3.0	4.2	–	6.1	–	–	–	–	SHM, ZYy, IM, AL, MA, Yy, BLk

[8] The phonetic reconstruction of this term is hypothetic; it does not occur in other Mongolic languages.

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gergei	–	wife	Wi	1.2	2.1	3.0	4.2	–	6.1	–	–	–	–	SHM, HyG, Yb
beri 1	–	wife	Wi	1.2	2.1	3.0	4.2	–	6.1	–	–	–	–	Yb
qadun	*qatun, qatun eme, *qatun haran*[9]*, χa-tun*	wife *(honor.)*	Wi	1.2	2.1	3.0	4.2	–	6.1	–	–	–	–	SHM, HyG, HyT, MP
aqa 3	*aγa*	wife *(honor.)*	Wi	1.2	2.1	3.0	4.2	–	6.1	–	–	–	–	Yy, BLk
**törgün*[10]	–	wife's kin	WiFa, WiMo, WiFaCh, $WiFaP^n$, $WiFa^nCh^n$ …	1.2	–	–	–	–	6.1	–	–	–	–	SHM
qadum 2	–	wife's kin	WiFa, WiMo, WiFaCh, $WiFaP^n$, $WiFa^nCh^n$ …	1.2	–	–	–	–	6.1	–	–	–	–	MA
berigen 2	*bergen*	elder brother's wife	ElBrWi	1.2	2.1	3.2	4.2	5.1	–	–	–	–	10.1	SHM, ZYy, HyG, MA, MP, Yy, Yb, BLk

[9] It occurs only as pl. *qatut haran* in [HyT 3:18a2].
[10] It occurs only as pl. *törgüt* [SHM § 61].

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Form	Variants	Translation	Extension	Intension									Monuments
berigen eme	–	widow of an elder brother, who became Ego's wife by the custom of levirate	ElBrWi > Wi	1.2	2.1	–	4.2	–	6.1	–	–	–	SHM
beri 2	–	younger brother's wife	YoBrWi	1.2	2.1	3.2	4.2	5.1	–	–	–	10.2	HyG, MA
de'ü beri	–	younger brother's wife	YoBrWi	1.2	2.1	3.2	4.2	5.1	–	–	–	10.2	Yb
kürigen ayɣai	–	elder sister's husband	ElSiHu	1.2	2.1	3.2	4.1	5.2	–	–	–	10.1	Yy, Yb, BLk
kürigen dö'ü̈	–	younger sister's husband	YoSiHu	1.2	2.1	3.2	4.1	5.2	–	–	–	10.2	Yy, Yb, BLk
baǰa 2	–	sister's husband	SiHu	1.2	2.1	3.2	4.1	5.2	–	–	–	–	RH
güregen 1	–	sister's husband	SiHu	1.2	2.1	3.2	4.1	5.2	–	–	–	–	SHM
de'ü 4	–	husband's male relative younger than he, but older than his children	HuYoBr, HuElBrSo, HuFaYoBrSo, HuFaFaYoBrSoSo … HuFa^{n}YoBrSo^{n}	1.2	–	–	4.1	–	6.2	–	–	–	SHM

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üye 2	–	husband's paternal cousin	HuFaBrSo	1.2	2.1	3.4	4.1	5.1	6.2	–	–	–	–	SHM
qaya	–	husband's second cousin	HuFaFaBrSoSo	1.2	2.1	3.6	4.1	5.1	6.2	–	–	–	–	SHM
χadun dö'ü	–	wife's younger brother	WiYoBr	1.2	2.1	3.2	4.1	5.2	6.1	–	8.2	–	–	ZYy
qadum egeči	–	wife's elder sister	WiElSi	1.2	2.1	3.2	4.2	5.2	6.1	–	8.1	–	–	MA
qadum de'ün	–	wife's younger sister	WiYoSi	1.2	2.1	3.2	4.2	5.2	6.1	–	8.2	–	–	MA
baǰa 3	–	wife's sister's husband	WiSiHu	1.2	2.1	3.2	4.1	5.2	6.1	–	–	–	–	MA
quda	*γuda*	father-in-law	ChSpFa	1.2	2.1	3.2	4.1	–	6.1	–	–	–	–	SHM, HyG, MP, Yb
beri 3	–	daughter-in-law	SoWi	1.2	2.6	3.1	4.2	5.1	–	–	–	–	–	SHM, ZYy, AL, RH, HyG, MP, Yy, BLk
güregen 2	*güregen gü-'ün, gürigen, kürigen, küregen, küreken, kürgen*	son-in-law	DaHu	1.2	2.6	3.1	4.1	5.2	–	–	–	–	–	SHM, ZYy, IM, AL, RH, HyG, MP, VdI, Yy, Yb, BLk

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and subjected to the componential analysis. The reason is that many of the terms were polysemic and could express several meanings from the field of kinship. Each of the LSV of one and the same term was for the clarity marked in the table by a numerical index (for example, *abaqa 1* 'father's younger brother', *abaqa 2* 'father's brother', etc.). Both tables have the same structure: the first column includes the most frequent forms of the terms which the latter have in the language of literary monuments, the second one – their less commonly used phonetic variants and also the co-referent nominal groups which contain them as their component units (for example, *diyü keün* for *de'ü 1*, *kö'ün šibawun* for *kö'ü(n) 1*). The third, fourth and fifth columns include correspondingly English translations of the terms, their extensions (rendered by combinations of literal symbols) and intensions (rendered into the meta-language of variables and their values). Finally, the sixth column contains the complete list of monuments where occur the corresponding forms.

If we try to correlate the data from Tables 5 and 6 with the already mentioned dialectal distribution of MMo. monuments, the following results can be obtained (see Table 7).

The fact is that 23 out of 25 common MMo. forms are elementary terms and only 2 (affinity terms *qadum ečige* and *qadum eke*) are complex ones. In East MMo. monuments 23 out of 32 forms are elementary and 9 complex terms, whereas only 11 of 25 West MMo. forms can be regarded as elementary, the rest being complex (6), composite (2) and descriptive (6) terms. It is especially interesting that absolutely all composite and descriptive terms which are considered by anthropologists to manifest the absence of the special terminological expression for the corresponding kinship connection in the language (see Bikbulatov 1981, p. 20) occur only in WMMo. dialects. Their counterparts in EMMo. monuments are elementary and complex terms, the descriptive designations of maternal grandfather and grandmother being not used at all. So it seems probable that the system of kinship and affinity terms in WMMo. dialects could have a secondary nature and show signs of a structural dissolution which become apparent especially in the replacement of the elementary and complex terms by the composite and descriptive ones. This may well point to the fact that EMMo. dialects and their system of kinship and affinity terms could be in a more archaic stage of development than the language of WMMo. literary monuments. As far as I know, this conclusion has not been made formerly by anyone in such a form, but it is fully confirmed by a number of data on historical phonetics, morphology and syntax of the Mongolic languages which can be found in some linguistic works (see e.g. Sanžeev 1953, p. 26; Ligeti 1963, pp. 132–133; Kuzmenkov 1986).

As can be seen from Tables 5 and 6, many of the forms included in them are completely synonymous, i.e. they have the same extensions and intensions. Some of these cases can be explained by interdialectal differences which resulted in the complementary distribution of the forms (Table 8).

However, in the majority of the cases synonymous forms occur within only one dialectal group of literary monuments or even in one particular monument (Table 9). The terms for relatives of the first descending generation should be especially mentioned which reveal free variation in both dialectal groups. These cases are quite com-

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Table 7. The dialectal distribution of Middle Mongolian kinship and affinity terms

Common Middle Mongolian	East Middle Mongolian	West Middle Mongolian
boroqai	*γolinmuču[q]*	*abaqa 2*
elinčük	*emege(n)*	*abaqa 3*
ebüge(n)	*ebin*	*aγa*
ečige	*abaqa 1*	*egeči 2*
eke	*döyi*	*de'ü 3*
naqaču	*üye*	*qadum 1*
aqa 1	*nu'u(n)*	*berigen 1*
de'ü 1	*yin*	*ǰitūr*
de'ü 2	*ǰe'e 1*	*qadum 2*
egeči 1	*ǰe'e 2*	*baǰa 2*
ke'üken 1	*(h)ači*	*baǰa 3*
ke'üken 2	*aǰin*	*yeke ečege*
kö'ü(n) 1	*baǰa 1*	*ečē ečē*
kö'ü(n) 2	*aqa 2*	*yeke eke*
öki(n)	**küirü*	*yeke ečge ekīn*
ere	*gergei*	*yeke ekeyin eke*
eme	*beri 1*	*ečgeyin deü*
qadun	*aqa 3*	*ečgeīn eme*
berigen 2	**törgün*	*aγa ečē*
beri 2	*güregen 1*	*dewü ečē*
quda	*de'ü 4*	*aγa eke*
beri 3	*üye 2*	*ekeyin ökin digü*
güregen 2	*qaγa*	**kūni kü'ūn*
qadum ečige	*aqai egeči*	*qadum egeči*
qadum eke	*naqaču egeči*	*qadum de'ūn*
	abu'a berigen	
	abulin eme	
	berigen eme	
	de'ü beri	
	kürigen aχai	
	kürigen dö'ū	
	χadun dö'ü	

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Table 8. Interdialectal lexical differences among Middle Mongolian kinship and affinity terms

Meaning	East Middle Mongolian	West Middle Mongolian
'paternal grandmother'	*emege(n)*	*yeke eke*
'father's sister'	*aqai egeči*	*dewü ečē*
'mother's sister'	*naqaču egeči*	*ekeyin ökin digü*
'grandchild (son's son)'	*(h)ači*	**kūni kü'ūn*
'wife's kin'	**törgün*	*qadum 2*
'sister's husband'	*güregen 1*	*baǰa 2*

plicated; they can be explained by the specific features of the language of particular monuments or by differences in use (vocative or referential) of the given terms by native speakers.

It should be noted that MMo. terminology of kinship and affinity, in general, reflects rather accurately the characteristic features of the social structure of mediaeval Mongols. Thus, 17 out of 25 terms, for which the variable "laterality of the alter" is relevant, denote patrilateral relatives and only 8 – matrilateral ones. This can be completely understood if it is remembered that the mediaeval Mongolian society was ruled by the principles of patrilineal descent and patrilineal inheritance which demanded more sophisticated terminological differentiation of various categories of patrilateral kin in comparison with matrilateral. On the contrary, in the terminology of affinity an obvious disproportion can be discovered in the distribution of forms opposed by the feature "sex of Ego": there are 18 special terms for male Ego, but only 6 for female Ego. In other words, a man could terminologically separate thrice as many categories of the relatives of his wife as a woman could as regards the relatives of her husband. Moreover, the relatives of husband were denoted by forms borrowed from the terminology of kinship (*aqa 2*, *de'ü 4*, *üye 2*), whereas for the relatives of wife there were special terms which did not have counterparts among the terms of blood relationship. It is especially worth noting that we have only two terms for Hu, only one of which was commonly used, but as many as seven terms for Wi, two of which besides were special honorific forms. Finally, relatives of a wife as a whole were denoted by two special collective nouns, but there was no term with the meaning *'husband's kin' in MMo. monuments at all. The reason could lie in the social inequality of participants in marriage relations among the mediaeval Mongols, according to which relatives of a woman as "wife givers" were in a higher social and symbolic position as compared to the relatives of a husband who enjoyed their status of "wife

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Table 9. Intradialectal lexical differences among Middle Mongolian kinship and affinity terms

Meaning	East Middle Mongolian	West Middle Mongolian
'paternal great-great-grandfather'	*boroqai* (SHM, HyG, Yb) ~ *yolinmuču[q]* (Yy, BLk)	*boroqai*
'paternal grandfather'	*ebüge(n)*	*ebüge(n)* (MP) ~ *yeke ečege* (AL) ~ *ečē ečē* (IM)
'father's brother'	–	*abaqa 2* (RH, MP, MA) ~ *ečgeyin deü* (AL) ~ *aγa ečē* (IM)
'mother's brother'	*naqaču*	*naqaču* (RH, MP, MA) ~ *aγa eke* (IM) ~ *abaqa 3* (AL)
'younger sister'	*döyi* (SHM, ZYy, HyG, Yb) ~ *de'ü 2* (Yy, Yb, BLk)	*de'ü 2*
'sister'	–	*egeči 2* (KG, RH) ~ *de'ü 3* (IM, AL)
'child'	*ke'üken 1* (SHM, HyG, HyT, Yb) ~ *kö'ü(n) 1* (SHM, HyT, Yy, BLk) ~ *nu'u(n)* (ZYy, HyG, Yb)	*ke'üken 1* (RH, MA) ~ *kö'ü(n) 1* (MA)
'son'	*ke'üken 2* (SHM) ~ *kö'ü(n) 2* (SHM, Ph, HyG, HyT, Yy, Yb, BLk)	*ke'üken 2* (AL, MA) ~ *kö'ü(n) 2* (IM, AL, RH, MP, VdI)
'father's wife'	–	*berigen 1* (IM, MP) ~ *ečgeīn eme* (AL)
'father's brother's wife'	*abu'a berigen* (Yy, Yb, BLk) ~ *aǰin* (ZYy)	–
'father-in-law (wife's father)'	*qadum ečige*	*qadum ečige* (AL, RH, MA) ~ *qadum 1* (MA)
'husband'	*ere* (SHM) ~ **küirü* (Yb)	*ere*
'wife'	*eme* (SHM, ZYy, Yy, BLk) ~ *gergei* (SHM, HyG, Yb) ~ *beri 1* (Yb)	*eme*
'wife' (*honor.*)	*qadun* (SHM, HyG, HyT) ~ *aqa 3* (Yy, BLk)	*qadun*
'younger brother's wife'	*beri 2* (HyG) ~ *de'ü beri* (Yb)	*beri 2*

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takers" (see Rykin 2003, pp. 32–34). This inequality resulted from the custom of the one-sided preferential marriages between two unilineal descent groups which existed already in the time of Činggis qan and was noted in many historical sources. In the terminology of kinship and affinity it is possible to find a reflection of the levirate (the term *berigen eme*) and of the marriage of a man with the widow of his own father (the equation FaWi = ElBrWi in the semantics of the term *berigen*), and also of a whole series of other characteristic features of the system of kinship and marriage of the mediaeval Mongols which we will not dwell upon here.

We cannot ignore such an important question as polysemy of MMo. kinship and affinity terms which is typical for a number of lexical units (Table 10).

From Table 10 the tendency for a group of forms belonging to the category of elementary terms to have a polysemy of the type 'kin category' – 'gender or age group' and/or 'social status' is to be observed. Special attention should be paid to the fact that MMo. kinship and affinity terms occur in these meanings much more frequently than in their meanings from the field of kinship which would seem primary. It applies especially to such forms as *ebüge(n)*, *emege (n)*, *ke'üken*, *kö'ün*, *öki(n)*, *aqa*, *de'ü*, *ere*, *eme*, *qadun* which are considered by some scholars to have had originally not kinship but gender/age or status meanings. Taking it into account, it is possible to attempt to reconstruct such type of a society which would show the best correlation with the above-mentioned special features of these most common terms of kinship and affinity. In my view, the type of social organisation which entirely explains these special features is the system of gender or age groups or classes. The point of view that age classes were the primary form of social organisation of the Mongols and, possibly, of other Altaic peoples actually becomes more and more widespread; cf. the articles by Burykin (2001) and mine (Rykin 2005) where it is developed in more detail. This point of view reflects the tendency to consider gender or age social institutions as the chronologically earliest stage in the development of human societies to be found in contemporary social anthropology. In the historical time this type of social organisation was explicitly outdated for the Mongols; at least, there are no reliable data on it in the historical sources. However, a number of folklore texts contain some allusions to the existence of *Männerbünde* and other forms of gender/age institutions in Mongolian society. The deeper and more systematic analysis of such data would possibly broaden our knowledge about the early forms of the social organisation of the Mongols, but such an analysis is beyond the scope of the present paper.

The study of the terminology of kinship and affinity in Middle Mongolian is certainly not limited to issues raised in this article; in particular, I intentionally left aside questions about typological affiliation of the system of kinship and marriage of mediaeval Mongols which are of direct relevance to the present topic. However, these questions deserve special consideration in the future.

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Table 10. The polysemy of kinship and affinity terms in Middle Mongolian

Form	Meanings from the field of kinship	Other meanings
elinčük	'paternal great-grandfather'	'ancestor'
ebüge(n)	'paternal grandfather'	'old man', 'ancestor'
emege(n)	'paternal grandmother'	'old woman'
ečige	'father'	noble title
eke	'mother'	noble title
ebin	'father's elder brother'	noble title
abaqa	'father's younger brother', 'father's brother', 'mother's brother'	–
aqa	'male relative older than Ego, but younger than Ego's parents', 'husband's male relative older than he, but younger than his parents', 'wife' (*honor.*)	'elder', 'senior', 'sir', 'chief', 'commander', 'elder sworn brother', noble title
de'ü	'male relative younger than Ego, but older than Ego's children', 'younger sister', 'sister', 'husband's male relative younger than he, but older than his children'	'younger', 'subordinate', 'soldier', 'younger sworn brother'
egeči	'elder sister', 'sister'	'elder', 'lady', 'khan's concubine', noble title
döyi	'younger sister'	'younger'
üye	'paternal cousin', 'husband's paternal cousin'	'joint, articulation'
ke'üken	'child', 'son'	'little child', 'boy'
kö'ü(n)	'child', 'son'	'baby', 'boy', 'prince', 'slave', noble title
öki(n)	'daughter'	'girl', 'princess'
je'e	'sister's child', 'daughter's child'	–
berigen	'father's wife', 'elder brother's wife'	'bride'
baja	'mother's sister's husband', 'sister's husband', 'wife's sister's husband'	–
qadum	'father-in-law (wife's father)', 'wife's kin'	–
ere	'husband'	'man', 'male'
jitür	'junior wife'	'concubine', 'jealousy'
eme	'wife'	'woman', 'female'
beri	'wife', 'younger brother's wife', 'daughter-in-law'	'bride'
qadun	'wife' (*honor.*)	'wife, lady' (*honor.*), noble title
güregen	'sister's husband', 'son-in-law'	'bridegroom', noble title
quda	'father-in-law'	noble title

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